



# Northcote

## Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020



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## Introduction

This report provides an overview of the existing gaps and opportunities for Northcote Business Association.

The first part summarises existing work to date (included previous strategic / business plans, Auckland Council documents, market data, and any other sources of relevant information), which helped us to understand the previous strategic intent and objectives, as well as the broader strategic environment, parameters, and constraints.

The report then recommends areas for future work, and presents emerging themes from a narrative research exercise conducted by canvassing a wide range of people (various business owners and other stakeholders in Northcote), including using a translator to specifically interview Chinese business owners. The narrative itself (i.e. transcript) from these interviews is available on our website.



# Previous and Existing Strategies

## and Business Plans

The following documents have been referenced in preparation of this Strategic Plan.

### 1 Northcote Strategic Documents

The Northcote Business Association strategic documents provided for this exercise were created by the previous Association Chair / Manager. These documents outline the history and context of the Northcote area, and discuss the projects successfully achieved to date. They go on to list a number of projects that are planned under the Northcote Town Centre Plan, which were previously approved or ratified by the Local Board (such as gateways, lighting, the Lake Road carpark configuration, public toilets, and the CCTV cameras).



### 2 Work by the Kaipātiki Local Board

The Kaipātiki Local Board is one of 21 Local Boards throughout the greater Auckland area and it covers the suburbs of Birkenhead, Northcote, Glenfield, and Beachhaven. It has responsibility for providing local leadership on issues, activities and facilities, funding of community grants, and engaging with and representing the community. To this end, it has two plans for these areas – the broader 'Kaipātiki Local Board Plan', and the more specific 'Kaipātiki Local Economic Development Action Plan'. This section will cover the aspects of these two plans as they relate to Northcote.

- **The Kaipātiki Local Board Plan**

The Kaipātiki Local Board Plan was launched in 2014 and covers a period of three years and contains a few aspects that specifically reference the Northcote Town Centre:

- Revitalise the town centre at Northcote – through the implementation of the Northcote Town Centre Plan, which aims to improve the town centre, including new public toilets, improved parking and lighting, signage, and public art,
- Build a greenway which will connect the town centre to adjoining suburbs and housing (as part of ongoing discussions with Housing New Zealand on its plans for the significant state housing development adjacent to the town centre),
- Protect and celebrate the heritage areas at Northcote to retain the heritage value,
- Build a greenway that creates linkages between the town centre and homes,
- Generally support the BID, business association, and businesses to work together on local economic development, planning and events,
- Work with ethnic and migrant-owned businesses to develop and support their business offerings in Kaipātiki,
- Extend the Northcote Library to meet projected growth, investigating long-term redevelopment as part of the Northcote Town Centre Plan.

- **Kaipātiki Local Economic Development Action Plan**

The Kaipātiki Local Economic Development Action Plan covers the activities that are specifically centred around economic development and include the following actions that relate to the Town Centre.

- Commission a commercial property market study,
- Implement the Northcote Town Centre Plan, including improvements to the town centre branding, toilets, CCTV, car parking, lighting and roadway improvements. This also includes actions to position the town centre for future nearby population growth,
- Support industry groups and business networking,
- Establish a Kaipātiki business association forum to ensure collaboration between BIDs, business associations, Kaipātiki Local Board, and Auckland Council. This forum will meet twice-yearly,
- Develop a programme to support ethnic and migrant owned businesses in the Kaipātiki area, particularly in the town centres.

- **The Migrant Business Study**

The rationale for this Local Board project stemmed from an acknowledgment that engagement in business support services for the city’s growing migrant owned business base is lower than that for the wider business community. With a significant concentration of migrant owned businesses, Northcote was considered to be a good centre to examine the demand for business support amongst the migrant community and to test a method for engaging business owners and gaining their trust. The key objectives were to:

- improve the capacity of migrant businesses to contribute to the Auckland economy and enhance international networks;
- seek to reduce the under-utilisation of migrant skills, through development of entrepreneurship and new business development;
- support migrant businesses through the provision of relevant and useful business support services and/or programmes;
- enhance migrant business growth in the Kaipātiki area.

Between June and September 2015 Raeburn House undertook research with Northcote based migrant owned businesses.

The research showed migrant owned businesses had information and support needs in several areas. The main issues identified by businesses were: general business advice; licensing, compliance and understanding regulations; health and safety and hygiene; tax; and legal business rights.



# 3

## Work by Panuku Development Auckland

Panuku Development Auckland is an Auckland Council Controlled Organisation (CCO). It is responsible for identifying and facilitating the best management of property in the Auckland area, on behalf of Auckland Council. It purchases, sells, and manages property in order to assist with better community outcomes. Panuku Development has a series of projects underway in the Northcote area. Its goal is to undertake an integrated and comprehensive redevelopment plan in Northcote to revitalise the town centre and better connect it with local homes. It is working in conjunction with the Kaipātiki Local Board. Its four key projects are:

### The Town Centre – Creating a Vibrant Heart

- Bringing retail development forward onto Lake Road,
- Creating a gateway with a new purpose built community facility,
- Building a new supermarket ,
- Improving the public spaces by upgrading the Greenslade Reserve community sports field, creating a new town square, making Cadness Reserve larger (including a destination children’s play park), and increasing investment in public spaces.

