

Hamilton Central Business Association (HCBA)

Six Monthly Report July – December 2025

Hamilton's central city economy appears to be holding steady under challenging conditions. There is still a high-cost environment which significantly impacts discretionary spending and can be seen in the CBD spend rates that show a slight increase, when adjusted for inflation, move to a decline.

The central city's ability to keep attracting activity and new business enquiry, particularly around hospitality, services, and developments, remains a positive sign for the city's economic future. For many businesses, it has been a period of consolidation and staying afloat, awaiting the much-anticipated improvement of economic conditions and easement of financial constraints.

Customer facing businesses, such as retail and hospitality, have worked harder for each dollar of customer spend over the past year however it is acknowledged that the challenging trading conditions have seen doors close on more than one business and the expectation there are further closures to follow in the coming months.

On a positive note, there is strong development underway and in the pipeline for the central city, and these large-scale projects (including the newly completed BNZ Theatre, Building B at Union Square and Pullman Hotel development) are the types of investment that helps a central city broaden its visitor economy, grow the nighttime economy, and lift confidence for surrounding businesses.

There is a noticeable demand for quality refurbished and new office space which is positively impacting on staff returning to the workplace. Mondays and Fridays are still showing lower pedestrian numbers, with some larger organisations (predominantly central / local government related) still accommodating a significant amount of work from home practice to happen on Mondays and Fridays.

Ongoing negative perceptions of safety, anti-social behaviour and parking continues to have a reputational impact for visitors to the central city and remains of concern to local businesses for both trading and staff safety.

Overall, there have been some positive developments taking place for the central city over the past six months, with several development and building upgrade projects to be delivered in the next twelve months. This combined with a positive shift in economic trading conditions, should lead to a less pressurised business environment in 2026.



EFFECTIVE OUTCOME 1 - ADVOCACY

To represent the central city business voice on issues and projects of strategic importance to the central city.

1. Central city

- HCBA is delighted with priority given to the central city with the implementation of the Hamilton City Council Central City Revitalisation Subcommittee focusing on enhancing, developing, and revitalising the central business district (CBD). The priority this committee will place on improving the central city will be of enormous advantage to Hamilton, in particular helping to grow the 25% contribution to the cities GDP.
- HCBA continues to be involved with the discussion around Garden Place improvements and supports the potential upgrade of the elements of Garden Place design, including the proposal HCBA put forward to introduce 3D Hamilton/Kirikiroa lettering into the space. Although Garden Place continues to be a contentious development area it is still a well utilised space in the central city that would benefit from having the basic elements tidied up to support general ambience and activation.
- HCBA supported the discussed upgrades in the public realm of Hood Street. After the initial elements were implemented, HCBA met Council onsite to provide feedback and recommendations that could better improve the look and feel of the area. The Southend of town being a destination nighttime area would benefit from improved lighting, streetscape and access to the river.
- HCBA supported proposed strengthening of bylaws that went before Council at the end of August to help combat anti-social behaviour in public spaces in the central city. Anti-social behaviour continues to be a significant problem for the central city with safety continually being identified by visitors to the city as an issue and poorly reflecting on the reputation of town.
- The business community continues to be significantly impacted by anti-social behaviour in town and the ongoing vandalism and destruction of property.

SUBMISSIONS

- HCBA provided a submission supporting the introduction of angle parking on Barton and Caro Street and additional parking spaces on Collingwood Street.
- HCBA provided three submissions supporting the work and changes to criminal law supporting retail workers.
- HCBA provided a safety submission supporting police Move On orders.
- HCBA provided a submission to elected members on the current parking situation with views on reverting back to two hours free parking.
- HCBA provided initial feedback not supporting implementation of a Local Alcohol Policy.
- HCBA provided a submission on the Lake Reservoir development.
- HCBA provided a submission on tree planting.



2. Transportation initiatives

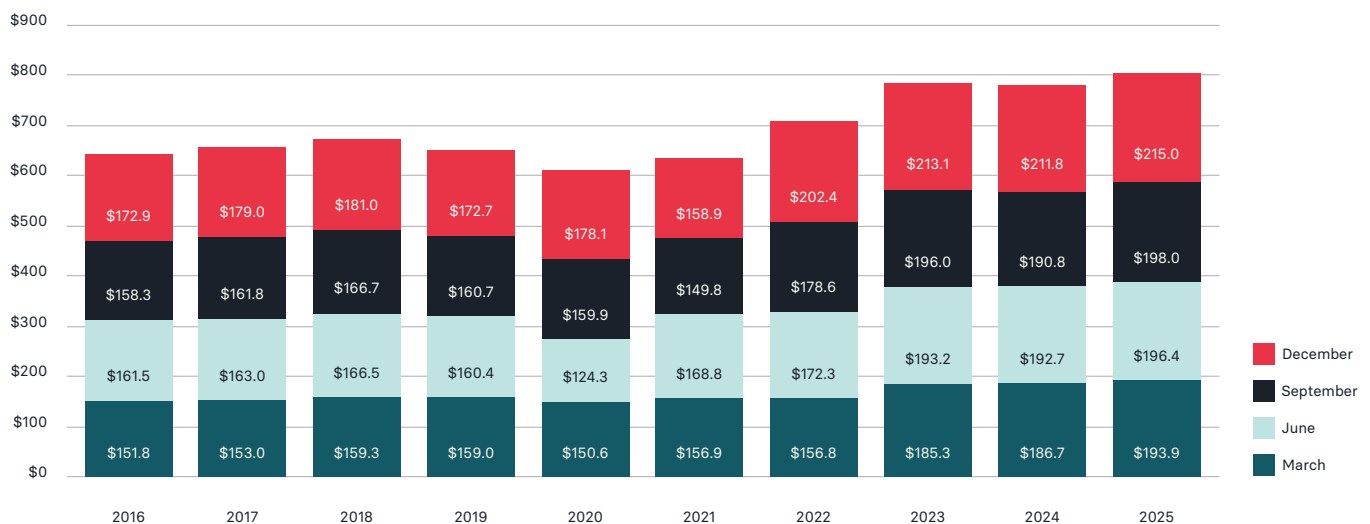
- HCBA has regular scheduled meetings with Council transportation and parking teams to discuss transportation initiatives in the central city.
- Parking continues to be a significant pain point for the central city, with HCBA provided regular feedback from the business community and visitors to town about the need for a simpler parking offering. HCBA is in support of the central city streets needing upgraded signage, footpaths and street scape.
- HCBA with NAI Harcourts were able to take representatives from Ward Street and Worley Place businesses through the Pullman Hotel development to see two set up demo rooms. The businesses were able to understand the requirements for the project over the next 12 months and have a key contact provided, directly from the developers. The two rooms were absolutely beautiful and incorporate a significant amount of first in NZ technology. With more than 200 rooms, the Pullman Hotel will be an immensely positive addition to the central city offering with significant benefits envisaged for the surrounding business.

