

Sustainable Urban Development

Research Report

Rebuilding a business zone after disaster:

Key Stakeholders Perspectives

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Introduction

Since the September 2010 and February 2011 Canterbury earthquakes, many areas within central Christchurch have experienced significant building and streetscape damage, causing businesses to close. As a reaction to this damage, there is a strong desire to redevelop and restore economic activity within Victoria Street and the wider city. Drawing on themes from rebuilding after disasters, *creative cities*, revitalising streetscape design, urban branding and improving transport, this project will illustrate some of the ways international cities have adopted these in order to facilitate the economic development of an area or city and promote the development of a distinct identity. In addition to international examples, this research addresses key stakeholders views on the proposed concerns of streetscape redevelopment and rebranding of place.

Research Questions and Objectives

The unique community mix of business and residential in Victoria Street requires perspectives from both parties for the redevelopment of the street. It is important to know what both stakeholders want and how they can both get the most out of Victoria Street. This leads to our main research question:

How do stakeholders view the place of Victoria Street post-earthquake? What initiatives do they favour for the rebuild?

Sub Questions:

How can Victoria Street develop a distinct identity within the Central City?

What can be learnt from a combination of international best practice and themes from the *Creative Cities* concept?

Our sub questions will be answered by a review of overseas initiatives and literature on rebuilding after disaster and the *creative cities* concept.

Context: Victoria Street

The earthquakes caused extensive building damage which led to many buildings being demolished along the street. Prior to the earthquakes, Victoria Street was a vibrant place with retail, cafe and business activity. The residential neighbourhood was characterised, according to the 2006 Census, as an area with a mixture of people of all ages. The median income suggests that people living in this area occupy the middle class. Households in this area with no car are higher than the Christchurch City average. Additionally more people own their homes, compared to those living in Christchurch City (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison between Victoria Street and Christchurch City census data.

	No. of residents	Under 20 (%)	20-64 (%)	Over 64 (%)	Median Age	Median Household income	Household with no car (%)	Owner-occupier household (%)
Victoria Street Neighbourhood	1053	10.3	69.1	21.5	39.2	\$49,400	23.8	19
Central City	7656	15.6	74.6	9.8	30.7	\$23,600	17.6	17.7

Source: Statistics New Zealand (2006)

Following the extensive damage caused by the earthquakes on Victoria Street, the Victoria Streetscape Project Group (VSP) was formed to facilitate redevelopment and economic recovery of Victoria Street. We have been working in collaboration with this group to facilitate community consultation.

Global Context

Rebuilding after Disaster

Transition

Rebuilding urban environments after disaster is an extremely complex process. It is also a great chance to address long-standing problems and re-design urban environments. There needs to be a delicate trade-off between speed and deliberation in the rebuild process, consequently it can take many years to complete. The initial problem for an urban hub such as Victoria Street is how it

can facilitate development and attract outside interest whilst long term planning and development unfolds. This first stage in development is referred to as the 'transitional phase' and is vital in keeping productive residents in an area, attracting new productive residents and visitors, in testing out and experimenting with ideas and in revitalising areas to make them commercially viable once again. There is no 'one size fits all' conceptual framework for redevelopment, as so much depends on context, however there are international trends that help to facilitate it.

Disasters such as the Northridge, California earthquake of 1994 and the Kobe earthquake of 1995 provide us with key information on how to begin the transitional process in the immediate years following an earthquake. Resident participation and community organisation have both been pointed out as key initiatives for facilitating development in the immediate years following a natural disaster. After the Kobe earthquake, certain areas used a citizen-participation process when planning changes to an area. As well as citizen-participation, the organisation of community groups was also pointed out as a key tool in accelerating the development process (Olshansky, Johnson, & Topping, 2006). These are both concepts that Victoria Street has successfully enabled.

Another way in which a street can encourage development during the transitional years is to seek out and promote temporary forms of development. Temporary projects are designed to make use of empty spaces that are not being effectively or efficiently utilised. This makes them ideal for an area that has been significantly affected by earthquakes and the resulting demolished buildings. Creative responses to disasters can attract significant tourism and improve an areas standing. The ongoing vibrancy and commercial viability that these initiatives can create is significant and can be an effective way to re-start development in the surrounding area (Trust, 2011).

Development

The development process itself is largely out of the hands of residents themselves, however a good relationship with the local governing body will enhance the decision making process for streetscapes and projects. One way in which the community members can influence development is to attract potential business and landowners that would benefit and contribute to the street. This can be done through initiatives used in the transitional phase, including branding and temporary re-start projects.

Creative Cities

There is no simple formula to produce a creative city. Wide speculation of the appropriate mechanisms have led to critical discussions and contrasting ideas. Many hold the opinion that “the very act of ‘planning’ itself destroys the creativity of a district” (Leslie, 2005). The rebuilding of Christchurch City has led to a proposed cultural quarter; potentially located around Victoria District. The creation of such areas leads to debate from government officials, in particular concerns focus on how tolerance, diversity and innovation can be operationalised (Leslie, 2005). City governments have the power to impose a monolithic notion of what a city should reform to, and able to decide what is included under the bracket of culture.

