



PŌNEKE PULSE

An economic check for Winter 2024

August 2024

**Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke

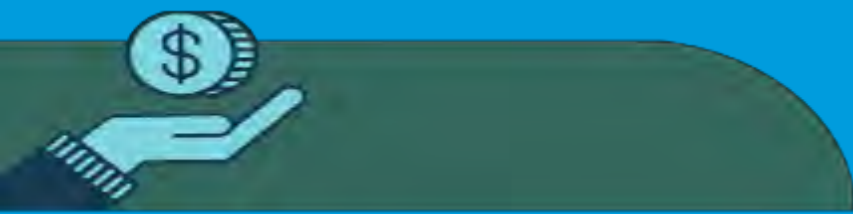
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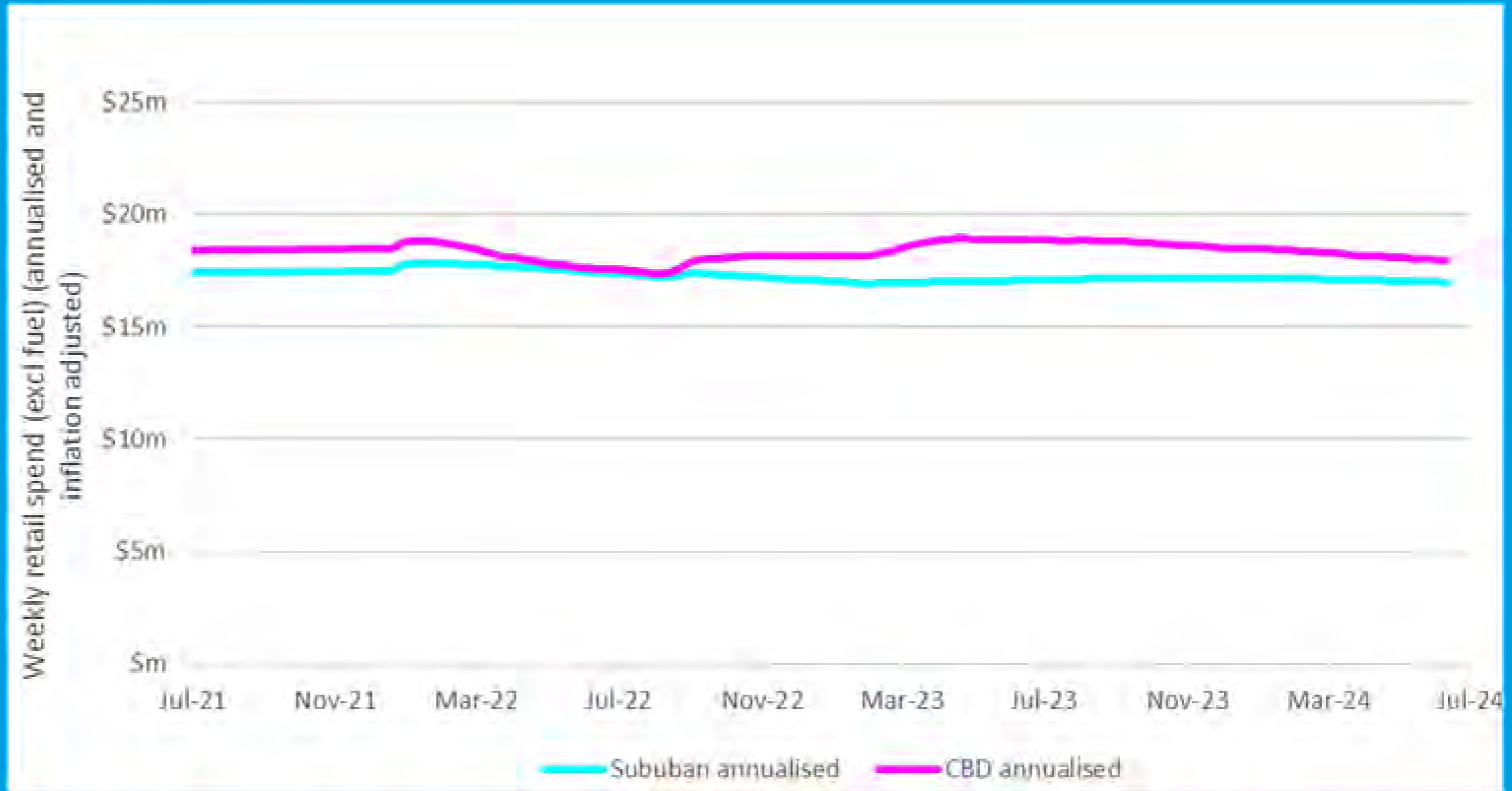
- Retail spend
- City employment
- Transport loadings
- Summary

Spotlight: Cultural expressions

- A selection of events that carry us through winter



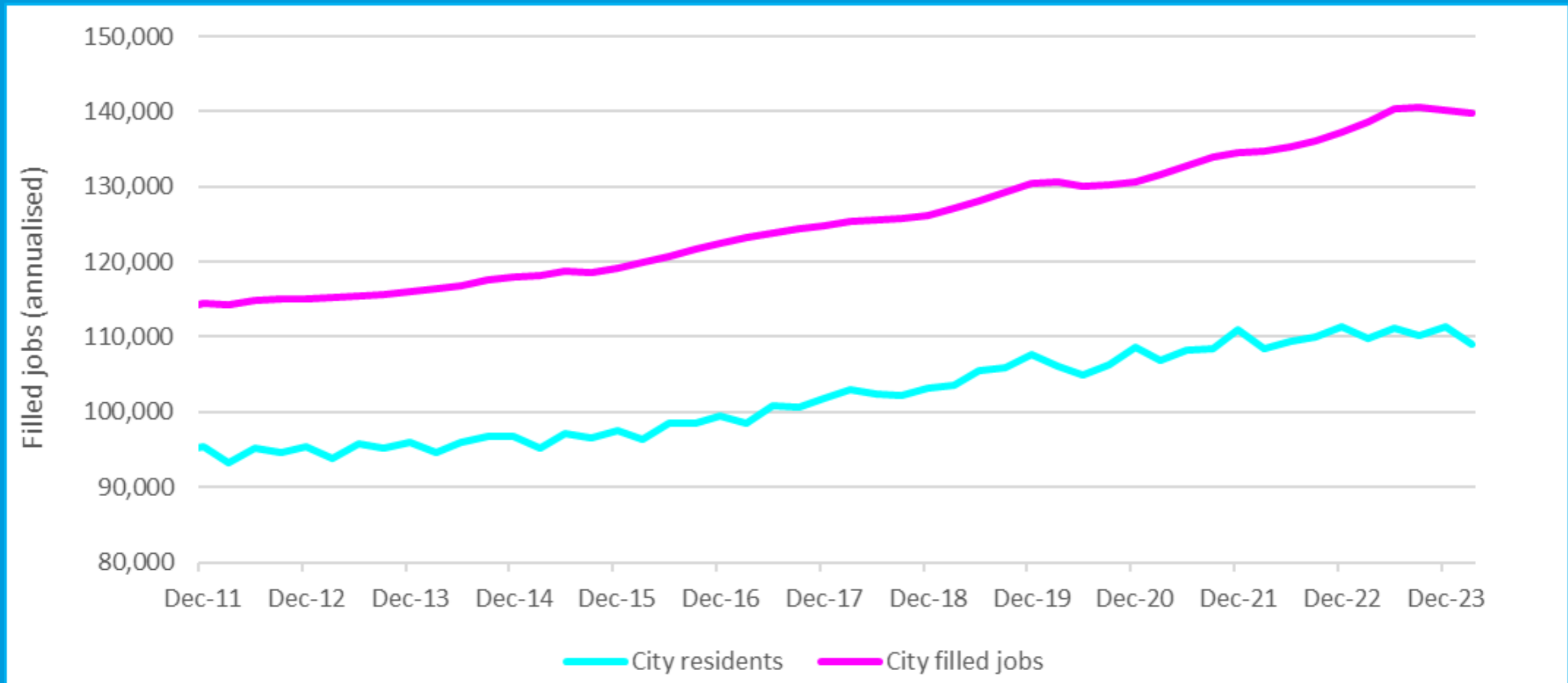
Retail spend: central city down .. suburbs stable



Suburban centres see the love, central city less so

- Central city 5% down per annum since 2023
- Suburban stable
- Likely causes:
 - Job uncertainty
 - Recession
 - High interest rates
 - Working from home trends
 - Suburban spend dominated by supermarkets and necessities

Employment (PAYE): may be declining



Source: MarketView

City filled jobs

- No longer growing and some indication of a decline

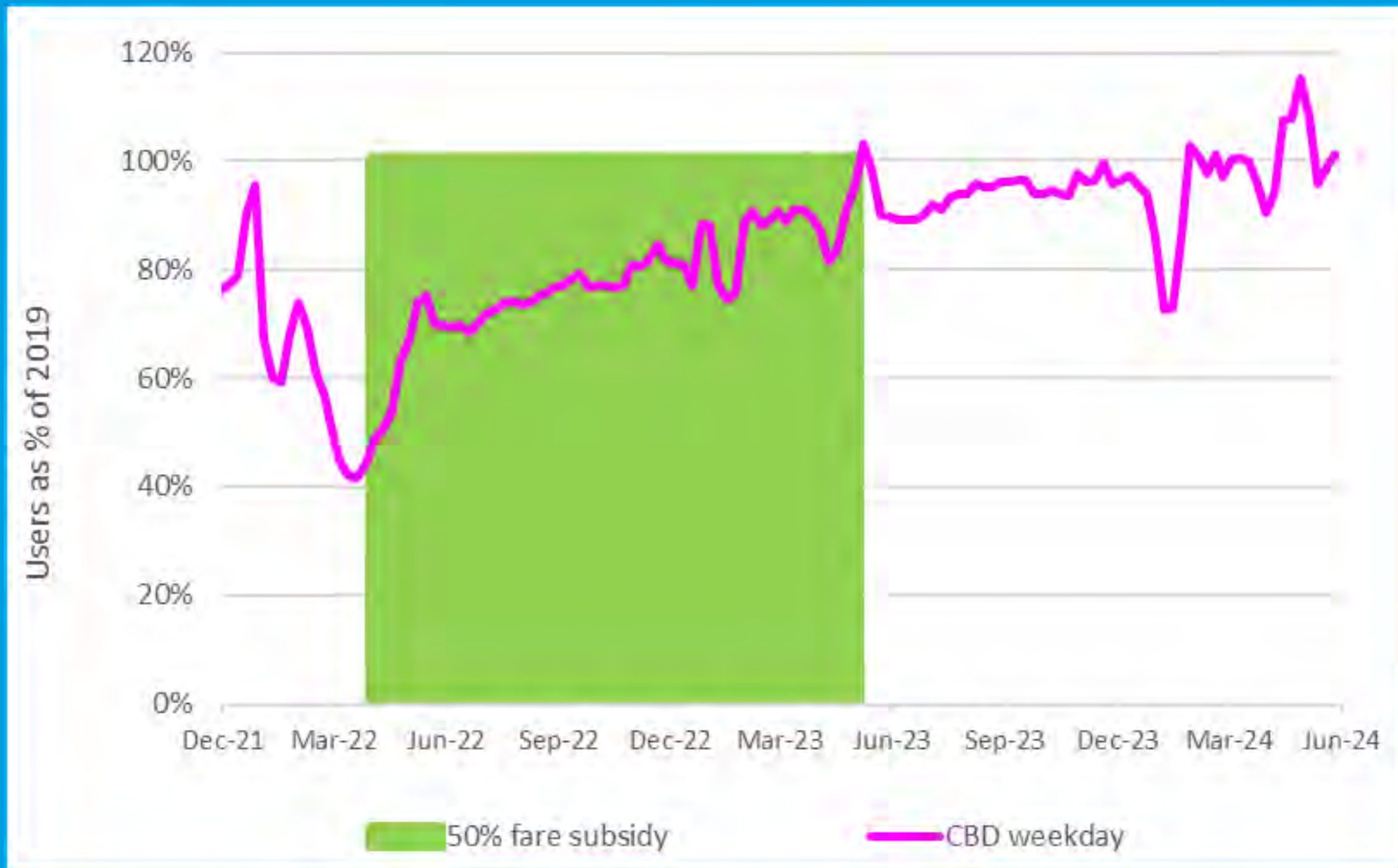
City domicile of employees

- Stable since 2021
- Growth (and possibly contraction) occurring in regionally based employees

Expectations

- Wellington job market contracted briefly after the GFC
- Expectation is that historic growth will resume when interest rates start falling

Bus weekday loadings: growing

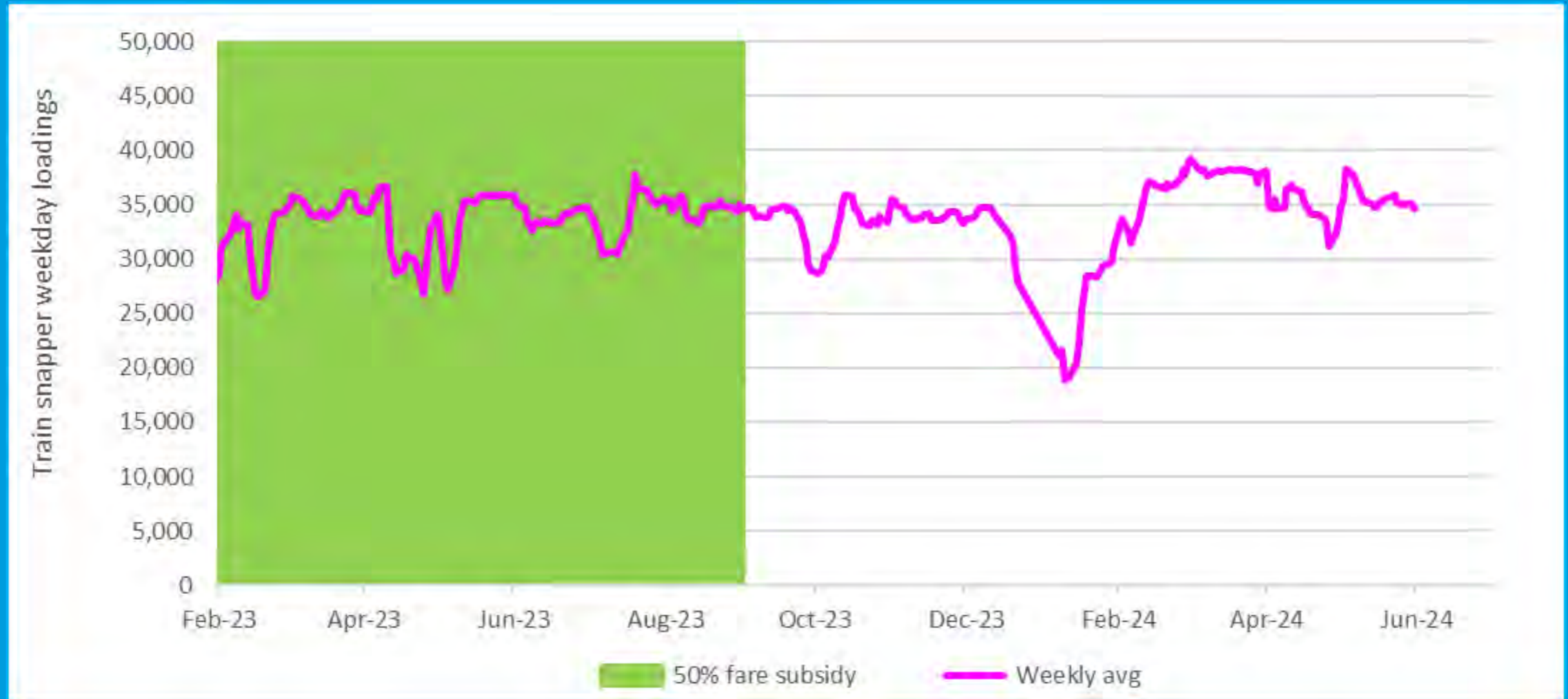


Source: Metlink

Growth continues

- Despite working from home trends
- 50% subsidy removal made little impact

Train weekday loadings: stable(ish)



Source: Metlink

Trends

- Some indication of growth in early 2024 (but a bit volatile)
- Removing 50% subsidy made little to no impact



Summary

Reserve Bank projections (May 2024)

- Interest rates
 - Wholesales rates (OCR) expected to fall in 2025
 - Spend and investment likely to remain low until then
- National export sector
 - Tourism is recovering post-COVID-19

Current challenging conditions likely to persist into 2025+

Wellington employment

- Significant public sector redundancies
- Current statistics indicate:
 - Historic growth has stopped
 - Some evidence of a small decline in overall City 'filled jobs' ex IRD PAYE returns
- Future public sector jobs
 - Government will need to work on new policies
 - Infrastructure+
 - This is likely to require more public servants+
 - Growth expected to return when policy priorities are clearer



A photograph of a city skyline at dusk, with buildings and their lights reflected in a body of water. The sky is a mix of purple, pink, and blue. The water in the foreground is dark with some rocks visible.

Winter spotlight

Cultural expressions in the city

Wellington's long held title as the creative capital reflects a highly engaged community who love participating in events as audience and performers. This spotlight showcases a small selection of events in the city that contribute to the vibrancy of Pōneke during winter months and provide economic opportunity for the wider city.

*To sign up to the regional events calendar and see what's coming up over the next six months, click [**HERE**](#)*



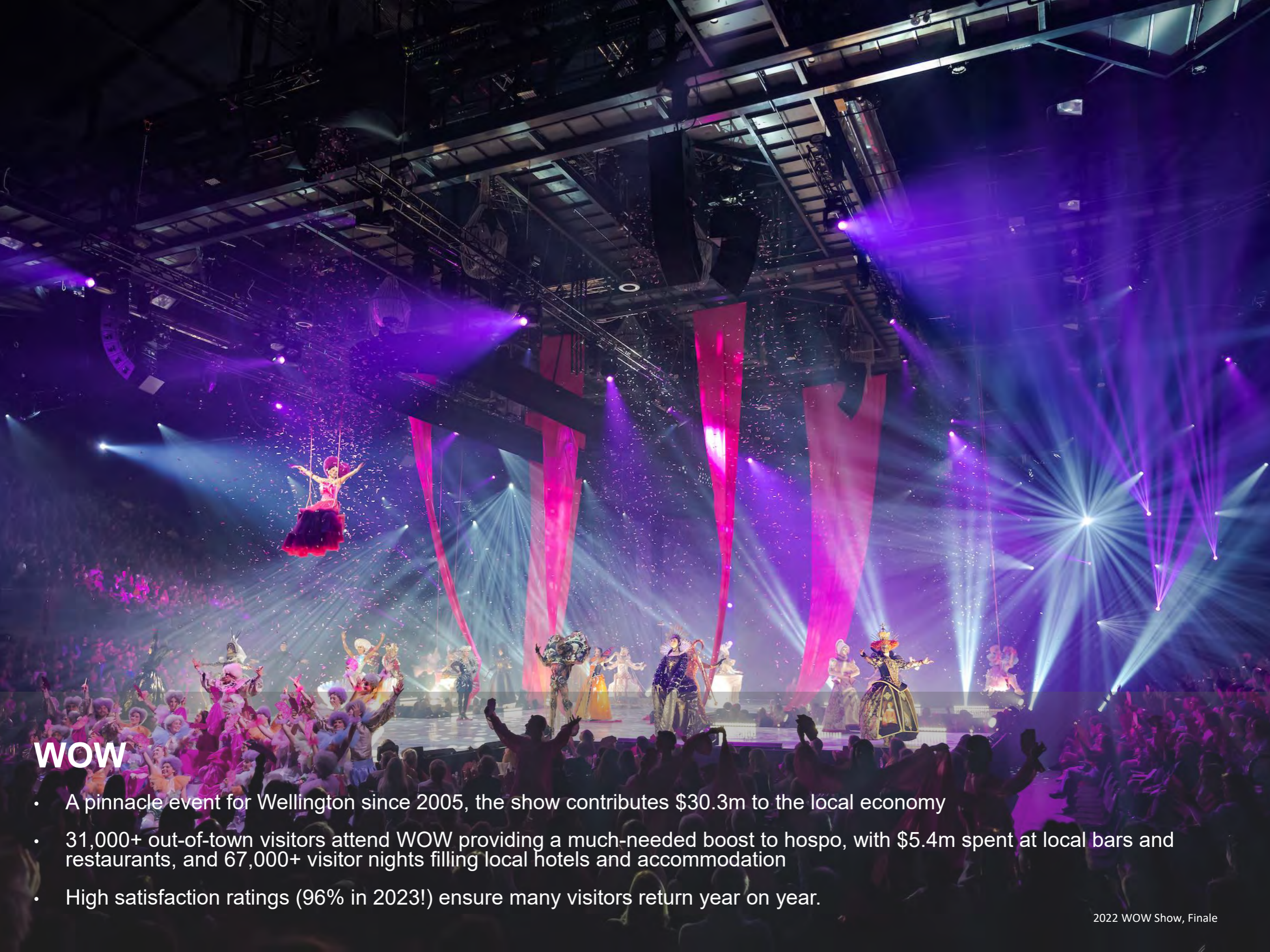
Matariki

- Over 4 nights at the end of June, Wellington's waterfront was transformed into an immersive self-led journey including fire pits, projections, live performances, and delicious food trucks in the Odlins Plaza kai court, with many enjoying the offer and continuing on into the city
- The celebration of Matariki Puanga, the Māori New Year, dates back over 700 years and is accompanied by long-established traditions. The rising of Puanga (also known as the star Rigel in Orion) and the Matariki star cluster (Pleiades or the Seven Sisters) marks the start of the Māori New Year
- This year more than 17,500 people experienced Matariki Ahi Kā as gathered to remember the past, share stories and kai and planned for the future in this uniquely Wellington event.



Light Cycles

- As part of the Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts, Light Cycles (by Moment Factory) was held at the Wellington Botanic Garden ki Paekākā May-June 2024 supported by WellingtonNZ and Wellington City Council.
- An immersive, multi-sensory experience featuring dazzling light installations, soundscapes, and digital art, Light Cycles was an invitation to connect in with the rhythms of nature that attracted over 30,000 attendees.



WOW

- A pinnacle event for Wellington since 2005, the show contributes \$30.3m to the local economy
- 31,000+ out-of-town visitors attend WOW providing a much-needed boost to hospo, with \$5.4m spent at local bars and restaurants, and 67,000+ visitor nights filling local hotels and accommodation
- High satisfaction ratings (96% in 2023!) ensure many visitors return year on year.



Visa Wellington On a Plate

- Since 2009, Visa WOAP has been serving up thousands of unique experiences for the culinary curious in what traditionally is a quieter winter period
- For the month of August the national media spotlight turns firmly to Wellington's food and hospo scene, highlighting the diversity across the city and region
- A changing annual festival each year ensures repeat visitation, with hundreds of eateries - this year alone more than 8.5k Festival Event tickets and 200 Burger Wellington's are on offer in a bid to get people off the couch and into our restaurants, bars and eateries to enjoy the best of Wellington.

Plus many more events ...

- 1 Jun - 28 October: Dr Who Worlds of Wonder Exhibition, Tākina
- 31 July - 12 August: NZ International Film Festival, Embassy Theatre
- 15 August - 1 September: We Will Rock You Musical, St James Theatre
- 23 - 24 August: Beervana, Sky Stadium
- 28 September: All Blacks vs Australia, Sky Stadium
- 16 - 20 October: Wellington Jazz Festival, various venues
- 24 - 27 October: A Midsummer Night's Dream by the Royal NZ Ballet, St James Theatre





Got questions or to sign up to receive Pōneke Pulse updates
email: economicwellbeing@wcc.govt.nz

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