3. Commercial and residential development

- HCBA has completed an economic snapshot of the central city (appendix 1) July - December 2025.
- Retail Occupancy Reports for the Hamilton CBD six months ending December 2025, compiled by NAI Harcourts in collaboration with CBRE Research, are reasonably positive showing reduced vacancy rates in Hamilton CBD retail, declining slightly from 10.9% to 10.5%. There continues to be a longer-term trend in play of Hamilton CBD becoming a niche retail destination, with a variety and concentration of speciality retailers and services, on the back of ongoing commercial and apartment development. Food Retailing in particular has continued scope for growth, in comparison, the Bars & Pubs category has contracted. Bars & Pubs are a vital component of the nighttime economy and will continue to be a feature of the Hamilton retail market, however there appears to be opportunity emerging for a new kind of hospitality experience in the CBD.
- Office Occupancy Reports for the Hamilton CBD six months ending December 2025, compiled by NAI Harcourts in collaboration with CBRE Research, show no brand new additions to Hamilton CBD office stock in the second half of 2025, however the completion of an extensive refurbishment at 18 London Street has moved this building up to a higher grade. Over the six months to December 2025, overall office vacancy increased from 6.4% to 8.9%. While largely driven by increases in D grade, most grades experienced a vacancy rate increase, although Grade A vacancy is the lowest, a result in line with the continued 'flight to quality' that many occupiers aim for. While hybrid working has been and will continue to be a feature of the workplace, employers are shifting their focus back to the office as a primary place of work, and for businesses to attract high performing individuals, they need a high performing workplace. This market led demand for quality office space will help to generate Hamilton office projects going forward.

4. CBD trends

Card Spending in Central City by Quarter from 2016 to Dec 2025



Hamilton City

- Nominal card spending in Hamilton went up by 0.4% in the December quarter this year compared to the same time last year.
- Given inflation for the quarter was up 3.1%, this represents a decline in real spending of 2.6%.
- Transactions across Hamilton were down 0.6% for this quarter.
- Groceries & Liquor is the only sector that saw an increase in nominal spending with 3.4%.
- With the increasing inflation on food this suggests that consumers are reducing their spending in other sectors to spend on Groceries & Liquor.
- Rest of International customer spending (excludes Australia) increased by 28%, a significant improvement from the 14.9% decrease seen in Q4 last year.
- Hamilton Airport has opened more routes and seen an increase of 71,000 travellers in the second half of 2025.
- As international visitors travelling through Australia can now arrive directly in Hamilton this may contribute to the increase in spend.
- Additionally, with the return of jet services to the Hamilton-Christchurch route as of September 2025 it expands capacity and convenience.
- This could be contributing to the 9% increase in spending from Canterbury visitors.
- Spend on the Fuel & Automotive sector did not see a fall this quarter, breaking the decreasing trend since 2024 Q2, potentially due to fuel prices on the rise.

Central City Zone

- Spending in the Central City is up 1.5% when compared to the same quarter last year.
- In real terms this represents a 1.6% decline in card spending.
- Overall transactions fell a slight 0.3% for the quarter.
- The biggest change was in the Home & Recreation Retail sector which lost 4 stores.
- Central City saw a 7.9% decrease in Fuel & Automotive spending, attributed to 6% fall in transactions.
- Notably, the Suburban Centre Core Zone saw a 7.6% increase in transactions.
- Along with Fuel & Automotive, Accommodation & Hospitality saw a 9.2% decrease in spend.
- However, the Retail Trade sector saw a 5% increase and Groceries & Liquor 6.2%.
- Consumers spending habits seem to be shifting in the Central City.
- Of the Retail Centre Zones, the Central City Zone saw a greater increase in spending (1.5%), compared to The Base (-1.3%) or Chartwell (-1.2%) for the first quarter since 2024 Q2.
- This may be due to activities and events held in and around Hamilton CBD over the summer making it more attractive compared to The Base and Chartwell.
- Chartwell saw a 17.5% increase in spend from international visitors and The Base saw a 29.3% increase. Conversely, the central city zone only saw a 11% increase.
- Hamilton City consumers, on the other hand, spent more in Central City this quarter (2.1%) than The Base (-2.1%) or Chartwell (-1.1%).