In 2003 Richard Florida published a paper ‘Cities and the Creative Class’, this acted as a catalyst for the study of *creative cities* and has received many contrasting reviews. Florida (2003: 11) argues that creative people are the driving force of economic growth, and that “places that are open and possess low entry barriers for people gain creativity advantage from their ability to attract people from a wide range of backgrounds”. Therefore, all places being equal, areas that hold open and diverse qualities will be more likely to attract larger quantities of talented and creative people – it is these people that facilitate innovation and growth.

According to Sasaki (2010), the impact of Florida's theory has resulted in a frequent illusion that cities thrive as people of a creative class, such as artists and gays, gather. Sasaki (2010) argues that this does not necessarily translate into a creative city, and instead a creative city needs a "culture-based production system". Leslie (2005) argues that even though Florida's notion of culture does include elements of tolerance, art forms, diversity and street culture, it lacks the need to reach all citizens. Florida's policy applications have a focus on 'quality of place' rather than quality of life'.

For the re-development of Victoria Street it is important to note that "cultural policies need to be sensitive to a tension that exists between creativity and planning" (Leslie, 2005:409), this is due to the fact that culture cannot be built the same way in which infrastructure is built. Once characterless campaigns are dismissed, and proper support mechanisms are formed, creativity will thrive.

Streetscape & Transport

Revitalising public space, through streetscaping and transportation, can improve the individual quality of life, community vitality and liveability of an area (Evans et al., 2006). The streetscape and transport are mutually reinforced by the other. For example, improving the walkability of an area to increase pedestrian use often requires changes made to the streetscape. Markusen & Gadwa (2010) suggest that a *creative placemaking approach* allows for the consideration to be given to the streetscape, transport and development. They advocate that rejuvenating the built environment and streetscape, thinking creatively about mixed-use development and encouraging alternative forms of transport can improve local business, diversity and liveability of an area.

Streetscape

The urban streetscape plays an important role in the character of a place. Gertler (2004) recommends that high-quality and compelling design or historical character of the built environment is important for attracting people to an area. Maintaining and strengthening existing elements of the urban fabric that are

distinctive and authentic, like the streetscape, is also important. In the context of Victoria Street, because of the widespread damage to the built environment, this may involve reflecting on the distinct and authentic elements of the urban fabric that existed before the earthquakes and thinking about redeveloping those. Using well-designed built form and preserving heritage buildings can showcase the distinctive character of an area. For example, Barcelona has given priority to urban design, combining heritage buildings with modern architecture. The 'collage' of the built form seen through the mixture of architecture and design gives it a unique identity (Evans et al., 2006). Natural environmental assets, like squares, trees and shrubs, should be enhanced to take advantage of their attractiveness. Urban green space is highly valued by urban and landscape designers for the contribution it has on the quality of life in areas. Sometimes this space manifests as parks, but cities also have found creative ways to introduce green areas into their spaces. For example green infrastructure such as green roofs or vertical gardens are new ways in which vegetation can be inserted into existing urban form. The benefits of these initiatives include their ability to insulate buildings, improve air quality and provide aesthetical value for people living and working in urban areas. However perhaps their best attribute is the fact they do not take up any space and that now buildings themselves can provide the necessary space for natural areas in urban environments (Peck 1999). Public art can also create and showcase an areas distinctive identity. For example in Philadelphia, through the Mural Arts Program, the city has transformed as more than 3,000 murals have been painted on once-vacant walls across the city (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010).

Streetscape improvements can be part of a creative city development strategy (Zimmerman, 2008). Looking specifically at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Zimmerman (2008) found that plans for the streetscape sought to increase the physical attractiveness of downtown neighbourhoods. Establishing connections between the downtown and surrounding neighbourhoods by introducing staircases and walkways revitalised the central area of the city and developed a new character. Similarly the Denny Way Streetscape project in Seattle aimed to enhance the liveability of downtown Seattle (Department of Planning and Development,

2009). This project aimed to make Denny Way a more inviting and safe place. The project saw an increase in pedestrian crossing, the upgrade of existing signalised crossings and the introduction of bicycle lanes. Building setback also featured to accommodate outdoor seating and street activities. There was also a generous introduction of greenery along the street, with some acting as buffers from traffic and all adding to the aesthetic value. Better lighting was introduced to increase the safety and surveillance in pedestrian areas and encourage walking at night. Footpaths were widened to encourage pedestrian traffic; and textured pavers were frequently used to improve the character and create a special urban place.

