
RESTORING THE GOLDEN MILE

1. Purpose of Report

To report back the outcomes of consultation on the Golden Mile bus priority and public space proposals, present the additional investigations undertaken, and seek the Committee's approval to implement amended proposals.

2. Executive Summary

In November and December 2008, consultation was undertaken over proposals to restore the city's Golden Mile by opening up Manners Mall to buses, undertaking a number of supporting public space improvements, signalling pedestrian crossings in Courtenay Place and imposing a 30 km/h speed limit. 722 submissions were received including 45 oral submissions. An AC Neilson poll of 500 residents was also held.

As a result of issues raised during consultation, further investigation and research has been undertaken including the commissioning of Opus International Consultants to undertake an independent evaluation of bus options and further pedestrian and parking surveys.

An amended proposal has been developed to address concerns raised by submitters. The key difference is the addition of a proposal to develop a shared space in lower Cuba Street with priority for pedestrian access and amenity. This proposal would improve the pedestrian legibility and functionality of the area consistent with international best practice.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Note the critical relationship between this project and the city's transport network objectives including the Ngauranga-Airport Plan and the growth spine.*
- 3. Note that short and medium term enhancements are needed to the network in response to public transport growth and increasing network congestion to ensure reliability and adequate operating conditions.*

4. *Note the results of the public consultation (detailed in Appendix 1).*
5. *Agree to signalling the pedestrian crossings on Courtenay Place, reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h and banning the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street in accordance with the timetable in this report.*
6. *Agree to opening up Manners Mall to two-way bus traffic and a request for a New Zealand Transport Agency subsidy for this project.*
7. *Note that Manners Mall was established by Council resolution under the Local Government Act 1974.*
8. *Agree to the revocation of the 'pedestrian mall' status of Manners Mall and note that a Special Consultative Procedure will be required and reported back to Council.*
9. *Note that provision of \$11.1m for these proposals phased over 3 years starting 09/10 is identified in the draft LTCCP.*
10. *Agree to the public space improvements proposed for Dixon, Wakefield, Mercer, Willis and lower Cuba Streets, with lower Cuba Street being a shared space with priority for pedestrian access and amenity.*
11. *Note that further consultation on detailed aspects of the proposals will be undertaken during the preparation of traffic resolutions required to give effect to the changes.*

4. Background

In April 2008, the Strategy and Policy Committee received a report proposing a series of bus priority works in Courtenay Place. The Committee came to the view that a more comprehensive plan was needed for bus priority in the city to ensure a joined up approach that recognised the strategic context and the part played by other regional partners, in particular bus operators and Greater Wellington Regional Council.

In October 2008, officers brought forward an option to Councillors that was based on a holistic overview of the Golden Mile bus route and its place within the strategic context of the wider transport needs and aspirations of the city, including the Council's Urban Development and Transport Strategies and the Ngauranga to Airport Strategic Transport Plan. These proposals, which were developed in conjunction with the Council's strategic partners (bus operators and GWRC), aimed to identify and implement in priority order those infrastructure improvements which would make the greatest difference to the functioning of the public transport system, and its interaction with the Golden Mile shopping and activity precinct.

In summary, these proposals were to open up Manners Mall to two way bus traffic and at the time same implement public space improvements in Dixon, Mercer, Willis and lower Cuba Streets to compensate for the reduction of public

space in Manners Mall. Concurrently, it was proposed to ban the right turn from Victoria to Manners Street West, reduce speed limits to 30 km/h and introduce traffic signals in place of 3 pedestrian crossings in Courtenay Place.

The Committee agreed to public consultation on these proposals, which was completed during November and December 2008. An extensive public consultation process was carried out (leaflets, media advertising, direct contact with businesses, posters and an information stall in Manners Mall). In addition, an online survey was commissioned from AC Nielsen amongst a sample of 500 Wellington residents.

An on line petition was also organised by a resident of lower Cuba Street which attracted 1595 responses in opposition to opening Manners Mall to buses.

During 24 to 26 February the Committee heard 45 oral submissions (from the 722 received via the Council consultation). The summary of submissions together with a copy of the AC Nielsen survey results are included in Appendices 1 and 2.

5. Discussion

5.1 Themes Arising from Consultation

The following broad themes emerged from the oral and written submissions:

- Loss of public space
- Effect on pedestrian routes
- Merits of time savings
- Alternative bus routes
- Cost of proposals
- Effects on local businesses
- Operational viability
- Loss of pedestrian priority in Courtenay Place

These themes and the outcomes / measures proposed to address them are discussed below.

5.1.1 Loss of Public Space

Proposals Consulted On

The proposal included the opening of Manners Mall to buses (with wide footpaths to cater for high pedestrian numbers and an attractive streetscape) and public space improvements to Dixon Street, lower Cuba Street, Wakefield Street, Mercer Street and Willis Street.