5. Central city safety and wellbeing

- HCBA are continuing to talk with City Safe about numerous possessions being left around the town, particularly by the same identified people. Potential storage opportunities have been identified.
- There has also been feedback received by HCBA suggesting there is an increase in homeless numbers, particularly from out of town, specifically Rotorua, Tauranga and Auckland.
- Police patrols are continuing around the central city with a central Police point of contact for HCBA, which has been extremely beneficial. The Police have been very visible and visited local businesses as and when required.
- HCBA hosted a meeting at SkyCity Garden Room with the Ministerial Advisory Group for Retail Crime who came up from Wellington to discuss the policy initiatives they have had accepted by central Government, including stronger penalties on trespass orders, stronger penalties on retail theft and citizen arrest powers. The session was well attended by retail and hospitality businesses with good discussion points raised.
- HCBA hosted a meeting with Area Commander Andrea McBeth and Mayor Paula Southgate in early August. MP Ryan Hamilton's Move on Orders bill was discussed at length and the impact this could have in the central city if passed.
- HCBA have asked that City Safe and Police patrols look to increase presence 6pm-11pm where Victoria Street has people congregating engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- HCBA provided a supporting submission to the Justice Department supporting Move on Orders to be implemented in the city.
- HCBA is working with several hospitality businesses about anti-social behaviour and ensuring these are on the police radar. There continues to be significant anti-social behaviour concerns along Victoria Street.
- HCBA met with the new policing team deploying in the central city.
- HCBA attends the monthly meetings of the Interagency group.

6. Love the Centre

- HCBA secured an annual contract with Winger Motors Hamilton for a Love the Centre branded vehicle to be used for promotion around the town and at Love the Centre activations. Winger Motors Hamilton have been extremely generous in their support of Love the Centre and their commitment to wanting to see Hamilton's central city thrive.
- Hamilton Central Business Association's 'Love the Centre' initiative has been recognised internationally, winning the Best Traditional or Digital Marketing Award at the 2025 Mainstreet Australia Awards on the 18th September in Melbourne.

The 'Love the Centre' campaign which showcases Hamilton's central city through innovative digital platforms and traditional marketing approaches, stood out amongst competitors from across Australia and New Zealand. At the heart of the winning campaign is the newly launched website, lovethecentre.co.nz, which invites visitors to "Rediscover the heart of the city." The digital platform beautifully captures what makes Hamilton's central city special, showcasing local businesses, events, and hidden treasures that bring our city centre to life.

The website serves as a comprehensive guide to everything happening in Hamilton Central, from dining options to entertainment, shopping experiences to cultural events. Its user-friendly design and engaging content have increased connections between businesses and visitors.



EFFECTIVE OUTCOME 2 - COLLABORATION

To contribute and collaborate on projects that support the CBD business economy.

1. Economic development initiatives

Embassy Park Development

- HCBA will be co-hosting with the Riff Raff Trust, the public unveiling on 14 February of the Riff Raff statue in Embassy Park. Supported by a public performance from shadow cast Hot & Flustered and with Richard O'Brien attending, this event will positively promote the new public space alongside the BNZ Theatre.

Homegrown

- HCBA has provided support to the Homegrown team for central city activation and provided connections to student support at Wintec.

Prime Properties

- HCBA is working with Prime Property on media promotion for the redevelopment at 500 Victoria Street and upgrade of the Norris Ward McKinnon Building. HCBA has also facilitated Council introductions for regulation support.

Student Activity

- HCBA met with Wintec journalism students to provide central city stories to work on, including current developments underway, Love the Centre awards and parking.
- HCBA permitted a group of University of Waikato students to film a short film in the HCBA office. Approximately one minute long, the film was about a career woman and will be provided to HCBA when completed.
- HCBA interviewed by Year 12 Girls High students for a Waikato Women of Inspiration social media campaign.

Soda Inc

- HCBA are continuing to work with Soda on opportunities under the Regional Business Partnership, particularly in supporting promotion around AI opportunities and R&D in technology.

Waikato Supper Club

- HCBA are working with McDonalds (5X Roads, Hamilton East, former Gateway Church site) on Waikato Supper Club to be held 4 March 2026 as a fundraiser for Ronald McDonald House. HCBA has secured 43 tables in the central city and Hamilton East for 430 people, along with restaurants in Cambridge. 500 people will be hosted in total after a live and silent auction fundraiser is held. In addition, HCBA has also secured auction items and the post dinner function space to support the event.