Transport

Since the 1930s cities have increasingly been designed around automobile infrastructure rather than transit (Newman & Kenworthy, 1999). Urban design has prioritised automobile use, evident in the priority given to the construction of new roads and parking lots, over transit and walking. Landry (1998) suggests challenging the automobile norm through pedestrianisation schemes. Typically these schemes are implemented in the context of strong and arguably short-sighted opposition, which is what makes them creative. International examples, such as Naples, show that decisions to pedestrianize the seafront promenade and promote walkability, contributed to the seafront becoming the city's most publicly used promenade. When alternative modes of transport, like public transport, walking and cycling are readily available in an area, a unique quality of place develops as people access and use the place in different ways. Markusen & Gadwa (2010) recommend that encouraging and facilitating these activities should be seen as goals for creative areas. Focusing on transport and mobility is also important as it provides a way to integrate design with access and improve the quality of experiences people can have in places (Evans et al., 2006).

Urban branding

Cities, towns and areas are increasingly becoming associated with symbols, images and slogans that become known through different strategies including civic boosterism, urban branding and city marketing (McCann, 2009). While these strategies often exist to enhance a city's competitive advantage, the underlying principles of each strategy is the promotion of places. Competition between places for tourists, residents and businesses has become the justification for city marketing and urban branding (Braun, 2012). The strategies are used to 'rewrite' a place, often following economic crisis and decline, or in the case of Christchurch, following a disaster.

Currently it could be argued that Christchurch City is having image problems as a result of the meanings attached to the widespread destruction of the city centre. In the context of Victoria Street, 'rewriting' the meanings associated with the street will present Victoria Street as an attractive and desirable place to be; with the aim of attracting people back to the area. In the Victoria Street area this may manifest as attracting residents and corporate investment back to the urban region. Cities are increasingly representing themselves as fun places, where people can experience a 'good life' through the mixture of employment opportunities and leisure (Jensen, 2007). Victoria Street exemplifies this trend with the proposed branding including slogans such as "Play, when you're feeling lucky at the casino" and "Shop because you deserve it" (Victoria Street presentation, 2012). The brand of an area is often captured in the slogans and symbols associated to the place. Therefore careful managing of specific images of an area, via websites, marketing brochures and in the case of Victoria Street, proposed lamp post flags is required.

Box 1. Key elements that can facilitate the promotion of place

Built environment

The renovation of the built environment and managing public urban spaces can help to promote the constructed brand of a place (McCann, 2009).

Understanding the audience

It is important to consider numerous audiences, for example tourists, business investors and potential residents. Each audience requires a different set of marketing strategies (McCann, 2009). As a result city marketers frequently have to promote places as business friendly as well as an ideal place to live. There has been an increasing trend for city marketers to focus on residents and workers within the creative class. Areas for this market have been highlighted as having vibrant neighbourhoods, diversity, cosmopolitanism, coffee shops and a 'cool' civic atmosphere (McCann, 2009).

Media

The media has an active involvement in the marketing of a place. Marketers want their place presented favourably, therefore viewing the media as a target audience they wish to please (McCann, 2009).

Awareness that branding is an on-going process

Brands need to be updated and changed over time as the context changes (McCann, 2009).

Implementation of the urban branding

For branding to be successful it requires –

- A shared understanding of the meaning behind the brand among city leaders (Braun, 2012).
- Incorporating the stakeholders to ensure that branding is genuine and credible (Braun, 2012).
- Concentrating on the balance between promoting the brand and supporting local communities which may mitigate some of the negative consequences of branding, such as the loss of the working class from areas that are gentrified (Gibson, 2005; Braun, 2012).

There have been some criticisms of urban branding. The most relevant to Victoria Street is that urban brands claim to represent a universal interest, but in reality there are often disparities between the claims made by the brand and the lived reality (Gibson, 2005). Another critique is the long-term nature of conventional branding does not account for the development of places. As places develop and grow they become more complex and may move beyond the specific logos or slogans assigned to that place (Sevick, 2011). In the context of Victoria Street there is a tension between using urban branding to attract business and development to the street while branding it in such a way that the street does not move beyond the logos and slogans assigned to the district.

Methodology

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods through the use surveying was employed as the primary research tool. This involved the use of two surveys, a Victoria Street business survey and a Victoria Neighbourhood Group survey. The aim of having two distinct surveys was to receive a balanced perspective on the proposed redevelopment of Victoria Street.

Survey Recruitment

The email databases from the Victoria Neighbourhood Group and the VSP were used as the primary tool for advertising and distributing the surveys. A hardcopy survey was used in addition to the online survey to reach individuals with no email address. Figure 1 below shows the area included in the Victoria Street Residents Association. Figure 2 shows the area of businesses along Victoria Street that received the business survey.

