

City Centre Masterplan 2020 Access for Everyone (A4E), and Zero Emissions Area (ZEA): Full Text

September 2019



Access for Everyone - Summary



Access for Everyone (A4E) is a new idea to create more space in the city centre, responding to the needs of our inner city neighbourhoods.

The concept is based on reallocating street space in favour of people, operations and street functions and reorganising access to prioritise trips needed to support the city centre, such as, such as deliveries, construction and emergency services.

A4E takes a holistic, proactive approach to our city centre operations; acknowledging that our city centre is a system, and that changes in one place will affect others. A4E addresses street functions as part of this system.

A4E would investigate creating more space for people by reorganising the city centre as a series of nine low-traffic neighbourhoods - including a wide-ranging pedestrian priority zone across the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley.

A4E plays a key role in delivering a Zero Emissions Area by establishing the physical street changes required to reduce the impacts of road transport on city centre air quality.

The concept also focuses on a more iterative approach to city planning, including co-design with the people who use our inner city spaces. Right now we're piloting incremental changes to test how A4E might work and we'll improve it with each step.

A4E aims to provide healthier, safer and more equitable transport and public space in the city centre - for now and for future generations.

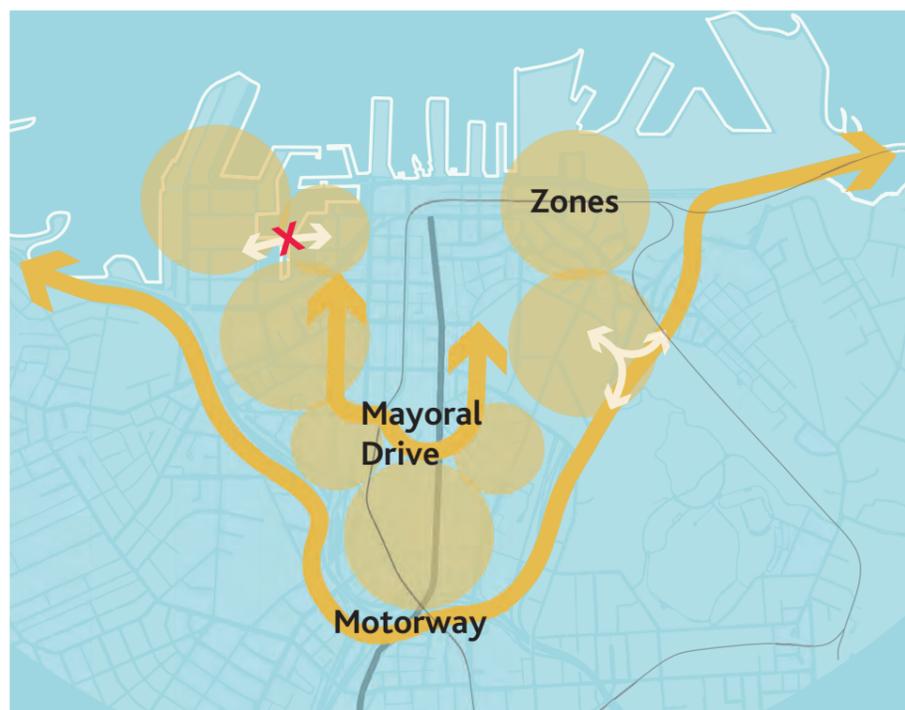
A4E is a high-level concept and would require further development and testing prior to full implementation.

Benefits of Access for Everyone

- City Mobility - rebalancing streets to prioritise space-efficient modes of transport
- Zero Emissions Area - implementation of access management for the city centre
- City Centre Transformation - holistic integration of long term planning, city management and investment



How might Access for Everyone (A4E) work?



