



Civic Precinct Framework

OCTOBER 2020



NAPIER
CITY COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera o Ahuriri

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NGĀ KUPU WHAKATAKI – MESSAGE FROM STEERING GROUP CHAIR

A cities Civic Precinct takes on many important roles within a community. Through connectivity, leadership, activation, celebration and accessibility it becomes an important destination, a focus of civic pride and most importantly for its community, a sense of place and belonging.

In Napier a series of events in 2017, culminating with a seismic report finding both the Station Street and Library buildings earthquake-prone, created huge disruption for the Napier public and Council alike. With our civic and library functions disbursing throughout the CBD, the discussion around bringing them back together has been varied with many options and issues.

As with all big challenges there also comes big opportunities, in this moment, a once in a generation opportunity to re-imagine Napier's Civic Precinct has presented itself. One that serves not only the administrative, functional and governance needs of our citizens, but also becomes a destination in itself. We have an opportunity to design and build the library of our future that promotes a sense of community and inclusion, provides spaces for partnerships, collaboration and reflection, and inspires people of all ages to learn and explore.

This Framework establishes a Vision for the Civic Precinct, with supporting Principles that will guide the future design and development of this key space and ensure every element of it is well-considered and works in harmony over the development years. I acknowledge the work of the Civic Precinct Steering Group and our partners who together, have brought diversity of opinion, leadership and passion to this pivotal project.

Ngā mihi

Annette Brosnan (Deputy Mayor and Chair of Civic Precinct Steering Group)



INTRODUCTION

The Civic Precinct Framework establishes the Vision, Values, and Principles for how the Civic Precinct will be redeveloped and what the community needs the precinct to provide.

The redevelopment of the Civic Precinct is influenced by a number of city-wide strategies and studies that already exist to set direction for the city and communities as a whole, and aligns with and contributes to broader city-wide principles. The Framework also recognises the key role the precinct redevelopment process can play in stimulating economic activity in the area, creating employment opportunities and contributing to broader city resilience.

In addition, a lot of work on the component parts of the precinct has already been completed. This work has contributed to a better understanding of the issues Council and the community are facing with this site, and the opportunities it presents.



Fig. 1: Contributing strategies and plans

The Civic Precinct Framework was prepared by the Steering Group, convened to provide guidance to Council in identifying the role of the precinct both in a functional and intangible sense. The approach the Steering Group took was to identify the values and principles that they felt that should govern future development of the precinct. These were then grouped into themes, which in-turn informed the overarching vision statement and the precinct's identity.

The Framework will be used to inform the completion of a detailed spatial plan for the precinct and remain as an enduring reference document for measuring the appropriateness of future development proposals into the future.

The Framework intends to establish a set of performance outcomes and is not intended to provide specific design requirements or define development sites. This will be established during the next stage of the process when a spatial plan is prepared. The spatial plan will in-turn inform project briefs for each of the developments and public spaces over time.