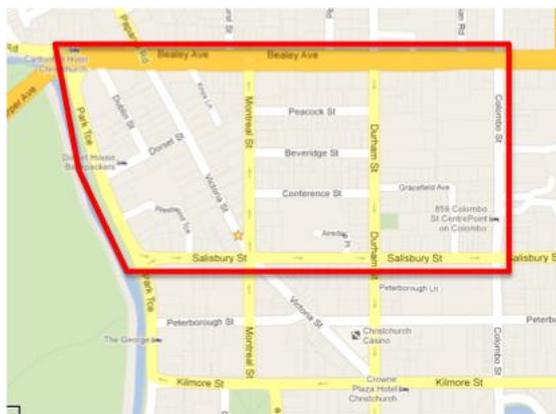


Figure 1. Boundary of Victoria Neighbourhood Group

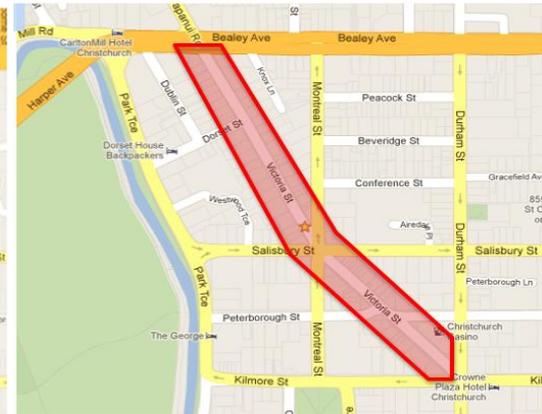


Figure 2. Victoria Street

Survey Details and Analysis

Both surveys were built and stored on the survey website Qualtrics, and included a mix of open and closed questions. A pilot sample consisting of 10 respondents was used to identify problems within the survey. The pilot sample highlighted a number of issues which lead to the simplification of terminology and rephrasing of some questions, all of which were addressed in the final version of survey.

A total of 32 respondents started the business survey of which 27 were completed of the surveys started 1 was a hardcopy survey and 31 were internet surveys. 36 respondents started the resident survey of which 27 were completed.

Ethics

Blanket ethics cover was secured by the project supervisors (Professors Eric Pawson and Simon Kingham) as the research was course based (GEOG402). This meant no formal ethics approval from the University of Canterbury Ethics Board was required. Although, before surveying commenced, copies of survey were submitted for review to the project supervisors.

Data Analysis

Survey data was analysed through the online surveying tool Qualtrics and the statistics software SPSS. Descriptive statistics was used to identify differences and trends within, and between, residential and business surveys.

Findings

Background Information

12 years was the average time for business/land owners or building owners to have been involved on Victoria Street. Knox church was a notable exception, as it has been operating on Victoria Street for over 100 years. The average time of residents living within the Victoria Street area was 15 years. Many residents and business clients access Victoria Street with a car, while taxis are another popular transport option for business clients (Table 2).

Table 2. The makeup of business along Victoria Street

Characteristics	n	%
Victoria Street Demographics		
Business Owner	15	50%
Building/Land Owners	9	30%
Business, Building & Land Owner	6	20%
Business Type		
Commercial	6	25%
Retail	5	21%
Residential	0	0%
Entertainment	5	21%
Dining (Cafe and Restaurant)	6	25%
Other (Optometrist, Church)	2	8%

Table 3. How residents and business clients access Victoria Street

Transport modes	Residents		Business	
	n	%*	n	%*
Car	22	79	20	100
Walking	2	7	10	50
Bicycling	0	0	13	65
Motorcycle	N/R	N/R	9	45
Taxi	N/R	N/R	19	95
Bus	N/R	N/R	8	40

*These responses are based on a multiple choice question, hence percentages do not sum to 100%

N/R These responses were not recorded

Draft Central City Plan

Majority of residents (86%) and businesses (90%) were aware of the proposed Victoria Street redevelopment initiative outlined in the Draft Central City Plan (DCCP). When residents were questioned on whether they thought the DCCP would help Victoria Street develop into a sustainable and successful part of Christchurch 92% agreed it would. Whilst largely agreeing with the DCCP, many respondents were concerned about building quality and heights, potential late night bars, the need for slower traffic speeds, and improved access for pedestrians and cyclists. In regards to businesses, 74% thought the DCCP would facilitate development in Victoria Street.

Current Activities

Majority of residents favoured a combination of activities to be available on Victoria Street, with retail and dining being perceived as the most important activities. Just over half the residents surveyed (57%) thought that Victoria Street had an integration of commercial, retail, leisure and residential activities before the earthquakes. Residents commented that there was some integration prior to the earthquakes but this was to a limited degree, as some activities for example residential and entertainment do not mix well. They also noted that the mixture of office and retail activity was evident but they were not aware of residential activity on the street. A few respondents commented very positively that Victoria Street before the earthquakes was becoming an exciting mixed-use

space and suggested that even now, the street is beginning to do so again. Of those respondents who felt that Victoria Street did not have an integration of activity, many commented on the few residential dwellings along the street. Some suggested that there is a need for more residences, however others thought that this would not work due to the bars having late night licenses, which would lead to loud noise for residents. Comments suggested that the only way to attract residential development and people to the area is to restrict late-night bars.

