Sustained Life in Vacant Spaces

Transitioning to tomorrow

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Section 1

Introduction

Following the 2010 Canterbury earthquake sequence, a number of organisations have been established for the promotion of the temporary activation of vacant space. These organisations operate in vacant spaces that can be anything from cleared sites, shipping containers, empty retail shops, walls, or even road cones. Activation activities can include physical installations, works of art, community gardens, green space, or event based activities. These activations add creativity, vitality, active citizenship, biophilic enhancement, entrepreneurship, ownership, and—most importantly—transitional engagement to the post-quake Christchurch city. They are an important outlet for testing new ideas, creative expression, and social change.

Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to understand transitional activities being undertaken in the city currently and how the needs and experiences of key end users will contribute to shaping the future for transitional organisations in order for them to have a greater and lasting effect. These organisations rely on the support of many external parties for their success and as such they must be able to convey value in the activities they are undertaking for implementation to occur. External parties include property owners, who allow for their sites to be used for activation; activators, the creatives behind the setup of projects; volunteers, who partake in activations; and sponsors, who are sources of funding. These groups are the key end users who this research seeks to better understand. The transitional activities have had a number successes and failures in appealing to the good nature of these groups and, as such, an understanding into their experience, the barriers they face, their

motivations, and their achievements will help to enhance and increase the future uptake of transitional activities in Christchurch city.

Transitional City Context

The notion of a transitional city entails a sense of place greater than that of the buildings that comprise it. A transitional city is one that has captured and engaged with the narratives that cities are always in transition, and that there are constant variations both in the way in which cities represent themselves and also the activities taking place within them (Wu, 2003). For a city to be seen as such, its citizens must have the ability to create new urban spaces, from the minor and subtle, to the dramatic and monumental. Citizens of such places are rewarded with innovation and vitality, and they actively engage and participate through transitional activities in city life, planning, and social process (Think, 2011).

Many examples of transitional city initiatives exist internationally. These are often cities that have undergone a disturbance to the traditional framework of city organisation, and as a result, transitional activities have taken the place of more formal structures and identities. Some examples of cities undergoing this transformation include Detroit, USA; Newcastle, Australia; Berlin, Germany; Hoboken, USA; and now Christchurch, New Zealand. Each has had a different expression of the transitional cities narrative but in all cases it has had a lasting and positive effect. Exploration of the value provided for by transitional activities has been undertaken by a number of researchers and academics and Christchurch can learn from international successes and apply them to the local context (3Space., Bishop & Williams, 2012., Dearing, 2000., Pinnegar, Marceau & Randolph, 2008., Think, 2011).

Section 2

Methodology

Meeting the research objective required engaging with key end users of transitional activities to understand their needs and experiences. A qualitative research approach was utilised as it was deemed most appropriate to undertake this engagement exercise. The justification for undertaking such an approach is due to the expected high number of variances between result sources.

Interviews

The first tool utilised in this research was interviews with key end users. Interviewing allows the flexibility for a range of responses and the investigation of new avenues should they arise. The relatively informal setting of the semi-structured interview allows the interviewee to share learning, description, and perspective on a subject or experience while leaving the interpretation open to the interviewer (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Warren, 2001). It is the best method to encourage the free-flowing of ideas and concepts in a situation where the sharing of information is beneficial to both parties. The looseness in structure of the qualitative interview allows each response to feed meaningfully back into a larger body of conceptual knowledge. Though interviewing has proven a very useful tool in collecting qualitative data, it is not without its critics; some see interviews as nothing more than a conversation, not a method of data collection (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

The first stage to conducting interviews was the selection of candidates. In Christchurch, it is estimated there are 200 groups who are at various stages of becoming activators of transitional projects (Sherow, 2013). To interview each one of these groups would be

unrealistic given the timeframe available for this research; therefore, only 15 groups were selected. These groups had all completed a transitional project to implementation stage. This was important in order to understand the motivations, processes, assistances, and experience of implementing a transition project. A mixture of the types of activities, size of the organisations, and spatial locations of transitional activities was chosen in order to give a broad sampling of the overall experience. Contact details were obtained for each of these groups and emails were sent asking them to participate in the research. If no response was received a second avenue or repeat email was sent in an attempt to receive a response.