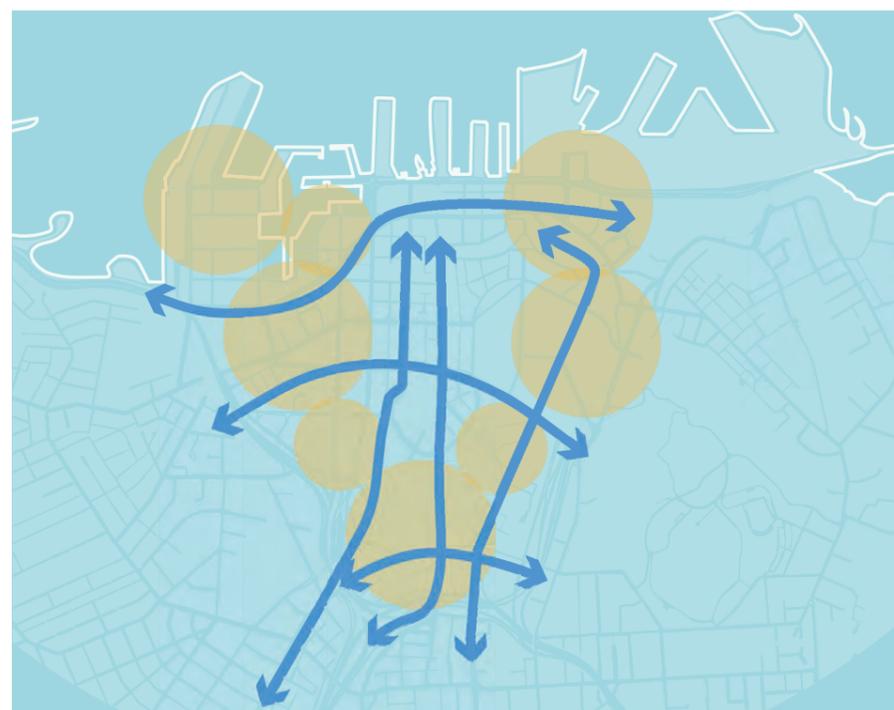
Component 1: Traffic Circulation Concept

Access for Everyone introduces a new traffic circulation system where private vehicles access city centre zones from the city's edge. This provides access to the city centre, not through it.

It organises the city centre into nine low-traffic neighbourhoods including one expansive pedestrian-priority zone across the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley.

Wayfinding signage would direct city-bound drivers along specific motorway and arterial routes to their destination zone and an off-street parking facility. This makes way for mobility users, servicing, operations and delivery vehicles to have greater access to on-street parking.

Most trips would be expected to exit from the same zone from which they entered. Traffic not going to a destination in the city would be expected to use the central motorway junction as a bypass. Car trips inside the city (intra-city) and some city access trips would use Mayoral Drive, which was originally built for this ring road function. Private vehicle trips between zones may become more circuitous and take longer.



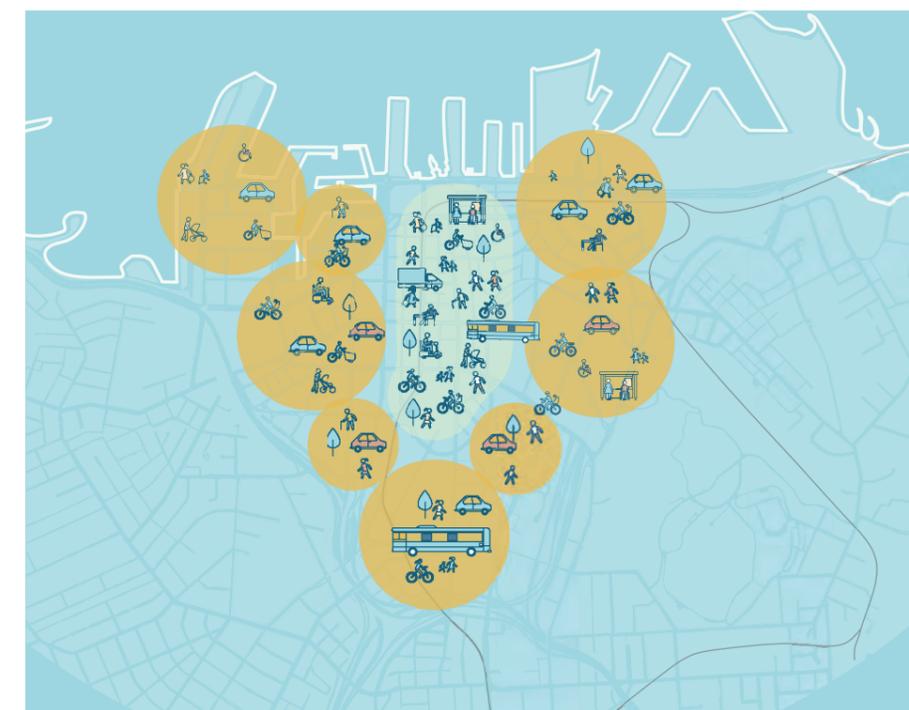
Component 2: Public Transport Priority

While maintaining most traffic movements to the city centre, the removal of some intra-city private vehicle movements opens up space to allow for a planned increase in public transport capacity from 35,000 to 88,000 people per hour; a rise of over 150% on existing levels.

