We support Option three: Transform

Generation Zero supports Option Three on all segments of the Golden Mile because it will dramatically increase pedestrian space, and will be better for buses, bikes, scooters and accessibility.

Wellington has been asking for years to transform the Golden Mile into the bright and vibrant heart of the city that it should be. Option Three delivers on that vision with adequate space for commuting, shopping and enjoying the city. The Golden Mile is also a significant public space for people living in and near the central city so needs to provide public space for people to use as they like.

Executive summary of detailed submission:

- Option Three along the entire Golden Mile is the best option, especially when viewed in the context of other LGWM projects.
- We support trial options where feasible and implementation in stages.
- Creating public space for pedestrians should be the priority for the Golden Mile redevelopment.
  - Weather-proof against the elements, improve safety by removing obstacles and slippery surfaces, and create more rest areas and public toilets
  - New public space can be used for multiple purposes: co-design with the community
  - Tell the history and geography of the area with mana whenua partnerships
- We support the closure of side streets to traffic along the Golden Mile (excluding Taranaki St). Side streets should support creation of public spaces, connections to the waterfront and parking for accessibility and deliveries. Safe taxi access should be provided for Courtney Pl (e.g. Blair St).
- Remove all parking and private vehicles from the Golden Mile.
- A single lane each way for buses along the entire Golden Mile. Bus stops should be generously sized, comfortable and informative. Removal of stops should be undertaken with due consideration given to those with accessibility needs.
- We support segregated cycle/scoot lanes on Lambton Quay and Courtney Pl that properly integrate with a coherent strategic cycle network. Segregated lanes on the Golden Mile should promote safe and lower speed travel and should give priority to pedestrians at bus stops. More bike parking should be provided on side streets.
- Co-designing public space with mana whenua. Our urban fabric should acknowledge local history and restore the mana of the area.
- Option Three is the most accessible and inclusive option. Further work is needed on footpaths, wayfinding, disabled parking to provide for all Wellingtonians.
- Increase street greenery with native planting and water sensitive design
Detailed feedback

Implementation

We support trial options where feasible and implementation in stages. This could enable faster implementation, learning from mistakes and reduced construction impact.

Pedestrian and public space

Creating public space for pedestrians should be the priority for the Golden Mile redevelopment.

Of the three options, Option 3: Transform re-allocates the most space to pedestrians. The benefits of this are:

- pedestrians are overwhelming the main users of the Golden Mile, yet are allocated disproportionately less space than other modes.
- More people walking means fewer people in carbon-emitting vehicles, which creates space in the city
- Walking improves the health and wellness of people by improving fitness, and fostering greater connection to the spaces they visit.
- Pedestrians and residents provide community surveillance and eyes on the street policing capabilities, which improves the safety of the city, and in turn makes it more accessible.
- Pedestrians make a greater contribution to local economies than any other mode-user, especially happy, safe pedestrians that feel comfortable to amble along and peruse shops.

All of this contributes to making the Golden Mile a livable, vibrant public space where people will choose to spend time.

In the refined designs we would like to see:

- Key passages weather proofed to provide protection from wind, rain, and sun.
- Safety improved by removing obstacles, like sandwich boards and parked electric scooters, from the paths of pedestrians and removing hazards like the bricks that get slippery in the rain.
- Accessible, sheltered rest spaces for people to enjoy the space. These could include play spaces for children and families to enjoy in sunny areas.
- Public toilets
- Clear wayfinding (e.g. link to Cable Car and Civic Square)
- Traffic light phasing that supports bus and pedestrian movement – bus pre-emption at lights, pedestrian cycle on each phase with no requirement to call (no beg button), use smart tech to facilitate correct amount of time for pedestrian crossing and bus movement
- Art and features that tell the history of the area with mana whenua design.
- Increase street trees and greenery. They should provide shelter, shade and make the city feel alive.

Pedestrianised zone with extensive greenery, Barcelona.

**Side streets**

We support the closure of side streets (excluding Taranaki St) along the Golden Mile. Side streets should support creation of public spaces, connections to the waterfront and parking for accessibility and deliveries.

