

Introduction

In March 2011 24-7 YouthWork was concerned about the need to include a youth voice in the plans for rebuilding Christchurch after the earthquakes.

The Todd Foundation provided funding. With this, 24-7 YouthWork enlisted The Collaborative for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development (The Collaborative) to conduct a research project. Subsequently an online survey and focus groups were conducted with young people from Christchurch high schools.

Six focus groups were conducted in high schools representing different geographical areas of Christchurch between October and December 2011.

4159 students from 9 to 20 years completed the survey. They came from 43 schools in Canterbury, years 7 to 13. 44% were male and 54% were female.

Results were used as the basis of a written comment on the draft Recovery Plan for the Christchurch CBD.

What Did the Young People Say?

Read on to find out....

Central City RebUild

TRANSITIONAL City

Different areas of the city should be opened as they are developed to give a sense of continuity for youth during the rebuild process.

We are called the green city.



Green City

This is a significant theme - create green spaces and greenery in the inner city.

Some young people say the old centre city did not reflect our garden city image. There was too much masonry.

56% say more green spaces are 'somewhat' important or 'extremely' important

23% say green spaces are extremely important

Yeah cos [tilt slab is] really ugly and Christchurch used to be quite grey like in the centre, so I think it's really nice that they [bring in some colour].



A Distinctive City

A low rise city

We want a six story height limit on buildings for a safe and spacious city fee. Some of us acknowledge this may not be economically viable.

Strong, safe and resilient buildings

People need to be assured that both old and new buildings are structurally sound.

But absolutely make sure that [the buildings are] safe.



Keep the city's heritage in some form in the rebuild

56% say Christchurch's traditional heritage is important

Many of us value Christchurch's heritage and want it kept in some form in the rebuild.

There is substantial support for keeping the Anglican Cathedral.

Because [our heritage is] who we are... that's Christchurch.



Modern buildings to have interesting architectural features and design

Colour and vibrancy, like the pop up mall in the city centre - that's the type of modern buildings and environment we want to see.

Only 29% feel this is not important

49% say 'interesting architecture instead of tilt-slab' is 'somewhat' to 'extremely' important

An eco-friendly city

A passionate few say create an eco-friendly city. It is the way of the future.

City Life

Colour, artwork and interesting design features

We want the redeveloped central city to have artwork, interesting design features and lots of colour.

An inner city like this would be a more fun and dynamic place to visit.

I think the idea of colour is really cool... I think it is like bringing life back into the centre city which has been so desolate for so long.



A vibrant city

We want a city in which a diverse group of people can work, socialise, shop and play; we value the energy this creates.

A welcoming city

Create a welcoming city that caters for everyone and accommodates our needs as part of this.

Very important!



And I think it's a big opportunity to be able to rebuild an entire city centre...that it needs to be kind of able to... accommodate everyone. It's not just what this person wants or what these people would like.

Good seating, lighting and footpaths

We need good seating so we can hang out. Wider foot paths and well lit public spaces for safety and to help to create an open and spacious feel in the new central city.

A clean city

A few of us want a cleaner city with plenty of rubbish bins and more regular removal of rubbish and graffiti.

A Smoke Free city

Some of us say the redevelopment is an opportunity to make the central city a smoke free area.

Suggestion: small designated outdoor areas could be used by smokers making the rest of the central city smoke free.

Free Wi-Fi in the city

Yes! Provide free wireless internet!

73% say free Wi-Fi is 'somewhat' to 'extremely' important in the central city

Safety through design

Young people worried about safety in relation to violence, crime and intimidation in the central city prior to the earthquakes.

Very important!

We need adequate lighting, widened foot paths, and fewer small dark places such as alley ways.

Entertainment and recreation

A very significant concern - the central city is a key social space for us. We need affordable things for them to do in the inner city.

We need more than just the commercial aspects of the city. Provide activities and spaces for us to hang out.



There needs to be both a cool outdoor and indoor spaces for people...

A significant number of us support development of gaming venues, pool halls, cinemas and a youth centre.

A few of us support development of another outdoor skate park, an indoor skate park, food festivals, a community centre and a fun/theme park.

Community events

Events like festivals and markets are valuable, they bring the community together; we need to accommodate these in the rebuild.

Youth-specific events and facilities

Some of us support youth-only venues and events. Others think there are enough events for young people at present.

55% say it is not important to have youth specific events

We need to have events and activities for all age groups.

A youth centre

Significant support for a youth centre in the central city



One with like studios in them cos like lots of people play music like young people like music and... lots of stuff like art and dance.

Making the city youth friendly

Public spaces and facilities should be youth friendly.

Transport Choice

Buses

We use buses! Improve the bus service with better timetables, improved routes, reduced fares and free buses into the inner city.

Many of us felt unsafe in the bus exchange before the earthquakes – too many enclosed, low visibility spaces.

Trams

We want to keep and expand the tram service in the central city.

Cycle ways

More than half of us say that cycle ways into the central city are important.

49% would be more likely to cycle if there were safer cycling lanes in Christchurch

We want safe, wider cycle lanes.



People bike to work - it's just something we need.

Walkways

A few of us say we need to ensure there are adequate and safe walkways into and around the inner city.