A second group of candidates for interviews was also selected. These candidates consisted of interested, but not directly involved, parties who would be able to provide commentary on transitional organisations within the city. Once again, emails were sent, and a non-response was followed up with a second attempt.

Following a positive response, a convenient location and time for the candidate was agreed on, and a group member went to conduct the interview. For site activators these interviews were semi-formal. In the first half, the questions listed in appendix 1 were addressed. These questions would then open the dialog for further commentary to be provided by the interviewee. Researchers would record the interview and draw conclusions and recommendations from the discussions.

Interviews engaged with the second group of candidates were entirely informal. This was due to the non-direct roles these groups played.

An attempt was made to conduct interviews with sponsors and also land owners however this did not eventuate beyond a single phone conversation. This may be due to a lack of

aggression in the pursuit of contact, and also difficulties in obtaining the correct contact details for the parties involved.

Volunteer Survey

A survey was implemented to understand the key end user experience of volunteers participating in transitional activities. Due expected number of respondents, a survey was decided as the best method to achieve this, as surveys are an easy way to collect the results of a large group of individuals. Their design and the time taken to complete them have significant impact on the results received from them (Bryman, 2012). Consideration was therefore made in the design process and of the questions being asked in the survey for this research project. Attached, in appendix 2, is the survey that was available online via the service, SurveyGizmo. Participation was requested via the previously interviewed activators; a link to the online survey was emailed to their database of volunteers.

Data collected from the volunteers via the survey was analysed, providing an understanding of their experience as a key end user group. The results have been interpreted and are explained in the results section below.

Section 3

Research findings and discussion

This section of the research report covers the results that were obtained from conducting interviews and the survey. It has been broken down into easily understandable sections centred on the various end user experiences of transitional activities in Christchurch. These sections are the volunteer experience, sponsorship and funding, activator experience, site access, and economic value.

The volunteer experience and results of the survey

A survey was used to understand the key end user experience of volunteers participating in transitional activities. The survey is shown in Appendix 2, and was completed in full by a total of 50 people; no partial responses were received. The uptake rate of the survey was very high considering it is expected that only approximately 400 people knew about the possibility of completing the survey (Sewell, 2013). A response and uptake rate of this level would indicate people are very engaged in volunteering for transitional city projects.

The transitional activities around the city rely on volunteers to undertake activation of sites and some of the operation of organisations involved in these activities. Interviews conducted with activator organisations provided information about the numbers of volunteers involved in projects. Each advised they had a core group of recurrent volunteers and that this was complemented by other individuals that came along, dependent on the roles available or project being undertaken. The survey responses could then be tested against this information to understand the demographic of who the respondents of the surveys were.

Testing the response in the survey showed respondents came from a range of different projects and differing levels of involvement. Question one asked respondents

"**Which transitional city organisations have you volunteered for?**"

Question four asked respondents:

"**Are you a repeat volunteer for these organisations?**"

The answers to both shows that about 50% of the survey respondents were core repeat volunteers and the remaining 50% were one-off or fluctuating volunteers. Most had participated in central city projects and events, but also a number were from suburban projects in communities such as Sumner and New Brighton. Despite the diversity of the survey respondents, there was little variance in responses to other questions.

All of the survey respondents found the volunteer experience positive or very positive. This response could indicate a bias to people who had a good experience volunteering and may mean the research has not received responses from people who had a bad experience volunteering for transitional activities. When answering question three:

"**How would you rate the experience of volunteering? (please indicate)**"

The survey respondents indicated 70% had found the experience very positive and 30% had found the experience positive. This encouraging response suggests that transitional organisations are working well in pleasing volunteer expectations ensuring positive outcomes. Research into the outcomes of participation in volunteering support these findings, that people will find the experience positive and beneficial (Meier & Stutzer, 2006., Wilson, 2000).

To understand the motivation for volunteering, question two asked the survey respondents:

"**What was your motivation for volunteering? Please provide a short blurb**"

The responses to question two fall into seven broad categories of motivations. Several

people indicated more than one motivation behind their decision to volunteer.

