



# Christchurch Visitor Strategy

2019 Update

ChristchurchNZ™

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## FOREWORD

Christchurch city and Banks Peninsula is a proud community that has an amazing place to call home. The rapidly redeveloping city is bordered by the coastline and the Canterbury Plains with the fantastic landscapes and harbours of Banks Peninsula. It's a great place to live and we should be proud to show off our place when hosting visitors, whether they have come for leisure, business or education, are from other parts of New Zealand or around the globe.

Christchurch's visitor economy is an important part of realising our prosperity ambitions for Christchurch as detailed in the 10-year goals within the Prosperity Framework<sup>1</sup>.

Beyond the employment and business opportunities of the visitor economy, international students are an important part of our future workforce and visitors more generally make a significant contribution to support our wider hospitality and leisure amenity which contributes to Christchurch being a great place to live for residents. Through leisure, business and education visitors, we can share our city's stories and connect with the world socially, economically and culturally.

Christchurch has been through a significant time of change. Disruption to visitor patterns and perceptions of the city has been particularly acute through this period resulting in diminished levels of visitation. However, we have seen renewed interest in Christchurch in recent years – with leisure visitation and international student growth above national averages.

Christchurch still hasn't recovered its share of the national visitor market across all visitor segments, and this update of the Christchurch Visitor Strategy details the actions still required to help us ensure we have a visitor economy which delivers the best contribution to our community. As signalled in the Christchurch Visitor Strategy adopted in 2016, the city needs to take a staged approach to developing the visitor economy as the disruptions in recent years have effectively transitioned the city from a mature visitor experience into an emerging one.

We need to ensure our aspirations to grow Christchurch's share of the national visitor economy are balanced against the environmental and social impacts of more visitation. Some of the social and environmental impacts are very localised and need to be addressed by carefully managing the distribution and volume of visitors within our local area and the wider region.

We also need to be aware of the inter-relationship between visitation and growing environmental awareness and expectation. New Zealand's distance from international markets makes this an issue, but there are opportunities to develop leading products that are more sustainable and experiential to gain competitive advantage. This is critical to future-proofing the visitor economy as the youth market, who will be high-value travellers in a decade or so, are already focussing on these issues when planning and purchasing as well as seeking experiences that give back when on location.

The other key challenge that this Visitor Strategy seeks to address is highly seasonal visitation patterns. The significant gap between visitor numbers at the peak of summer and the winter months constrains investment in visitor and leisure products and services. We need to focus on actions and markets that grow visitation in shoulder and off-peak seasons to catalyse a positive investment cycle that improves the visitor experience and brings further amenity for residents.

There is still much to do to develop Christchurch's visitor proposition and regain our historic proportion of New Zealand's visitor markets. However, a strong platform is being put in place to maximise the potential of the city, Banks Peninsula and the wider region of which the city is an integral part.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.christchurchnz.org.nz/media/9097/christchurch-prosperity-framework.pdf>

To build momentum in the next phase of the strategy's delivery will require a change in focus from capital investment in visitor infrastructure to activities that position, activate and promote the city. All actions need to position and amplify the city as a place of exploration. We need major and business events that attract visitors as well as bringing energy and vibrancy to all of us who live here. The city must commit to providing outstanding service, maximising utilisation of assets and facilities and most importantly, being a welcoming host.

The visitor proposition can be further amplified through a closer working relationship across the Canterbury region. Both the city and regional propositions are stronger when considered as one, rather than a range of distinct destinations.

Everyone in the city and region must play a part in the success of this strategy by committing to be the strongest champions, friendliest hosts, creating and showcasing a sustainable city. If we work together we can create a strong, vibrant and sustainable visitor economy that improves the lifestyles for people that chose to call Christchurch home and enriches the experiences for those that have come to visit.

## INTRODUCTION

Before the seismic events in Canterbury in 2010/11, Christchurch played a key role in the national travel network as the primary gateway to, and main destination within, the South Island. Within a few short months, over a century of well-established travel patterns were disrupted and Christchurch's national role across leisure, education and business visitor segments was severely compromised by the damage to facilities, infrastructure, visitor perceptions and confidence.

In 2019 regeneration is progressing and transforming how Christchurch looks and feels as both a place to live and a place to visit. The possibilities are exciting for residents and visitors, with the ingredients there for Christchurch to afford itself optimism and aspiration with capacity for growth. However, success is not guaranteed.

With decisions made in this high-change environment having the potential to affect social and economic outcomes for many generations to come, it is important to ensure that decision-making is informed, strategic and aligned. It is also important to think beyond the physical rebuild of the city's facilities and infrastructure to consider how these structures and spaces can be activated to deliver maximum economic returns, social and cultural amenity.

**This strategy galvanises a visitor aspiration for Christchurch and sets out a framework to deliver the aspiration and address key issues that stand in the way of achieving it.**

While the direction set by the 2016 Visitor Strategy's economic aspiration and strategic framework are still appropriate, this 2019 update of the Visitor Strategy reflects an evolution of the priorities and action plan to reflect the progress made over the last three years and the rapidly changing nature of the city and the wider strategic context.

This updated strategy is informed by evidence which is outlined in an accompanying background paper that provides more detailed insight into the visitor economy.

**The key factors driving the strategic response outlined in this strategy can be summarised as:**

- The stage of maturity of Christchurch's visitor experience post-quake.
- Highly seasonal visitation suppressing investment in tourism and leisure related products and services.
- Global trends including climate change and environmental awareness, digitisation, an increasing focus for tourists on experience and authenticity.
- The importance of regaining local confidence and pride in the city, raising awareness of the visitor proposition and maintaining regeneration momentum.
- The important interdependency between Christchurch city, Banks Peninsula, the Canterbury region and the South Island visitor experience offerings.
- The contribution of the visitor economy to realising Christchurch's 10-year prosperity goals as detailed in the Christchurch Prosperity Framework.