Access for Everyone creates distinct street networks for different modes. Buses, light rail vehicles, people walking and using mobility devices, and people riding bicycles or micro mobility, would be able to pass freely between zones.

The street network would be designed to reduce conflict between modes, with specific modal access matched with the urban context. Access for Everyone aims to create abundant, safe access across the city centre for everyone.

The City Centre Masterplan sets out a goal of accelerated public transport and active mode shift accompanied by lower volumes of vehicles entering the city centre. This includes a target of reducing the number of people entering the city centre by private car during the two hour morning peak period by 20%, a drop from about 36,000 to 30,000.



Component 3: Streets for People

This traffic circulation and street network strategy unlocks city centre space that can be reallocated for other uses, including transport, public space and events. It would also accommodate the trips needed to support the city centre's growth, including deliveries, rubbish collection, construction, building access and emergency services.

The pedestrian-priority zone across the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley forms the Mayoral C40 declaration zero emissions area (ZEA); a flagship action of the Auckland Climate Action Framework.

The ZEA is targeted to realise the maximum benefits for people in the city centre, an area with the highest population density in the country, which also regularly exceeds air quality limits (see p. 9). Coupled with low- or no-emissions public transport, this initiative could give Auckland the cleanest air of any million-plus city in the world.

A4E is a high-level concept and would require further development and testing prior to full implementation.



A4E

Access for Everyone



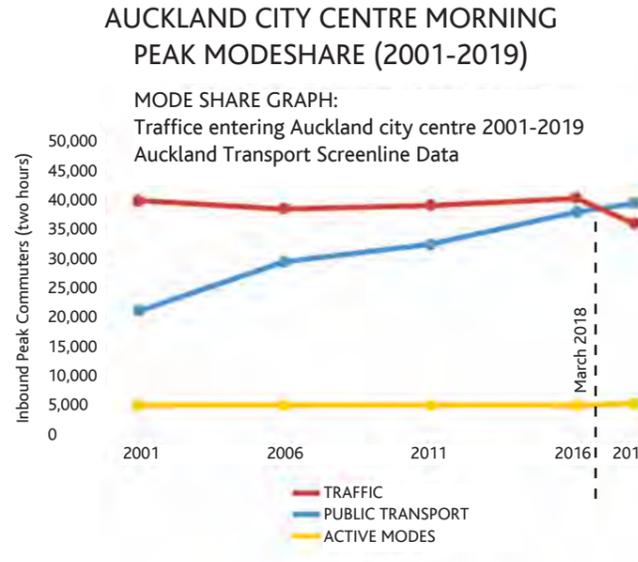
The context for change

Access for Everyone responds to existing trends in the city centre, including a rapidly increasing residential population and growth in access to and use of public transport.

The number of people arriving in the city centre at peak times by private vehicle has remained nearly constant for the last 15 years. Over the same period, the number of people arriving in the city centre by public transport has almost doubled¹. In March 2018, more people commuted to the city centre by public transport than by private vehicle for the first time since the early 1970s². This mode shift has followed Auckland's investments in high quality public transport to the city centre.

This trend is expected to accelerate. A step change in public transport access is being planned and built. City Rail Link (planned to open in 2024) will add two new underground city centre railway stations at Aotea and Karangahape. With improved capacity and longer trains, the rail network will be able to carry an extra 12,000 people per hour, equivalent to the capacity of the motorway network into the city centre. Additionally, proposed light rail lines from the city centre to Māngere and north west Auckland would move up to 10,000 people per hour along Queen Street³.

The city centre is rapidly growing and densifying. The number of people living, visiting, studying, and doing business in the city centre continues to exceed projections. The number of residents has more than doubled over the last ten years from 22,000 to approximately 57,000 and is predicted to reach 70,000–90,000 in 2038⁴. City centre employment growth has continued to surge and has been de-coupled from inbound car traffic since 2001. The city centre currently accounts for 20 percent of Auckland's GDP and 7 per cent of New Zealand's GDP⁵.



What is Access for Everyone?

Access for Everyone aims to provide healthier, safer and more equitable public spaces. The concept is based on reallocating street space in favour of people, operations and street functions.