2. Partnership and networking opportunities

- HCBA hosted Christmas drinks for the network for the inaugural opening of the Hamilton Hotel Birdman space. This was a well attended event with the space receiving lots of positive feedback on the night.
- HCBA attended the sod turning ceremony at The Pā for the new medical school development.
- HCBA judged the Beca annual Christmas competition, incorporating a new initiative of decorating balance bikes that were then donated to Women's Refuge. This was considered a huge success and will be an annual offering.
- HCBA participated in the annual Breeze radio campaign with the Love the Centre 12 Days of Christmas live broadcast in Garden Place. A good number of local businesses contributed to the campaign and HCBA were well represented on a live radio quiz.
- HCBA supported new hospitality business openings of Eterna, Sip N Dip dessert bar and Moo's Table and retail opening Parlour.
- HCBA attended TOTI meeting to discuss signage and heritage requirements around the central city. This is an ongoing project. HCBA has written up the history of Victoria, Collingwood and Thackery Streets.
- HCBA attended the Council events hui at the Hamilton Gardens, where several speakers discussed holding events and attendees were told about an easy-to-understand workbook for events in Hamilton.
- HCBA met with a new event potential, Shakespeare in the City, who are considering creating an event at Victoria in the River and Garden Place.
- HCBA met with Raglan Salt Company who were potentially looking at pop-up shop or collaboration opportunities in the central city.
- HCBA met with Phillip Quay to discuss various PR initiatives for his Pulse Magazine and Business Connect event.
- HCBA met with Ben from Hello Hamilton to discuss ways to work together. HCBA has supported a number of initiatives and connections with Hello Hamilton.
- HCBA met with YMCA to discuss collaborations with central city businesses.
- HCBA met with Council to collaborate on Summer in the City event promotions.
- HCBA met with the GLOtron team and Hamilton library to look at cross promotional opportunities in the lead up to Christmas.
- HCBA met with Nourish Magazine to look at a proposal for two major food related events in 2026.
- HCBA attended the developer's forum at Council, primarily focused on the new Water body and impact across green fields sites.
- HCBA attended the Regional Growth Collective – economic development forum, held by Soda at Wintec. This event provides a great opportunity to connect with regional stakeholders about economic development initiatives. Guest speaker was from FTN in Te Rapa (electric motorbikes) and was very well received by the audience, particularly in the discussion around why they moved operations from Wellington to Hamilton.
- HCBA attended breakfast event at Novotel remembering the Māori Land Wars with guest speaker Hon. Nanaia Mahuta.
- HCBA welcomed Helloworld into the central city and have promoted their 'Win a trip to Bali' opening promotion.
- HCBA organised the Great Debate Garden Place event with the Festival of Architecture team. A sold out event with 120 people to listen to a panel of six discuss innovative ideas and improvements for Garden Place at Panama Square.
- HCBA met with Phillip Quay from Business Connect to provide information for their new magazine, including a monthly column provided by HCBA.
- HCBA attended architect event at Claudelands about reimagining central cities based on hotels and accommodation options. An informative and inspiration event held annually.
- HCBA promoted Escape, Hide, Tell campaign launch from Central Government.
- HCBA met with Mat Pedley from Overproof to discuss new hospitality offerings in the Hamilton Hotel.
- HCBA met with the Hamilton Libraries manager to discuss the impact of the new facia development in Garden Place.



- HCBA attended sustainability presentation from Council looking at ways of creating 'green roofs' on current infrastructure. This is expected to be trialled on a bike rack in Garden Place.
- HCBA met with John Luxton from Regeneration HQ to discuss his recently published paper on Rethinking SME Support – A New Conversation for Aotearoa.
- HCBA met with Hatch Student Accommodation for Wintec to look at opportunities to support in both development and promotion.
- HCBA went on a tour of the new Mediaworks location and promoted the latest 'breakfast pie' offering from the Stu & Camille breakfast show sold at the Grumpy Baker.
- HCBA attended Ruth Gilmour's photography studio opening on London Street, in the former Federated Farmers building.
- HCBA attended the blessing of the work to start on the facade of the Hamilton Central Public Library. This is expected to be completed in March 2026, however the library will remain open for the duration of this project.
- HCBA met with Vetro to continue development of the Spring Festival in October on Rostrevor Street.
- HCBA has provided the Hamilton Arts Trust Board with use of their office for monthly board meetings.
- HCBA attended a Council workshop on the provision of toilets in the central city and provided feedback on requirements.
- HCBA has continued to provide HCBA office space for Wintec artists to display artworks to the public.
- HCBA attended two AI workshops via Soda and the Regional Business Partnership Programme.
- HCBA attended Turning of the Sod event at Union Square to celebrate the start of Building B.

SOCIAL BUSINESS

Date	Time	Venue
24 February	3–6pm	Development Tour COMPLETE
26 February	9–3pm	Mahi on the Awa COMPLETE
26 February	5–7pm	Chris Wilkinson Retail Seminar COMPLETE
12 March	4–6pm	Boon Business Tour & WSA Gallery Tour COMPLETE
29 April	3–4.30pm	Media tour 500 Victoria Street COMPLETE
12 June	5–7pm	O Studio COMPLETE
23 July	5am & 12–2pm	Wintec Hangi for Business COMPLETE
28 August	5–6.30pm	AGM COMPLETE
25 September	4.30–6.30pm	NZ Festival of Architecture Great Debate COMPLETE
29 September	5–6.30pm	Safety evening with Ministerial Advisors COMPLETE
29 October	7–10.30pm	Love the Centre Awards COMPLETE
28 November	12–1pm	Invitation Only tour of the Pullman Hotel COMPLETE
3 December	4–6pm	Christmas drinks at the Hamilton Hotel COMPLETE



3. CBD safety initiatives

- HCBA has had an initial meeting with Auror to discuss Axon who are implementing an AI enabled technology trial in Newmarket. HCBA will follow up results after the trial is completed in the new year.
- HCBA met with Council staff to discuss the potential of implementing Auror technology in the central city. Unfortunately, this platform was unable to progressed.