This strategy identifies the areas Christchurch needs to focus on to achieve the visitor aspiration. The intent of the strategy is to get the best possible return on investment in visitor-related initiatives by ensuring all activities align with the strategy and represent the optimal use of Christchurch's limited resources as the city continues to evolve and grow.

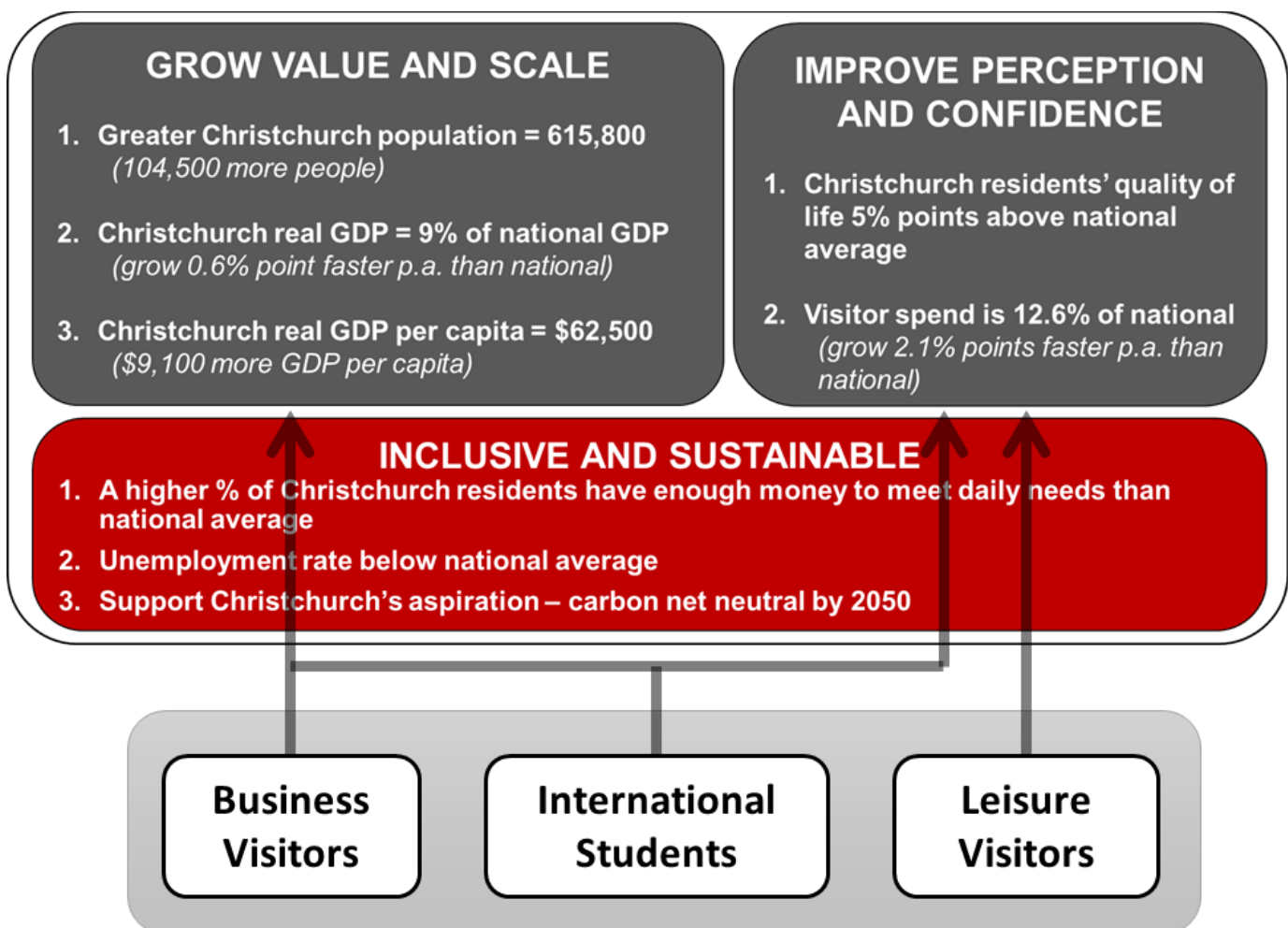
The Strategy primarily informs Council decision making and investment. Many other organisations have a significant interest in and/or a key role to play in Christchurch's success as a visitor destination. This strategy provides a common framework that enables everyone to take a joined-up approach to delivering activities that focus on attracting visitors to Christchurch.



## USING VISITATION TO DRIVE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

With the right strategic approach Christchurch can use visitation to help drive Christchurch's social, cultural and economic development and enhance the wellbeing of Christchurch residents.

This is illustrated in the diagram below which shows how a strong visitor economy supports all aspects of the 10-year goals set out in the Christchurch Prosperity Framework.



The most tangible and immediate benefit of visitation is the money spent by leisure, business and education visitors across a wide range of local businesses including accommodation providers, cafes, bars, restaurants, attractions, transport providers, personal and professional services and retailers.

The resulting increase in spending power creates new jobs and materially enhances the wellbeing of Christchurch residents by allowing the city to sustain a much larger social and cultural footprint than its resident population could support by itself. Christchurch residents benefit from this by having many more things to see and do in their city without having to bear the full cost of sustaining them.