These seven categories are:
- To feel like they are helping (indicated by 17 respondents)
- To meet new people and network (indicated by 12 respondents)
- To be part of an inclusive/alternative rebuild (indicated by 11 respondents)
- As an educational exercise to learn new skills (indicated by 4 respondents)
- Because it is cool (indicated by 4 respondents)
- For healing and wellbeing (indicated by 4 respondents)
- Because it seemed like fun (indicated by 4 respondents)

A number of interesting assumptions can be made about these motivations for

volunteering. For 28 respondents, more than half, seeing it as a way in which they could

help or be part of the rebuild suggest that volunteering in these organisations is engaging

people with the transitional cities movement and these people want to have agency in their

city and communities. Some of the respondents also indicated in this section that they were

from outside of Christchurch and this motivation to volunteer and be part of something had

brought them to the city. Other respondents also suggested that it was a means to take

back the rebuild from formal powers and utilise a bottom-up community-led approach to

recovery.

That some respondents are motivated by 'meeting people' suggests that these activities are

bringing together people, supporting research about transitional activities being a tool to

build community. The shortage of social activities following the earthquakes may also

contribute to this being a motivation for some people.

The next two questions in the survey try to gauge respondent's views on recognition that could be used to help get more people to volunteer or to retain current volunteers. Research partners had indicated concerns about volunteer burnout and had also suggested some incentives that the Christchurch City Council could offer to transitional city volunteers:

Question five asks:

"**The council may be able to offer some low or no cost incentives to show recognition for volunteer work undertaken for transitional projects. Which of the following would you be interested in? (These are not indicative of possibility but rather a scope of potential) please tick any that interest you.**"

The responses to which are shown in Table 1.

Potential Incentives	Count	Percent
VIP seating at council run events	14	28.0%
swimming pool vouchers	24	48.0%
free bus passes	14	28.0%
free/reduced parking at council car parks	13	26.0%
free access to paid facilities at libraries	15	30.0%
a small rates credit	16	32.0%
other suggestions	14	28.0%

Table 1. *Responses to Question five of the volunteer survey. Multiple entries could be selected; counts represent the number of times each option was selected.*

Fourteen people gave other suggestions to question five. These included ideas supporting a token system that could be used in exchange for contributions to community funding by the council. Other respondents indicated no incentives or rewards should be given. These respondents may have misinterpreted the intention of recognising effort put in by volunteers rather than being a direct incentive. These respondents also answered unlikely or very unlikely to question six, which further supports the idea they may have been confused with what the question was asking.

Question six asked:

"**Do you think recognition strategies would encourage you to volunteer more/get more people involved in volunteering?**"

The responses to which are shown in Table 2.

Value	Count	Percent %
5 - Very Likely	10	20.0%
4 - Likely	13	26.0%
3 - Neutral	17	34.0%
2 - Unlikely	8	16.0%
1 - Very Unlikely	2	4.0%

Table 2. *Responses to Question Six of the volunteer survey. A single option could be selected only.*

These responses indicate that some recognition system could be offered by the council and it would likely be well received. However, there is an underlying motivation for people to volunteer that does not rely on being formally recognised.

The final component of the survey sought to collect other suggestions regarding ways to improve the volunteer experience. 27 respondents offered suggestions; some were completely irrelevant to the research but others gave good recommendations. Several respondents indicated they would appreciate if food and refreshments were provided during volunteer exercises. A number of respondents also indicated a need for some form of advertising listing upcoming volunteer opportunities they could participate in. They felt this would allow them to plan for volunteering and better understand how they could help. Several respondents also suggested more marketing to explain the benefits and experience of volunteering for transitional organisations in the city; sharing the experience so others

are enticed to volunteer themselves. This information may help guide future initiatives in this area.

Sponsors and Funding

Most transitional organisations are charities and require funding from sponsors to carry out their activities. Organisations such as Life in Vacant Spaces (LiVS), Gapfiller, and Greening the Rubble all receive funding and sponsorship from a variety of sources. These sources include, but are not limited to, Vodafone Foundation NZ, Creative NZ, Christchurch City Council, The Todd Foundation, the Tindall Foundation, and donations from private sources. Interviews with the transitional organisations have revealed several findings about funding and sponsorship of these organisations.