Access for Everyone would establish a framework for the holistic long-term development and management of access to and within Auckland city centre.

Consultation

Auckland Council would lead any consultation on Access for Everyone. Auckland Transport would be responsible for delivery, should a viable funded concept be developed. As the road controlling authority, Auckland Transport is required to operate and develop a safe and legal transport system, addressing people's needs in the growing city centre.

Principles

Several interventions are being explored according to the Access for Everyone strategy, but the concept is distinct from any one intervention. Rather, Access for Everyone guides diverse projects across the city centre according to a set of principles:

1. Each transport mode has access to a specific street network, and efficient forms of transport are prioritised over private vehicles.

Private vehicle city centre access

Access for Everyone facilitates access for private vehicles through specific motorway and arterial routes. These routes provide access to the city, not through it (refer to p. 3, components 1-3).

Routes run from the city's edge to distinct zones within the city centre. The street network would restrict private car travel between zones and across the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley, so most drivers would exit the city centre from the same route they entered. Most existing intra-city car trips would require a change in route.

Consolidating traffic patterns to specific motorway and arterial routes would preserve access to key car parks and destinations while freeing up space for a transformed street environment and more efficient people-movement.

1. Auckland Transport screenline data, 2019
2. Central area proposals, 1971, Auckland City Council
3. MRCagney, City Centre Transport Capacity and Access Trends, August 2018. <http://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/assets/publications/Auckland-city-centre-transport-capacity-and-access-trends-Aug-2018.pdf>.
4. Statistics NZ. Subnational Population Estimates. Statistical Area 2 (SA2) Population Estimates. population estimates for SA2 zones from 1996-2018. Sourced on 12/12/2018 from nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz.; Statistics NZ. Subnational Population Projections. 2013(base)- 2043 update. Sourced on 19/12/2018 from nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz.
5. Rohani, M., & Lawrence, G. (2017). The relationship between pedestrian connectivity and economic productivity in Auckland's city centre. Auckland: Auckland Council



4. Access for Everyone would transform the look and feel of city centre streets.

By consolidating traffic to main arterials, the Access for Everyone concept enables an expanded network of paths for people; these would have little or no vehicular traffic. This builds upon the existing network of shared spaces (such as O’Connell Street) and laneways (such as Vulcan Lane).

New street operations management allows for improved service and delivery access to paths for people during designated time windows, and taxi and ride-hailing access through nearby pick-up and drop-off points.

Paths for people prioritise pedestrians and are easy and safe for cycle and micro-mobility use. These streets will facilitate new uses like food stalls, parklets, public art, or café and restaurant seating.

Access for Everyone unlocks the space to promote a thriving and authentic Māori identity and culture throughout the city centre, as per the Auckland Plan 2050.