Feedback Received

Many submitters expressed concern at what they saw as a loss of pedestrian public space in Manners Mall. Typically, they were unconvinced that the proposals in the consultation brochure to develop other public space to compensate for the loss of pedestrian-only space in Manners Mall would be adequate. The key concerns for the community appeared to be that the public

space improvements in the October proposal were either too remote from the existing space in Manners Mall, not of sufficient quality, or both.

The Way Forward

Officers' view is that this concern is best addressed by developing Lower Cuba Street as a 'shared space' so that it becomes an environment of sufficient quality and functionality to provide a viable alternative to the pedestrian space in Manners Mall which will be affected by the introduction of buses. This would have the concurrent benefit of providing a key pedestrian access-way from Cuba Mall to the Michael Fowler Centre, Civic Square and the waterfront. This concept is described in greater detail in section 5.2 'Amended Proposal'.

5.1.2 Effect on Pedestrian Routes

Proposals Consulted On

The proposal in the consultation brochure assumed that the current pedestrian volumes on Manners Mall would be catered for on wide footpaths constructed on either side of the new bus carriageway.

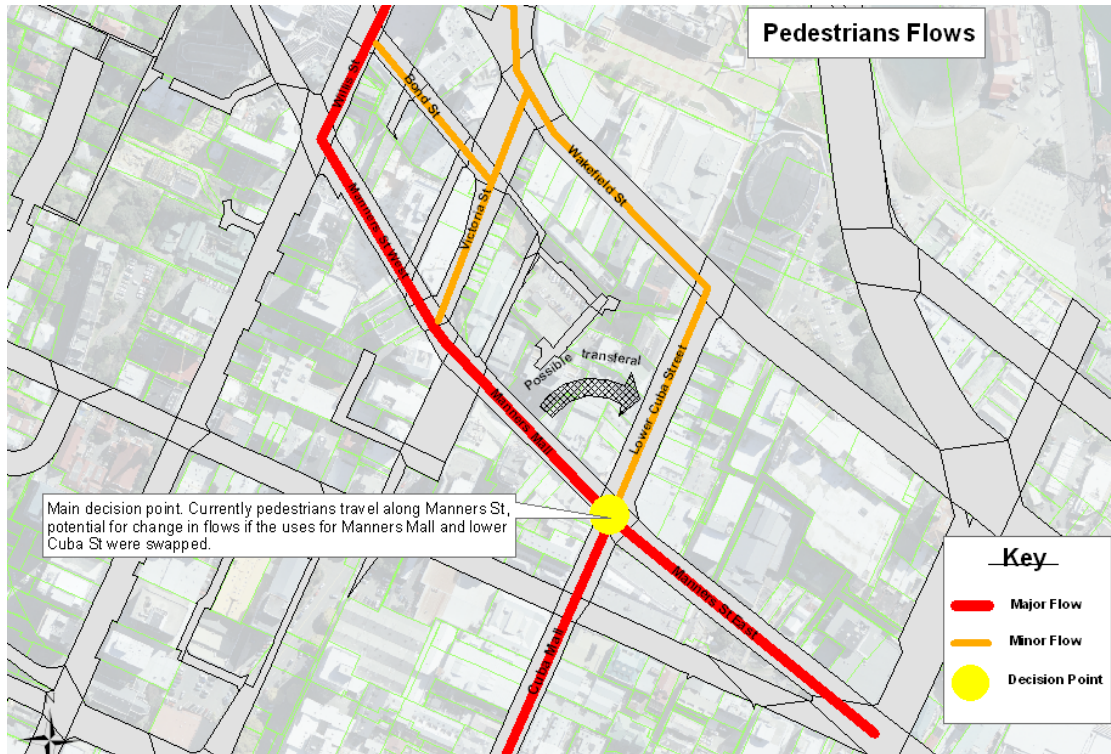
Feedback Received

A number of submitters pointed to the high volumes of pedestrians using the Mall, and expressed the view that allowing buses to travel through the Mall would disrupt the functioning of pedestrian travel in this part of the city.

The Way Forward

In March, officers commissioned a number of pedestrian counts and the results are contained in Appendix 3 together with an analysis of the issues.

The analysis shows that the current pedestrian 'desire lines' (the routes that most people wish to travel) run from Cuba Mall and Courtenay Place via Manners Mall to Willis Street as per the following diagram.



The pedestrian counts in Manners Mall itself are similar to the counts on Lambton Quay where pedestrians are accommodated on footpaths and share the carriageway with buses and general traffic.

The analysis shows that if Manners Mall was opened up to buses with no additional provision for pedestrians, the proposed footpaths in what is now Manners Mall could accommodate the pedestrian traffic appropriately. However, if lower Cuba Street were to be made a shared space with a pedestrian focus as is proposed, this is likely to divert a significant proportion of foot traffic along a new pedestrian route running down lower Cuba Street and along Wakefield Street (the brown line shown on the above diagram).

It should also be noted that the survey data shows that very few people are currently using Manners Mall as a public space (i.e. a place to linger). Only 4% of those surveyed spent more than 5 minutes in one location.

An important point to emphasise is that the design of the proposed Manners Street 'transit mall' will also be based on a shared space concept where buses will share the mall with pedestrians rather than the buses dominating the space made available for vehicle movement. This could be achieved by using a flush surface treatment and by appropriate choice of surface materials and colours and placement of street furniture and planting. Introduction of a 30km/h speed limit and advisory signage will also reinforce the low speed/shared space nature of the reconfigured street.

5.1.3 Merits of Time Savings **Proposals Consulted On**

During the development of the proposal, traffic modelling was undertaken which showed that time savings of 24-48 seconds per bus would be achieved as a result of establishing two way bus traffic through Manners Mall.

Feedback Received

Many submitters opposed to the October proposals felt that the projected time saving to bus travellers were insignificant and not worth the disruption to pedestrians and public space. As a result, officers commissioned Opus International Consultants to undertake an independent technical evaluation of the proposal including potential time savings for public transport users. A copy of this report (excluding the technical appendices) is attached as Appendix 4.

The Way Forward

The Opus report estimates that the time savings for bus users would be 32-162 seconds for the northbound route. When multiplied by the numbers of bus users on this route annually (as derived from the transport modelling), this results in benefits of \$19.75m over a 30 year period and gives a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 2.3. This is an extremely positive outcome for a public transport project, particularly given the relatively short length of route affected.

It should be noted that this project is part of a number of wider initiatives to improve the efficiency of our limited network by seeking to maintain an optimum balance between public transport and other transport modes.

5.1.4 Alternative Bus Routes

Proposals Consulted On

The consultation material noted that officers had examined a number of alternative routes during the development of the Golden Mile proposals.

Feedback Received

A number of submitters acknowledged that the current bus routes were problematic, but felt that there were other routes that could be utilised which eliminated the need to open up Manners Mall to bus traffic. This matter was referred to Opus for their consideration as part of their independent review. The four routes examined were:

Option A: Modified status quo – retain Manners Mall and ban the right turn for general traffic from Victoria St into Manners Street West.

Option B: buses to travel 2 way on Wakefield Street

Option C: buses to travel 2 way on Dixon Street

Option D: open up Manners Mall to traffic as proposed in the October report.

Option Di: as per D but reverse the flow of general traffic through lower Cuba Street

The Way Forward

The finding of the Opus investigation was that the options which involved opening up Manners Mall to buses were clearly superior to the other options. The evaluation summary table from page 61 of the report is shown below:

	Option A – Modified Status Quo	Option B – Wakefield Street	Option C – Dixon Street	Option D [D(i)]– Manners Mall
Benefit to Cost Ratio	1.6	1.6	0.8	2.3 [2.1]
Base Capital Cost	\$470,000	\$5,312,000	\$4,287,000	\$5,411,000 [\$5,378,000]
% Contingency	59%	73%	66%	68% [68%]
Transportation costs (TT, VOC and C02)	\$4,619	\$4,599	\$4,611	\$4,620 [4,600]
Passenger Transport Performance	Neutral / Little Change	Good	Poor	Very Good
Bus Route Legibility / Accessibility	Very Poor	Poor	Very Poor	Good
Linking Public Spaces	Neutral / Little Change	Poor	Very Poor	Very Good
Pedestrian Amenity	Neutral / Little Change	Good	Poor	Good

5.1.5 Cost of Proposals

Proposals Consulted On

The proposals in the consultation material were costed at \$11.1m including public space improvements.

Feedback Received

A number of submitters also felt that the projected cost of the project was excessive, given what they perceived as being the limited benefits.

The Way Forward

This view was based on a misunderstanding of the way the costs of the proposal were built up. The costs fall into two categories: public space improvements and transport improvements.

Approximately \$5.0m of the original proposal was for public space improvements. This amount had already been included in the 2006-16 LTCCP for public space improvements over the five year period from 2008-2013. When officers developed the Golden Mile proposal last year, they recommended adjusting the timing and details of these public space improvements to support the proposal. It should not be assumed, therefore, that if the Golden Mile proposal does not proceed, this expenditure will not be undertaken. Commitments exist for some of this expenditure (the Willis Street improvements), while other expenditure is required to maintain the quality of our public spaces by upgrading infrastructure as it ages or to make repairs to existing infrastructure (in the case of Manners Mall).

