

Media Release

Impressive projects anchor a compact, green city

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Facilities for high performance sports, health and innovation, and a new convention centre are some of the highlights of the new central Christchurch, Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee says.

The Recovery Plan released today showcases the new city, providing for the replacement of the key facilities a city like Christchurch requires. Christchurch will be divided into precincts of health, arts and entertainment, retail, and the justice and emergency sectors.

Mr Brownlee says after reviewing the thousands of ideas offered through Christchurch City Council's award winning Share An Idea consultation process, the Christchurch City Council produced a strong draft Recovery Plan in December 2011. CERA's Christchurch Central Development Unit (CCDU) was able to take this work and tailor the new city design to meet the practical needs and creative ideas of the community.

"I asked the CCDU team to further develop the council's draft plan and deliver a blueprint that was consistent with the forward-thinking, bold and exciting Share an Idea consensus.

"I am very pleased to endorse the blueprint CCDU have created and I believe this is the start of a hugely exciting future for our city."

Mr Brownlee says the Recovery Plan contains a blueprint for a smaller, greener central city that will set Christchurch apart from any other urban centre.

Within a large L-shaped green space the city's new form will take shape. The low density open space eastern frame will run from Kilmore Street to Saint Asaph Street, encapsulating an entire block-width of land between Madras and Manchester Streets. It's expected new urban living apartments will be developed along the edge of this space.

"This innovation is the most significant change from the draft Recovery Plan, and is likely to enhance the economic value of the area and promote denser central city development," Mr Brownlee says.

The southern part of the frame, from Madras Street to Hagley Avenue, encapsulating the entire block-width of land between Tuam and Saint Asaph Streets will develop into a campus-style area, with a walkway and cycleway. Sited between the hospital and the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) site, this area will be ideally suited to the health, innovation and education sectors.

"I anticipate a light, airy, college-campus style feel for the home of numerous innovative Christchurch companies and public sector agencies," Mr Brownlee says.

At the southern end of the frame area and close to another anchor project – the hospital and health precinct – will be a new metro sports facility. This aquatic and indoor arena

will be capable of playing host to national and international events. It will offer high-performance training and sports medicine facilities alongside retail and entertainment activity complementary to sport.

An important key to the city's commercial regeneration will be a new convention centre, which will cater for up to 2000 people and complement other large centres proposed in Auckland and Queenstown. The centre will be a catalyst to hotel investment and will connect the Square to the Avon River Precinct, which will ensure visitors enjoy the uniquely green beauty the central city has to offer.

"This city development is one New Zealand should be extremely proud and supportive of," Mr Brownlee said.

"The plan and its implementation are being watched by the rest of the world, which has also been supportive of Christchurch in its time of need."