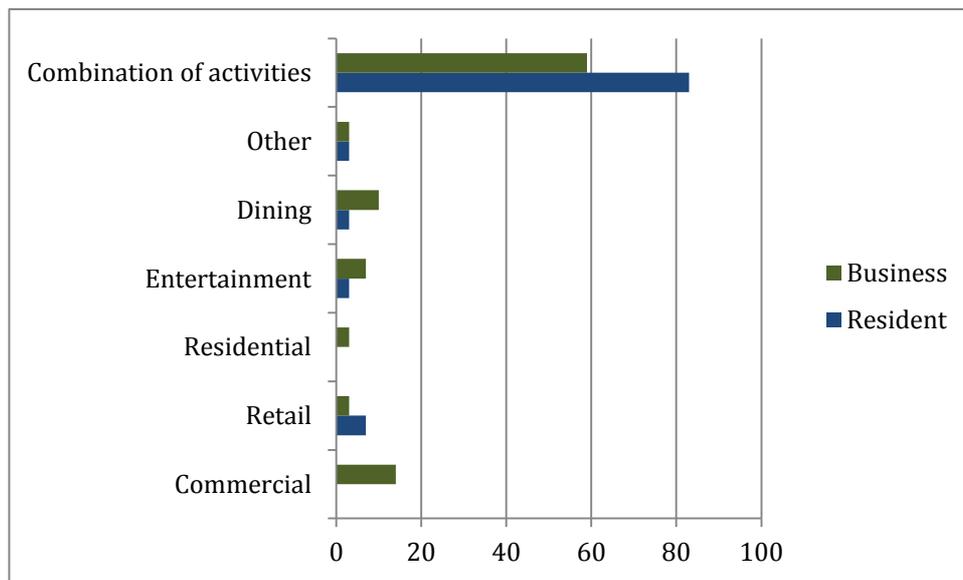


Figure 2. The business and residential responses on the most important activity along Victoria Street.

The majority of residential respondents (96%) supported the integration of activities along Victoria Street. They believed that commercial, retail, cafes and dining activities can all co-exist happily and easily; and that this mixture would benefit the street greatly. Some thought this kind of integration would bring the street alive and inspire and promote a ‘village’ atmosphere. Other business respondents supported the integration but had reservations, making comments about the specific types of activities, for example no late night bars or the replication of already existing areas in Christchurch. Those unsupportive of the integration were concerned that the mixture of activity may compromise the residential areas around Victoria Street.

In regards to a combination of activities, the majority of business respondents suggested retail, commercial, dining, entertainment and to a small degree residential. 61% believed that Victoria Street already had mixed-use space of buildings and the integration of activities amongst the street. However, it was strongly noted that not enough integration existed and the Victoria District could benefit from a higher proportion of residential use on the street. Many were opposed to the idea of integrating residential use as it limits hospitality, instead suggesting residential houses are located on the fringe of the street in order to minimise reverse sensitivity with other activities. It was also noted that a large amount of integration had been lost post earthquake. Majority of businesses (96%) support the integration of different activities along Victoria Street. Reasons for this include; increased diversity that in turn attracts people and businesses, increased visual and practical interest, freedom of choice for landlords. It was noted that better facilitation of outdoor dining would be beneficial, and that introducing activities was a great idea as long as Victoria Street did not start to look ‘jumbled’.

Table 4. The business and residential responses to the integration prior and future integration of activities along Victoria Street.

	Business		Resident	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Integration of activities prior to earthquakes	61	39	57	43
Future integration of activities	Support (%)	Do not support (%)	Support (%)	Do not support (%)
	96	4	96	4

Parking

Parking is a major issue in Victoria Street from a business and residential perspective. Majority of businesses (70%) rely on on-street parking and nearly one third of businesses rely on on-street loading.

Only 43% of business respondents were satisfied with the parking arrangements on Victoria Street prior to the earthquake. These respondents said more parking

would be beneficial and there was a suggestion of angle parking on Dorset Street. Of the 36% that disliked the previous parking arrangements, the main reasons were that parking was too limited and majority of parking seemed to be taken up by workers as the area is lacking close long-term parking. Over half of the residents surveyed (57%) had neutral opinions about the parking arrangements on Victoria Street prior to the earthquakes. Of the residents that liked the previous arrangements (7%), they said they had “no problems” with the prior arrangements, but noted that they “mainly walked”. Of those that disliked the previous parking (36%), the main reasons were because there was too much traffic for parking to operate safely, car parking detracts from the overall streetscape, not enough off-street or parallel parking, and that the corridor to the North-west direction dominated activity within the street.

Half of the business respondents did not support the partial removal of on street parking, with 21% in favour and 29% unsure of this idea. The majority of business owners thought the likely impact of the partial removal of on-street parking would be detrimental to their business by preventing easy access and viewed this idea as crazy, stupid or short sighted. Some business respondents strongly stated that the partial removal of on-street parking would lead them to consider moving their business out of the area. However, several respondents noted that the impact would not be too significant given that there were alternative parking options, like improved off-street parking. Half of the respondents thought that the potential development of a car parking building could compensate the partial removal of on-street parking. Majority (68%) of residential respondents’ support the partial removal of on-street parking on Victoria Street, and nearly half of respondents (46%) were in favour of developing a parking building to compensate for the loss of on-street parking.