The balance of the budget (approximately \$6.0m) was for transport improvements including overhead wires, construction of a carriageway through Manners Mall, signalling pedestrian crossings and intersection improvements. This expenditure is eligible for NZTA funding and could attract a subsidy of up to 53%. Moreover, the 40 additional on-street car parks created by the proposal would generate \$200,000 per annum in extra revenue, further offsetting the cost to ratepayers.

It follows, therefore, that if the Golden Mile proposal were not to go ahead, the net savings to ratepayers would be equivalent to 47% of the cost of the transport improvements less the amount of revenue generated by the extra car parking. Details of the proposed expenditure are included in section 5.2.5 below. This is the amount that should be balanced against the considerable benefits of the amended proposal.

5.1.6 Effect on Local Businesses

Proposals Consulted On

The proposal involved opening up Manners Mall to bus only traffic.

Feedback Received

15 local businesses made submissions on the October proposals. 14 of these commented on the merits of opening up Manners Mall, with 8 being in favour and 6 opposed. One other business in the area has since expressed their

opposition directly to officers and Councillors. Two businesses made oral submissions to the Committee.

The first of these was Arty Bees Books situated in Manners Street East. Their major concern was that the proposals would cause a loss of parking resulting in an inability for customers to bring in cartons of books for sale. The amended proposal below will address this issue by including a loading zone that can be used by the customers of Arty Bees and other adjacent businesses.

The second local business to make an oral submission was Mr Con Anastasiou on behalf of Mr Luigi Muollo. This submitter was concerned about the loss of public space and the potential effect on businesses in Manners Mall.

The concern over the loss of public space is addressed in the amended proposal which will result in a net increase in usable public space immediately adjacent to the current Manners Mall.

The Jones Lang LaSalle report commissioned as part of the development work for the October proposal made the following key points on the effects on local businesses:

- Efficient public transport and proposed enhancement of streetscapes are likely to benefit retail and commercial premises.
- Gradual changes in the surrounding social and commercial environment on completion of the subject project can trigger refurbishment to existing malls that have become functionally obsolescent.
- Retailers along Manners Mall are likely to benefit from the increased exposure as a result of the proposed changes to transport networks and streetscape.
- Proposed changes are likely to further enhance the subject area's cafe and restaurant atmosphere.
- Additional on-street car parks are likely to promote pedestrian flows and may provide funding towards any improvements made.
- Proposed changes may be beneficial for future introduction of light-rail.
- Positioning of bus stops in the area will be important to avoid possible congestion. Investigation into this has been undertaken.
- Incentives for people to stop in the area and impacts on local retailers during the redevelopment process need to be investigated.
- Proposed changes may increase commuters travelling times to office buildings along Dixon Street and Wakefield Street.
- Low vacancy rates in the subject area indicate pedestrian flow and the current traffic network for retailers works well with current retail mix.

The discussion in the body of the report canvasses both the benefits and disbenefits of opening up malls, but overall, the report concludes that on balance, the effect on the local businesses is likely to be positive.

This conclusion is supported by overseas experience. For example the recent opening up of the Church Street Mall in Sydney to slow traffic has revitalised the area. Prior to the work being conducted there were 31 businesses and 7 vacancies in the Mall. After implementation of the project there were 43

businesses (due to subdivision of large shops) and only 1 vacancy. There has also been a move towards higher quality retail activity with a reduction in two-dollar shops and introduction of national retailers including Aldi and JB Hi-Fi. The local council has since undertaken a retail assessment across the city with the initial draft showing that the newly opened mall is the best performing strip shopping precinct in the city.

The Way Forward

The amended proposal retains the transit mall in Manners Mall (including wide, landscaped footpaths providing a pleasant environment), but recommends a pedestrian priority space in lower Cuba Street. International experience suggests that these proposals are likely to have a positive effect on local businesses. The effect on lower Cuba Street should be to revitalise local businesses in this street.

Auckland City is proposing to implement a similar concept in the entire Fort Street area (lower Shortland St, Jean Batten Place, Fort St, Commerce St, Gore St), Elliot St, Darby St, O'Connell St, and Lorne Street following overseas examples such as Santiago and Copenhagen. The benefits they have identified include encouraging a more democratic, safe and dignified use of the public space for a wider range of businesses and recreational uses. The recently completed redevelopment of Queen St improved pedestrian traffic by up to 30% on weekdays and 25% on weekends, benefiting local businesses.

5.1.7 Operational Viability of the Proposal

Proposals Consulted On

The original proposal involved the creation of a two-way bus carriageway through what is now Manners Mall.