Visitation also delivers a range of benefits that are more difficult to measure but no less important to Christchurch including:

- Energy and excitement e.g. activation of central city precincts, atmosphere at major events.
- Opportunities to increase the profile of the city nationally and internationally, build deeper business relationships, exchange knowledge, attract talent and investment, and grow international trading channels.
- The opportunity for Christchurch to be domestically and globally connected e.g. the air services sustained by visitation which carry high value exports and support inbound and outbound travel.
- Investment attraction e.g. external investment in accommodation facilities and visitor attractions or scheduling of touring shows and exhibitions in Christchurch.
- The likelihood that some visitors, particularly international students, will choose to relocate their talents and capital to Christchurch, contributing to the wider economy.

With careful management these benefits initiate a cycle of improvement that delivers a more vibrant city and higher living standards for residents. The resulting impact on city image, confidence and pride has far-reaching benefits locally and regionally. Once this cycle has started it becomes increasingly self-sustaining over time as internal and external confidence grows and private sector capital and skills flow to the city.



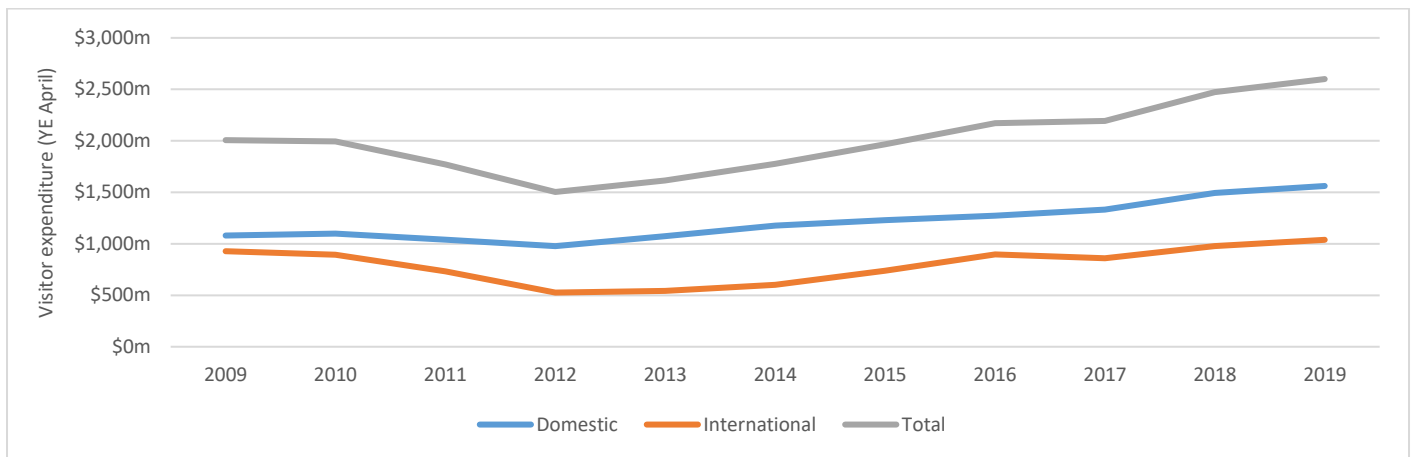
## ECONOMIC ASPIRATION

### Regain Christchurch’s pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy by 2025.

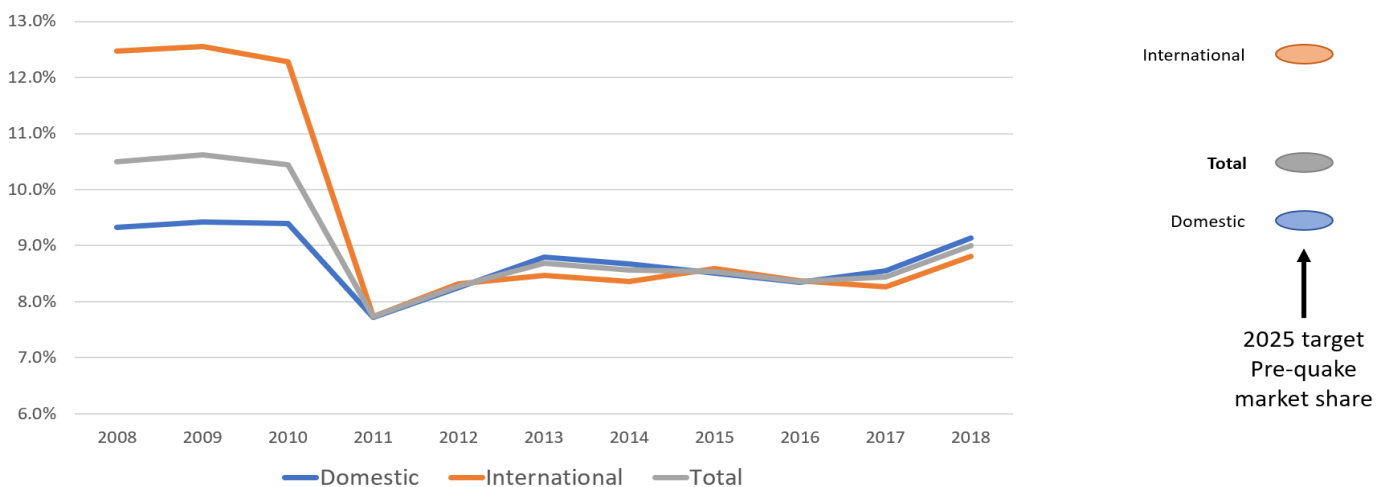
Regaining Christchurch’s pre-quake share of the national visitor economy will deliver Christchurch the economic, social and cultural outcomes described in the section above.

Pre-quake (2010) Christchurch’s market share of visitor expenditure nationally was 10.4%. Domestic market share was 9.4% and international market share was 12.3%.

Christchurch has seen good growth in visitor expenditure since 2012 in the wake of the earthquake disruption.



