



# Pōneke's Premiere Place to Play.

Courtenay Precinct Investment Prospectus 2024

**Absolutely Positively  
Wellington City Council**  
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

**Ehara taku toa i te  
toa takitahi, engari  
he toa takitini ke.**

**Success is not the  
work of one, but  
the work of many.**

> A window into our  
economic vibrancy and  
identity of Wellington.



# Welcome to Courtenay precinct.



**Courtenay precinct holds a unique place in our city. For decades it has been a place for everyone.**

In recent years, we've seen Courtenay Place not reach its full potential, which is why one of my top priorities has been to see it revived so that it is a thriving place for our people.

We want a colourful, creative destination that attracts residents, tourists and investment into the area. We want to work with local developers, property owners, iwi and the private sector to strengthen Courtenay precinct's offering as a destination and a neighbourhood.

Collaboration and open dialogue with the community and businesses are key to revitalising and making Pōneke a safe place to play, but most importantly a place we can all be proud of.

This is a priority for me as Mayor of Wellington and I invite you to join us on this exciting journey into a future where Courtenay precinct is reimagined, and where everyone is welcome.

Mayor Tory Whanau



**Wellington City Council is committed to revitalising Courtenay precinct and making it a safe and vibrant place for businesses and people wanting to enjoy world class events and hospitality.**

We've made a significant investment already with the restoration of St James Theatre as well as the new Tākina Convention and Exhibition Centre. The Council is committed through our Long-term Plan to continue to invest in revitalising the city, specifically transport and infrastructure projects that shape our city and enable us to grow.

Through ongoing collaboration with local businesses and partners, we are confident that Courtenay precinct will once again reclaim its position as the vibrant heart of Pōneke.

Wellington is in the midst of a once in a generation transformation. We welcome partnership from like-minded companies and individuals committed to making Pōneke a creative capital where people and nature thrive.

CEO Barbara McKerrow



**Courtenay precinct has a proud history as Wellington's gathering place. Originally the home of Te Aro Pā, it has now established itself as Pōneke's leading entertainment district.**

Loosely defined as the district between Cambridge Terrace and Taranaki Street, the Courtenay precinct is centered around Courtenay Place and is the beginning of the 'Golden Mile'. It's the entry point to the central city and a leaping off point for many of Wellington's iconic experiences.

The precinct has a high concentration of theatres, bars and restaurants that bring our city to life during the day and night. The area is also home to a growing population, diverse technology and creative businesses, and independent retail that contribute to the economic vibrancy and identity of Wellington. On the edges of the precinct lie the waterfront, Te Papa Tongarewa and our newest civic building, the 5-Green Star rated Tākina Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The precinct has been identified by Wellington City Council as a strategic priority for revitalisation.

***We're looking for civic-minded partners interested in the future of Wellington to help bring 'Courtenay Precinct: Our Premier Place to Play' to life.***

With opportunities from small scale activations and new commercial operators to prime development investment, we can revitalise this precinct together, ensuring Courtenay precinct's success as a central part of Wellington's cultural and economic landscape.

# Prime for investment.



**TĀKINA**  
\$179m project opened 2023, dedicated exhibition centre and annual conference capacity for 73k delegates. Delivered \$38m GDP in 2023/24.

**MOLLY MALONES**  
Developer committed to major redevelopment.

**OPERA HOUSE**  
85k event attendees in 2022/23.

**READING CINEMA**  
Redevelopment opportunity.

**PUBLIC SPACE UPGRADES**  
Civic investment in major public space upgrades expected.

**KOREA HOUSE**  
Developer committed to major redevelopment.

**EMBASSY CINEMA**  
Front entrance restoration in 2022.

**ST JAMES THEATRE**  
\$41m upgrade completed in 2022. 110k event attendees in 2022/23.

**HYDE LANE**  
150 luxury apartments and three commercial units on a new laneway due to open in 2024.

# Courtenay precinct by the numbers.



**\$**  
**\$220m**

**COUNCIL INVESTMENT**  
Across St James and Tākina. Additional investment in Courtenay Place upgrades.



**8,500**

**EMPLOYEES**



**876**

**BUSINESSES**



**11,800**

**RESIDENTS**

In the Courtenay precinct area



**\$**  
**\$500m**

**ANNUAL CONSUMER SPEND**

In Courtenay/Cuba



**\$1.6b**

**TOTAL GDP COURTENAY/CUBA**

(~5% of Wellington City)