Table 5. The business and residential responses to parking

	Business			Resident		
Perspective on pre-earthquake parking arrangement	Liked (%)	Disliked (%)	Neutral (%)	Liked (%)	Disliked (%)	Neutral (%)
	43	36	21	7	36	57
Business reliance on on-street and rear service facilities	On-street loading (%)	Rear service facilities (%)	Neither (%)			
	30	60	10			
Business reliance on on-street parking	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unsure (%)			
	70	30	0			
Removal of on-street parking	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unsure (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unsure (%)
	21	50	29	68	14	18
Car parking building	Yes (%)	No (%)	Does not affect me (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Does not affect me (%)
	50	39	11	46	15	39

Transport

Despite being less supportive of the potential initiatives that promote walking or cycling, business/land owners want to see more walking (82%) along Victoria Street. The majority want to see same amount of car (71%) and motorcycle (74%) use and the same (39%) or less (39%) bus use along Victoria Street. For the resident group, two-thirds (67%) of respondents want to see less cars along Victoria Street. The majority of residents wanted more walking (86%) and cycling (75%) in the area, and similar to less amounts of motorbikes and buses.

The results show that over half the business/land owners would not support the introduction of light rail (63%) or tram (59%) on Victoria Street. In contrast the majority of the resident group were supportive of the introduction of light rail (67%) along Victoria Street but did not want to see the tram (71%).

The results show that half of business/land owner respondents supported the introduction of slower traffic speeds along Victoria Street. Contrasting this, three-quarters (75%) of residents supported the slower traffic speeds. A recent revitalisation project in Arlington, a district in Poughkeepsie, New York state,

found that design improvements to the street that reduced traffic speed, increased pedestrian safety (Arlington Business Improvement District, 2011).

Box 2. International examples of traffic reduction strategies

Traffic-calming - 'changes in street alignment, installation of barriers, and other physical measures to reduce traffic speeds and/or cut-through volumes, in the interest of street safety, liveability, and other public purposes' (Ewing, 1999).

Shared zones - Traffic-calming comes from the Dutch communities who removed curbs that separated the road from the sidewalk, thus integrating the roadway with outdoor spaces (Pharaoh & Russell, 1991). Within the Danish context, the application of traffic calming of main roads involves making the urban environment, pedestrians and cyclists the priority (Ewing, 2008). These applications of traffic calming illustrate a different kind of attitude. There are other traffic-calming measures that have been adopted by different countries across the world. For example in the United States, a study on street use in Berkley, California found that with the introduction of speed bumps and chicanes along a main street, there was a significant increase in pedestrians and cyclists (Ewing, 2008).

Shared space - This is another approach to develop slow speed zone and foster pedestrian traffic. For example in the United Kingdom, the remodelling of a main street in Newcastle-upon-Tyne encouraged pedestrians and cyclists to move more freely in the urban environment in amongst vehicular traffic who travelled at slower speeds (Hamilton-Baillie, 2008).

Business/land owners were more supportive (81%) than residents (68%) of the potential altered bus route from Victoria Street to Montreal Street. This difference may exist because Montreal Street is a residential street and the introduction of a bus route will increase noise and traffic.

Table 6. The business and residential responses to transport issues and potential transport changes along Victoria Street.

Mode of transport	Business			Resident		
	More of (%)	Less of (%)	Same of (%)	More of (%)	Less of (%)	Same of (%)
Car	18	11	71	0	67	33
Motorcycles	11	15	74	7	39	54
Buses	21	39	39	11	29	61
Bicycles	39	18	43	75	4	21
Walking	82	4	14	86	4	11
Addition of light rail or tram	Support (%)		Do not support (%)	Support (%)		Do not support (%)
Light rail	37		63	67		33
Tram	41		59	29		71
Slower traffic speeds along Victoria Street	Support (%)	Do not support (%)	Unsure (%)	Support (%)	Do not support (%)	Unsure (%)
	50	29	21	75	14	11
Altered bus route from Victoria Street to Montreal Street	Support (%)		Do not support (%)	Support (%)		Do not support (%)
	81		19	68		32

Streetscape

The results show that for residents, approximately two-thirds (67%) of respondents were happy with some aspects of the streetscape prior to the earthquakes but not others. These respondents did not comment on what they did not like about the street but made comments regarding improvements they would like to see. These comments exposed some reoccurring themes, for example better pedestrianisation, reducing the amount of traffic along the street, more green areas and increased variety of shops. One-fifth (20%) of residential respondents were unhappy with the previous streetscape, criticising it for being unfriendly for pedestrians, with no safe crossing areas and poor landscaping. For business/land owners, just under half (48%) of the respondents reported being happy with some aspects of the streetscape but not others. These respondents commented on the lack of cohesion and beauty in the street with no green space and the characterless built environment along the street. For these respondents many saw the earthquakes as providing an opportunity to adopt a good urban

design approach to catalyse the development of an interesting, mixed-use space. Landry (2008) describes how city-making or place-making relies on maximising assets. However often places or cities have obstacles, like dull landscapes, fragmented built fabric and lack of transport options, which degrades the positive assets of a place. While the earthquakes have, in some cases along Victoria Street, provided a clean slate to work from there are others areas that will need to address the issues of the built environment and transport in order to develop an attractive place for people (Landry, 2008).

