

Manager's update



Happy New Year to all our *Invest Christchurch* readers.

I hope you've had – or are still having – a pleasant and relaxing break, and are feeling

invigorated ahead of what will be another exciting year for the greater Christchurch rebuild.

The regular *Invest Christchurch* newsletter will resume in February, once everyone is back on deck and the 2013 work programme is under way. In the meantime we are providing a brief update on developments during the Christmas period.

Sheila McBreen-Kerr,
Invest Christchurch Manager

Canterbury economy surging ahead

The Canterbury economy continues to provide an excellent platform for the greater Christchurch rebuild, growing faster than any other region in the country.

According to the latest National Bank regional trends, year-on-year growth in economic activity for the September quarter was 5.1 per cent in Canterbury. That's 2.2 percentage points higher than Taranaki, which came in second.

Meanwhile, Statistics New Zealand figures show that earthquake-related building consents in Canterbury rose in value by more than one-third from the June to September quarters. In addition, retail activity increased by 2.1 per cent in the September quarter (nationally, it fell by 0.8 per cent).

There are also positive signs for our tourism sector, with guest nights in October up 12 per cent on the previous year. Hopefully, this improvement means that the decline in tourist numbers since the earthquakes is now a trend of the past.

Please forward this newsletter to others who may be interested. Should you be receiving this second hand and want to receive copies directly you can register at www.ccd.govt.nz/newsletter or email investchristchurch@ccd.govt.nz



Canterbury's economy grew

5.1%

in the year to September 2012 making it the fastest growing region in NZ.

The total value of Christchurch CBD building consents rose from \$5m to just under

\$30m

in the year to September 2012.

SCIRT has identified a need for at least

900

new employees for the infrastructure rebuild industry over the next 12 months.

Health Precinct Request for Proposals released



'Waterside', the British Airways HQ in London, is just one of many designs providing concept inspiration for the Health Precinct.

Last month we went to the market for consultancy services to help design a master plan for the Health Precinct, an anchor project outlined in the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan.

Christchurch's health sector is already world-renowned for its biomedical and clinical research, health education and IT. The idea behind the Health Precinct is to make the sector even stronger.

The Health Precinct will create an innovative, vibrant campus environment in the central city. It will provide integrated health services, research and education and link the health system more effectively with business.

What we want is to build greater collaboration between the different private, government and academic players in the sector. We're keen to help to create a community of excellence that attracts operators and investors from local, national and international health sectors.

The Health Precinct will play a vital role in accelerating greater Christchurch's economic growth. It will also enhance the city's reputation as a centre for innovation and technology.

At this stage, a core development area of approximately 30,000 square metres is likely to be required for the Precinct, with additional phases of development further ahead. The University of Otago has already signalled its interest in taking a leading role as an investor. Anchor tenants will be the University of Canterbury, the Canterbury District Health Board and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology.

It's great to see another of our anchor projects moving forward, and we're looking forward to receiving a range of high-quality responses before the Request for Proposals (RFP) closes on 11 February. See the government tenders website, www.gets.govt.nz, for more details.

Accessible City transport chapter creating a buzz

I'm also pleased to report that there's been an enthusiastic response to *An Accessible City*, the draft transport chapter of the Recovery Plan that's currently open for public consultation.

Since we released the draft chapter in November, there's been a lot of interest registered on our website and on social media. We've also distributed 3,500-plus hard copies of the chapter during engagements with industry associations, residents and other stakeholder groups.

We're delighted with the constructive feedback we've already received. Most of it has been positive, but not all – and that's exactly what this process is about.

In general, people like the idea of improvements for all modes of transport in the CBD, and have a range of suggestions about the design detail they'd like to see further down the track. There have also been a lot of questions about parking accessibility and speed management – looking ahead, these are areas we're going to have to put more work into.

The consultation period continues until 1 February. If you have not already made a submission, I encourage you to do so through the CCDU website: www.ccd.govt.nz/the-plan/an-accessible-city