Visitor expenditure has been through a strong growth period in New Zealand overall. This means that whilst spending in Christchurch is above pre-quake levels, progress toward regaining pre-quake share of the national visitor spend has been more limited. Domestic visitor market share has recovered well, but international visitor market share is still significantly below the pre-quake level.



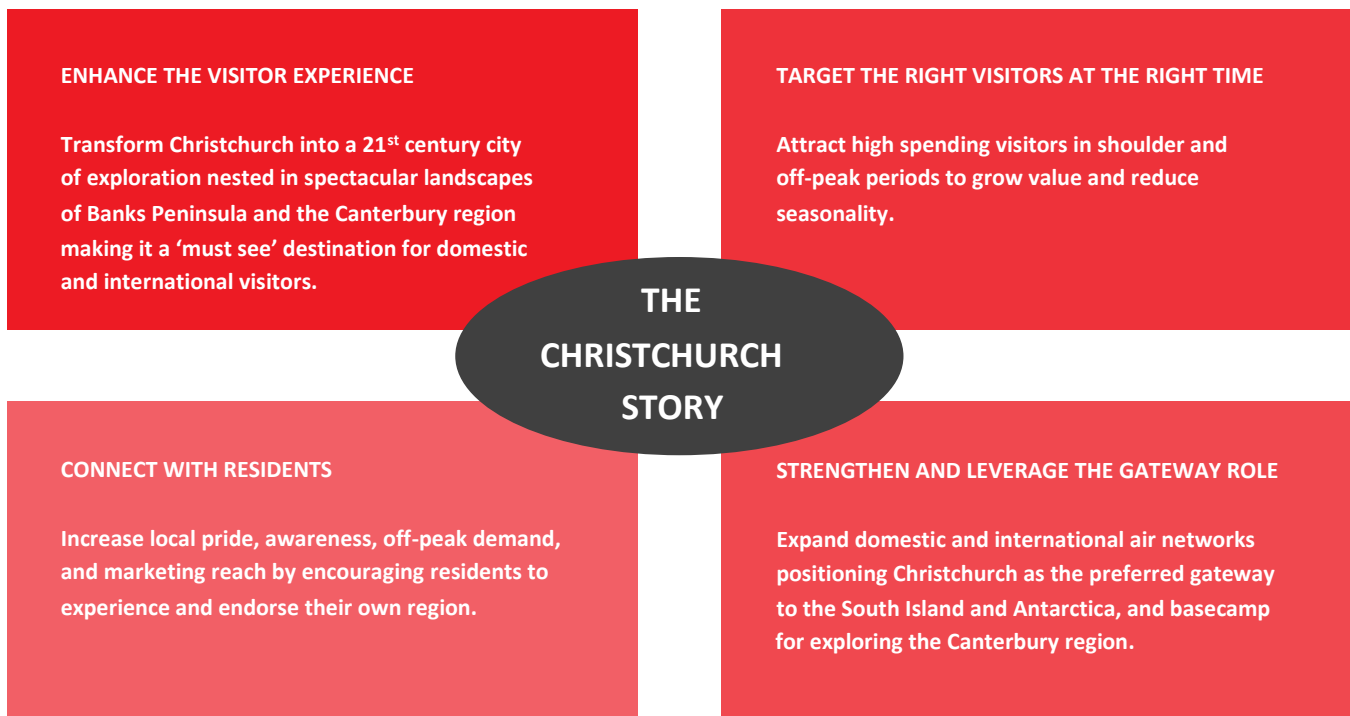
Source: MBIE Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates

Based on national visitor economy forecasts, this aspirational market share would deliver an estimated \$1billion of additional expenditure and 7,000 new jobs in the decade from 2015 to 2025. Growth in the visitor economy will underpin the social and cultural outcomes desired.



## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

# LONG-TERM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR GROWING CHRISTCHURCH'S VISITOR ECONOMY



The strategic framework was developed to guide Christchurch's visitor-related thinking, decision-making and investment over the next decade and beyond.

The centre-piece of the framework is the Christchurch Story which the visitor experience must consistently align to, and add value to, over time. The story "Explore the Opportunity" has been developed following the adoption of this strategic framework in 2016<sup>2</sup>.

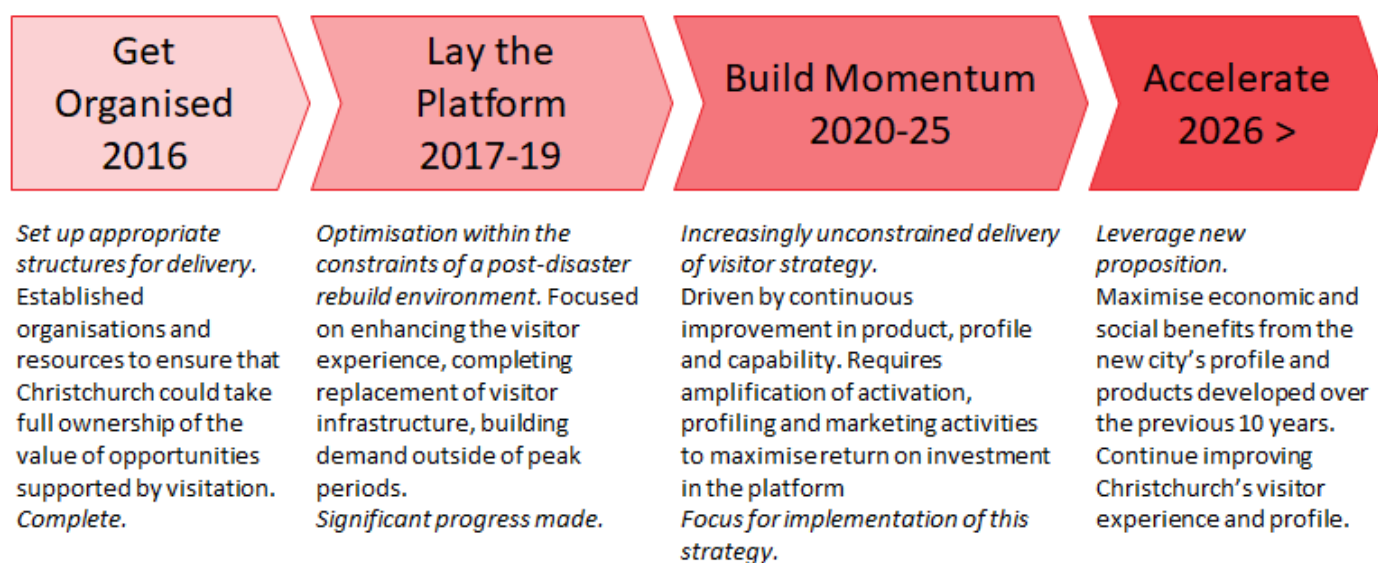
The four pillars of the framework cover the major supply and demand-side needs and opportunities that can determine Christchurch's long-term success as a destination and as a gateway to the South Island and Antarctica.