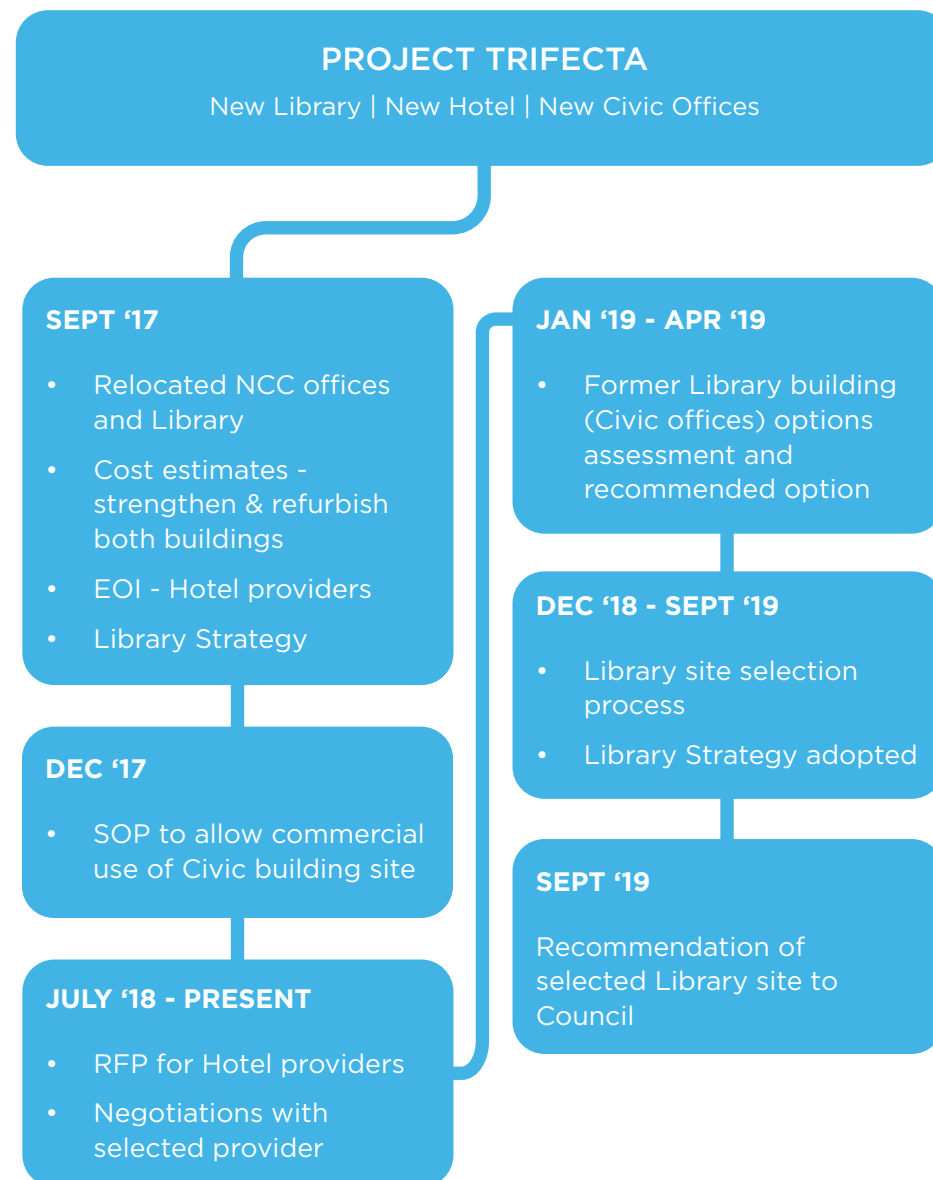


Fig. 2: Timeline of projects contributing to Project Trifecta (Council site only)