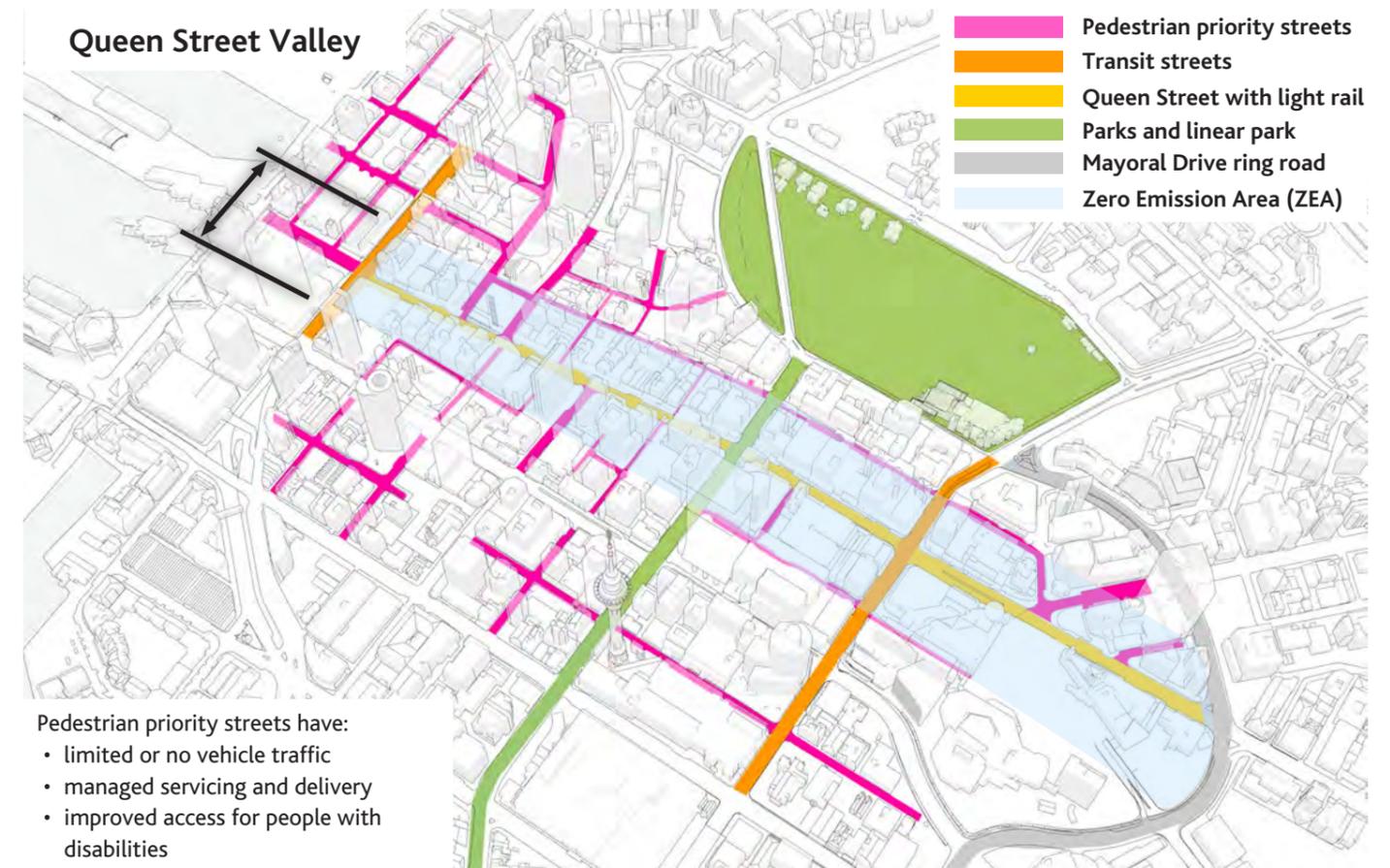
The emerging city centre laneway network would provide a background to the network of city centre paths for people, with more traffic-restricted and car-light streets.

Access for people with disabilities

This would be improved under Access for Everyone via:

- expansion of paths for people
- strategically located mobility parking
- improved transit stops and station areas
- following a universal design approach

Total Mobility users would have access to optimised pick-up / drop-off on these streets, with less competition for space with general traffic.



- Pedestrian priority streets have:
- limited or no vehicle traffic
 - managed servicing and delivery
 - improved access for people with disabilities

A4E

Access for Everyone



Zero Emissions Area (ZEA)

Access for Everyone supports a flagship action within Auckland’s Climate Action Framework, by enabling the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley to become a Zero Emissions Area (ZEA).

Complementary policies may include:

- controlling delivery and service vehicles across the Zone by vehicle size and type,
- incentivising the use of electric over fossil fuel propulsion
- introducing ‘common carrier delivery’ drop-boxes.

These policies would address the air pollution issues currently recognised in Queen Street.

Public spaces

By restricting traffic across the city centre, Access for Everyone will allow for new public plazas along the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley. This could happen, for example, at the westernmost end of Shortland Street.

Access for Everyone would also support existing plans to add a linear park on Victoria Street across the Queen Street Valley.

Transit streets

Access for Everyone supports time-controlled car-free transit streets to facilitate efficient mobility across the city centre. Possible transit streets include portions of Symonds Street, Customs Street, Wellesley Street and Albert Street.



A4E

Access for Everyone



It is expected that Queen Street will also become a transit street north of Mayoral Drive, possibly carrying electric buses and subsequently light rail vehicles.

Transit streets will improve public transport efficiency to maximise people-movement, while also facilitating improved walking and cycling conditions.

What are the expected benefits?

Access for Everyone re-imagines Auckland's city centre. By considering city centre access strategically, it would unlock city centre space, creating an attractive city for businesses, residents and visitors.

Magnet: Making the city centre attractive to people and businesses

Safer, more attractive, more accessible city streets: These would help consolidate Auckland city centre's role as the country's most desirable location for business and investment, particularly the fast-growing knowledge-based sectors. As the most accessible location in Auckland, city centre job growth brings benefits to the wider region.