Feedback Received

Some submitters expressed concern that the construction of the carriageway through Manners Mall would not be operationally viable because buses would not be able to pass each other at bus stops. There was also concern that the Manners Mall route may not provide sufficient capacity for the city's needs in the future.

The Way Forward

The Opus report has addressed both these issues. At page 39 it states:

The proposed designs allow for conventional diesel buses to pass one another, however trolley buses would be forced to wait behind a stationary bus (as with existing operational conditions). The modelling and assessment to date suggests that significant spare capacity exists up to 2016. No modelling has been carried out beyond 2016 however the increase in demand up to 2026 used for this project is considered relatively small and sufficient capacity exists in which to maintain high levels of service to buses.

The amended proposal retains the bus network in the original proposal.

5.1.8 Loss of Pedestrian Priority in Courtenay Place

Proposals Consulted On

The proposal includes signalling of three pedestrian crossings in Courtenay Place

Feedback Received

Some submitters were concerned at proposals to replace pedestrian crossings with traffic signals because they felt that this reduced the priority given to pedestrians in this area.

The Way Forward

Designing the transport network in the city is a balancing act because in the absence of significant capacity increases (i.e. new roads or public spaces), improving the performance for one mode of user often results in impacts on performance for other users. It is true that installing signals will result in pedestrians generally having to wait longer to cross Courtenay Place. However, the upside of this is that bus users will receive reductions in delay. Moreover, it is hard to argue that a bus with up to 60 people on board should have to wait for one person to cross the road at a time, which is the situation that can occur at present. Traffic signals will redress this balance so that a group of perhaps 10 or more pedestrians cross at one time, thereby making more efficient use of the transport network and balancing the needs of all user groups. Officers confirm that the traffic signal phasing in Courtenay Place will be able to achieve a satisfactory level of accessibility for pedestrians while allowing for buses to progress along Courtenay Place with less interruption. It should be noted that traffic signals, including pedestrian signals, are the norm on the rest of the Golden Mile in terms of providing safe and convenient crossing facilities for people on foot.

It is noteworthy that Living Streets, the organisation representing walkers and public spaces, did not object to this aspect of the proposal. In fact, in their oral submissions they drew attention to the synergy between public transport and walking and the fact that the two modes needed to support each other.

It should also be noted that the Association of Blind Citizens supported the signalling of crossings because it would make it easier for sight impaired people to cross the roads.

The amended proposal retains the signalling of these crossings.

5.1.9 Other Issues Raised During Consultation

Youth in the Mall

Concern has been raised about the loss of Manners Mall as a safe meeting place for youth. This function will be provided for in the development of lower Cuba Street as a shared space.

Cycling

Cyclists and others have asked that cycle lanes and other cycle-friendly options be considered as part of the proposals. The proposed shared space in lower Cuba Street will provide a cycle friendly environment and link from Cuba Mall to Civic Square and the waterfront.

Buskers and Street Entertainers

Buskers and other street entertainers currently use Manners Mall to perform and are therefore concerned that the space will be lost. The proposed shared space on lower Cuba Street will provide areas where these activities can be accommodated.

Sustainability

Some submitters have asked how this project contributes to the city's sustainability. By improving the performance of the city's public transport and pedestrian networks, the proposal will encourage greater use of these modes, thereby reducing the reliance on the private car and consequent emissions and energy use.

Taxi Stands

A taxi company has expressed concern about the proposed relocation of the taxi stand from Dixon St to Victoria St in terms of accessibility and safety for customers. Officers will work with taxi operators during the detailed design phase to identify taxi stands that meet the needs of users.

5.1.10 AC Neilson Survey

In contrast to the consultation feedback, where respondents were 'self-selected', the AC Neilson survey was based on a randomly selected group of 500 people, giving a margin of error of $\pm 4.4\%$. The survey was commissioned to obtain the views of Wellingtonians in general.

Insights from the survey were that there is strong support for the proposal overall (including locating the bus route through Manners Mall), with just over two thirds of Wellington City residents (68%) in favour.

Widening footpaths, planting trees and making improvements to the quality of streetscapes generally, are the aspects most well received. There is also strong support for lowering the speed limit and increasing on-street parking.

About one quarter (24%) are opposed to the proposal overall (including locating the bus route through Manners Mall). Putting traffic lights on the zebra crossing in Courtenay Place and removing the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street are the main aspects identified in this research which appear to be fuelling opposition.