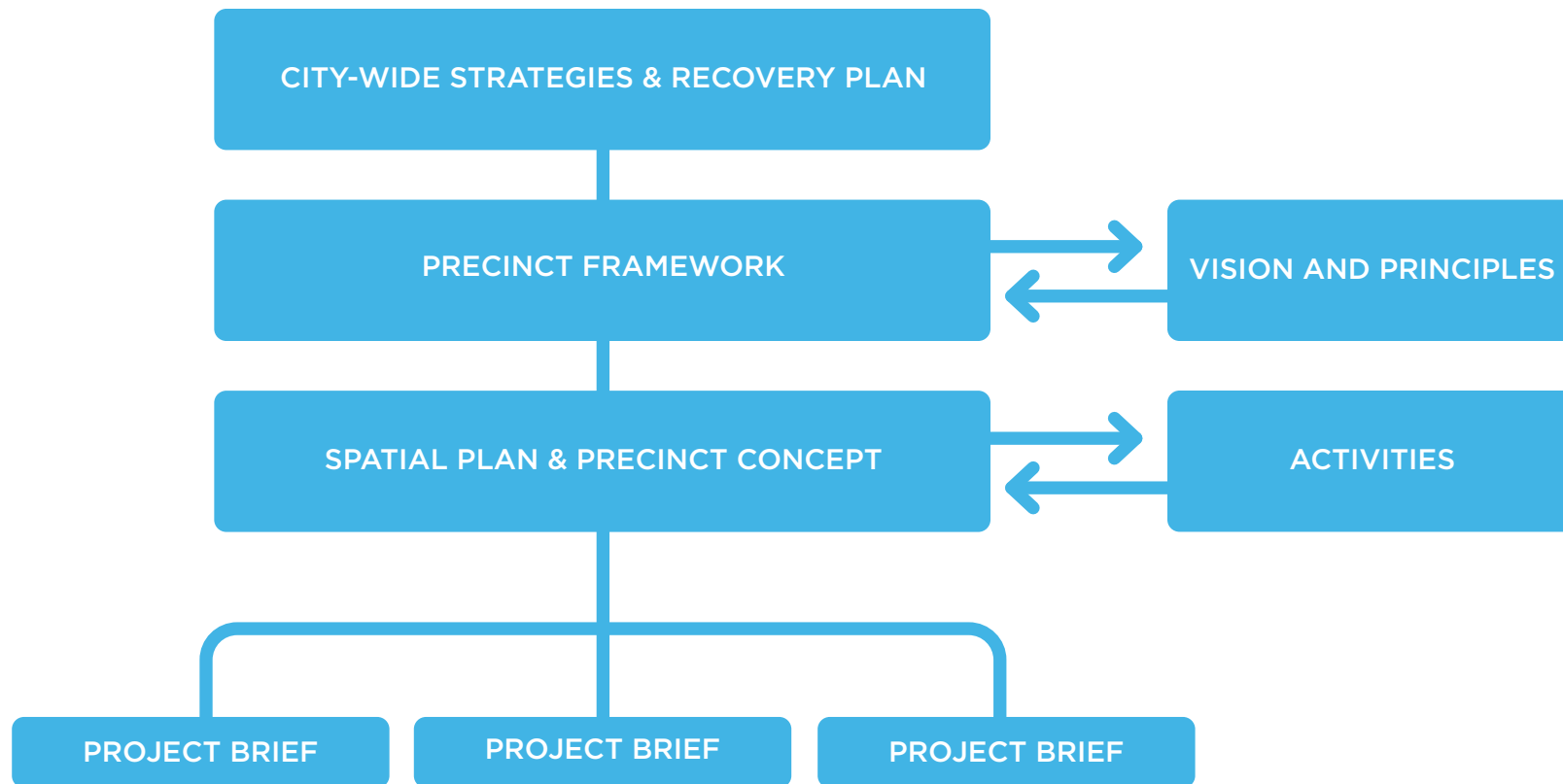


Fig. 3: Relationship of Civic Precinct components & purpose of each task

PRECINCT BOUNDARY

The Civic Precinct incorporates a number of sites that serve a civic function, as well as nearby buildings and spaces where opportunities for further development and supporting activities reside. Sites that are within the control of Napier City Council (NCC) include the NCC-owned Station Street site, previously occupied by the Council administrative offices, governance facilities and Napier Library, as well as all the streets. Outside of these areas, the interface with other buildings, spaces and activities is important, and consideration needs to be made to how NCC can influence the design and operation of these neighbouring spaces/buildings.



Fig. 4: Civic Precinct extent and sphere of influence

SITE CONTEXT

The site we see today is much changed from that which existed 170 years ago. The precinct lay on a gravel spit, its western edge lapped by waters of a tidal lagoon. When Europeans arrived, the Māori population was small, and the area now covered by the city centre was not permanently occupied. Earliest Pākehā occupation of the site shows it developed as a sawmill. Records show the site currently occupied by the former Library and Council administrative offices being used or owned for a variety of civic purposes including railway, post and telegraph services, and for commercial purposes

Napier City Council has occupied this site since the 1960's, and the Library site since the 1980's. A seismic assessment on the Civic and Library Buildings in 2017 found these two buildings to be earthquake-prone, kickstarting a series of events that saw all staff relocated to alternative offices. The opportunity this presents is not one that comes around too often. There is now an opportunity to design a space that provides for a new approach to working – one that is collaborative and flexible; and a space that is an expression of us and our aspirations.

The Civic Precinct project presents the chance to strategically consider the site and its connections with the waterfront, wider Napier City and transportation providers, as well as other social and community service providers. The precinct will accommodate a new Napier Library, Council offices, and governance services, with the potential to share facilities with other government organisations, and to collaborate with partner organisations and businesses.



Fig. 5: Dept of Lands and Survey Map 1865; red star is the approximate location of site (taken from G Carter's Archaeological Report of the Civic Site)

Buildings surrounding the proposed Civic Precinct are generally human scale. Recent development of the Police Station reflects a lower intensity of development, similar in scale to the Art Deco buildings located on Emerson Street.

Government organisations extend along Dalton Street from Station to Vautier Streets, however, only the Police and HBRC have entrances onto this area. The street design of Dalton Street is basic and doesn't highlight the area as a special precinct.

The Civic Administration Building is a comparatively large site and its buildings are an expression of civic values from the postwar modernist period. Unfortunately, this type of architecture has proven world-wide to be deficient for creating good urbanism or for capturing citizens' hearts or spurring imagination.

The original library building is a single storey pavilion / annex attached to 4-storey building. The entrance to the old library building is positioned mid-block on Station Street, with pedestrian access via an expansive forecourt area. The annex offers a complex facade onto both Dalton Street and the Station Street edge. There is no dedicated car parking for library visitors. Off-street library staff parking and time-limited parking is located to the rear of the library building, and accessed from Dalton Street. Large leafy mature trees differentiate Station Street from the rest of the city centre streets.