The activators interviewed all suggested that they had sufficient funding to maintain their present operation but could utilise further sources of funds. Many of the present funds by activator organisations were tied to specific outcomes such as projects on the ground, and that such limitations meant that administration, improvement, and education were not able to be fully addressed by the organisation. One organisation found it difficult to balance chasing sponsorship and carrying out activities. They are now in process of hiring a part time staff member to carry out this task and hope this will alleviate pressure (Annan, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013)

Some groups are also able to receive greater funding support and sponsorship compared to others. In an interview with LiVS, it was indicated that groups that are able to have a clear and concise package for sponsorship are more likely to receive sponsorship. Groups must be able to communicate clearly to a potential sponsor specifically what benefits the sponsor will receive by contributing (Sherow, 2013).

Some organisations are able to leverage sponsorship and funding due to having a recognisable brand. Funding and support is more likely to go to groups that are familiar to potential sponsors. This has also supported the idea of umbrella organisations, such as LiVS, under which activities can operate. As LiVS further their brand and recognisability they hope to be able to contribute to more transitional projects as an umbrella organisation through which funding can be channelled (Sherow, 2013).

Transitional activities see any cuts to the current level of funding as a risk to their organisation's success. Therefore, the wish of LiVS and Gapfiller is that the Christchurch City Council continues to provide the same level of funding to transitional organisations, recognising the benefits these organisations provide to the city. Some of the funding these organisations receive is earthquake related, and is soon due to expire, or have revised conditions applied. Losing these sources of funding will create the necessity to seek alternative funding, taking activators away from other important tasks (Annan, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

Some organisations have explored alternative models of funding, such as becoming a social enterprise, where a service or product is sold, with the intention being to fund a social exercise, rather than to make a profit (Peryman, 2013). Social enterprises are a relatively new concept, likely to be unfamiliar to many people, including potential sponsors. Traditionally, grants and sponsorships are given to charities and by not being a charity could mean groups become ineligible for grants. Careful management of the process is required to ensure that charitable status is maintained such that their success is not compromised by the loss of this.

Activator experience

To understand key activator experiences, semi-structured interviews were conducted with activators. Four in-person interviews were conducted in addition to two email-based interviews. In these interviews, questions were asked of the activators, the structured questions shown in Appendix 1, followed by unstructured questioning and discussion. The aim of these interviews was to identify the barriers and opportunities that exist for activators.

The role within Christchurch, and the motivations for each group varied and was dependent on their spatial location. For core vacant space activators located in the central city, the motivations were related to the social benefits transitional projects can have. They saw their organisations as a way for people to engage with the central city and partake in the rebuild. They felt it was important for people to be engaged citizens who contributed to change, rather than being consumers of it. They are able to help people build new place identities within the city by creating new spaces people can participate in. Through creating the opportunities for people to volunteer and help, they are also able to assist people in the recovery, healing, and wellbeing following the earthquakes (Annan, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

In suburban sites where activation has occurred, the groups felt their role was closer to that of beautification organisations less aligned with transitional city themes. This does not completely reflect the reality of the situation, as many of these groups are having long lasting engagement effects on their communities. It is felt that as time passes and these organisations grow and mature, the impact they are having will align closer with transitional town themes (Guest, 2013).

The barriers for implementation have varied between groups. For suburban sites, the key barriers were the conversations and confrontations with local council staff. This was reflected in the difficulties they had in accessing sites owned by the council, the inconsistent message of support, and reluctance in facilitation of such activities. When meeting and interviewing LiVS, these difficulties were discussed and it was mentioned that it was a difficult task to understand the council structure, in order to know who was responsible for what. For a small organisation, this may pose as a significant barrier to success. Indeed, for one organisation, this was stated as the primary reason for choosing to discontinue with the activation of vacant sites (Guest, 2013., Sherow, 2013).

For the central city organisations of Gapfiller and Greening the Rubble, the key barrier faced is access to property. Each organisation has found it easier to get access when it is a local person or company that owns the sites, but found it difficult to get access to sites that are owned by international development trusts or a large organisation such as the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA). In both cases, the reason for this difficulty was believed to be associated with the ability to clearly communicate the intentions and process for activation of a site, when this would need to go through several stages of approval in an organisational hierarchy (Annan, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

Many more activations could occur within the city; however some of these activations could be operated differently. For instance, murals on walls require the same volume of paper work as an activation across an entire site. A more efficient approach is for these to migrate to hoardings that are being installed around new construction sites; they could even be moved at a later stage. This would avoid the paperwork for site leases altogether, though a new facilitation process would need to be created (Sherow, 2013). For the activation of

green space within the city, Greening the Rubble are able to participate, however, for larger sites, such as the nature play space, they need assistance in project management to ensure success. They advise they are able to do a site activation cheaper, lighter, and faster than traditional approaches as they can involve communities in the process; this is particularly relevant when we look at anchor projects such as the Eastern frame, and also the residential red zone (Annan, 2013). There exists a significant opportunity to engage transitional activities with the CERA anchor projects. As these organisation become more well-known and their objectives, value, and achievements get recognised by CERA, they can play a greater role in the more 'formal' rebuild activities. Previously, this has not occurred but dialog is beginning to show promise.