### Remodelling Lake Road

- This area will undergo extensive work to remodel it into a boulevard, including narrowing the carriageway, widening the footpaths, creating a dedicated cycleway, and planting trees.

### Creating a Blue-Green Way

- This will create a connected network of public spaces through Northcote, comprised of green pedestrian friendly corridors linking the town centre with parks and ecological spaces.

### Housing developments

- Northcote’s town centre and surrounding residential areas will contain higher density housing, with 1,200 new dwellings developed by Housing New Zealand, and over 500 apartments in the town centre. This work alone is likely to drive additional new housing development.



# Narrative Themes

This section extrapolates the key “themes” from our narrative research which involved canvassing a wide range of people (various business owners and other stakeholders in Northcote).

- **People like the hospitality but want more diversity of offering in terms of shops.** A number of people mentioned that there used to be more of a town centre ‘hub’ where you could get everything done, using the bank, the post office, etc. The prevalence of hospitality venues means that while Northcote offers a good eating destination, it may be little too ‘niche’.
- **People think that the area is looking a little tired, and needs a facelift.** Many answered the question about describing Northcote as a person by saying that they would be a bit shabby, a bit run down, and so on. It was felt that the area needed to be revitalised. Saying this, it was also often mentioned that the area was not without its charms, and that not a huge amount of work was needed to put things right.
- Many business owners – particularly from Chinese businesses – are concerned about **the security and safety of the area**. They are keen to see more investment in this area.
- **There are high hopes for the Northcote of the future.** Almost everyone spoke of the strategic potential for the area, and people were positive and supportive of the work that is going on via the Local Board and Panuku Development. It was widely recognised that Northcote can be a hub for the wider area.
- **People want an Association that is accountable, communicates often, and is a conduit for information between the membership and decision-making stakeholders** (such as the Council, Panuku, and AT). It was often mentioned that the Association of the past was not responsive or open with the membership. Further consultation and engagement with the membership would go a long way. People are also keen to see the Association play a larger role in the marketing and promotion of the area and of the different business offerings.



# Strategic Objectives and

## Initiatives 2017 - 2020

The following section contains four strategic objectives, with initiatives listed under each. While these objectives are multi-year, covering the 2017-2020 period, many of them contain initiatives that will be undertaken in 2017 and simply continued in outyears. This is due to the Association's past work being somewhat fragmented and without clear direction, meaning that much of work is 'catch-up' activity, and resulting in the need to frontload activity into the Strategic Plan.

### 1 Building a Sustainable Business Association

The Association is an entity that must be accountable to its members and wider stakeholders, such as Auckland Council and the Local Board. It must also ensure that it can create the conditions by which its members are best represented. To achieve this, the Association must have good governance and management processes in place. The establishment of these processes are crucial to the credibility of the Association as an organisation. The following initiatives outline how to achieve this.

Strategic Initiative	Timeframe	Budget	Measure
Establish a new website for the Business Association and the town centre.	March 2017	Nil	Website up and running.
Hire a dedicated resource (a Town Centre Manager) for the Northcote Business Association.	By June 2017	To be determined.	Permanent BID management team appointed.
Run an Annual Governance Board appointment process. This should consist of a call for nominations / applications of interest, followed by a vote by members – either electronically, or by paper ballot.	April 2017	Included in existing budgets.	Members aware of process and nominations received from interested members.
Hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) for all members no later than two months after the end of each financial year, where the audited Annual Accounts will be presented.	April 2017 (as required by Auckland Council)	Included in existing budgets.	AGM held and a new Executive Committee elected.

Hold a Special General Meeting (SGM) for all members no later than two months prior to the end of the financial year, where members attending have the opportunity to discuss and ratify the coming year's Business Plan and Budget.	In conjunction with April AGM.	Included in existing budgets.	Meeting held on time, following due process.
Develop a Constitution / Charter as a governing document for the Association. This document will be ratified at either an AGM or an SGM and will be revisited annually.	New Constitution to be adopted at this year's AGM in April.	Included in existing budgets.	New constitution adopted.
Investigate and implement a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) database, which will enable the capture and use of up-to-date information about the membership (subject to privacy laws).	By June 2017.	To be determined.	CRM system implemented.
Created and maintain a social media presence for the Association that can be used to promote the area, businesses, and events.	In 2017	\$2,000	Social media presence active, with a substantial following, and regular posts.

### 2 Enhancing and Protecting our Space

The appeal of a town centre is heavily influenced by the conditions it presents. Consumers, business owners, and the community will be drawn towards a Northcote that is safe, secure, and clean. While much of the beautification work in the area is underway through Local Board activities, there are initiatives that the Association can undertake as a conduit between its members, the public, and the relevant agencies.