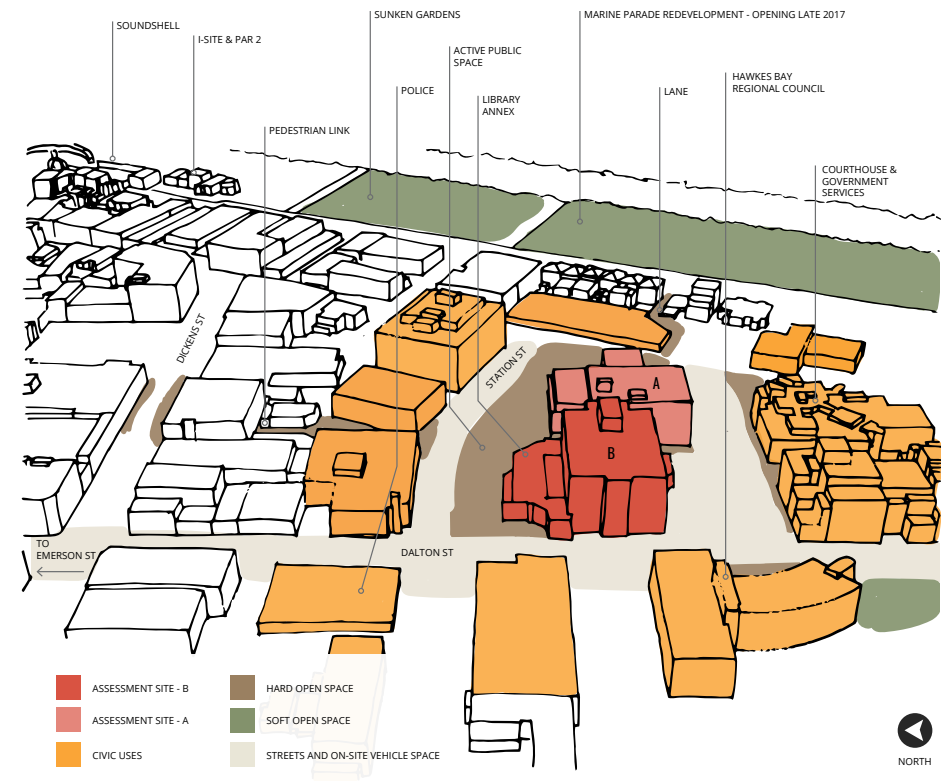


Fig. 6: Civic Precinct sphere of influence

Within the Precinct is the city's main public transport hub, situated on Dalton Street. This has good connectivity to the CBD shopping precinct and to the waterfront.

Dalton House to the south has a very large building footprint, however the finished floor level is set 1.5m above the street and as such it provides a poor, inactive interface with Vautier and Dalton Streets. The configuration of the built form of Dalton House offers good pedestrian connectivity mid-block between Hastings Street and Civic Court, however there is no hospitality activity / vibrancy in this area after standard business hours.

The Courthouse is positioned in the middle of the proposed Civic Precinct, and has its entrance is situated on Hastings Street. Intimidating anti-social behaviour in front of the Courthouse occurs at times, and therefore good urban design principles is essential around this site in order to increase the feeling of comfort for people passing through this space, and to discourage anti-social behaviour.

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) building is a modern, architecturally designed building situated on the western edge of the proposed Civic Precinct.

A small public green space is located to the south of the HBRC building, while large areas of off-street parking are situated to the west and south of the HBRC building.

Civic Court is a pedestrianised space accessed via Station Street (opposite the old library and NCC Council building) or from Dickens Street via a covered walkway connection beneath Tourism House. Civic Court offers an important pedestrian connection to the city's retail sector which then links up to Ocean Boulevard and then Emerson Street.

Civic Court lends itself to becoming a future food hub for the city, due to the wrap-around nature of the buildings surrounding the space, and it's proximity to the proposed Civic Precinct and surrounding offices / professional services sector



Civic Precinct Vision and Themes

The Precinct Steering Group identified a series of interlinking themes. The themes reflect the crucial characteristics of the Precinct that must be achieved to define and connect the future buildings and open spaces in a coherent way.

DESTINATION

A place of outstanding architecture and a high amenity urban environment, that creates a sense of place and celebrates the cities cultural values and unique history. A place that weaves together stories from our Māori and contemporary history, and provides a destination that attracts locals and tourists alike. A place of ceremony, local pride and belonging, firmly anchored in our unique local geography.



CONNECTIONS

The Precinct prioritises high levels of connectivity to other parts of the city. The Precinct facilitates easy access for active modes of transport and high-quality pedestrian environments. There is good proximity to public transport and good access for private vehicles. The site fosters an environment that enables people from all aspects of the community to interact as equals without prejudice.



INCLUSIVE

Precinct spaces are welcoming, inclusive, accessible, and safe. Spaces are designed without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions, by all persons of all abilities.



LEADERSHIP

The Precinct embraces a visible leadership role in both civic and environmental sustainability. Leadership is shown through the use of environmentally sustainable practices and innovative and collaborative approaches are embraced.