**>3,000**

**PEDESTRIAN COUNTS PER HOUR**

Saturdays – the busiest day



**23,000**

**DAILY PEDESTRIAN COUNT**

At the Manners/Dixon/  
Courtenay intersection



**6,000**

**PASSENGERS**

Daily average boarding and alighting  
buses over three months



**20,000**

**RESIDENTS**

Estimated by 2050

# A visitor magnet.

As a compact, cosmopolitan and creative destination with a world-class events calendar, tourism is a vital part of Wellington's economy. The city is famous for a vibrant culture, fueled by great manaaki, and recognised as the most creative city in Aotearoa. Courtenay precinct has a concentration of museums, theatres and cinemas that host iconic events marking it as the cornerstone of our visitor economy.

## 1.5m

**ANNUAL VISITORS**

To the precinct from Te Papa alone



Photo credit: Jason Mann

**150,000**

annual visitors to Tākina

**\$1542m**

domestic visitor spend

**C\$49.8m**

estimated out of region spend due to events in civic venues

**69%**

commercial accommodation occupancy rate vs. national average of 55%

**2,598k**

total visitor nights

**70%**

of visitor spend in Wellington is from New Zealanders

**~500k**

attendees at performance events across civic venues

**~54k**

delegates at business events in civic venues

**\$155.67**

revenue per available hotel room on average

**6,037,654**

total potential domestic trips to Wellington

# In good company.



The Courtenay precinct is home to a range of businesses with a strong focus on technology, hospitality and professional services. With its proximity to Mount Victoria, the waterfront, and relatively lower rental cost per sqm compared with Lambton Quay and The Terrace, the area is particularly attractive to technology businesses including Xero, Trade Me, Creative HQ, Optimal Workshop and MOBI.

## CAFE AND WINEBAR

Glou Glou opened in January 2024

*"We opened Glou Glou as we saw a gap in the market and see amazing value and potential for Courtenay precinct. Our roots are here and there's a strong sense of community that supports both our day and nighttime offerings. We love this side of town!"*



**876** businesses, concentration of hospitality, tech & professional services

**95** licensed restaurants and bars in the area

**38** Asian restaurants

**\$1.6b** in GDP (5% of Wellington City)

Photo credits: Phoebe Mackenzie

# A growing neighbourhood.

Wellington's inner city is its largest unofficial suburb, with a population that's tipped to double in the next ten years. Modelling from Wellington City Council's urban design team shows the inner city's largest opportunity for more housing is in Kent and Cambridge Terrace, and around the Basin Reserve, which will drive more visitation and business activity in and around Courtenay precinct.

Inner city residents are attracted to the precinct with its dual offering of city life and easy access to the natural environment (the waterfront, Mt Victoria town belt). In addition to providing work and entertainment opportunities, the precinct is flanked by two central city supermarkets, a weekend market and excellent primary, secondary and tertiary schools.

# 150

## ONE-TO-TWO BEDROOM APARTMENTS

Hyde Lane is an exciting new residential high-rise development that will invigorate the wider area, bringing new energy and new business to the Courtenay precinct.



**59%** of residents are aged 20-39

**79%** of residents aged 18-29 identify Courtenay precinct as one of their most used precincts for social, cultural and recreational activities



# A host of opportunities.



## Office space

A variety of level one office tenancies are available in the area, in particular on Blair and Allen Streets.

These offer high quality commercial spaces, with heritage features and structural strengthening complete.

Office size ranges from 155sqm through to 1050 sqm.

The area has a lower leasing \$/sqm relative to Lambton Quay and The Terrace.



## Hotels

Wellington city hosted 2.2 million commercial nights in 2023. Hotel demand forecast to exceed supply as soon as 2027 in Wellington City.

At present, the Courtenay precinct is home to a mix of accommodation options – TRYP, Oaks Hotel, QT Museum Hotel, Cambridge Hotel, YHA backpackers and more out towards Oriental Bay.

Wellington City has a consistently high occupancy rate throughout the year due to business travel and major events. Seasonality is less pronounced due to the strength and diversity of domestic tourists, which account for 70% of Wellington’s visitor spend. This leads to greater stability in room rates.

There is demand for a range of accommodation options, with 43% of potential visitors wanting to stay in motels and 40% wanting to stay in a hotel.