Simplifying construction management to facilitate investment: Access for Everyone provides a new framework to manage traffic circulation impacts from construction activity, attracting and facilitating transformational private investment across the city centre.

Access for Everyone improves the movement of people and goods into and around the city centre. It enables a thriving economy and creates a coordinated approach to minimise disruption and leverage public investments.

Efficient: Making the most of city centre space

Access for Everyone facilitates new transit streets that move public transport vehicles more efficiently. With reduced private vehicle traffic, slower speeds, and more space on most streets, the city centre would also support safe cycling and micro-mobility use. Walking – the city centre's dominant mode – would become more accessible and more pleasant for more people.

Improving service and delivery access: With reduced general traffic and improved, targeted allocation of dedicated kerbside space, delivering goods and services would be made easier. Rubbish collection could be simplified. As part of the access management framework, efficient transport modes such as electric cargo bikes or electric vans could be incentivised.

Delivering value for ratepayers' money: Access for Everyone creates a strategic framework to coordinate city centre projects. This would mean projects are implemented under a 'systems approach' to minimise disruption, and planned to address long-term challenges before they become problems.

Healthy: Making the city centre healthy for people and the environment

Inviting spaces: Access for Everyone ensures the city centre focuses on the physical and mental health of all users, Streets would bustle with people, not cars. Most streets would become more inviting and attractive places to spend time.

Reduced emissions: Access for Everyone would facilitate a Zero Emissions Area across the Queen Street valley, addressing the existing air pollution problem. This would entail a shift towards lower or no emissions public transport

vehicles in the city centre. This would **reduce emissions** and catalyse this shift region-wide, while furthering Auckland's climate change objectives.

Safer city streets: Reduced and calmed traffic would save lives, with the target to eliminate deaths and serious injuries from road traffic.

Improved personal safety: Creating more dedicated taxi and ride-hailing pick-up/drop-off points allows these locations to be well-lit, accessible, monitored, and safe spaces all times of day and night.