**Creation of public space**

At the moment, 80% of the open space in the centre city is used by the streets themselves, which contributes to a significant lack of third places for people to enjoy and promote their well-being. We would like to see the side streets of the Golden Mile transformed into pedestrian plazas and pocket parks as places for people to build communities and add vibrancy to the city.

These spaces can reflect the needs of the immediate surroundings. Shade, outdoor seating, play areas and local artwork could be included. These can be dynamic spaces that change with the city and the seasons. Mana whenua should be involved in co-designing the development of these spaces.

**Connection to waterfront**

We want to see the Golden Mile connected to the waterfront, to integrate the Golden Mile and form streams between two of the city’s most loved and occupied public spaces. The development of these
connections offer significant opportunities for businesses, with greater pedestrianisation occurring in this “in-between” zone.

This is vital for connecting to the waterfront shared space, cycleways, and future MRT stops. It will also provide better access to city infrastructure like Civic Square, the Convention Centre and Frank Kitts Park. Similar developments could be considered to establish a greater connection between Lambton Quay and the Terrace. For example, we recommend fully pedestrianising key connecting streets like Mercer St (connection to Civic Square) and Panama St (connection to Queen’s Wharf and future MRT stop). Lower Cuba St and Lower Tory St should be pedestrianised. All other side streets should have generous provision of mobility parking close to the actual Golden Mile with some provision for short-term parking and delivery zones.

**Speeding up buses and pedestrians**

Interactions with cars and turning movements from side streets create significant delays for buses.

Side streets should be a continuous footpath level to provide an accessible and seamless walking experience.

**Use of parking on side streets**

Allocating parking for disabled people, taxis and service vehicles on various side streets is essential for the effective operating of the Golden Mile (see section: Accessibility). We also would like to see escooter and bike parking provided on these side streets.

Listen to local businesses to assess their delivery needs. Providing loading zones and accessible parking should be high priority. Time of day restrictions of guidelines can be used to allow larger delivery vehicles in at off-peak times so they can easily turn around.

Regular parking should be low priority. There will be spaces available for car-using shoppers with parks available in private parking buildings or due to WCC’s new parking policy that ensure spaces are always available.

**Courntey Pl, taxis and safety**

Safe taxi access should be provided for Courtney Pl. This needs to have wayfinding, rest areas and generous lighting. This is particularly essential for certain people (e.g. young women and LGBTI+) who may need a safe spot to pick up a taxi home. This could be provided for by making the end of Blair St a turnaround spot for taxis. Or taxis could still go through Blair st to access Courtney going towards Cambridge Terrace. Taxis should have minimal interference with buses or bus stops.
Conversion of side street into pedestrianised park, Vienna. The Golden Mile side streets should have mobility parking available, with key connecting streets fully pedestrianised (e.g. Mercer and Panama).

**Bus lanes and bus stops**

*Generation Zero supports removing all parking and private vehicles from the Golden Mile. A single lane each way for buses along the entire Golden Mile. Bus stops should be generously sized, comfortable and informative. Removal of stops should be undertaken with due consideration given to those with accessibility needs.*

**Removal of private cars**

This has been called for by Wellingtonians for decades and is plainly the right course of action. Private cars have adequate access to the area via the Terrace, Featherston/Victoria and the waterfront quays.

**Single bus lane each way**

We support a single bus lane each way, as opposed to the double lanes in Option Two. In combination with other initiatives, the small benefit gained from bus overtaking lanes will be heavily outweighed by the massive benefit of increasing the public space along Lambton and Courtney.

Removing private vehicles, side street conflicts, some bus stops and parking will drastically speed up buses. The occasional indented bus stop will allow faster buses to overtake heavily-laden ones in front. Resilience in the case of bus breakdown can be achieved by the Option Three diagram with no median between the bus lanes.

