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Golden Mile truck ban will cause economic harm

Banning truck access to Wellington's Golden Mile could seriously harm the city's economy, Road Transport Forum (RTF) chief executive Nick Leggett says.

"If the powers that be in Wellington want the Golden Mile to be able to live up to its lofty name, they will seriously reconsider this notion that banning trucks and delivery vehicles will create some kind of pedestrian and cyclist utopia. They will create a wasteland," Leggett says.

The RTF has submitted on Let's Get Wellington Moving's Golden Mile Engagement Report and says it ignores the significant impacts on commerce the plan will have and creates a greater public safety risk.

"Wellington is not some European city with wide open spaces and plazas and equally wide thoroughfares," Leggett says. "The Golden Mile is Wellington's primary inner-city arterial retail canyon. It is narrow and that presents problems for the delivery of goods not just to retail stores, but to coffee shops and restaurants, and high-rise offices and apartments.

"This plan shows a complete lack of understanding of how the city's commerce works. By suggesting freight delivery vehicles will have to be parked some distance away from the receiving site, drivers and delivery people will be expected to move the goods lengthy distances along pavements while being mindful not only of their own health and safety, but also of the apparently many cyclists and pedestrians using the same space.

"The side streets that have been delegated for delivery vehicles are totally unsuitable and will involve reversing and other manoeuvres that will compromise safety.

"Most of the retail outlets and premises on the Golden Mile have front access only, so moving delivery vehicles further away from those premises presents security risks – for the driver and the goods – and the potential for goods to be displaced and damaged as they are wheeled some distance from the delivery vehicle, often in bad weather.

"A vision of routes through the central city with no traffic other than buses was barely desirable before Covid-19 and the Government's lockdown. It is even less so post Covid-19 with its legacy effect of economic atrophy. The Golden Mile is golden no more. Foot traffic has declined significantly and retail is clearly suffering. All this will do is move shoppers out to the malls they can drive to.

"Wellington lacks proper planning for the present traffic flows to the southern suburbs and airport, and the seaport, and we would have thought greater effort

should be paid to sorting out these routes through expansion of State Highway 1 at the Terrace tunnel, and focussing on the entire route to the airport.

“It seems that the narrow focus is on limited environmental and amenity scenarios in the Golden Mile initiative. Yet access to the airport and seaport are essential for Wellington’s economic viability,” Leggett says.

You can read the RTF submission [here](#).

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About Road Transport Forum New Zealand (RTF)

RTF provides unified national representation for several regional trucking associations. RTF members include Road Transport Association NZ, National Road Carriers, and NZ Trucking Association. The affiliated representation of the RTF is about 3,000 individual road transport companies which in turn, operate 16-18,000 trucks involved in road freight transport, as well as companies that provide services allied to road freight transport.

The road freight transport industry employs 32,868 people (2.0% of the workforce), has a gross annual turnover of \$6 billion, and transports 93% of the total tonnes of freight moved in New Zealand.