ACTIVATION

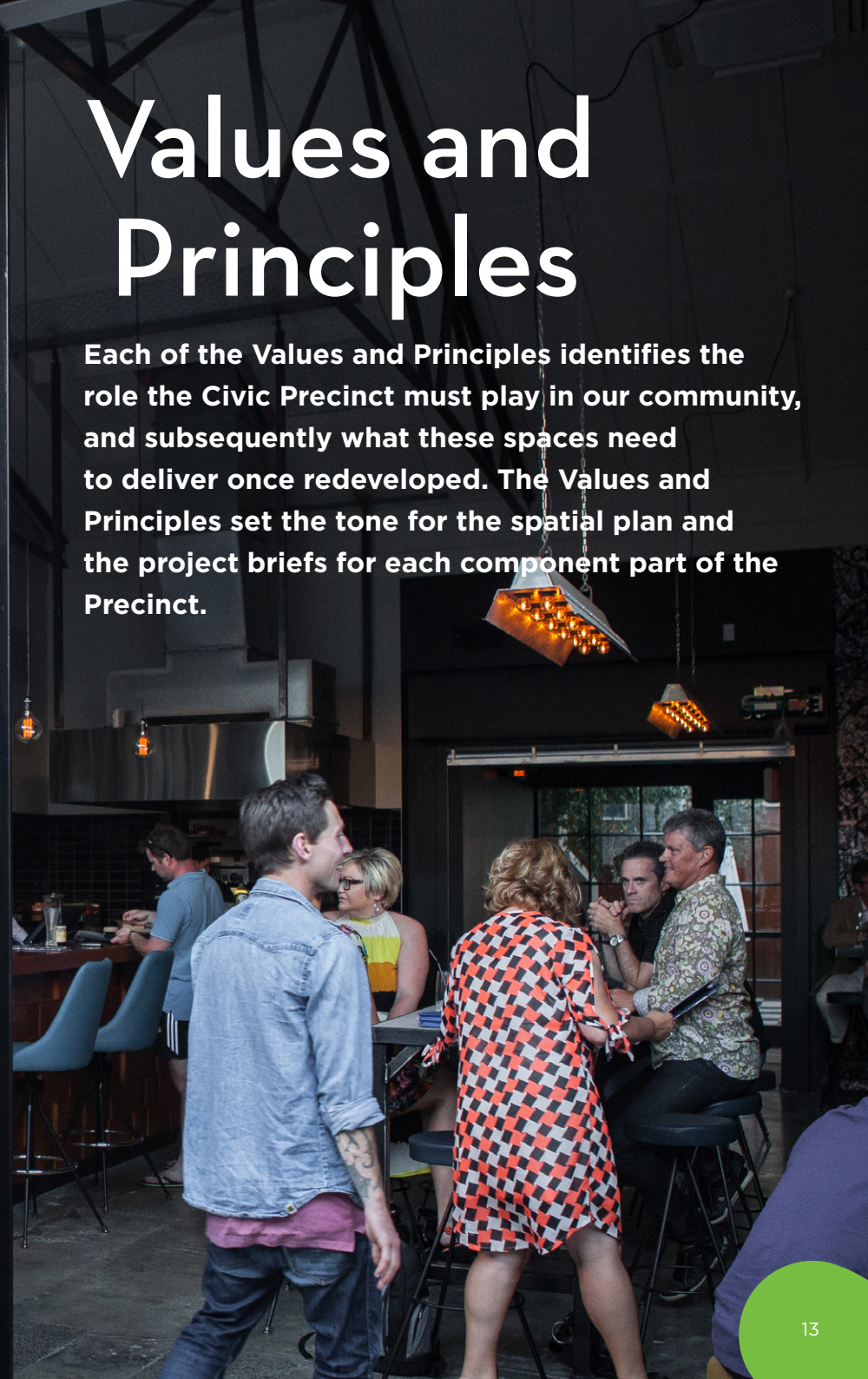
An environment that fosters innovation in our community and social enterprise. A vibrant place where community groups and businesses of all sizes are supported with sustainable foot-traffic. Infrastructure and technology such as meeting spaces, collaboration hubs are enabled in a flexible, safe, supportive and reliable environment.





Values and Principles

Each of the Values and Principles identifies the role the Civic Precinct must play in our community, and subsequently what these spaces need to deliver once redeveloped. The Values and Principles set the tone for the spatial plan and the project briefs for each component part of the Precinct.





EXPRESSION OF OUTSTANDING DESIGN THAT COMPLEMENTS THE CITY

A Civic Precinct that celebrates our community through iconic architecture and high quality, well connected public spaces. A place where our cities culture, history, and aspirations are interpreted and reflected in the architecture, arrangement and materiality of the buildings, and the design of the urban realm.

PRINCIPLES:

- Buildings and spaces that stand the tests of time and evoke civic pride.
- Opportunity to create iconic buildings that become a landmark and a point of discussion for the community and visitors.
- Design that challenges and potentially contrasts the existing urban framework/expressions.
- Design excellence - positive architectural offerings that signify the importance of this Precinct to the city.
- Incorporation of Te Aranga Design Principles.





EXPRESSION OF MĀORI HERITAGE AND PRESENCE

Māori as mana whenua have a long connection with the wider area and the waterfront, and this continues today. Māori art and Māori culture are tightly woven together, and cultural history and connection to the area is reflected throughout the design and form of the Precinct.

PRINCIPLES:

- Ahuriri Māori cultural heritage and tikanga will be woven into the fabric of the Precinct through spatial design, building and public realm design, use of materials, and storytelling.
- Ahuriri Māori are engaged through the development process, and their voice is heard and reflected in the design of spaces.
- Cultural values, artwork, and the history of our people in the region are integrated into the Precinct.