The framework provides Christchurch a consistent strategic approach to growing the visitor economy.

<sup>2</sup> [www.christchurchstory.com](http://www.christchurchstory.com)

## STAGED APPROACH

Because of the disruption imposed on the city, the maturity of the visitor offering shifted from an established stage to an early development stage. The pace and sequencing of the rebuild imposes practical constraints on Christchurch in terms of its visitor proposition and capacity. In this environment a staged approach has been necessary to reposition the city to move through development into a new mature offering. This will take many years to achieve. Each stage identified in the strategy reflects what needs to be done to mature the visitor economy, while taking into consideration the constraints and the necessary investments and timeframes to overcome them.



**Stage 1: Get organised for success.** This stage is complete. It involved the major steps of establishing a joined-up entity to lead delivery of the actions and initiatives outlined in this strategy and developing the Christchurch Story.

**Stage 2: Lay the platform.** During the years 2017 to 2019 focus has been on implementing key changes and initiatives to lay the platform for regaining Christchurch's pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy by 2025. This included a strong focus on developing the visitor proposition (supply-side) and building additional demand during shoulder and off-peak periods through creation of a supportive major events strategy and growth in conferences to smooth demand and improve asset utilisation (demand-side). Some major projects are still to be completed.<sup>3</sup>

**Stage 3: Build momentum.** From 2020, Christchurch can build momentum off the platform laid during stages 1 and 2, to regain Christchurch's pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy by 2025. As Christchurch's visitor economy moves beyond post-quake recovery of national market share, deeper consideration is required about how the visitor economy can deliver on the city's wider prosperity aspirations and 10-year goals as set out in the Christchurch Prosperity Framework, reinforce Christchurch's positioning as a city of exploration, and support the Christchurch's economic transformation into areas of high-value global growth opportunities.

**Stage 4: Accelerate.** Beyond 2025 Christchurch will be placed to continue growing its market share across all major visitor segments and ensuring Christchurch's visitor economy contributes to the city's wider prosperity goals.

The implementation actions in the following section focus primarily on completing stage 2 and initiating stage 3. The staging of actions and speed with which the city can shift focus to stage 3 will be determined to some extent by the delivery of key visitor assets.

<sup>3</sup> More detail of progress against the strategy can be found in the Visitor Strategy background paper.



## IMPLEMENTATION

Regaining and then growing our pre-earthquake market share is an ongoing challenge that can only be addressed by working together and making decisions that are in the best long-term interests of our city and its people. Implementation across all elements of the strategic framework is required to support acceleration of the visitor economy to achieve the economic aspiration of pre-earthquake national market share by 2025.

### THE CHRISTCHURCH STORY

The Christchurch story provides a powerful platform to support a more joined up approach to positioning, promotion of, and attraction to the city. The priority for amplification is the adoption and use of the Christchurch story by businesses and organisations to attract new business, investment, migration and visitation to the region. Use of a consistent storyline woven into different promotional activities has numerous benefits including:

- Clear and consistent internal and external messaging around what Christchurch is and has to offer using the Christchurch Story narrative.
- Ensuring that each year’s promotional investment builds on the last.
- Cost efficiencies arising from organisations being able to leverage shared promotional content, rather than having to develop their own.
- The ability to systematically influence internal and external perceptions of Christchurch.

#### Strategic focus to 2022

Action	Lead
Work with all invested parties to <b>clearly communicate a strong differentiated story of Christchurch</b> that supports, amplifies and leverages activities that attract visitors and builds resident pride in. Develop the specific sub-narratives needed to support the activities under the other four pillars of this strategy.	ChristchurchNZ
Build public-private-relationships that <b>focus resources to add richness and depth to the Christchurch story</b> and the toolkit of “Explore” resources. Develop the granularity applicable to specific target markets.	ChristchurchNZ
<b>Develop the city’s differentiating story propositions</b> under the umbrella Explore Christchurch story, including Banks Peninsula, Antarctica, Ngāi Tahu.	ChristchurchNZ

### ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

To gain a larger share of the national visitor economy, Christchurch needs to transform itself into a destination with a point of difference for domestic and international visitors. The rebuild is a critical step in this process because it is redefining Christchurch’s central city and providing infrastructure to attract and serve visitors e.g. Convention Centre, Avon River Precinct, Lyttelton cruise wharf, visitor accommodation, hospitality and attractions. A key focus for the next stage of strategy delivery is to address perceptions about the city such that visitors feel safe and welcomed into a friendly city and excited about what Christchurch and its surrounding area has to offer.

