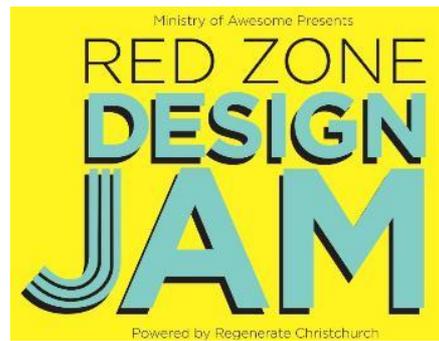




**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Wednesday 28 June 2017**

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## **Successful designer set to inspire students about the red zone's future**



A youth design challenge this weekend will see students brainstorm potential solutions for the Ōtākaro Avon River corridor regeneration area.

They will be supported by local design professionals and mentors and a United States urban planner and designer who conceived a successful urban redevelopment project as a student.

Ryan Gravel, whose student research shaped the original vision for the Atlanta BeltLine, one of the most inspiring urban redevelopment programmes underway in the United States, is visiting Christchurch.

The Atlanta BeltLine is a 35-kilometre transit greenway that is changing the physical form of Atlanta and the decisions people make about living there. Now a US\$4 billion public-private investment, the project's health and economic benefits are already evident through the record-breaking use of its first section.

Ryan will share his experiences at a public event this Thursday evening and with more than 50 students at a Design Jam this weekend. The Design Jam is presented by the Ministry of Awesome and supported by Regenerate Christchurch.

This youth event will see architectural, design, community, entrepreneurial and sustainable minds come up with potential designs for the Ōtākaro Avon River corridor regeneration area, says Regenerate Christchurch Chief Executive Ivan Iafeta.

"We want to make sure young people feel they have a say in the future of the red zone and this is an amazing opportunity to do that. Participants will be mentored by knowledgeable and skilled industry leaders."

Ministry of Awesome Chief Awesome Officer Lauren Bliss Merritt says they are delighted to present such a unique and meaningful opportunity for young people in Christchurch.

"This immersive and fast-paced experience will give participants an opportunity to brainstorm, test, collaborate and communicate ideas and rapidly develop an exciting approach to the future of this huge area."

The public is invited to view the designs at the Ministry of Awesome from the following Thursday.





Before the Design Jam, Ryan Gravel is speaking at a free Christchurch Conversations event on Thursday 29 June 2017 from 6:00 – 7.30pm at The Piano, 156 Armagh Street. He'll describe how cities can be transformed by catalyst projects and refer to international examples, including Singapore's Rail Park and the Los Angeles River.

This event will be livestreamed on Regenerate Christchurch's Facebook page and videoed and uploaded to Regenerate Christchurch's website the following week.

The 2017 Christchurch Conversations series is presented by Regenerate Christchurch, in partnership with Christchurch City Council and Te Pūtahi - Christchurch centre for architecture and city-making.

Regenerate Christchurch will continue to engage people as the Ōtākaro Avon River corridor Regeneration Plan is developed this year:

- Exhibition of options: In September, several design scenarios will go on display, where the public can give feedback.
- Evaluation panel: In September/October, 50 people, at least half of them selected from the electoral roll, will consider all public feedback on the options and provide their views to Regenerate Christchurch's Board.

ENDS

**Note to media** - If you would like to interview Ryan Gravel or visit the Design Jam, or for images or more information, please contact:

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