4. CBD accessibility initiatives

- HCBA has been reappointed onto the Aged and Accessibility group for 2026.
- HCBA met with Wintec osteo students on a project around how to support older people accessing the centre city. The project included conducting interviews with older people who do and don't come into town and identifying barriers. There have been several meetings with the students to detail the project, interview questions and report format. This project was completed in October. As expected, issues around parking and safety were highlighted. HCBA has offered to host tours with retirement homes in 2026.

5. Hamilton Waikato Tourism (HWT)

- HCBA met with HWT to discuss hospitality initiatives including Story Bites documentary options. HWT will be looking to create a campaign in December around Brews including coffee, wine and distilleries.
- HCBA attended the Tourism Symposium at Mystery Creek. A highlight was listening to the Minister of Tourism & Hospitality, Louise Upston, talk about initiatives underway to recognise, grow and develop the industry. China was a market extensively discussed with statistics, stating 60 million Chinese are actively looking to visit NZ. Tourism numbers are continuing to grow, but still short of pre-Covid levels. Cruise ship numbers continue to track down. For the region there were many positives highlighted including the Jetstar domestic travel from Hamilton and Air NZ and Jetstar jet service to Christchurch.
- HCBA continue to work with Hamilton Waikato Tourism to implement initiatives to the benefit of both international and domestic tourism to the area.

6. Executive Committee

HCBA held the AGM at the end of August at Loan Market premises. A great turnout for the AGM which included three presentations from Brett Wood – Loan Market, Mike Neale – NAI Harcourts and Mat Pedley – Overproof, adding great value to the evening.

- Three Committee members stood down after two terms: Dwight Egelhof Chairman – Craigs Investment Partners, Vanessa Parker – SkyCity and James McIlvor – TGH. They provided outstanding service during their time on the Committee and were formally recognised at the AGM.
- Three new members were welcomed onto the Committee: Kari Jones – SkyCity, Leon Johnson – TGH and Nicola Oldridge – Harkness Henry and look forward to their contribution and support in HCBA.

HCBA Committee Members:

- Chelsea Fleetwood – PKF Accountants
- Mike Neale – NAI Harcourts
- Julie Ashby – Wintec
- Niraj Kumar – IBIS Tainui Hamilton
- Rory McKenzie – Maisey Harris & Co
- Craig Paul – Tabletalks
- Kari Jones – SkyCity
- Leon Johnson – TGH
- Nicola Oldridge – Harkness Henry



7. Governance roles and responsibilities

HCBA Governance:

- People's Project
- Embassy Park Working Group
- Aged/Accessibility Friendly City Group

Contributor to:

- Contributor to Inter-agency meeting
- Contributor to Hamilton Waikato Tourism working groups
- Contributor to Waikato Film Office, Boon Street Art Festival and Nourish Magazine
- Contributor to Council plans for safety, transportation, parking and central city
- NZ Mentor – currently mentoring a fin-tech entrepreneur



EFFECTIVE OUTCOME 3 – PROMOTION

To promote the central city as a bustling, active, innovative, vibrant place that offers exceptional businesses and experiences.

1. Social media & website engagement

July

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,227	Followers 44,521	Followers 953	
Views 43.1K	Views 213.8K	Views 31,994	Views 8.4K
Reach 8.2K	Reach 73.9K	Reach 26,611	Event count 25K

August

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,246	Followers 44,628	Followers 978	
Views 29.9K	Views 301,514	Views 12,199	Views 15K
Reach 6.1K	Reach 97,346	Reach 8,575	Event count 39K

September

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,287	Followers 44,661	Followers 1,053	
Views 33.3K	Views 197.7K	Views 33,282	Views 7.7K
Reach 3.4K	Reach 51.8K	Reach 5,368	Event count 25K

October

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,365	Followers 44,777	Followers 1,049	
Views 52.8K	Views 220.5K	Views 3,075	Views 9.8K
Reach 4.7K	Reach 64.04K	Reach 907	Event count 31K

November

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,415	Followers 44,936	Followers 1,078	
Views 72.6K	Views 355.2K	Views 18,252	Views 9.5K
Reach 6.2K	Reach 81.8K	Reach 13,930	Event count 31K

December

Instagram	Facebook	TikTok	Website
Followers 4,587	Followers 45,066	Followers 1,110	
Views 74.4K	Views 185.1K	Views 10,735	Views 13K
Reach 10K	Reach 49.7K	Reach 6,682	Event count 42K



2. Sector specific initiatives

Commercial

- HCBA has been supporting several new businesses with promotion and establishment support. There is a predominance of new businesses within hospitality.

Hospitality

- HCBA has met with the team looking to host the Hospitality Awards in 2026. HCBA has been providing feedback on the Love the Centre awards to assist in the set-up. This awards programme will be biennial and is expected to be positively welcomed by the hospitality sector.
- HCBA met with the NZ Hospo rep to discuss advocacy around Local Alcohol Policy (LAP) proposal from Council.
- HCBA has discussed with a number of hospitality providers their thoughts on a Local Alcohol Policy. There is concern that this policy will be looked at as an opportunity to introduce measures like a one way door policy. HCBA provided initial feedback not supporting the Policy.
- HCBA has promoted the Soda training programme created for hospitality to be held in October.
- HCBA contributes a quarterly double spread highlighting businesses, experiences and events through branded Love the Centre promotion.
- HCBA featured branded promotion with a Love the Centre feature in the Waikato Times.