EXPRESSION OF ART

Art is the tangible expression of a culture's identity, and prominent public spaces offer opportunities to express that identity. In Napier, artist expression is highly valued by our community and is integral to the buildings and public spaces designed for this Precinct. Artistic interpretation is used to express our unique character, diversity, the region's history, and our stories and is integrated into the design process from the outset.

PRINCIPLES:

- Artwork is integrated into the Precinct through a range of methods from small details that can be discovered over time to large installations.
- Space and opportunity is provided for temporary art installations that keep the spaces fresh and provide a sense of discovery.
- Art is used to engage with audiences of all ages and abilities and to evoke a sense of civic pride.
- Art is used to illustrate our diverse and vibrant community.
- Art is used to tell the story of the region and the significant events in our history.





EXPRESSION OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Civic Precinct is the home of the city's elected leaders and community governance. The Precinct is a visible example of government organisations leading by example and supporting the governments and community's broader wellbeing outcomes.

PRINCIPLES:

- The built environment is constructed and operates to high standards of environmental sustainability and is a flagship example of what can be achieved.
- Buildings have enduring qualities and whole-of-life costs taken into consideration at design stage.
- Public spending on redevelopment delivers value for money
- The buildings within the Precinct are resilient to the effects of natural hazards and climate change.
- The built environment establishes a high quality work and/or living environment for employees and residents in the Precinct including, flexible working models, diversity/quality and technology.





ESTABLISHING A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PLACE FOR ALL

The Civic Precinct is developed with safety as a crucial requirement and remains at the forefront of all design processes. The Precinct is an environment where all of our community and visitors feel safe; a place for all ages and abilities. The Precinct encourages diversity of activity at different times of the day and night, and safety concerns are not a barrier to achieving this.

PRINCIPLES:

- Building and public spaces are designed in ways that discourage anti-social behavior, create areas that are well proportioned, allowing for safe movement, and provide clear signals about the behaviors expected in the Precinct.
- Buildings and public spaces meet national accessibility standards, with no barriers to those with physical or visual impairments using the Precinct safely.
- Building orientations, access and surveillance strategies allow safe use at all times of the day and night.
- Buildings are designed to enable safe and easy maintenance over the life of the buildings.





PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORT AND ARRIVAL REQUIREMENTS

The Civic Precinct is well connected to our city fabric, the waterfront, and the outer residential and commercial areas. All modes of movement to and within the Precinct are well catered for, and the Precinct feels safe, is easy to find, and easy to move around in. Public spaces respond to changes in the way we get around and our changing needs through the provision of technology and flexible spaces.

PRINCIPLES:

- The Precinct has a vital role as a central hub connecting to the suburbs and satellite community services.
- A place where the community can come for a range of central, regional and local government administrative services.
- The Precinct has good visual and physical connections to the waterfront, Civic Court, and the retail heart of the city.
- Facilities and services that provide for shared and active modes of movement are prioritised within the Precinct space, and users are made to feel as equals with users of other modes of transport.
- Prioritisation of movement of people (over vehicles), shared spaces, child friendly, barrier free.
- Accommodating functional needs of all modes of transport and an easy arrival experience (parking, taxis, service vehicles, bike racks).
- Responding to future changes in technology, the environment and policy, and shifts in culture which affect how we move about.





FLEXIBLE SPACES THAT FOSTER COLLABORATION AND COHABITATION

The Precinct offers an exciting opportunity to explore how the City Council, Regional Council and our community service providers could share resources, facilities, and provide the community with an integrated customer service experience. All buildings and spaces are flexible and allow them to cater for a range of uses and activities during the week and, over time. A philosophy that promotes ease of access is reflected in the design of the spaces, inside and out. The creation of spaces without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions, by people of all abilities.

PRINCIPLES :

- Consolidating civic functions and facilities where this makes sense, maximising a finite resource.
- Enabling our partners to achieve their community outcomes and functional duties in spaces that foster strong collaborative relationships.
- A 'no wrong door' approach to customer services across the precinct.
- Enabling community support services clinics to occur on a routine basis within the Precinct.
- Flexible spaces that enable activity into the evenings and weekends.
- Bookable spaces that can be used at different times of the day for public or business activities.
- Flexibility and adaption over time continues to accommodate enduring functions and rituals (reading books, ceremonies).
- A customer service culture is established where the community can receive service and direction that meets their needs.
- Not duplicating facilities provided elsewhere in the city where this may result in a reduced demand for this facility.





ENHANCING SOCIAL CONNECTION

The Civic Precinct is a welcoming place where visitors and residents alike can go for social interaction and support. A place where our community will choose to gather and where our formal celebrations take place. The Civic Precinct is a destination celebrated by our community and which our visitors are drawn to.