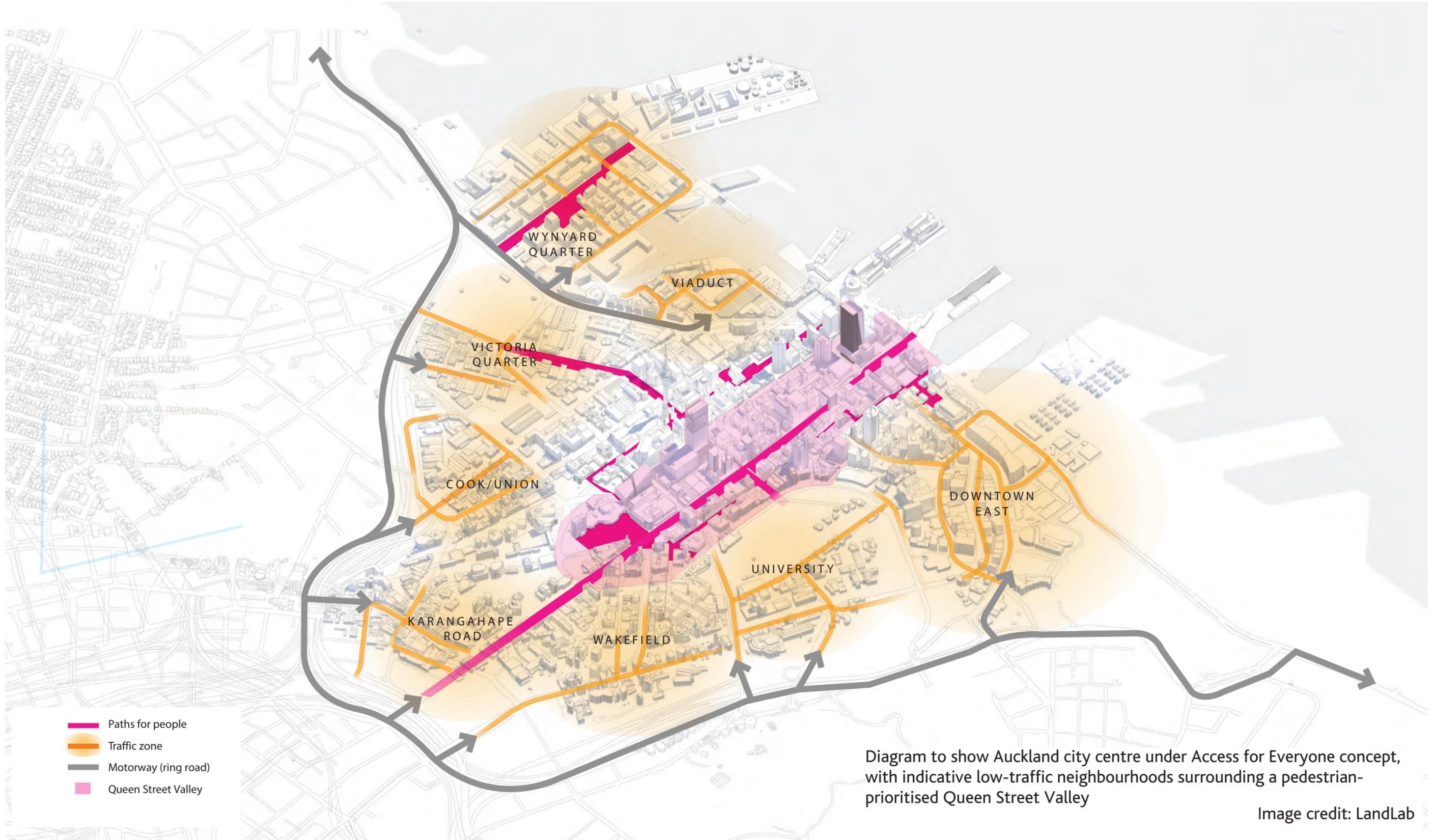
Challenges of Access for Everyone

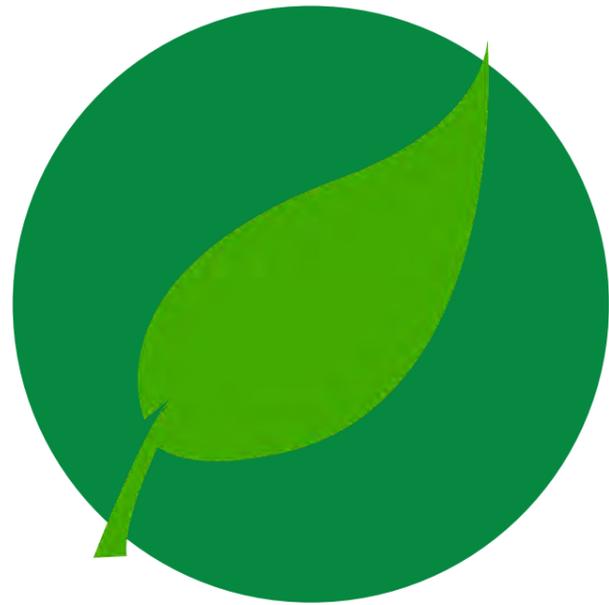
Access for Everyone would be a substantial change to the city centre's complex transport, operations and logistics systems.

In order to develop Access for Everyone, we would need to work with NZTA and Auckland Transport to understand traffic volume and pattern changes, coordinate existing work and identify any necessary supporting projects.

Public transport improvements would be necessary, alongside new approaches to management and supply of car parking. Underpinning everything would be the necessary legal framework to support the changes to street access and management controls.

Engagement with the logistics industry and city centre businesses would be essential to develop new transport, operations and logistics systems. Long-term stakeholder engagement would shape design and share implications and benefits, with travel demand management needed to support travel behaviour change and bring about a more attractive, more sustainable and better functioning city centre.





Auckland City Centre is now home to over 57,000 permanent residents, workplace to 120,000 people, and hosts over 200,000 people every day.

Unfortunately, it is also where Auckland's highest air pollution levels are observed, with measurements having exceeded national and global regulatory guidelines for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM), including black carbon. The latest trend data shows pollution concentrations in the city centre are increasing significantly.

Air pollution is known to contribute to cancer, asthma, stroke and heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and changes to brain function linked to dementia. There is therefore an urgent need for action.