Retail

- HCBA, supported by NAI Harcourts and assistance from the generous Landlord, secured 325 Victoria Street for a pop-up shop in the first week of December for Dress for Success. Their everything \$5 sale held last year was a huge success and was met with the same success again in 2025.

Creative

- HCBA are continuing to work with Creative Waikato on a Garden Place activation, with support from Beca.
- HCBA provided a submission supporting a Council led Arts Policy on major infrastructure projects.
- HCBA attended TOTI workshop on the stories behind the street names for a project that has been endorsed by Council. Implementation of this project is being managed by TOTI.

Wintec

- HCBA held a very successful Matariki hangi event at Te Kōpū Mānia o Kirikiriroa Marae at Wintec city campus. There was fantastic feedback received and enjoyed by all those who attended. This will be held again in 2026.



3. HCBA Profile raising activities

- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on December retail sales.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on positive results on Auror crime statistics.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on Black Friday results.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on retail optimism going into Black Friday.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on winning a Mainstreet Australia award.
- HCBA provided Pulse Magazine with central city update on award winners.
- HCBA met with Editor Waikato Times to discuss potential stories in the CBD.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on Auror Facial Recognition technology.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on bus services to Hamilton Airport.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on roaming dogs in the central city.
- HCBA provided Pulse Magazine with central city update.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on Spring events.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on Great Debate Garden Place event.
- HCBA arranged for RNZ to interview Brian White post the Great Debate event.
- HCBA interviewed by the Waikato Times on 40 years of Centre Place.
- HCBA interviewed by the Waikato Times on the Ministerial Safety Meeting.
- HCBA interviewed by the Waikato Times on the Night Markets moving from the central city to the University.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on places to visit for experiences.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on the former Town & Country hospitality business.
- HCBA interviewed by Stuff on MetroMart and what this style of supermarket means to a central city.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on a potential parking fund.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on safety further to the Palate robbery and comments from Lawrenson Group.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on parking fees and penalties.
- HCBA contributed to a press release from Council on central city clean up activities.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on the French rugby team not staying in Hamilton.
- HCBA interviewed by Waikato Times on Gateway Church site becoming McDonalds.
- HCBA interviewed by The Breeze on the Love the Centre Awards.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on Summer in the City.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on the Love the Centre Awards.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on new businesses.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on Father's Day shopping.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on activations in the central city.
- HCBA provided a monthly column to Waikato Local on where to shop.
- HCBA interviewed by HCBA interviewed on Free FM every month to discuss happenings in the CBD.



4. Public space activation

HCBA has had the funding signed off for the next three years to undertake activation in public spaces in the central city 2024-2027.

LOVE THE CENTRE WEBSITE

HCBA have continued to invest in and develop the Love the Centre website, with central city promotions, holiday programmes and business special offers.

DECEMBER

Window Display

Christmas display.

Summer in the City

1 December – 8 March 2026

HCC have supported activations in the Summer months including pickleball, skatepark, Christmas carols, primarily held in Civic Square and Garden Place. These have been well received by the public. HCBA have continued with the activation programme in the central city.

Thursday 4 December

Love the Centre Live Music

12.30pm – 1.30pm, Garden Place

Saturday 6 December onwards

GLOtron

Centre Place, 501 Victoria Street

Sunday 7 December

Hamilton Christmas Parade

2pm, Anglesea Street.

A much loved, family day out with a huge audience turn out.

Wednesday 10-19 December

Trees at the Meteor

The Meteor Theatre

Thursday 11 December

Love the Centre Live Music

12.30pm – 1.30pm, Garden Place

Friday 12 December

Love the Centre Live Music

12.30pm–1.30pm, Garden Place



Saturday 13 & 20 December

Festive Fun

11am-2pm, Garden Place

A huge hit with families attending a range of fun activities including Pop's games, face painting, live music and circus performers. Over the last two working weekends in December, this provided a superb add on to free activities around the central city.

Sunday 14 December

Pasko Sa Nayon Christmas in the City

3pm-8pm, Garden Place

Thursday 18 December

Love the Centre Live Music

12.30pm-1.30pm, Garden Place

Friday 19 December

GCC Carols in the City Christmas

5pm – late, Garden Place

NOVEMBER 2025

Window Display

Love the Centre Award Winners

Yamaha Rollo's Marine Bridge to Bridge

November 7-9th Bridge 2 Bridge Waterski Classic weekend, featured live boating action along our wonderful Waikato River. The river was particularly high and racing started from the Love the Centre start-line down at Grantham Street. This lively event drew people to spectate along the banks of the river and has the potential to grow a corporate offering, particularly with the Ferrybank upgrade.

Lugtons Round the Bridges

November 16th on Victoria Street all levels of fitness lined up to compete in the Round the Bridges 2km, 6km and 12km Lugtons Round the Bridges. Celebrating 80 years of this magnificent event, where every year thousands of runners and walkers descend upon Hamilton city centre for one of NZ's oldest and most beloved annually contested events. This sold-out event attracted 7,000 participants and thousands of spectators. The Love the Centre recovery zone was well received and overall was a fantastic central city celebration.

Love the Centre Progressive Dinner

November saw the return of the annual Progressive Dinner in the central city, featuring restaurants Mr Pickles, Madam Woo, Octavo, El Mexicano, Little Honey and including a flash mob dance group at El Mexicano. 50 attendees enjoyed a stroll around town and a night of fine wine and delicious food.