Other LGWM and council projects will increase bus speed and reliability over the medium and longer term. All door boarding, better ticketing, electric buses and removal of buses due to a second MRT PT spine will all achieve massive gains. This project should be viewed in the context of these other projects and be fit for the next few decades at least.
**Bus stop design**

Bus stops should be large and have generous seating. They should protect people waiting against prevailing winds. Real Time Information boards should be upgraded from the current dot matrix to modern LED boards that give more information on each route (e.g. frequent route, night time route).

**Bus stop removal**

We support removal of some bus stops in principle. This will remove stops from constrained pedestrian areas and speed up buses. The 5 minute walking modelling should be viewed in light of real world factors like light phasing, weather and the walking abilities of children, the elderly and others with accessibility needs. We support a design that works for the most amount of people, but actively promotes greater accessibility.

![Bus stop concept for Auckland Transport by Design Brand.](image)

**Cycling and scooters**

We support segregated cycle/scoot lanes on Lambton Quay and Courtney Pl that properly integrate with a coherent strategic cycle network. Segregated lanes on the Golden Mile should promote safe and lower speed travel and should give priority to pedestrians at bus stops. More bike parking should be provided on side streets.

The importance of segregated lanes and integration with strategic cycleway network

Option 3: Transform is the only option that will provide a safe, separated cycle path, which should be a priority under our preferred transport hierarchy. Cycling is a low-emissions, efficient, and healthy way for people to get around the centre city and a cycle path has an added benefit of providing a place for e-scooters to move them off the foot paths where they can be dangerous for pedestrians.

People on bikes can make a strong contribution to local economies if routes are easily accessible and it is convenient to stop easily.
The lanes on Lambton and Courntey should be integrated with a coherent strategic cycle network. For Lambton Quay, the cyclelane can act as a distributor for the waterfront, Karori and waterfront quays cycle paths. Courtney Place needs to connect into a proper cycle network, and not funnel users into the constrained bus corridors of Manners and Willis Sts.

**Detailed design of cycleways**
The golden mile is not the right place for a fast, through route for commuter cyclists. We would like to see cycle access along sections of the golden mile where significant excess space can exist and conflict with pedestrians can be limited by a design that encourages separation and slow speeds.

At bus stops, segregated lanes should give as much priority to pedestrians as possible.

**Bike and scoot parking**
In the detailed designs, we would like to see consideration for the whole-of-trip experience of cyclists and escooter users. There needs to be sheltered, safe places to park bikes and scooters provided at regular intervals. This would enable a smooth transition between active and public transport use which is important as it is often not convenient or possible to take a bike on the bus.

Build it and they will come: Bikes mean business in Copenhagen.

**Mana whenua representation & community design**
Our urban fabric should acknowledge this history of our places and the Golden Mile project is an opportunity to restore mana and provide some history of the Aotearoa Context to our city centre.
We would like to see the use of a framework for mana whenua co-design and representation similar to Te Aranga Design Principles used in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, giving consideration to the core values that should inform good urban design.

For instance, the principle of Whakapapa speaks to celebrating Māori names in urban spaces and Taiao to ensure the natural environment is protected, restored and/or enhanced. Anyone should be able to walk down the Golden Mile and know they are in Te Whanganui-a-Tara in Aotearoa, not some generic, western urban setting. See here for more info on how this is being used in practice on the City Rail Link project in Tāmaki Makaurau.

In addition to mana whenua involvement, we would like to see these re-developed places along the Golden Mile developed through co-design with the communities they will serve - perhaps through a series of participatory planning workshops, design pop-ups, and flexible places.

City Rail Link co-designed stations with mana whenua to reflect the geography and history of each area.

**Accessibility**

Option Three is the most accessible and inclusive option. Further work is needed on footpaths, wayfinding, disabled parking to provide for all Wellingtonians.

For the development of a 21st century space in our urban centre, an inclusive “design for all” approach must be realised; one that reduces physical and social blockades, encourages inclusion/participation and
maintains the safety and the well-being of every member of the Wellington population. Generation Zero believes that this can be achieved with Option 3: Transform.