With most emissions and air pollution in the city centre generated by motor vehicle traffic, Council has committed to move towards emissions-documents currently out for public consultation:

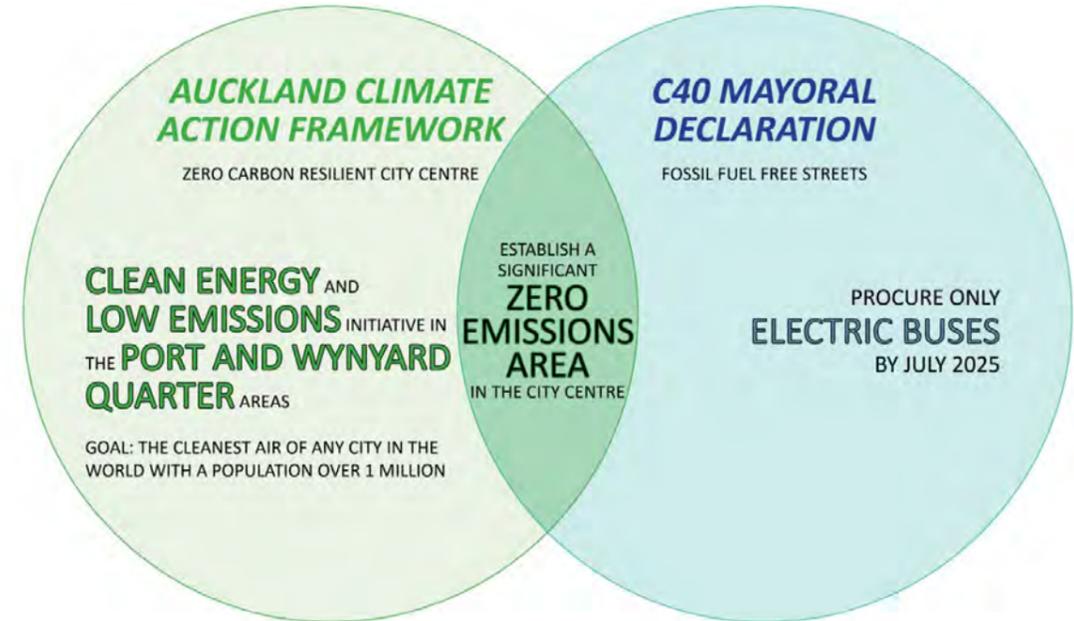
- **Auckland's Climate Action Framework** Key Move 4: Transform Existing Buildings and Places identifies a Zero Carbon, Resilient City Centre as a flagship action.
- **CCMP 2020**, under Outcome 9 seeks to deliver a Sustainable City Centre.

The aim is for the city centre to have the *cleanest air of any million-plus city in the world*.

This will in part be delivered by Council's existing commitment to the C40 Fossil Fuel Free Streets Declaration to procure only zero-emission buses from 2025 and crucially creating a **Zero-Emissions Area (ZEA)** in the city centre by 2030.

ZEA

Zero Emissions Area



Auckland's proposed ZEA, that is an area in which fossil fuelled vehicles are banned, will be focused on the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley area at the heart of the city centre. It is likely that, as with ZEAs elsewhere in the world, it will be rolled out in a progressive manner starting with the introduction of a Low Emission Area (LEA) that limits some vehicle and journey types.

The Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley ZEA dovetails with the CCMP 2020 proposed Access for Everyone strategy which seeks to provide more space for people by reorganising transport circulation and street operations across the city centre.

Access for Everyone divides the city centre into nine separate low-traffic neighbourhoods, including one expansive pedestrian priority zone covering the Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley which broadly correlates to the proposed ZEA boundary.

Under Access for Everyone, general traffic would have access to individual neighbourhoods from the city's edge with no through movement for most private vehicles (bus transit would still be possible).

The Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley Access for Everyone pedestrian zone will therefore, in time, remove all non-essential private vehicles from the ZEA. A permit scheme would still allow restricted access to existing off-street car parking in the zone. New ways of managing the delivery of goods will be required including the use of central pickup stations, cargo bikes and zero emission vehicles.

The move to a largely private vehicle free Waihorotiu Queen Street Valley would in turn enable a proposed light rail system from the city centre to Māngere which can run freely up Queen Street.

The ZEA would be enforced through rapidly developing technology such as on street monitoring, bollards and cameras.

The goal is to have the ZEA fully in place by 2030 with A4E an important stepping-stone. Further work with Auckland Transport, the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) and city centre stakeholders as well as general public consultation is required to understand see how best to progress the outcome. A critical next step is likely to be the roll out of Access for Everyone trials in test locations.

Find out more: phone 09 301 0101
or visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