PRINCIPLES:

- A place for gathering and informal community interaction, where everyone feels comfortable spending time, taking part, listening or merely observing others going about their daily routines.
- A special place for formal ceremonial events, celebrations and Civic rituals.
- The Precinct has immediate appeal to a broad range of people, including for residential purposes, and is a place that people enjoy and want to return to again and again.
- The Precinct is a focal point for people to meet at the start of their central city experience as they journey into the city from around the region.





ECONOMIC STIMULUS

The Precinct will play an important role in stimulating economic activity in this area of the city. A high-quality redevelopment and the return of Council facilities and the Library will be a catalyst for activating new business growth in the Precinct and in the surrounding area, and will instil a sense of confidence in the City.

PRINCIPLES:

- The Precinct has a role in investing in and empowering our people, growing their knowledge and expertise to be ready for the future, and providing the right environment for them to thrive. Building leadership and knowledge expertise within, that can be leveraged in our community. Working alongside business support agencies to provide facilities and services that support positive economic outcomes.
- Spaces and environments are created that fosters innovation in our community and social enterprise. The Precinct has a role in supporting business growth with foot-traffic of 1000 plus people choosing Napier Libraries daily as a destination.
- A place for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and not for profit businesses, providing low cost or free infrastructure and technology such as desk space, meeting spaces, collaboration hubs and the latest digital tools in a safe, supportive and reliable environment.
- Exploration of mixed uses including residential, commercial, transportation and regulatory.
- The redevelopment of the Precinct will play an important role in the Covid pandemic recovery, creating employment and stimulating the economy in the region through the construction industry and supplier chains.



GOVERNANCE OF THE PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

For the future implementation of the Civic Precinct Spatial Plan, the Steering Group is currently exploring ways to ensure future developments within the Precinct will give effect to the framework and spatial plan over time. The Steering Group consists of Council staff and representatives from external organisations and stakeholders, as well as three NCC Councillors including:

- NCC Māori Committee
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council
- Friends of the Library
- Deputy Mayor Annette Brosnan, Group Chair
- Councillor Tania Wright
- Councillor Ronda Chrystal

Membership of this Group is variable and new members will be added as necessary throughout the life of this project.



PRECINCT SPATIAL PLAN

Following the adoption of this Framework by the City Council, a Spatial Plan will be commissioned. The Spatial Plan will establish the spatial layout for the Precinct taking into consideration;

- Scale and location of building sites
- The network of open spaces that complement and connect the buildings and the Precinct to other areas in the CBD,
- The location of the Library within the Precinct
- The form of the Council administrative offices and governance spaces
- How the neighbouring buildings such as Regional Council, District Court, and Dalton House are integrated,
- How the movement of pedestrians, public transport, service vehicles, private vehicles will occur.

This Framework will be an integral part of the spatial plan design brief. The vision, themes, values and principles established in this Framework is what will ensure that the Civic Precinct has its own identity, is authentic, and becomes an extraordinary place that is uniquely Napier.





Appendix 1

CITY VISION FRAMEWORK

The City Vision Framework establishes a set of 6 Principles that guide the Napier City Council in its priorities and operations across the City.

These 6 Principles are:



PUTTING PEOPLE
FIRST



OUR PEOPLE, OUR
STORIES



OPEN FOR
BUSINESS



ECOLOGICAL
EXCELLENCE



A PORT AND
COASTAL CITY



PEDAL POWER

LIBRARY STRATEGY

The Napier Library Strategy was adopted by Council in 2018. It's Customer and Community Service Values are outlined below:



NAPIER RECOVERY AND RENEWAL PLAN

The Napier Recovery and Renewal Plan was prepared to address the medium to long-term impacts of the Covid-19 global pandemic on business and the community. It sets a vision for recovery and establishes 5 pillars of action. These are shown below:

We are
**TEAM
NAPIER**



**KIA KOTAHI
TĀTAU O
AHURIRI NEI**

Goals

Napier Recovery and Renewal Plan Post-COVID-19 Pandemic

Together, we will restore and enhance the social and economic wellbeing of our community while respecting and celebrating our cultural heritage and environment

Goal #1

Everyone has access to clean drinking water, food and housing

Community wellbeing relies on fundamental human needs being met.

• Indicators: House and neighbourhood agreement score (Source: Social Monitor Survey); known number of homeless in Napier (Source: xxx); number of dirty water complaints (Source: NCC)

Goal #2 We are healthy and active

Successful recovery requires the ongoing elimination of COVID-19. The mental and physical health benefits of walking or cycling during Lockdown can be built upon for the ongoing wellbeing of our community.

• Indicators: New and active cases of COVID-19 in Napier (Source: HBDHB); pedestrian/cycle counts (Source: NCC); walking/cycling scores (Source: Social Monitor survey)

Goal #3 Our economy is resilient and innovative

Finding and responding to opportunities will enable us to recover and renew the economy for the wellbeing of everyone.