The visitor experience needs to be delivered in a way that consistently reinforces the Christchurch Story and its central tenant “explore the opportunity”. The story identifies this key attribute of Christchurch so that a unique and

compelling proposition can gradually be built around it. This theme will evolve with the city. To deliver a coordinated response to achieve this, a destination development plan will be created that will provide tactical direction for all parties that influence the visitor experience and clarifies the key visitor hub/s.

Christchurch is developing the newest central city infrastructure of any city in New Zealand. Ensuring it has been designed and planned to embody the character of a city of exploration and cater for visitor needs must be a priority. This requires visitor-friendly public spaces in the central city and an urban design and feel that fit the city story and make visitors welcome and relaxed.

Cruise ship tourism has been one of the fastest growing inbound sectors in New Zealand over the past two decades. Christchurch's ability to participate in this sector has been inhibited by damage to Lyttelton Port. A new cruise wharf will come into operation during the timeframe of this strategy enabling more and larger ships to visit Christchurch and Canterbury and a more balanced distribution of cruise activity between Lyttelton and Akaroa, further enhancing the visitors' experience of the city and region.

The development of major visitor attractors in and around Christchurch is necessary to alter travel patterns and materially increase visitation to Christchurch. To maximise the outcomes for Christchurch, these visitor attractors should create a unique point of difference, align with the Christchurch Story, leverage the city's competitive advantages and be, at least in part, all weather activities. These visitor attractors are expected to be largely privately funded but public sector agencies still have an important role to play in creating the right environment for investment to occur.

Development of major visitor attractors should be viewed as a partnership between public and private stakeholders to deliver better outcomes for Christchurch, especially since one of the positive spill-over benefits of new major attractors is more things for Christchurch residents to see and do – enhancing residents' quality of life. Investment in major visitor attractors needs to be pursued with urgency as long lead times mean that projects conceived now may take 3-5 years to be developed.

To be successful Christchurch's hard infrastructure and attractions must exist within a visitor friendly environment. Easy and ubiquitous access to broadband is a specific feature a modern city needs to provide for its visitors, enabling them to be the city's biggest advocates as they communicate with friends and family the world over. The key pillars of visitor friendliness that Christchurch must strive to uphold are:

- Making visitors feel safe and welcome through consistently high levels of customer service. Christchurch must embrace the spirit of Manaakitanga, providing guests with a warm welcome, ensuring that they are well cared for, and being respectful of their needs. Extra attention must be paid to segments and markets that Christchurch decides to target through tactical decisions based on market opportunities. Visitor sentiment needs to be understood to identify areas of weakness and what is needed to improve visitor experience.
- Providing visitors with the information and guidance they need to have a great experience through physical and digital channels. Visitor services play a key role in influencing the visitor experience and can have a material impact on awareness of opportunities, activity levels and expenditure.

## Strategic focus to 2022

### High-priority activities

Action	Lead
<b>Develop a Christchurch destination development plan</b> to coordinate a consistent approach to physical, product and service development that provides a coordinated experience, built around and amplifying the Christchurch story, recognising Christchurch within the context of the region and the South Island.	ChristchurchNZ
<b>Scheduled completion and optimal utilisation of new developments.</b> Essential developments include: the performing arts precinct; the Avon River Precinct, Cathedral Square; potential corridor of activities from city to sea through Avon river corridor regeneration; as well as other projects that enhance the visitor experience.	Project specific
<b>Support the planning and development of new physical and/or digital visitor attractors</b> that drive high year-round visitor flows and/or reinforce the Christchurch Story.	ChristchurchNZ
<p><b>Ensure the needs of the visitor and the development of the Christchurch destination informs infrastructure development, policy, regulation and planning frameworks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Council policy, operations and investment reflect the needs of visitors and the value visitation adds to resident wellbeing.</li> <li>Apply a visitor and Christchurch Story lens to all major construction projects, precinct development, infrastructure and open space provision to ensure that visitor needs are properly considered.</li> <li>Ensure appropriate infrastructure to service visitors is planned for and delivered, particularly accommodation, transport and internet connectivity.</li> <li>Improve access to visitor offerings outside the central city.</li> </ul>	Christchurch City Council, Industry, Environment Canterbury, other local and national government agencies
<p><b>Complete the development of a cruise wharf at Lyttelton.</b></p> <p>Once complete, take an <b>integrated approach to cruise ship access</b> for both Lyttelton and Akaroa that maximises visitor spend (and value-added opportunities) while recognising the needs of the local communities.</p>	Lyttelton Port Company Christchurch City Council
<b>Improve sustainability and develop carbon-neutral experiences, products and services.</b>	Industry, Christchurch City Council, central government

### Evolution activities

Action	Lead
Work with tourism operators to <b>grow high-quality, sustainable world-class offerings with consistent city narrative storytelling</b> , that delivers to targeted markets and builds on the assets developing in the central city and city environs including the seaside suburbs and Banks Peninsula.	ChristchurchNZ

<b>Leverage Central Government tourism funding</b> (www.mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism/tourism-funding) and other future funding avenues to reduce investment barriers and accelerate private sector investment in visitor experience improvement projects.	Project specific
<b>Develop and improve visitor sentiment monitoring</b> and develop collaborative responses to emerging issues.	ChristchurchNZ
<b>Develop a city ambassadors programme.</b>	ChristchurchNZ

## TARGET THE RIGHT VISITORS AT THE RIGHT TIME

Christchurch must extract maximum value from its limited resources by targeting the right visitors at the right time of year.