5.2 Amended Proposal

Taking into account the issues raised by submitters and the additional work undertaken, an amended proposal has been developed for the section of the Golden Mile between Courtenay Place and Willis Street. Under this amended proposal, the following elements of the original proposal would remain unchanged:

- Banning the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners west;
- Reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h between Willis Street and Cambridge Terrace;
- Signalising the three pedestrian crossings on Courtenay Place;
- Minor kerb line changes in Courtenay Place at the James Smith bus stop;
- Constructing a 'transit mall' through Manners Mall for buses only.

The key difference from the original proposal is the addition of a proposal to create a shared space with a pedestrian focus in lower Cuba Street to address the clearly expressed concerns of submitters regarding the loss of public space in the current Manners Mall. This change is discussed in detail below.

Other proposed changes are:

- Additional angle parking spaces in Dixon Street;
- Re-sequencing public space improvements to support the amended proposal.

5.2.1 Creating a Shared Space in Lower Cuba Street

In analysing the submissions, it was clear that concerns over loss of public space were strongly felt and had some validity. However, when an urban design assessment of the affected area was undertaken, it also became clear that the design of the Manners precinct can be significantly improved upon in terms of increasing the legibility of the walking routes, public spaces and connections between them.

The following plan shows the current pedestrian and public space layout in the area.



- Existing Public Space
- Existing Public Urban Space
- Clearways/Footpath
- Public Open Green Space

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 NEWCASTLE | WELLINGTON | AUCKLAND | CHRISTCHURCH

Manners Street Bus Lane
 JOB NO: 17.2
 DATE: 17 Apr. 2000

Existing Public Space
 DRAWING NUMBER: SK03
 SCALE: AS SHOWN

DRAFT

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A pedestrian unfamiliar with the city walking down Cuba Mall from Ghuznee Street to Civic Square would find it a confusing experience. Crossing Dixon Street, it would be apparent that they were crossing a major bus route, but it would be unclear where to catch a bus in the opposite direction. Upon reaching the intersection of Cuba Mall and Manners Mall, they would find that the walking corridor made a left turn (along Manners Mall) while straight ahead on lower Cuba was a major bus terminus, but it would be unclear where the buses were going to or how they related to those in Dixon Street. If the pedestrian took

a left turn into Manner Mall they would find that at the end of the block (at the intersection of Manners Mall and Victoria Street), the pedestrian space simply stops rather than linking to anything. If they continued down lower Cuba Street, they would find that the street links to the city's Civic Centre and waterfront.

A much more logical and legible configuration is found in the following plan which is built around the proposed shared space in lower Cuba Street.

Manners copyright Ken Davis Architects Ltd



Proposed Public Space

- New Public Urban Space
- Existing Public Urban Space
- Generous Footpaths
- Public Open Green Space

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 NEW SPACES

Manners Street Bus Lane
 MANNERS STREET
 WELLINGTON

Proposed Public Space
 DRAWING NUMBER
 SK04
 DATE
 17 Apr 2008
 SCALE OF A1
 1:2000

DRAFT

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The same pedestrian walking down Cuba Mall under this scenario would experience a much easier crossing of Dixon Street because of the removal of bus

traffic and the resultant narrowing of the carriageway at this point. On reaching the Manners Street intersection it would be clear that this was a major public transport corridor, and if they wished to catch a bus, it would be readily apparent where to do so. If they wished to continue walking, it would be clear that the main walking route continued straight ahead. This would take them to Civic Square and on to the waterfront or along Wakefield Street to Willis Street if they were intending to go in that direction.

The concept is to create a pedestrian priority shared space down what is now lower Cuba Street. The characteristics of this space would be:

- Continue the design 'feel' from Cuba Mall to retain continuity and reinforce the pedestrian link to Civic Square (pavers, planter boxes, trees etc);
- Vehicle access would be allowed but would be limited to providing servicing and parking for local businesses and to providing access to businesses in Manners Street east;
- Parking would be changed from the current angle parks to parallel parking to reduce its density and impact on the space;
- The area would be traffic calmed to reduce vehicle speeds to a walking pace and vehicles would be required to give way to pedestrians;
- Some areas (probably near the Manners Street end) would be reserved as public space for pedestrians only at all times;
- It would be designed to allow the exclusion of all vehicle traffic for events (for example, the Cuba Carnival).

Some preliminary concept drawings illustrating how the space might look are included below.



Lower Cuba shared space looking towards Michael Fowler Centre



Lower Cuba shared space looking south from Wakefield Street

This concept is not widely used in Wellington City. However, it does have a precedent in the treatment of Woodward Street which has limited vehicle access with pedestrian priority. However, the concept is 'best practice' throughout the OECD and is currently being considered for introduction in Auckland City.

One of the most obvious benefits of this proposal is that it provides a public space immediately adjacent to the current public space in Manners Mall.