Christmas Tree Lighting

November 29th the magical Christmas Tree Lighting, a much-loved event that officially launches the festive season and brings families together in the true spirit of celebration. It was an unforgettable night as the Christmas tree was lit for the first time. With a fantastic crowd in attendance and sunny weather, it was a great night of festive fun and dazzling lights with a wonderful crowd who came to enjoy. Some brilliant drone shots by organisers were taken on the night.



OCTOBER 2025

Window Display

Halloween

VETRO SPRING FESTIVAL

Saturday 18 October Vetro Spring Festival on Rostrevor Street was transformed into a Mediterranean celebration featuring live music, face painting for the kids, and an incredible lineup of food vendors including The Grumpy Baker, Mizzoni, Goodfellas, and many more. With in-store tastings at Vetro and the chance to win a Weber BBQ, it was a perfect way to kick off event season. Tables set up down the middle of the street with Love the Centre gazebo's created a fantastic long lunch style atmosphere with thousands of people attending throughout the day. One safety incident occurred with a recidivist anti-social offender coming into the space, however this was swiftly dealt with by City Safe and the police attending. The Vetro team were delighted with the day and feedback from attendees was extremely positive. Special thanks to Downer & Infrastructure Alliance who sponsored traffic management for the day.

SEPTEMBER 2025

Window Display

Spring installation

NEIGHBOURHOOD DAY

Saturday 27 September in Garden Place and Civic Square.

The event included:

A Mayoral Question and Answer session – for mayoral candidates only, a free ticketed event, 11am-12pm. Hamilton City Council Reception Lounge.

A Candidate Café session – Civic Square - for all candidates, a free open event for the public to have an informal chat face to face with candidates in their ward.

Entertainment – in Garden Place – DJ, local performers and various family activities including face painting, interactive exhibits, live music, circus in the centre, enchanted character, kids zone, show rides and cultural performances.

A well attended family event that created good vibrancy in Garden Place encouraging civic participation, showcase Council services, and provide opportunities for the public to engage directly with those standing for election.

AUGUST 2025

Window Display

Father's Day

JULY 2025

Window Display

Love the Centre Awards

5. Advantage Club

HCBA produce a fortnightly update to Advantage Club subscribers that includes CBD events, news, special deals and the latest business openings. All subscribers are entered into a quarterly draw to win \$250 shopping spree in town. December's winner chose vouchers from Soul Gallery. September winner selected vouchers from Barkers, Centre Place.



6. The Love the Centre awards

The Love the Centre awards has received some wonderful feedback and press coverage (media release below). The predominance of October has been spent on delivering the awards for the business community.

MEDIA RELEASE

Hamilton's central city came alive on 29 October as the Love the Centre Awards, sponsored by Spark Business and supported by Mediaworks took over the stunning K'aute Pasifika fale.

Businesspeople gathered for an evening that fizzed with energy, creativity, and pride, recognising the establishments that make Hamilton's CBD a true destination.

The venue was transformed into a place of beauty with lush greenery and dramatic tiered grandstands, immersing guests in comfort and connection. As conversations flowed, guests were treated to Cream Eatery's creative catering, including a wildly popular raw seafood bar and a decadent tiramisu bar, setting the tone for indulgence and celebration.

The awards ceremony, delivered in two halves, recognised and celebrated the businesses that stood out to a panel of judges. Throughout the night, the talented MC Kelvyn Eglinton ensured no moment went uncelebrated, while Royal Lab's innovative design, SBI Production's top-tier production and Moving Media along with Ruth Gilmour Photography captured every embrace, cheer, and triumphant smile.

Half time saw the Select FM DJs electrify the audience with a Homegrown artist showcase, reminding everyone of the major talent coming soon to Hamilton.

"This evening is a celebration of what makes central Hamilton thrive, our businesses, our people, our experiences," said Vanessa Williams, General Manager of Hamilton Central Business Association. "It is an honour to recognise the talent, hard work, and resilience of our businesses. It is through dedication, passion and determination that the business community has turned Hamilton central into a place where people want to be!"

Spark Business, longtime sponsor, returned for the eighth year as the main sponsor, reinforcing its commitment to helping local businesses flourish. "Spark is proud to champion innovation and connection across Hamilton's city centre," said Fabian Pathirana, Business Lead, Spark Business. "The businesses recognised tonight are creating opportunities, building community, and showcasing exactly why people love being in the heart of our city."

MediaWorks, supporting sponsor, echoed this dedication. "MediaWorks is here to help tell the stories of Hamilton's most dynamic, driven businesses," said Stewart Melrose, General Manager, Mediaworks Waikato. "Tonight's event reflects the diversity and ambition that make the CBD such a remarkable place."

The awards ceremony, produced by Hamilton Central Business Association, is a highlight on the business calendar, a night devoted to championing those making a lasting impact.

POST AWARDS

The Love the Centre awards coverage has continued throughout October and November in the Waikato Business News, the Waikato Times, the Waikato Herald and post awards campaign on The Breeze.

HCBA have been celebrating the award winner's videos filmed by Moving Media on Love the Centre social media channels throughout December. These have received excellent audience views and feedback.