This demand continues to grow, largely driven by visitors to Tākina.



## Markets

There is a gap in Wellington for inner city markets.

Twenty-six percent of domestic visitors want to eat at local restaurants and 23 percent want to shop at farmers’ or local food markets, bringing a potential market size of 1.5 million visitors a year.

In its first year of trade, more than 2 million people visited Christchurch’s Riverside Market \$80m development, with spending figures for the first three months of trade showing an extra \$1m a week was being spent in the central city.



## Hospitality and retail

Ground floor opportunities, size available from 69sqm to 388sqm.

Courtenay precinct is known for its hospitality sector. There is interest in food-first dining offerings. Ortega, Capitol and Dragonfly are examples of successful high-end dining in the area.

Blair and Allen Street are home to a boutique retail offering, such as Small Acorns, Yvette Edwards and Kura Gallery.

\$750/sqm average net effective retail rents in Courtenay precinct.



## Family-friendly attraction

Analysis shows there is opportunity for family-friendly experiences and there is a gap in the market to capture that spend.

Average 3,000 pedestrian counts per hour on Saturdays consistently across the day (WCC Viva City Sensors, 2023).

Comparatively, when Queensgate Mall reopened in 2022, visitation increased, with total sales for the year end 31 March 2023 up 19.7% on the prior year, and up 18.4% on the year end 31 March 2019 (pre Covid-19). This increased visitation is helping to drive leasing activity for the centre, resulting in higher rents, which has partially offset the softening of the capitalisation rate for the centre.



## Apartment housing

With the population expected to double by 2048, there is demand for housing in Pōneke.

Average residential rent in Wellington City was \$578 in 2023, compared to \$542 in New Zealand. This is higher in the central city.

Wellington’s new District Plan will allow our central city to thrive with increased intensification and mixed-use spaces, as well as taller and denser developments.

Average inner city (Te Aro) housing value is \$627,000.

## Courtenay precinct timeline

**1820s**

Te Aro Pa was established

**1855**

Earthquake raises land that eastern Courtenay precinct was built on

**1900s**

A railway station between Tory, Blair and Allen Streets was the main site for local markets

**1910s**

St James Theatre and Opera House built

**1920s**

Opening of De Luxe Cinema and Paramount Cinemas

**1940s**

First Chinese restaurant opened

**1990s**

Boom in cafés, restaurants and bars

**2000s**

Lord of the Rings premiere

**2019**

Closure of Reading Cinema

**2022**

Reopening of St James Theatre

**2023**

Opening of Tākina

# About the Wellington region.



Wellington City population **216,000** (students, families and Yo-Pros dominate)



**3** universities, **30,000** tertiary students



Wellington the most **creative** city in Aotearoa since 2000



Wellingtonians have the highest household **income** in NZ



Greater Wellington regional population **550,500**



High quality of life **89%** agree



Wellington ranked **7th** in Safe Cities Index



The only city **increasing** its native birdlife



# Working with you.

Wellington City Council's Economic Wellbeing and City Development teams work collaboratively with businesses, investors and Council staff to turn complex problems into dynamic solutions. We offer a concierge service tailored to your needs and work closely with relevant teams to ensure you receive the necessary information and service to inform your investment decisions.

- » Making introductions across Council and the business community.
- » Site identification and 'on-the-ground' support.
- » Market intelligence.
- » Support through grants and incentive programmes.
- » Providing information regarding regulatory frameworks and project requirements.

We look forward to becoming your trusted partner from idea through to reality. We are open to innovative approaches that lead to great outcomes and welcome discussions around these.

## Get in touch with our team



MELISSA DAVEY  
Economic Strategy & Commercial Manager  
Melissa.Davey@wcc.govt.nz

Leading city revitalisation and sharing trends to help bring new opportunities to the area.



PRAK SRITHARAN  
Central City Manager  
Prak.Sritharan@wcc.govt.nz

Working alongside businesses as a central point of contact to realise new opportunities and pathways through council processes.



PHIL BECKER  
Manager City Development  
Phil.Becker@wcc.govt.nz

Working with investors and developers to deliver high quality urban regeneration projects that are commercially viable and enhance the city's resilience and sustainability.

# Be part of a reimagined Courtenay precinct.

**Absolutely Positively**  
**Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke