

**Prepared By Gravitas Research and Strategy Limited**

**AUCKLAND CITY CBD RESEARCH  
24/7 PHOTO DOCUMENTARY  
THEMES SUMMARY**



**Prepared For Auckland City Council  
(Report 2)**

4<sup>th</sup> June 2003

# Introduction

In acknowledging the importance of the Auckland CBD and the need to integrate and progress the physical, social and economic development of the area, the Auckland City Council has established the CBD Strategic Direction Project.

The Project aims to first develop a vision for the CBD and then to implement an integrated programme of development. Three work streams have been established to identify and facilitate projects which will contribute to these outcomes: the social/ cultural work stream, the spatial work stream, and the economic development work stream.

The Social and Cultural work stream is focussing on the social and cultural development of the CBD. This work stream particularly seeks to understand current and future potential use of the CBD, perceptions of the CBD, barriers to use and social infrastructure needs. As part of a wide research programme responding to these information needs, the CBD photographic observation project was undertaken to provide photographic documentation of the use and users of the CBD through a 24/7 period (ie. through the week, weekend, day and night). See Report 1 for more detail.

# CBD Themes

Photos and observations were selected from across the CBD to represent key themes reflective of important uses, functions, activity, and user types within the CBD. The themes are: Residential Living; Transportation and Traffic; Public Space; Transactions; Education; Events and Attractions; Night Life; Weekends; Feelings and Atmosphere and Drivers of Enjoyment.

Full Photo Album:

The photos and observations were matched and collated according to shifts and then according to quarter so as to develop a 24/7 picture of each quarter. To obtain a 'Full Photo Album' please email: [cbd@aucklandcity.govt.nz](mailto:cbd@aucklandcity.govt.nz)

# CBD Education

The education sector is increasingly visible in the CBD, particularly through the visibility of students in and around many parts of the CBD. The rapid growth of ESOL institutions within the CBD has added considerably to visible student numbers.

While students are increasingly visible in parts of the CBD traditionally dominated by CBD workers, the university is observed to be almost exclusively used by students and university staff.

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# Outdoor Events/ Attractions

CBD streets and spaces accommodate a range of outdoor events and attractions – from impromptu street buskers to large, elaborate festivals.

Outdoor events add variety, interest, a point of difference – providing a ‘change of scene’ and adding to the unique atmosphere of the CBD. Places and spaces successfully accommodate events when they are adaptable, accessible, and enable diverse interactions to occur. Planned events commonly occur in the weekend drawing broad user groups, including families. Night events tend to be smaller, more informal - adding interest and colour to city nightlife.

# Atmosphere

The CBD invokes a range of feelings, moods and atmosphere - by time of day, location, situation, event and user.

Feelings and moods generated are individual - there are limitations in the extent to which a photo can infer an individual response to the CBD. However, the following photos suggest the diversity of feeling, mood and atmosphere by time and place within the CBD.

01:03:53

# CBD Night Life

By night, the CBD accommodates a diverse range of activity - after work drinking, late night shopping, dining, arts and culture, boy racers, gaming, pubbing and clubbing, late night cafés, red light entertainment.

Entertainment zones such as the Viaduct, City/Waterfront, K'rd and Old Town continue through the night and into the morning.

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# CBD Public Spaces

Public spaces in the CBD provide for a variety of users and use – from quiet, reflective time out, as a means of passage, to the opportunity to participate in large, vibrant outdoor activities. Aotea Square demonstrates an adaptability and accessibility to successfully provide for a range of public space uses and experience. Public spaces are well used throughout the week and night – less use is observed during weekends unless organised events are taking place. Public spaces neighbouring residential areas are observed to be least used.

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# CBD Residential Living

Residential areas are typically quiet and have little observable street level activity. Areas showing some street level transactions between residents tend to have lighter traffic volumes. There is little observed evidence that residential areas also provide for effective public space and public activity. Delineation between these spaces and activity types is most obvious in the Viaduct.

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# CBD Transactions

The CBD facilitates numerous transactions between CBD users and between users and the CBD itself. Transactions may occur in places intended for such purpose (e.g. bars) or in areas modified by users (e.g. students using building entrances for meeting points). Some CBD users may have low levels of transactions –for example, pedestrians. The level and type of transactions occurring by place may vary considerable by day and time. Social transactions peak by night and throughout the weekend.

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# CBD Transportation and Traffic

Traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian is a recurring and dominant theme through most areas of the CBD and throughout the week, including weekends. During commuter peaks, the movement of traffic provides an all pervasive rhythm to the CBD. Areas such as Westside, Nelson and Vincent are particularly dominated by traffic – undermining the extent and potential for other transactions to occur. By day, traffic is focused on movement and purpose – by night, some roads also become a stage for display, bravado and entertainment through boy racer activity.

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# CBD Weekends

Weekend use/users of the CBD contrasts to the week. Family groups, visitors/tourists and youth are all more noticeable. Activities are primarily focused on shopping, entertainment, leisure and recreation. Traffic, however, continues to be a dominant theme throughout both Saturday and Sunday. Organised weekend events are popular, drawing large crowds to areas such as Aotea and the Viaduct.

Compared to Saturday, Sundays are typically quieter across the CBD, particularly in the morning.

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