### High-value visitors

Visitors have differing spend profiles depending on the purpose and length of their travel. The strategy seeks primarily to increase the value of visitation by attracting more visitor types that have a high average daily spend.

Research conducted in preparation of this strategy has identified four high value visitor segments for Christchurch to focus on:

- Leisure – short-stay visitors with high daily spend mainly concentrated in the peak and shoulder seasons
- Major events – short-stay visitors with high daily spend whose visits align with event schedules
- Business events - short-stay visitors with high daily spend mainly concentrated outside peak season
- Education – long-stay visitors with high overall spend attracting additional visits from friends and relatives

Direct air services into Christchurch provide significantly more value to the South Island from international visitors than indirect air services via Auckland. Accelerating growth in the visitor economy is supported by Christchurch Airport’s ability to attract new international air services targeting international markets with which Christchurch has, or can establish, direct and commercially viable air services.

In addition to targeting direct air services, Christchurch must work with Air New Zealand and other carriers to bring more international and domestic visitors to Christchurch through the domestic network throughout the year.

### Addressing seasonality

Addressing the considerable seasonal variability of the visitor economy is a crucial element of this strategy. The shoulder and off-peak periods create challenges for investors and operators, but also provide opportunities to stimulate visitation to create more consistent levels of demand across the year. Conferences, major events and winter sports all have the potential to attract visitors to Christchurch outside peak tourism periods, as does growth in education visitors. The new convention centre, Te Pae, has an important role to play in lifting off-peak demand, along with planned sports facilities and retail and entertainment facilities that provide enjoyable visitor experiences throughout the year. If seasonality constraints can be addressed then accommodation, hospitality and entertainment venue investment can be attracted more easily as risk is reduced.

Emphasis of demand stimulation will be focussed on shoulder and off-peak periods. The main objective is to reduce the impact of seasonality on businesses in Christchurch by improving asset utilisation and cash flow across the year and improve year-round vibrancy in the city.

Marketing initiatives for each segment will be aligned to consumer preference. The Christchurch experience can be promoted to South Island residents, the Christchurch & Canterbury experience to North Island residents and the Canterbury and/or South Island experience to international visitors. This is based on patterns of supply and demand that will change so the proposition focus for key visitor segments will need to be regularly reviewed and refined.

Time of year	Demand stimulation focus
Peak	Minimal
Shoulder	Marketing
Off-peak	Major events, business events and winter proposition

### Export education

Export education offers a significant growth opportunity for Christchurch. However, competition for students is increasing internationally so maintaining a competitive international education offering is increasingly important. As well as students and their visiting families directly consuming goods and services, export education attracts bright young people from all over the world to Christchurch. This benefits the city by introducing new ideas, new thinking and talented young people who bring their global networks, catalyse innovation and may become part of Christchurch’s future workforce. This provides is an opportunity to address local skills shortages for future growth industries.

### Events and conferencing

Major events will be delivered in accordance with the Major Events Strategy which was developed in response to this Visitor Strategy. This vision of the Major Events Strategy is that Christchurch has a focused portfolio of major events, business events and festivals that expresses the spirit of Christchurch and its people, including the aspirations of mana whenua. Events build a strong profile for Christchurch, nationally and internationally, attracts visitors throughout the year and leave a positive legacy for the community and wider region. Events with large visitor footprints will be held during shoulder and off-peak seasons.

In addition to growing the visitor economy when it’s most needed, major events and business events generate a range of spill-over benefits for Christchurch including:

- Promotion of the Christchurch Story and industry strengths internally and externally through leverage programmes and domestic/international media coverage. Conferences that align with the Christchurch Story and support the growth of Christchurch and Canterbury’s high-value sectors will be targeted.
- Lifting local pride and confidence through greater vibrancy and the ability to participate.
- Providing opportunities for locals to observe, learn and connect by bringing people to Christchurch, with the potential to build deeper business relationships, exchange knowledge, attract talent and investment, and grow international trading channels.



## Strategic focus to 2022

### High-priority activities

Action	Lead
<b>Develop a business events strategy</b> for Christchurch to maximise existing and new venue utilisation and ensure Christchurch reclaims its status as a significant conference destination in Australasia through: promotion; provision of accurate information and familiarisation activity; and development of pre/post conference incentive offerings in Christchurch and Canterbury. Target conferences that promote the Christchurch story and support the growth of Christchurch and Canterbury's high-value sectors.	ChristchurchNZ
<b>Optimise the value from new developments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete new developments</b> including: the convention centre, Te Pae, Metro sports centre and multi-use arena; as well other projects that can enhance visitor experiences and attract high value visitors outside of peak season.</li> <li>• <b>Develop programmes for new leisure facilities</b> such as Metro Sports, Salt Water Pools and multi-use arena to ensure good asset utilisation and visitor attraction from opening.</li> </ul>	Project specific
Address seasonality through the <b>development of off-season product</b> (including iconic events focussed on domestic and Australian markets, leveraging the Canterbury region's winter sport attractions) and targeted promotion, with a short-term focus on engaging domestic visitors with the central city.	ChristchurchNZ, Industry
<b>Partner with others</b> (Tourism New Zealand, airlines etc) <b>to deliver marketing campaigns</b> that grow shoulder and off-peak season demand through a market portfolio approach.	ChristchurchNZ, Christchurch International Airport

### Evolution activities

Action	Lead
<b>Develop high-end accommodation</b> to address supply shortcomings for high value markets.	Industry
<b>Deliver marketing and support programmes that support the attraction of more international and domestic (from outside Christchurch) students</b> , enhance the student experience, increase friends and family visitation and increase the retention of students in our economy post-study.	Tertiary Institutions, Schools, ChristchurchNZ
Partner with Education New Zealand to <b>align local efforts with national international education strategies</b> that support delivery of this strategy and broader economic development goals by focussing on the high value STEM students our future economy needs.	Tertiary Institutions, ChristchurchNZ
<b>Evolve the city's major events portfolio</b> to grow the economic and promotional value of major events; shift focus from event delivery to catalysing, supporting and attracting world-class events.	ChristchurchNZ

Investigate ways to <b>grow events funding</b> to attract and leverage major and business events to ensure success of city investment in event infrastructure.	ChristchurchNZ
Partner with Sport New Zealand and Major Events New Zealand to <b>attract major events outside of peak seasons.</b>	ChristchurchNZ

## STRENGTHEN AND LEVERAGE GATEWAY ROLE

Christchurch is the natural gateway to the South Island and a basecamp for exploration of the Canterbury region. It is also one of only five gateways to Antarctica.

