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## Media Statement

### Huge benefits from quality urban design

Less crime, greater safety, healthier local economies, vitality in the streets and better health are some of the significant benefits of quality urban design, according to *The Value of Urban Design* report launched today by Environment Minister Marian Hobbs at a joint local government and property sector event in Auckland.

"This research gives us remarkable insights into how urban design supports successful cities and towns," Marian Hobbs said.

The evidence-based review of over 200 international studies looked at the social, economic and environmental benefits of urban design.

"It should give developers more confidence to make the extra investment needed to deliver high quality urban development," Marian Hobbs said. "When done well, urban design is profitable, offering benefits over time for developers and the wider community. Good urban design is not just a 'nice to do', it is a must do."

Overall, the *Value of Urban Design* has found that a high design standard for buildings, public spaces and networks is crucial to our quality of life and will help make our towns and cities successful. It also shows that continuing poor design can lower quality of life in a city, and limit its economic growth.

"This year is the Year of the Built Environment and we need to take a longer term view of our cities and think about urban design as a whole – we want to encourage a positive long-term impact on the quality of our built environment," Marian Hobbs said.

The *Value of Urban Design* is part of a series of initiatives building on significant work by central government on our built environment. *The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol* was launched in March this year, and it now has over 90 signatories.

"It is encouraging to see our Auckland signatories and partners collectively taking up the challenge of the Urban Design Protocol and coming together to address the region's issues," Marian Hobbs said.

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