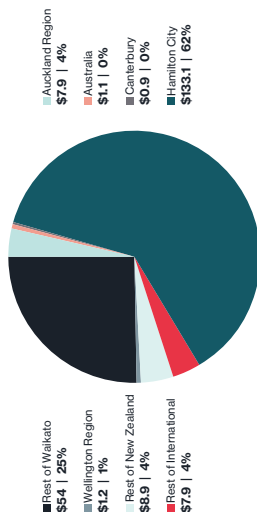
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOT July – December 2025

Economic Snapshot July – December 2025

In the six months to December 2025, the Hamilton Hotel opened with five new hospitality offerings: the Hamilton Hotel Public Bar, Bistro, Four Daughters, Birdman and Wonder Horse, as well as an upstairs event space. This adds to the central city's growing hospitality and entertainment mix, alongside the newly named BNZ Theatre, officially opening in January 2026. While 2025 did not finish with the widely anticipated economic upswing, the central city continues to see strong investment. There is a significant amount of development underway and in the pipeline for the central city, and these large-scale projects (including the BNZ Theatre, Building B at

Union Square and Pullman Hotel development) are the types of investment that helps a central city broaden its visitor economy, grow the nighttime economy, and lift confidence for surrounding businesses. There is a noticeable and continued demand for quality refurbished and new office space, which is positively impacting on staff returning to the workplace. The central city will also benefit from ongoing investment in the public realm and building upgrades, including works underway at the Hamilton Central Public Library, the Celebrating Age Centre, and the former Ferrybank Reception Centre on Grantham Street.

Hamilton Electronic Spending (\$m) by Customer Origin Q4 2025



CBD Spend

\$803.2m
Total annual spend 2025

\$193.8m
Total spend 2025 Q1

\$198m
Total spend 2025 Q3

\$196.3m
Total spend 2025 Q2

\$215m
Total spend 2025 Q4

Business activity
33
new businesses opened

Retail vacancy rate
10.4%
down from 10.9%

Office vacancy rate
8.9%
up from 6.4%

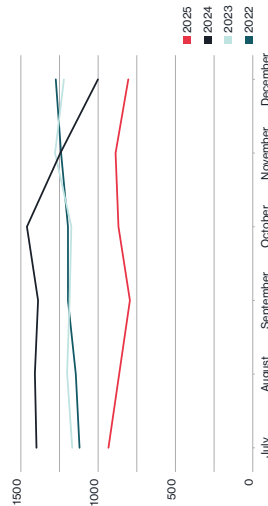
Developments underway:

- Barton Street corner redevelopment** – hospitality, retail and office space, due for completion 2026.
- Hinemoa Apartments** – 42 entry level 1 & 2 bedroom units, due for completion 2026.
- Union Square, Building B** – building four of six, for Tetra Pak and Aecoom, due for completion Q4 2026.
- 500 Victoria Street** – redevelopment of six level office building, including external re-clad and end of trip facilities due for completion 2026.
- 121 Angelsea Street** – orthopaedic medical facility development, due for completion 2026.
- Former Federated Farmers Block** – development plans in progress.
- Pascoes Building** – retail and office space corner of Garden Place and Victoria Street due for completion in 2026.

Card Spending in Central City by Quarter from 2016 to 2025



Average Pedestrian Volume by Year



Economic snapshot created by Hamilton Central Business Association. Hamilton CBD retail and office market rates sourced from CBRE & NAHarcourts retail and office occupancy surveys.

Hamilton CBD spend data sourced from MarketView. Hamilton CBD pedestrian count data sourced from Hamilton City Council.



Appendix two

NEW BUSINESSES OPENED July – December 2025

July 2025

- Kori Desserts – 37 Ward Street
- Cutthroat Brothers Barbers – Level 2, 341 Victoria Street, on the corner of Garden Place
- Running Grid – 126 Alexandra Street

August 2025

- Progress to Health – 931-935 Victoria Street
- Silk Audit Chartered Accountants – 37 Harwood Street
- Little Honey – 217 Victoria Street
- Octavo – 15 Hood Street
- City Fitness has committed to a new facility at the former JB HiFi building in Barton Street
- Ruth Gilmour Photographer – L2, 169 London Street

September 2025

- K Chicken – Alexandra Street
- Haley Adele Photography – 24 Garden Place
- Joy Billiards Club (heyball) – 88 Tristram Street

- First Training – 9 Clifton Road

- Striker Sports – 113 Alexandra Street (October)

- Tech4You – 36 Ward Street
- Helloworld Travel – 1 Ward Street
- Scrان Cafe – Casabella Lane

October 2025

- Our Accountant – 169 London Street
- Dynasty Remedial Massage – 384 Victoria Street
- Crew Care are relocated into the CBD – 801 Victoria Street
- Neazor Brady relocating back to the CBD – 18 London Street
- Aroma Massage has secured the corner of Victoria & Rostrevor Streets, formerly Aesthete Gallery
- The ground floor suite at 20 Alma Street has been leased to a photographer
- LSKD – Centre Place

November 2025

- Eterna, Café & Dine is now open at 131 Victoria Street
- Ultra Beauty – Centre Place
- Blue Dragon Vietnamese Takeaway – 191 Victoria Street
- Richard Sutton & Hannah Cuthill Barristers – Suite 23 of the Arcadia Building in Worley Place

December 2025

- Moo's Table – 149 Alexandra Street
- Parlour – 307 Barton Street
- Lorna Jane Pop Up – Centre Place
- CKL Planning Surveying Engineering relocating from Te Rapa into 18 London Street