Site activations of vacant spaces is key in creating a city of vitality and difference; a transitional city. The transitional city hangs on the laurels of the work undertaken by these organisations and key discussions on the value and importance need to occur so that the work of these groups can be sustained. This will become more relevant with the decrease in vacant gravel sites in the city over the coming years, with activations changing shape and focus, progressively occurring in built spaces.

Site access

The ability to access vacant sites is crucial in the transitional city activation process. To access a site, approval needs to be obtained from the site holder by the activator. This has been simplified through the creation of the organisation Life in Vacant spaces in 2012. They now help match activators with site holders and have smoothed the process. This research did not directly contact any site holders, however, an understanding of the barriers to access was established through interviews with activators and LiVS.

The key barrier to access was site holders not realising what the transitional city movement was and what value projects have. As addressed earlier in the report, this is often the case when site owners are internationals or large corporations, and the communication of aims is diluted by the time projects reach the appropriate level of authority. Another barrier occurs when site owners do not have a clear picture of what they wish to achieve with their site; whether they want to develop it, sell it, or leave it vacant. This poses difficulties in the decision making process of site holders when deciding whether to let transitional activities occur on their site. Attempts to resolve this issue through the use of 30 day notification periods on sites have still not been enough to convince some site holders. It is expected that as the influence and brand name of LiVS becomes more well-known, complications of access such as this will decrease. This will also require LiVS to ensure on-going organisational integrity and process when dealing with site holders to not jeopardise future opportunities. Another key issue with site access is a misunderstanding about impacts that transitional activities can have on the value of sites. To mitigate this, studies need to be available to show value changes caused by transitional activities to reduce or alleviate fears and concerns; pop-up shops or vacant retail activators will encounter this as their greatest boundary (Annan, 2013., Guest, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

Activators interviewed have a policy of not paying for the use of a site. This decision has been made to maintain integrity and the benefits of transitional activities; payment for sites is believed to place these at risk and undermine the transitional process. These decisions are particularly relevant when making decisions about rates reductions on sites being used for transitional activities. The research found that even though this may offer an incentive; particularly to large or corporate land owners, the risks presented may be too high and it

could potentially reflect badly on transitional activities if only some sites were given the reduction. Policy incentives and communication of values may be more appropriate ways to deal with vacant space (Annan, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

The economic value transitional activities

A number of studies have focussed on the value of transitional activities and the activation of vacant space. These all exist in an international context; this research sought to understand some of the value that has been experienced in the Christchurch context. Given the short length of this study, this was a difficult task, and more longitudinal studies should be conducted. Despite these research barriers, economic value to tourism in Christchurch was explored. Activators were also asked about the resulting economic values from activation occurring.

Activators all stated the work they were doing provided economic value in areas where they had activated vacant space. They stated in their interviews that once space had been activated, the number of visitors increased to areas. People also were more engaged with other activities going on in the area. Activators believe that the activity happening around sites helped to retain or increase the value of the once vacant and surrounding land. Businesses around activated sites also suggest, anecdotally, increases in patronage. In the retail precinct of New Regent street, the activation of a vacant shop was seen not only as economically successful in getting a social enterprise to a commercially viable level, but also to be influential in the subsequent negotiation of the commercial leasing of the shop (Annan, 2013., Guest, 2013., May, 2013., Sherow, 2013., Winn & Airey, 2013).

Tourism activity and visitor numbers in Christchurch experienced significant declines following the earthquakes. The causative reasons behind these declines were cumulative;

poor image, lacking accommodation, and reduced provisions for tourism activity. Similarly, Greater Canterbury, Nelson, and Westland have very comparable as dependent tourist markets linked closely to the Christchurch market. Each experienced similar decline and recovery trajectories to Christchurch, so all share an interest in the Christchurch recovery (Townsend, 2013).