Table 7. The business and residential response regarding their level of satisfaction with streetscape before the earthquakes.

Business				Resident			
Yes (%)	No (%)	Happy with some aspects but not others (%)	Not important to me (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Happy with some aspects but not others (%)	Not important to me (%)
17	24	48	10	13	20	67	0

The Figure 8 shows that both the residents and business/land owners equally (96%) supported the increase in green features along Victoria Street. These results complement the growing trend in urban development. According to Marshall (2001) urban green spaces promotes the distinct identity of a place and creates an attractive streetscape that encourages the use of space by a wide audience including pedestrians, tourists and businesses. For roadside dining, wi-fi access and increased outdoor seating there was little difference between the two groups, with the residents showing slightly greater support for each.

The differences between the groups increased around the themes of alternative transport. The residents (93%) supported the introduction of bicycle lanes more strongly than business/land owners (64%). For the potential development of on-street bicycle parking, the resident group strongly favoured (93%) this initiative while more than half of the business/land owners were unsupportive (57%) than supportive of this. Finally the widening of footpaths was supported strongly by the residents (93%), while only three-quarters of business/land owners (75%) wanted to see this along Victoria Street.

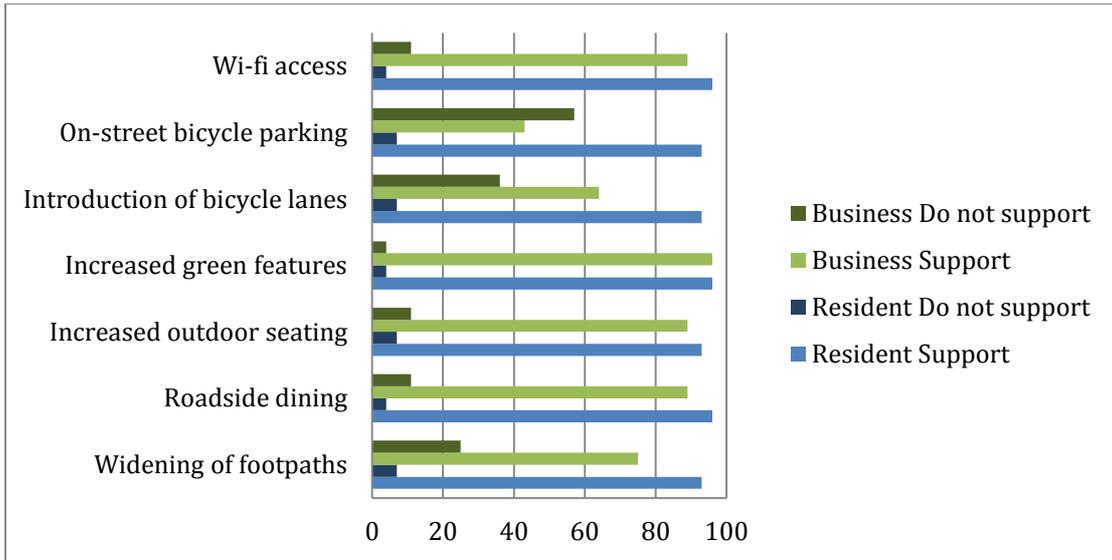


Figure 3. The business and residential responses to the proposed redevelopment initiatives on Victoria Street as outlined in Draft Central City Plan.

Box 3. International Examples

Groningen in the Netherlands decided to promote walkability and cycling, by introducing bicycle lanes and pedestrian crossings and widening footpaths, shopkeepers and other business owners were reluctant of the pedestrianisation (Landry and Bianchini, 1998). However because of its success, with people moving back into the city and enhanced turnover in shops, they are now promoting the extension of pedestrian friendly areas around the city. Similarly pedestrianisation of Munich led to a huge increase in trading profits and use of the city (Landry & Bianchini, 1998).

Future Developments for Victoria Street

Council Initiatives

Both the business and residents surveys incorporated questions regarding council initiatives for the future development of Victoria Street. The questions included were centred around a visual reconnection with Victoria Square (as seen below in Image 1), the development of lanes between Victoria and Montreal Street, a new convention centre being built within walking distance of the



Image 1. Crowne Plaza Hotel has been demolished, revealing line of sight down Victoria Street to Victoria Square

Victoria Street shops and the street being located within the proposed brothel zone. Of the four council initiatives, three were met with positive results from both business/land owners and residents. The reconnection with Victoria Square had 89% of residents' respondents in

support and 96% of business/landowners. The comments regarding this question were extremely positive, with the only hesitation coming from people who did not want to have traffic moving through this area, only pedestrian access. Others thought it would be extremely beneficial to the Victoria Street area.

The development of lanes between Victoria and Montreal Street had 82% of both residents and business/land owner respondents saying they approved of the development.