Strategic Initiative	Timeframe	Budget	Measure
Install two additional CCTV cameras in Northcote Town Centre.	By August 2017.	Council funding may be available through a request to the Local Board.	New locations determined and new cameras installed.

Work with the relevant authorities and decision-makers (such as Panuku Development and the Local Board) on initiatives for the beautification and development of the Northcote town centre area.	On-going	To be determined.	Key relationships developed and projects advanced.
Work with the Police, Neighbourhood Support, and security firms to ensure the Northcote town centre area is safe and secure, and will establish a regular dialogue between businesses and these agencies.	On-going security patrol.	\$54,000	Regular meetings with security patrol and Police.
Work with branding / promotional agencies to establish the best way to promote Northcote as a destination – ideally getting services pro bono.	2017	To be determined.	Northcote seen as a destination for visitors.

### 3 Relevance and Development

The Association exists because of its members – it has no raison d’être without them. Because of this, the Association must ensure that it is current and relevant to the points of view of the membership. It must be acknowledged that these points of view will sometimes be conflicting, and the Association must strive to cater for - and advocate on behalf of - all its member segments. It will use this information, obtained regularly, to inform its business planning for the year, as well as its regular meetings with wider decision-makers.

Strategic Initiative	Timeframe	Budget	Measure
The Association will host the lunar New Year (a Chinese and Korean celebration, among other nationalities) event.	January 2018	\$30,000	Well-attended event run and all accountability reports submitted.
Host a quarterly member’s event. These sessions will be open to all members of the Association and will canvas opinions on member issues, as well as testing ideas about upcoming events and promotions.	April, July, October, January.	\$4,000	Quarterly events held and attended by a minimum of 10% of members.

Engage specifically on an annual basis with ethnic and migrant-owned businesses in Northcote, using a translator where needed. This work will carry on the activity that began with the Migrant Business Study.	May 2017	TBD	Migrant businesses engaged and supported.
The Town Centre Manager will meet with ethnic and migrant-owned businesses on a biennial basis to discuss their specific issues and needs, as well as canvas them for ideas around promotions and events.	On-going	Included in existing budgets.	Biennial meetings held. Migrant businesses feel supported.
Commission an annual engagement survey of all members, which will include a narrative component.	June 2017	Included in existing budgets.	Member survey conducted and results reported via newsletter.
Work to capture Paymark data that will be distributed to businesses, the Local Board, and Auckland Council while complying with privacy law requirements.	Quarterly	TBD	Quarterly Marketview reports are received.
Run regular events in the Northcote town centre as a way of bringing customers and vibrancy into the area.	Based around seasonal events such as Mother’s day.	\$2,000	Number of events held; attendance at events.
Form ‘special interest groups’ for members, which will meet regularly to discuss issues / matters of interest.	Quarterly	Included in existing budgets.	Number of special interest groups formed; attendance by Association members.
Run migrant ‘business clinics’ in conjunction with ATEED.	As required.	TBD	Number of clinics held; attendance at clinics.

# 4 Reach and Influence

A membership body comprises the collective views of its entire constituency. This means that the body not only has the ability to represent these views – it has an obligation to do so. The Association is in the privileged (and challenging) position of being the conduit between its membership and decision-makers such as the Local Board, Auckland Council, and it's CCOs. The Association will assume this responsibility seriously, and will represent the collective and diverse views of the membership objectively in as many meaningful forums as possible.

Strategic Initiative	Timeframe	Budget	Measure
Resolve the ground rent matter in the Northcote Town Centre by completing the negotiations with Panuku Development.	TBD in negotiation with Panuku.	Included in existing budgets.	Satisfactory resolution as regards for members.
Engage with Panuku on the matter of increasing the freeholding of land in the Northcote Town Centre.	TBD in negotiation with Panuku.	Included in existing budgets.	Satisfactory resolution as regards for members.
Appoint a member of the Kaipātiki Local Board to sit on the Association's Governance Board. This role will be appointed annually, and will allow for a free exchange of ideas between the two bodies.	April 2017	Included in existing budgets.	Local Board member appointed.
The Town Centre Manager will have regular catch-ups with the Chair of the Kaipātiki Local Board (at least monthly), and on an ad hoc basis.	Monthly	Included in existing budgets.	Monthly meetings with LB chair.
The Town Centre Manager will meet regularly as required with representatives of the Auckland Council CCOs, including (but not limited to) Panuku Development, ATEED, and Auckland Transport.	As required.	Included in existing budgets.	Meetings held as required.
The Town Centre Manager will meet regularly with landlords and developers as a means of testing opportunities and market perceptions of Northcote.	Twice yearly forums.	Included in existing budgets.	Twice yearly forums held.
Work closely with the Kaipātiki Local Board on the creation and consultation of the 2017-2020 Plan.	As required.	Included in existing budgets.	Northcote Town Centre has input into the LB plan.