Cars and roadways

Many of us favour excluding cars from the main inner city shopping precincts. Access to the inner city would be ensured by an effective public transport, roadway and parking system.

Eco-efficient transport

49% say eco-friendly public transport is important

And a few of us think eco-friendly public transport is more than important - it is essential.

Market City

Open and Spacious CBD

Many of us think it is important to design areas in the CBD that feel open and spacious.

An inviting, open planned sort of town.



Have a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces that are used for multiple events and purposes. We see these as places that can accommodate lots of different groups of people, and welcome young people too.



Also places where teens can go and be out of the way of adults who sort of watch over them.

We want the central city to be big enough that we can socialise away from the gaze of adults and can spend time moving between different parts of the city.

A place where kids can just go and hang out.



Markets

We want markets in the central city! We like markets that have affordable and interesting products, food stalls and live entertainment.

Shops

We really support boutique shops in the inner city. They provide a shopping experience not available in the more generic malls.

Affordable food outlets in the redeveloped central city are an important draw-card for us.

IMPLEMENTATION - YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE REBUILD



Very
important!

We want participation in the rebuild of Christchurch.

Why? Because Christchurch may be the city in which we work, live and raise our own families.

We will be less likely to leave Christchurch if it has an attractive, functional and vibrant city centre.

Being involved gives us a stake in the rebuild and increases our understanding of what is happening.

SUBURBAN REDEVELOPMENT

For those of us out on the West side of Christchurch this is not a significant issue. Our local areas didn't sustain too much damage in the quakes.

Elsewhere in Christchurch some of us *are* having our local areas redeveloped.



What do you want from your local shopping area?

Colourful.

Modern.



Attractive.



Interesting shops.

A relaxed and friendly community feel.



63% say local village squares are 'somewhat' to 'very' important

WELL-BEING

How have the earthquakes affected your lives?



Answer on a scale of 1 to 7. 1 means not at all affected. 7 means massively affected.

25% answered 5, 6 or 7

6% affected massively

9% not at all affected

Effects on education

Very important!

Our schoolwork has been disrupted. We have had to share school sites. We

have felt decreased motivation to study.

Effects on relationships

Some of us now have a low tolerance for conflict with others. There is the negative impact of friends and family moving away from Christchurch.



Effects on emotional wellbeing

We feel stressed, anxious and tired.

Recreation and entertainment

We have lost recreational and entertainment facilities such as swimming pools, local shopping areas and the central city. Some of us feel bored because there is now nowhere to go and less to do.

Very important!

Intensive media coverage of earthquakes

Media coverage had a negative impact on some of us and our families. It impacted on our ability to move on.

Feeling closer to our community

A few of us feel more connected to our community since the earthquakes.

Positive outcome

CONCLUSION

Young people's interest in the rebuild emerges clearly from this research: a significant number from Christchurch schools took part in the online survey.

We were also struck by focus group participants' enthusiasm for being involved and their commitment to helping create a Christchurch that is dynamic, safe, well designed and modern while also being respectful of its heritage.

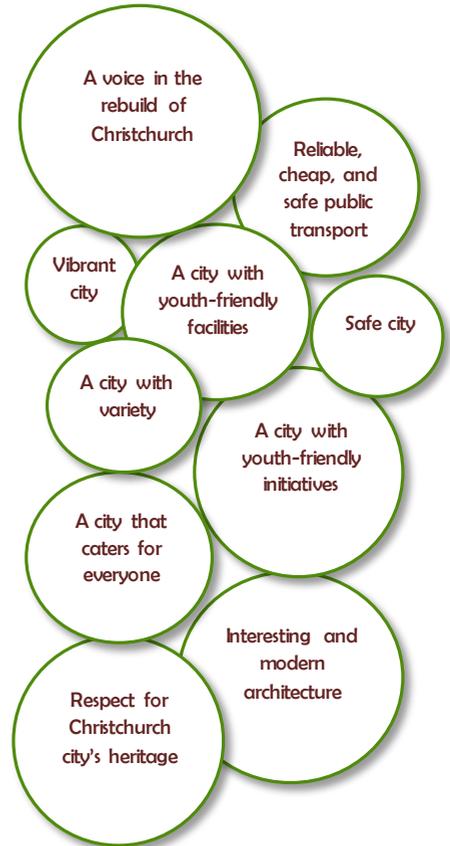
Young people revealed their desire to help create a city that is youth friendly.

They recognise that young people have specific needs now, and looking ahead, they will be the ones who may work, study, live and raise their own families here in the future.

But importantly they also want a city that is well designed for everybody in the community, not just for youth.

In relation to this it is clear that young people value the wellbeing of the community as a whole in the rebuild and are able to recognise their place within this.

So to SUM UP... What do YOUTH Want?



*If you want to find out more
the full report is on The Collaborative's website at
<http://collaborative.org.nz/research/what-we-have-done/>*

REBUILDING
CHRISTCHURCH AFTER
THE EARTHQUAKES
YOUNG PEOPLE'S
PERSPECTIVES



I think the idea of a 'hub' in the central city, which buzzes with people, energy and life, with lots of small music venues, cafes and gardens so that the central city has life but is still quintessentially Christchurch, is a great idea to make something positive from something so negative and sad.