The opportunity for Christchurch of being a gateway is to be part of an enhanced South Island visitor proposition and expanded South Island travel market overall. By strengthening Christchurch’s gateway role in the context of a compelling South Island proposition, Christchurch benefits from more incidental visitation and expenditure by people who would not visit Christchurch if it was not the gateway, and greater destination awareness resulting from the city’s position being aligned with the Canterbury and South Island brands. Christchurch’s high gateway value means that the strength of the South Island brand and visitor proposition is very important to Christchurch’s success as a visitor destination. It also means that Christchurch’s association with the South Island in the minds of travellers is equally important.

Christchurch has an opportunity to enhance its role as a basecamp for exploration of the wider Canterbury region. With much of Canterbury’s visitor offering within a 2-hour drive of the city, Christchurch has the potential to offer visitors a rich mix of experiences from a single location.

Christchurch is also one of only five global gateways to Antarctica. This is a key point of difference that Christchurch can leverage to attract and engage visitors. In 2015 the economic benefit of Christchurch’s gateway status to Canterbury was \$235m and 3,675 jobs. A significant proportion of this economic value is derived from visitation – both from the summer Antarctic research and operations teams from the United States, Italy, South Korea and New Zealand, which generated \$117.8 million in economic benefit in 2015, and visitors to Christchurch who experience Christchurch’s Antarctic connection through engaging with local visitor attractions and events. The Christchurch Antarctic Gateway Strategy has identified the development of the Antarctic Gateway visitor proposition, and further growth in National Antarctic Programmes using Christchurch as a logistics hub as key actions within the strategy.

### Strategic focus to 2022

#### *High-priority activities*

Action	Lead
<b>Market Christchurch as a basecamp for exploring Canterbury</b> (i.e. the hub for a “hub and spoke” visitor experience).	ChristchurchNZ
<b>Grow the Antarctic-related visitor offering</b> to connect and excite visitors and residents about Antarctic in Christchurch.	The Antarctic Office

### Evolution activities

Action	Lead
<b>Support delivery of the South Island Destination Management Plan</b> and work with the wider tourism industry to shift the proposition focus for international leisure visitors to South Island via Christchurch Airport and Canterbury via Lyttelton Port.	ChristchurchNZ, Industry, Local Government
Continue to <b>attract higher levels of direct international air connectivity.</b>	Christchurch International Airport
<b>Target marketing at international markets that Christchurch Airport has, or can establish, direct air services with.</b>	ChristchurchNZ, Tourism New Zealand
<b>Target gateway visitors</b> to stay longer and spend more in Christchurch.	ChristchurchNZ, Industry

## CONNECT WITH RESIDENTS

Visitation can drive or support many positive economic and community outcomes. Visitors contributes to social and economic development, directly through expenditure which creates jobs, and indirectly by enabling the city to sustain more social amenity than its residents could otherwise support.

Residents are the city's greatest resource to champion the city to visitors. However, this depends on residents understanding the positive impacts visitors can bring, and the experiences the city has to offer. Connecting with residents to develop this knowledge creates a situation where residents welcome and look after visitors; and residents and visitors increasingly become ambassadors and champions for Christchurch. Our residents should be encouraged to take every opportunity to promote Christchurch, encouraging friends, family and acquaintances to come here.

The wider Canterbury and the South Island communities are an important aspect to this as many are regular visitors to the city, and the city proposition is integrally linked with the South Island visitor experience.

Over half of all domestic visitor nights in Christchurch are spent in the homes of friends and relatives. Residents therefore have considerable influence over what their guests see and do while they are in the city. They are also highly influential marketers through their personal and professional networks, social media and word-of-mouth promotion. In addition to delivering positive visitor outcomes, providing residents with great experiences will increase local pride, confidence and living standards.

### Strategic focus to 2022

#### High-priority activities

Action	Lead
<b>Deliver local engagement activities that excite the community</b> about: the positive impacts on the local community from visitor activity; and encourage residents to engage with the city's offerings and marketing campaigns so that they become ambassadors for Christchurch.	Christchurch City Council, Industry, ChristchurchNZ

**Evolution activities**

Action	Lead
<p><b>Strengthen regional marketing initiatives, information provision and channels to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of, engagement and satisfaction with the many attractions residents and visitors support such as restaurants, entertainment venues, parks, museums, galleries and events that Christchurch has to offer. Short term focus on engaging with the central city.</li> <li>• Increase demand for visitor attractions during off-peak periods.</li> <li>• Leverage personal networks to promote the city (social media and word-of-mouth).</li> </ul>	ChristchurchNZ
<p><b>Proactively manage community impacts of transition of cruise visitation from Akaroa to Lyttleton.</b></p>	Christchurch City Council
<p><b>Develop Council policies for short term letting of residential properties to visitors</b> to provide certainty for the accommodation sector and residents on acceptable operating practices.</p>	Christchurch City Council



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