The proposed plan for a new convention centre being built within walking distance of the Victoria Street shops had 96% support from both residents and business/land owners.

The idea of moving Victoria Street within the proposed brothel zone was not met with the same enthusiasm as the previous three initiatives. The residents were firmly against this with 86% of people saying no and 14% saying they were

unsure. Business/land owners showed similar dissatisfaction with 75% saying no.

With these results, the council could continue with three of the four initiatives if they so choose, without receiving a high level of dissatisfaction (RESISTANCE???) from both residents and business/land owners. However the implementation of placing Victoria Street within the proposed brothel zone could be met with considerable disagreement.

Future Initiatives for the Victoria Streetscape Project Group

In the literature review two ideas were outlined regarding potential activities for the VSP whilst the area is being rebuilt. These were the implementation of re-start projects and the re-branding of Victoria Street. We included questions in both the business/land owner and resident surveys on these two potential initiatives.

The response from respondents to the implementation of re-start projects was predominantly positive. There were however concerns about an increasing number of late night bars, mainly from residents. This is because residents perceive the bars as having a negative effect on the quality of the street and on residents quality of life with late operating times, intoxicated people causing damage and disruption in the middle of the night. Many supported the idea of re-start projects, providing they were well maintained and temporary. This positive reaction bodes well for an introduction of this kind of transitional development into Victoria Street. One project that may be of interest to the VSP is ARTBOX (Box 2. Figure 9 & 10).

Box 3. Description of ARTBOX development projects

ARTBOX' s are designed by Christchurch firm F3 and are portable, architectural "boxes" that provide comfortable and highly adaptable spaces. They can be stacked, oriented and arranged in various configurations and are well insulated and weather-tight. Their unique design allows for multi-functional and multi-purpose use across a number of industries (Godden, 2012). A project such as this is something that the Victoria Streetscape Project Group can look into using in one of the vacant sites on Victoria Street. As several Victoria Street businesses have been forced out of work due to the earthquakes, these boxes could provide an ideal way in which they could re-start their business. They are also easily transported, look smart and respectable meaning there will be no disapproval from other Victoria Street stakeholders.



Figure 4. ARTBOX, portable, multi-functional and multi-purpose temporary commercial space

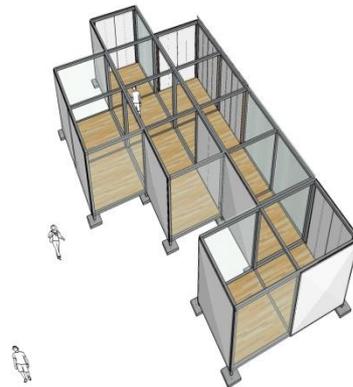


Figure 5. ARTBOX, portable, multi-functional and multi-purpose temporary commercial space

The re-branding of Victoria Street was met with a relatively positive response. 64% of residents liked the idea, while 18% were unsure and 18% were not supportive of re-branding. The businesses were much more supportive, with 77% saying they would like to see this, 8% saying they would not and 15% being unsure. As the VSP group have already begun with the rebranding of the street, the results will show that they will not meet much disapproval from residents and especially not from business/land owners.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations within the research design and survey distribution.

The distribution of the resident and business survey could be improved through an extended surveying period from one week to two weeks. This may have improved the survey response rate. Moreover, by exclusively using the email database from the Victoria Neighbourhood Group and VSP there is the potential to leave out potential respondents who are not a part of either organisation.

Implications

In reference to the international examples and survey results, the Victoria Streetscape Project is successfully advancing the first stage of development. The rebranding of Victoria Street, inclusion of artistic and cultural initiatives, and strong relationships with the Christchurch City Council and key stakeholders have been identified throughout our research process

We recommend:

- Fostering and maintaining good relationships between urban planners, developers, business/land owners and governing bodies.

- Including residents into these relationships to ensure that all key stakeholders are central in the decision making process.
- Continuing communication between all stakeholders.
- Facilitating discussion, in a focus group or open meeting, about conflicting interests that have been identified in the survey. These include, potential development of a parking building, late night bars, cycling access and bicycle and vehicle parking issues. Doing this will enable different groups to have their perspectives heard.
- Integrating cultural and artistic enterprises along the street to create interest and facilitate development.

Conclusions

Victoria Street has been severely affected by the Canterbury earthquakes. The community is a unique mix of businesses and residential housing which provides multiple issues when considering redevelopment. The VSP was formed to assist with the revitalization. Using research from rebuilding after disaster literature and the *creative cities* concept, key themes were identified including; good relationships between stakeholders, communities and governing bodies, facilitating development during the transitional phase, streetscape revitalisation, transport and urban branding. In light of these international examples and our survey results, key stakeholders want to see redevelopment along Victoria Street that is consistent with international practice. While there are differences between residential and business/land owner responses, we recommend these can be addressed through open discussion and consultation between key stakeholders. Overall the VSP is assisting the redevelopment of Victoria Street into a distinct area of Christchurch City.

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