The present indications for tourism activity in Christchurch are that recovery to pre-September 2010 levels is still underway. The key tourist visitor markets of Europe, Asia, and America have almost recovered in full. The Australian Market, the largest in the number of visitors and spending has begun to recover but has just finished declining; a similar experience was seen with domestic visitors (Townsend, 2013).

The agency responsible for tourism promotion in Christchurch is Canterbury Christchurch Tourism (CCT). Most of the effort of CCT has been in recovery of tourism in Christchurch and very little effort has been able to go into growth of the tourism sector. Transitional activities are a key part of CCT's current promotion , and utilisation of these activities in the marketability of the city is very important (Townsend, 2013).

When visitors come to Christchurch now, they come to experience a mixture of old and new; they will experience previously existing activities but these are now being complemented by activities and sites including the Transitional Cathedral, Re-Start mall, and the Pallet Pavilion. The interest that visitors now have in Christchurch as a destination of choice is the juxtaposition between old and new, the city can now cater to people interested in arts, creativity, urban renewal, and transitional explorations (Townsend, 2013., Sewell, 2013).

Transitional activities help frame the earthquake in a positive light. Without such initiatives, the earthquake narrative becomes very bleak and discussions framed in negative terms of loss and destruction. Such an image will deter future visits, reduce recommendations, and reduce investment and immigration by visitors (Townsend, 2013).

Some activities have different appeals to various markets. The transitional Cathedral has become a very popular attraction for Japanese visitors particularly; they see this as a key link to their own country and links well with feelings of camaraderie between the two nations. The Re-start mall has a very distinct appeal to the European market; this is reflective of the many urban renewal initiatives taking place in Europe currently. The Pallet pavilion draws a lot of attention from visitors in the backpacker or freedom tourist market. These visitors have often encountered this in guidebooks such as lonely planet or online where large viral interest has been shown.

Transitional activities give the ability for CCT to market Christchurch as a 'sticky gateway.' The encouragement of this idea is very important as guests are more likely to spend time in a city if there are areas they can interact with. The city now has a point of difference from other cities and has broad appeal to a range of visitor markets. If we capitalize on the transitional activities we could expect the number of nights visitors spend in Christchurch to grow following the earthquakes (Townsend, 2013).

Section 4

Limitations

This research had a number of limitations, one of these being the difficulty in contacting and getting responses from people. Expansion in detail of some areas may have been achieved if greater success was achieved in this area. Another limitation was the short length of the study. Some areas of research would be better understood if longitudinal studies took place. This would be particularly useful when making quantitative assessment of the value; retention, gain, or other changes with transitional activities taking place. This could be compared against international examples to see if similar results occur in Christchurch.

Key Recommendations

This research has sought to gauge the key end user experiences to better contribute to shaping the future for transitional organisations in order for them to have a greater and lasting effect. As a result of this research there are a number of key recommendations that, if acted upon, will assist in achieving success for the future.

The first recommendation is clear communication of the transitional city narrative. If clearly communicated, the benefits, objectives, and value gained from the activation of vacant sites could help to receive more assistance from key contributors such as sponsors, site owners, and volunteers. Each needs to understand what is in it for them. The research suggests that each group does receive value from transitional city activities, and collectively these activities are making the city a better place. An expo, case studies, or a film could be ways to achieve this communication and have it reach a wide audience. An interest has been shown by some of the end users engaged with this research for such things to occur.

The next recommendation is that the council could further its support of these organisations. It could do this in three key ways. First would be for the council to clearly communicate its required expectations, outcomes, and view of transitional activities to all groups and to make this available publicly so groups can use this in obtaining support from other external parties such as site owners. It could also further explore the possibility of a recognition package. This package should not be used as an incentive but rather to acknowledge the work done thus far. The third suggestion would be to clearly communicate to activators the structure of the council and who is responsible for what. This is especially important for activators wanting to engage in council assistance and advice, some experiencing vast difficulties in the past.

The key recommendation of this research would be for more research in this area to occur. This research will empower future decisions and almost all interview participants had suggestions for further research. This research could be done in conjunction with the University of Canterbury geography department as part of a number of different research courses currently being offered.