However, there are a number of other advantages to the proposal:

- Significant improvements to public space and walkability along an improved pedestrian axis linking Cuba Mall to Civic Square and the Waterfront
- Significant improvement to the legibility of walking routes and public space in the area
- Represents a major contribution to improving the pedestrian experience in the central city and aligns strongly with the intent of the Council's Walking Policy
- Establishes a clear framework for future development of this area around a coherent vehicle / public transport / walking network that assigns priority to particular modes on particular parts of the network in accordance with best practice principles for transport and urban development. This consists of an east-west public transport spine and a north-south pedestrian spine.

- Provides a net improvement in public space in the area by slightly increasing the area of public space and improving the legibility of public spaces and the interaction between them.
- Creates a linear walkable public space down Cuba Mall and lower Cuba Street to Civic Square and the waterfront that mirrors similar linear spaces in internationally competitive cities such as Copenhagen, Freiberg and Melbourne.

Other proposed public space improvements to support the proposal are:

- Treatment in Dixon Street to slow traffic and improve connectivity along Cuba Mall by enhancing the pedestrian link across Dixon Street;
- Improvements to pedestrian space on Wakefield Street;
- Pedestrian improvements to Mercer Street and the Mercer / Victoria Street intersection to increase amenity and improve the connection between Willis Street section of the Golden Mile and Civic Square;
- Streetscape improvements on lower Willis Street to improve amenity on the Golden Mile.

5.2.2 Parking

Surveys have been undertaken to establish the functions currently served by parking in lower Cuba Street and Manners Street East. This information is contained in Appendix 5. This data shows that on-street parking plays only a very minor role for adjacent businesses. Taking into account the number of parking spaces, the average turnover, average length of stay and the number of businesses in the street, each business receives on average one customer per day from on-street parking outside their businesses. It is clear, that the vast majority of shoppers travel to the area by public transport or on foot or park in parking buildings.

The amended proposal will provide angle parking in Dixon Street to replace current parallel parks (providing an increase in parking), while the improvements to lower Cuba Street will change the current angle parks on the western side to parallel parks on both sides. There are some consequential changes proposed in other streets such as the addition of parks in Wakefield Street made possible by the removal of bus traffic.. The effect will be a net increase in shopper parking of approximately 40 spaces¹, with the exact number to be determined during the detailed design process. This number of extra parks will result in approximately \$200,000 additional annual revenue to the Council.

5.2.3 Affect on General Vehicles

The Opus report contains two options regarding traffic flow under the proposal to open Manners Mall to buses. Officers recommend the adoption of option D which maintains the flow of vehicles through the shared space in lower Cuba Street in the current direction (one way heading south). It is also proposed to allow general traffic to travel through Manners Street west from Boulcott Street to Victoria Street.

¹ Note that this number is different from numbers of parks cited in the Opus report because that report did not include the proposed shared space in lower Cuba Street.

Taxis would be permitted to travel on the new bus corridor through Manners Mall because they too are passenger service vehicles, although this may need to be restricted during peak hours. This is also consistent with the current trial of taxis on selected bus lanes.

It has been noted that prohibiting the right turn from Victoria into Manners Street west will prevent some people using this route to access the motorway via Boulcott Street. This is intentional because it will encourage these vehicles to instead travel up Victoria Street and use the motorway on-ramp at Karo Drive, thus reinforcing the city's arterial roading network design.

Changes to existing traffic patterns will require traffic resolutions and these will be referred back to Council for ratification. The above recommendations on general traffic may be amended as a result of consultation.

5.2.4 Sunlight

A shade pattern analysis has been undertaken of the relative merits of lower Cuba Street and Manners Mall as public spaces. This analysis covered the months of June, September and December and times of 10.00am, noon and 3.00pm and is attached as Appendix 6. The analysis shows that certain times of day or season favour one street, while other times favour the other. Taken overall, neither street is clearly superior to the other. The analysis does, however, confirm that lower Cuba Street receives an acceptable level of sunlight which adds to its amenity value.

5.2.5 Budget Value

The capital cost of the amended proposal would be spread over the three financial years 2009-10 to 2011/12 and is broken down as follows:

Public space improvements (lower Cuba, Manners Mall, Willis, Dixon, Mercer)	\$4.92m
Transport improvements (overhead wires, construction of a carriageway through Manners Mall, signalling pedestrian crossings and intersection improvements).	\$6.215m
Total	\$11.135m

These costs are expected to be offset by subsidy revenue from NZTA of \$3.347m and by parking revenue of \$200,000 per annum. Over the first 5 years of the project's life, the net costs of the transport elements are therefore:

Transport improvements	\$6.215m
Less NZTA subsidy	(\$3.347m)
Less extra parking revenue	(\$1.0m)
Net cashflow	\$1.868m