• Indicators: Unemployment and median household incomes (Source: MSD); New companies registered in Napier (Source: Companies register)

Goal #4 Our City Centre and Local Centres are vibrant and sustainable

Our City Centre and Local Centres are living organisms that contribute to our quality of life. Loss of activity in these areas would likely have a domino effect on economic and community wellbeing.

• Indicators: Unemployment and median household incomes (Source: MSD); New companies registered in Napier (Source: Companies register)

Goal #5 Our community is safe, connected and resilient

People living in a safe, connected and resilient community will be empowered to care for their collective economic, social and cultural wellbeing.

• Indicators: Social index, safety, social connections and accessibility agreement score, mental wellbeing index (Source: Social Monitor survey); Local crime rates (Source: NZ Police)

Goal #6 Renewal of our city respects and celebrates our cultural heritage and environment

The recovery provides an opportunity for us to re-build a sustainable economy and city. "Sustainable" means we recognise that our culture, heritage and environment are essential for our wellbeing in the 21st century and beyond.

• Indicators: Air quality (Source: HBRC); tree coverage (Source: NCC); stormwater discharge quality (Source: NCC/HBRC)

Appendix 2



SITE HISTORY

Prior to European occupation Napier's geography was very different to what it is today. Napier Hill (Mataruahou or Scinde Island) was essentially an island, while to the south lay a series of gravel spits, bars and islets. Further south and east was the Te Whanganui-a-Maraenui swamp. The sea lay closer inland and Marine Parade and surrounds was a large gravel bar.

Ahuriri and the wider Heretaunga Plains were heavily occupied by Māori prior to European settlement, with the early and strategic pā of Ōtātara and Heipipi, several pā on Mataruahou, and Te Pakake. The tidal estuaries and lagoons were sources of food and served as highways for waka.

Seven hāpu (Ngāti Tū, Ngāti Matepu, Ngāti Hinepare, Ngāti Mahu, Ngāti Pārau, Ngāti Ruruku, and Ngāti Tawao) all gathered kaimoana from Te Whanganui-a-Orotu, the inland lagoon further to the north-west.

When Europeans first made contact in 1834, the Māori population was small, having only just started to recover from the battle at Te Pakake ten years earlier. Although Westshore was initially established the settlement focus, the establishment of a small town shifted to the south side of Mataruahou in later years, requiring an ongoing programme of reclamation to ensure sufficient land for development and to address health issues.

The earliest plan that identifies the land on the corner of Station and Hastings Streets is Dommett 1855, where it is identified as being on the edge of the swamp. Station Street does not exist at this time. Bowmans 1880's maps show a number of buildings on this site, including a sawmill (Station Street still does not exist). Bristed's 1887 map show Station Street as formed, and the sawmill still located on this site.



Fig. 1: Dept of Lands and Survey Map 1865; red star is the approximate location of site (taken from G Carter's Archaeological Report of the Civic Site)

Aerials show the site occupied by a number of buildings up until the late 1960's when the Civic Building was constructed, and until the mid 1980's when the Library Building was built.

Acquisition history records the sites being previously acquired by the Crown for a number of purposes including for a post office (line store and garage), for Railway Purposes, for post and telegraph services, and owned by private individuals for commercial automotive services.

In June 2017, a seismic assessment on the Civic and Library Buildings found these two buildings to be earthquake-prone, achieving 10% and 15% NBS respectively. From September, the Library and Council administrative offices, were relocated to alternative premises across Napier City. A Statement of Proposal in November gave Council the option to divest the Civic site. In mid-2018, Council began engaging with hotel providers to develop an international hotel on the Civic site. Following the Covid-19 global pandemic, the preferred suppliers withdrew their proposal for this site.

In 2018, Council prepared a Library Strategy to guide the operation and future development of the Napier Library. The strategy's objectives guided Council in the selection of a new permanent site, signaling needs such as space requirements, access to the outdoors, enabling access, and the opportunity to collaborate with other community providers. A site selection process followed, initially identifying 16 possible sites before short-listing these to three, and finally the preferred site, within the Civic Precinct at Station Street, Napier.

Parallel to this work, Officers have been working on options for the use and development of the former Library Building and site.

The Civic Precinct project wraps up all these studies and this work, and presents the opportunity to strategically consider the site and its connections with the waterfront, wider Napier City and transportation providers, as well as other social and Community service providers. The Council-owned site will accommodate a new Napier Library, Council Offices, and Governance services, with the potential to share facilities with other Government organisations, and to collaborate with partner organisations and businesses.



Fig. 2: Excerpt from Bristed 1887 showing sawmill extending over the wider site (taken from G Carter's Archaeological Report of the Civic Site)



Fig. 3: Excerpt from 1951 aerial showing footprint of the current buildings (taken from G Carter's Archaeological Report of the Civic Site)