**Communities at the core of urban planning - Do they lead or are they misled?**

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**Introduction**

Following the Christchurch Earthquake (2010-2011) and Victoria Black Saturday bushfires (2009), both NZ and Australian governments opted for a community-led approach to rebuilding the cities. More or less a decade post-disaster, there is a question if the rebuilding that has taken place actually reflects the ideas of the residents of those cities or whether they serve the purpose they were intended to deliver.

**Case study focus**

This poster shows how residents’ views have been incorporated into overall city rebuilding process and how those shaped the construction outcome of Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct (CJESP) and Vibe Hotel and Conference Centre, Marysville which were given prominence in rebuilding those cities, as catalytic or anchor projects.

**Data collection**

18 face to face interviews were carried out with the planners, designers, consultants, contractors, operational staff and end users that are involved in anchor projects in Christchurch and 12 with those involved with catalytic projects in Marysville, to understand the level of community involvement in bringing these projects to life. Desktop research was used to validate the findings and some areas were explored further.

**Findings**

- **Vibe Hotel and Conference Centre (AUS$28Mn)**  
  - 4 out of 5 residents questioned feel the experience is more than satisfactory  
  - 6 out of 8 respondents feel that the overall outcome of the project is satisfactory

- **Marysville’s public engagement strategy**  
  - Workshops and planning days fed into a community recovery plan for Marysville
  - BCG, an economic consultancy firm suggested the need of a hotel and convention centre for economic regrowth rather than the town’s Community Recovery Committee (CRCs)
  - CRCs agree the community welcomed the idea of a hotel because the fires destroyed the two accommodation facilities that Marysville had pre-fire

**Considerations for successful public engagement**

- Is there a presence of self-selected members + Council appointed members representing diversity of the community including members of the business community and community leaders to plan for their respective cities rather than a national or local government led approach?
- Is there a public place i.e. a community hub available to ensure continuity and ease of meeting up for future gatherings?
- Have CRCs determined methods of continuous communication of progress to the wider community?
- Have the CRCs undertaken situational analysis including risk and need analysis considering population data, past usage behavior of similar facilities and the changes to current urban landscape i.e. demolitions and land acquisitions?
- Do the plans consider long-term strategic relevance?

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