5.2.6 Timetable

The proposed timetable for these improvements is as follows:

2009/10	Construct bus carriageway and public space in Manners Mall Install overhead wires Construct intersection changes as required Create additional shopper parking in Dixon Street Signalise pedestrian crossings in Courtenay Place Create pedestrian public space in lower Cuba Street
2010/11	Construct waiting facilities at bus stops Further intersection improvements Public space improvements in Manners St West
2011/12	Further public space improvements in Willis, Mercer, Victoria and Dixon Streets

5.3 Summary of Overall Benefits of the Amended Proposals

The amended proposals, incorporating the new pedestrian and public space corridor from Cuba Mall to Civic Square, provide an integrated package of transport network benefits, public space improvements and urban renewal with many synergies and overall enhancements to the area. These are summarised as follows:

1. Significant improvements in public transport reliability and reductions in bus travel times between Taranaki and Willis Streets as confirmed by the Opus report.
2. Significant improvements to walkability along an improved pedestrian axis linking Cuba Mall to Civic Square and the Waterfront.
3. Significant improvement to the legibility of public transport services in the area.
4. Significant improvement to the legibility of walking routes and public space in the area.
5. Represent an important first step in implementing the Ngauranga to Airport Plan by upgrading the central city public transport route to link in with other infrastructure improvements in the Plan.
6. Integral part of a holistic package of measures to improve the performance of the central city public transport spine.
7. Represents a necessary pre-condition for a future step change in the city's public transport system (under the Ngauranga to Airport Plan) which could take the form of bus rapid transport or light rail.
8. Establishes a clear framework for future development of this area around a coherent vehicle / public transport / walking network that assigns priority to particular modes on particular parts of the network in accordance with best practice in transport and urban development. This framework consists of an east-west public transport spine and a north-south pedestrian spine.

9. Provides a net improvement in public space in the area by slightly increasing the area of public space and improving the legibility of public spaces and interaction between them.
10. Responds to advice received from bus operators and Greater Wellington that improvements to the performance of the bus network are required to meet the future public transport requirements of the city.
11. Eases growing bus congestion.
12. Obtains maximum value from past and current investment in transport networks and public spaces.
13. Good economic performance (benefit-cost ratio) for the preferred option indicates it is likely to meet NZTA funding criteria.
14. Addresses concerns raised by some local businesses about the October 2008 proposals relating to loss of public space and servicing of their businesses.
15. Provides a net increase in on-street parking.
16. Addresses concerns by submitters and members of the public about the October 2008 proposals over a perceived loss of public space in Manners Mall by providing a net improvement in public space.

5.4 Project Implementation

Prior to construction commencing, the following tasks will need to be completed.

Confirmation of NZTA Funding Support for the Proposals

The Council's city-wide bus priority proposals received funding approval from LTNZ (now NZTA) in 2007. NZTA have been involved in the development of the proposals in this paper. It is proposed to formally apply to NZTA for funding for the recommended scheme (if approved).

Revocation of the Pedestrian Status of Manners Mall

Manners Mall was established by Council resolution to declare it a 'pedestrian mall' and restrict the driving or parking of vehicles on it. Legal advice is that revoking this status will require a Special Consultative Procedure under the Local Government Act 2002. In essence, this will require Council to make a resolution that the Special Consultative Procedure be commenced and issue a statement of proposal and summary of information. This will provide an opportunity to communicate clearly to the public about the creation of new public space in lower Cuba Street and how the elements of the overall proposal will fit together. It is proposed to commence this process in August 2009.

Traffic Resolutions

Traffic resolutions will be required for the creation of shared space in lower Cuba Street, to regulate the speed of traffic and changes to road layout and parking. Consultation on these matters will be carried out concurrently with the Special Consultative Procedure above and will particularly target businesses on lower Cuba Street and Manners Street east and others directly affected by the proposals, such as the taxi industry.

Detailed Design Work

This will be undertaken progressively as the project is rolled out to achieve the timetable shown above. Construction is planned to commence with the

signalised pedestrian crossings and minor kerb line changes to the bus stop outside the St James in Courtenay Place.

6. Conclusion

It is recommended that Councillors approve the amended proposals for restoring the Golden Mile contained in this report.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

This proposal is strongly supported by the Council Transport and Urban Development Strategies and the Ngauranga-Airport Plan.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Funding for these proposals is contained in the draft LTCCP.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

There are no known Treaty issues.

4) Decision-Making

This is significant decision that will have long term effects on the city.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Consultation carried out on these proposals is detailed in the report.

b) Consultation with Maori

No specific consultation with Maori is required.

6) Legal Implications

Council's lawyers have been consulted during the development of this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This proposal is fully consistent with Council policies on bus priority and transport network management