Overcrowded footpaths have long been recognised as a challenge for accessibility. With the widening of footpaths, the public can access local retail with greater ease. The removal of footpath clutter will further facilitate a safe and accessible environment for all.

With the inclusion of separated bike/e-scooter paths, the risk posed by micro-mobility is shifted away from pedestrians which will make the Golden Mile safer for both groups. The detailed designs need to include allocated parking areas for both bikes and e-scooters, keeping the footpaths clear.

Generation Zero also supports the comments made by the Disabled Persons Assembly in regards to improving the footpath quality; forming continuous footpaths, appropriately designed pedestrian crossings (with raised plates), and the removal of surfaces that get slippery in wet conditions. To add to this, we would also like to see inclusive buses in future that meet the needs of the physically, audibly and/or visually impaired population.

With sufficient disabled parking on side streets, inclusive public transport, and unimpeded footpaths, access to the Golden Mile will be realisable for everyone.

**Ecological benefits and water sensitive design**

*Increasing street greenery with native planting and water sensitive design provides a valuable ecosystem service.*

We would like to see the detailed designs use water sensitive design principles and include significant increase in greenery to manage stormwater and improve the urban ecology.

Water sensitive design that reduces impermeable surfaces and uses planting to absorb and filter water improves the resilience of the city to flooding, and improves the urban water quality.

Increased native plantings increases the biodiversity value, reduces the urban heat island effect, and improves the well being of users of the Golden Mile. Native plants are often cheaper and easier to maintain than exotics as they thrive in the Aoteatoa conditions.
Delivery to Businesses

Delivery and maintenance vehicles should have access at off-peak times (between 9pm and 6am) to support local businesses. Access can be organised by time, rather than space, to achieve the best outcome.

Taxis and other ride-share vehicles should not be allowed on the Golden Mile because they will be disruptive to the traffic flow and slow down buses. Allowing them on at off-peak times will be confusing and will likely lead to the rules being ignored at times.

For a broader discussion of innovative and alternative delivery solutions that are common in most cities around the world, see this excellent Talk Wellington article. We cannot keep having the same solutions as if the city centre is a suburban shopping strip. Off-peak deliveries, micro-delivery hubs, and smaller electric vehicles are all part of the way forward.

Car park removal

Removing private vehicle from the Golden Mile and converting street space to create space for pedestrianised walk-ways, cycle lanes, and public transport will be beneficial to business. NZTA has found that generally, pedestrians and cyclists contribute a higher economic spend proportionately to other transport users and are important to the economic viability of local shopping areas (see here). In Auckland, spending was found to be 47% higher on Fort Street after it was converted into shared space in 2012 (see here).

Some businesses will still require vehicle access for deliveries etc. but this can be managed through access at off peak times restricted by bollards etc (see Delivery to Businesses)
Feedback on the engagement process

We have been impressed by the lengths the LGWM team have gone to to seek engagement on this proposal, and we have been impressed by the extent to which they have dispersed information about the consultation.

However, we think that the communication could have been significantly improved in the following ways:

1. The key metrics used in the ‘easy comparison’ sections of the website and pamphlets are clearly biased and have ignored metrics we would have considered key; carbon reduction potential, ecological benefits, healthy and wellness benefits etc. This is a huge failing and really sets the agenda for the type of feedback you will receive. We are not saying carpark removal, construction impact etc. are un-important, but these other metrics we have suggested are also important.

2. The language used in the material served to reduce this consultation to a question of buses and pedestrians vs. private vehicles. There was not nearly enough focus on the many other aspects of our city that will be impacted by this project. We realise the purpose of LGWM is moving more people with fewer cars, but this excludes the conversation around amenity, livability, and vibrancy.

3. It is not clear at all how the Golden Mile will work-in with other planned re-developments in the city - for instance the Civic Precinct redevelopment and the proposed mass rapid transport projects. While we appreciate that without a master-plan for the city, the LGWM team is limited, but the public should have been made aware that these upcoming projects are likely to affect the decision making re: the Golden Mile.

Thank you for the opportunity to feedback on this proposal.

Nga mihi nui,

Generation Zero Wellington

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