Conclusion

This research set out to understand transitional activities being undertaken in Christchurch city. The motivation for this was to understand the needs and experiences of key end users so a contribution could be made to shaping the future for transitional organisations in order for them to have a greater and lasting effect. These organisations play a key role in the post-earthquake city. By supporting and assisting the growth of transitional activities, Christchurch is becoming a more interesting city, full of vitality and innovation. These organisations offer an ample opportunity to catch and utilise this value and are now key

economic drivers in the city. Not only do they have economic value, they also are providing

a significant and very important social value. These activations have successfully achieved

elements of active citizenship, entrepreneurship, ownership, and—most importantly—

transitional engagement to the post-quake Christchurch city. By assisting these

organisations to flourish, Christchurch city is on the way to becoming a transitional city; it is

hoped this research can help be a part of this becoming a success.

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Appendix 1:

Questions asked in activator interviews:

Tell us about the journey you underwent making your organisation successful
- What were your motivations?
- What were some key barriers you faced and key facilitating factors?
- What nurtured your progress and what hindered it?
- Has public participation and word of mouth had an impact, what?
- What areas of your organisation are lacking in relation to others, how can these be improved?
- What do you consider your organisation's main achievement?

How did you develop your business model?
> Were other options considered and why was this one successful?
> Are there any aspects of operation that you feel could be more successfully executed?

What do you feel your role is in Christchurch?

How do you believe that as a transitional organisation, you can be best incorporated into the Christchurch rebuild?
> How do you feel visitor numbers would change if the space was permanent?
What do you believe is needed in a successful framework to successfully facilitate transitional activities?

How did you hear about the transitional fund?
- Do you think your business outcomes would have differed without this fund?
- Have you found businesses are willing to invest in your projects - have you found it easy to approach organisations/have any approached you wanting to help you out?
- If the TF budget was to be extended, where would you want to see that money go: incentives for landowners/volunteers, resources for projects
- If the budget was decreased, how would this affect your operations?
  - Would it be difficult to find alternative funding?

Appendix 2:

Transitional city: volunteering and sustained life in vacant space.

This survey is to better gauge the thoughts and feelings of volunteers assisting and partaking in transitional city projects.

Expect completion within two to five minutes.

We are a group of postgraduate Geography students, at the University of Canterbury. We have been commissioned with our coursework, in conjunction with the CCC, to understand the key end-user needs and opportunities for the activation and continual operation of transitional projects in vacant spaces throughout Christchurch. We believe that volunteering is an important aspects of these projects. The views as presented in this survey are ours solely and do not indicate those of The Christchurch City Council, or the University of Canterbury.

By completing the following survey you authorize your response to be used as part of our research. All responses will be kept anonymous and individual answers will not be provided to any third parties. Interested respondents will be able to have a copy of the report sent to them at the conclusion of our research. Please indicate if you wish to receive this.

If you have any concerns or questions

Please email: Joshua Neville jtn17@uclive.ac.nz

1. Which transitional city organisations have you volunteered for? Such as Gap Filler or Greening the rubble. (Please list) *This question is required.*

2. What was your motivations for volunteering? Please provide a short blurb

3. How would rate the experience of volunteering? (please indicate)

- ○ 4 - Very Positive

- ○ 3 - Positive
- ○ 2 - Negative
- ○ 1 - Very Negative

4. Are you a repeat volunteer for these organisations? *This question is required.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I intend to be

[Next] These questions are to gauge what impact incentives may have on the amount

of volunteer work undertaken.

5. The council may be able to offer some low or no cost incentives to show recognition for volunteer work undertaken for transitional projects.
Which of the following would you be interested in? (These are not indicative of possibility but rather a scope of potential) please tick any that interest you. *This question is required.

- ☐ VIP seating at council run events
- ☐ Swimming pool vouchers
- ☐ free bus passes
- ☐ free/reduced parking at council car parks
- ☐ free access to paid facilities at libraries
- ☐ a small rates credit
- ☐ Other suggestions: Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.
  [   ] **This question is required.**

6. Do you think recognition strategies would encourage you to volunteer more/get more people involved in volunteering? *This question is required.

- ○ 5 - Very Likely
- ○ 4 - Likely
- ○ 3 - Neutral
- ○ 2 - Unlikely
- ○ 1 - Very Unlikely

7. Please feel free to offer any other suggestions you believe would improve the volunteer experience within transitional projects in the future Christchurch:

Submit