

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



Dear member,

2020 is certainly testing the resilience of many of our citizens, businesses and other organisations. City Centre operator's dependent upon foot traffic have been particularly hard hit by the triple-whammy of disruptive construction activities, an absence of international tourists and the rapid rise of many having to, or choosing to, work from home. The duration of these impacts is difficult to judge at the present time. The Committee's recent workshop - Reinventing Auckland's City Centre made a compelling case for the important role the City Centre plays in a vibrant city. It was good to see the interest in this issue. Looking to the future, in spite of the recent second wave of Coronavirus cases, if we can successfully combine our inherent natural advantage of geographic remoteness with appropriate border controls at ports of entry, New Zealand, and Auckland will emerge as the place desired by many (you may recognise that as the somewhat unfairly derided slogan proposed by ATEED back in 2016). We've already seen early evidence of this with wealthy foreigners seeking to purchase property and visas. We need to prepare for that day.

Like many knowledge workers, I'm in the fortunate position of being able to work from home. Ignoring the warnings of various well-intentioned electronic nannies telling me that my screen time is up x% from normal, I have indulged in viewing the odd Ted talk whilst "confined to quarters". For lovers of architecture, I can recommend a Ted Talk featuring world renowned architect Renzo Piano (of The Shard, London and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris fame). As I'm sure it will with all of you, the one line that really resonated with me was "Better cities make better citizens". That simple statement goes a long way to covering what the Committee for Auckland is all about.

Covid-19 has undeniably served as a catalyst, accelerating some emerging trends that may otherwise have taken several years to manifest such as the uptake of flexible working arrangements, the rapid deployment of new communication technologies, and unfortunately the exploitation of IT security vulnerabilities. For our next event we're planning to explore several of these workforce and technology trends and the implications for Auckland. Further details to follow.

Sincerely,
Mark Spencer

COMMITTEE FOR AUCKLAND



EVENTS & NETWORKING

Reinvigorating Auckland's City Center

On Monday 3 August CfA held an event focused on how to respond to the multiple threats currently facing Auckland's CBD. These threats range from disruptive construction activities through to an absence of tourists, students and office workers as a consequence of the current border restriction and a growing number of people electing to study or work remotely some or all of the time.

Mark Thomas (MD Serviceworks) facilitated a guest panel comprised of Viv Beck (CEO, Heart of the City), Derek McCormack (Vice Chancellor, AUT University) and Annette Jones (Technical Fellow - Urban Design).

The subject clearly resonated with very senior civic, local and central government, cultural, institutional, Iwi and business leaders, who attended the event, with a number actively participating in the ensuing frank and constructive discussion and lingering to continue the conversation following the conclusion of the event.

Viv provided a quick summary of the challenges being faced by tenants and residents of the CBD, whilst Derek focused on the considerable economic benefit foreign students provide to the city and the country as a whole. Annette rounded out the panel discussion with a combination of informative material concerning the movement of people throughout the central city, counterbalanced with some personal insights as a city fringe resident.

Towards the end of the facilitated discussion, Kirsten Paisley (Director of Auckland Art Gallery) gave a great "mini speech" that summed up the sentiment in the room - that New Zealand has achieved an enviable position on the world stage and that Auckland needs to prepare for an inevitable increase in visitor numbers once our borders are opened up to foreign visitors.



Upcoming events

Much has been talked and written about how work might change in the future and what the impact of technology could be. And then, suddenly, we're here with substantial remote working, much greater virtual transacting and even e-caring. But what do we do with this future, now we are part of it? What are the implications for Auckland's physical spaces? What's the workforce impact? How do we need technology to develop? How will the more vulnerable need supporting? Keep an eye out of the Committee for Auckland's workforce and technology event in October: Working Smarter in Auckland.

Also look out for '[Cultured Conversations](#)' by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. This digital series asks leaders to explore contemporary issues and ideas as we navigate the impacts of COVID-19. It's hosted by Gallery Director, Kirsten Paisley. [Listen to the Cultured Conversations episodes here!](#)

NEWS & PUBLICATIONS

Auckland Recovery Survey

The Auckland Recovery survey was conducted between 22 and 29 May. It surveyed Committee for Auckland members, and Future Auckland Leaders programme alumni. The survey was conducted in partnership with the Committees for Cities and Regions Network (C4), a group of 20 Australian and New Zealand sister organisations coordinated by the Committee for Melbourne.

The results of the Auckland recovery survey highlight that the Auckland Covid-19 recovery priorities are to support economic development and address poverty.

Respondents said these two areas had been most negatively impacted by the pandemic and needed the greatest attention from Auckland's leaders said Board Chair Mark Spencer.



"Additional priorities were housing and new projects resulting from Covid-19. All were ahead of transport and climate change as priority issues for action as Auckland plans its pandemic recovery response."

"87% of organisations reported they had been negatively impacted by the pandemic with almost 50% saying it had been significant."

"As a consequence, respondents said it was important Auckland Council update or transform its existing project priorities to better respond to the Covid-19 impact. This reflects what many Committee for Auckland members have underway."

Respondents said the top focus for the government and Auckland Council should be adapting to work with Covid-19 closely followed by new priority projects. Only a minority ranked resuming business-as-usual operations as the top priority.

Respondents concluded that Auckland Council will make significantly less progress unless it makes changes.

Board members Mihi Blair and Mark Thomas presented the CfA Auckland Recovery Survey to Councillor Desley Simpson, the Chair of council's Finance & Performance Committee which will make decisions on the Auckland Council emergency budget. The information presented to Council provided a new and different perspective. Desley was reflective on the emphasis on poverty as a priority.

You can read the [newsroom story here](#).

UPDATE

Meet the Board



Anne Blackburn |
Director



Derek McCormack |
Vice-Chancellor, AUT



Mark Spencer |
Group Director,
Beca



Tom Irvine |
Chief Operations Officer,
Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei



Mihi Blair |
Operations Manager,
Procure Health



Simon Vannini |
Partner, Simpson Grierson



Mark Thomas |
Executive Director,
Serviceworks

"Having spent most of the last four years working in (and now virtually with) Asia on our cities and technology business, there's a wealth of ideas from Seoul, Singapore and Taipei that can contribute more to Auckland's progress. The Auckland Recovery Survey showed that Covid doesn't have to stop this as most of us see more opportunities than adversities. I'm looking forward to the role the Committee can play not just in helping shape our recovery but in the progress that comes next."

– Mark Thomas

MEMBERSHIP

New members

Creating a Better Auckland: Become a member to inform the Committee's advocacy with government and inform the broader public debate.

Contact us to discuss your membership options and prices.

E: admin@committeeforauckland.co.nz

Future Auckland Leaders programme

A number of members have asked about the Future Auckland Leaders (FAL) programme. A minimum viable cohort is 20 participants, with around 24 being ideal from a networking perspective. We now invite members to indicate their intention to put forward candidates for this outstanding leadership programme. We also provide the option for member organisations to sponsor an emerging leader Subject to achieving target numbers, the next intake would commence early in 2021. Further information concerning the FAL programme can be found on the Committee for Auckland website.

To nominate or enquire email admin@committeeforauckland.co.nz