

Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025

Background

Designated as one of two satellite towns in Auckland’s Unitary Plan, Warkworth is now seeing the start of the significant growth that is coming over the next 30 years.

Auckland Council growth forecasts indicate there will be an additional 7,500 dwellings, up to 2,000 new jobs, and a population of over 25,000 people in Warkworth. Over 1,000ha of rural land around Warkworth has been re-zoned Future Urban, and a structure plan process is currently underway for the future planning of the growth of the town.

The Puhoi to Warkworth Road of National Significance (RoNS) is expected to be completed in late 2021, creating greater accessibility between urban Auckland, Warkworth and the surrounding areas.

Under the Future Urban Land Supply Strategy (FULSS), Warkworth is expected to be development-ready with the necessary infrastructure in place between 2022 – 2035¹.

These factors make Warkworth desirable to property developers with several significant developments completed e.g. The Oaks retirement village, the Grange retail centre, and the Summerset Falls retirement village expansion, with more underway e.g. McKinney Valley extension, 60ha of live-zoned industrial land on Goatley Road/ SH1, significant private plan change proposals underway for Stubbs Farm Estate and Warkworth Land Company – both in the Northern precinct of Warkworth due to come online in 2022.

Development land in Warkworth is market attractive to developers given it is currently some of the cheapest future urban land in the region. With the quality of lifestyle on offer in the district, the construction of the RoNS motorway extension, and the strong demand for housing, the market is expected to drive Warkworth’s growth curve quite quickly.

Undeniably, Warkworth will attract greater business interest and there will be a need for new retail, service, manufacturing, and distribution activities, as well as business support services and visitor attractions.

The primary focus of a Business Improvement District (BID) is to deliver local economic development outcomes, advocate to Auckland Council for appropriate infrastructure that supports business activity and provide a business perspective on local and central government policies and initiatives.

¹ Warkworth North 2018 - 2022, Warkworth South 2027 – 2031, Warkworth North East 2031 – 2035.

One Warkworth is also an important conduit for other community groups to ensure that their advocacy is heard by the CCO's, the Council and the Government. This is particularly pressing given the growth that is currently ahead of Warkworth.

Business Improvement (BID) programmes are internationally recognised and there are 48 (to confirm) currently operating successfully in the Auckland region.

Purpose of document

This strategic plan identifies what the One Warkworth Business Association would focus on if a Warkworth BID is established. It guides the actions necessary to make progress, defines key success factors for the first five years of operation, and informs the annual business plan.

Our Vision for Warkworth

Warkworth will be a thriving, appealing, accessible, and well-connected town that attracts and retains a diverse range of successful businesses that meet the needs of loyal customers, clients, residents and visitors, and make us all prosperous and proud.

Our Mission

One Warkworth will deliver activities and initiatives that create business and employment opportunities and contribute to improved profitability, to achieve a strong and sustainable local economy. We will advocate to council, central government and other agencies for appropriate infrastructure and have significant input to plans, policies and initiatives that impact on the prosperity of our business community.

S.W.O.T analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Stable and successful business community	Highly dependent on local and regional customers
High degree of commitment to Warkworth	Poor parking options
High level of business confidence	Roading issues and localised and seasonal congestion particularly at Hill Street
Forecast growth and increasing number of customers	SH1 creating a physical barrier between business hubs contributing to poor connectivity and walkability
Small, friendly village feel and proximity to beaches and countryside	Retail and commercial business hubs operating autonomously and not looking at 'whole of Warkworth' solutions and benefits
Designation as satellite town in AUP and identification of infrastructure needs in FULSS making Warkworth market attractive to developers, investors and property owners (first home buyers, families, retirees)	RoNS will by-pass Warkworth diverting potential customers away from the existing retail and commercial centres (but comes online as development land also comes online helping grow the local community)

Established service centre. With banks, two supermarkets and other chain stores, Warkworth is the main service centre for locals, neighbouring communities (e.g. Wellsford, Mangawhai, Snells Beach, Algies Bay, Matakana, Omaha, Kaipara Flats, Tauhoa), and visitors	Poor visitor reputation compared to Matakana and a limited co-ordinated approach to attract Auckland visitors to Warkworth as a destination in its own right
Accessibility to SH1, proximity to Auckland and the North, and centre of the Matakana Coast tourism area	Weekend and late night trading hours inconsistent
RoNS built by 2022 hopefully alleviating local traffic congestion	Fibre not due to be rolled out until 2022.
Public amenity: unique river and river frontage, Jane Gifford, public walkways, heritage buildings, parks	Increased competition: local, Silverdale, Albany
Good facilities in/near town: schools, library, medical centers, sports grounds etc	Current OneWW business model is reliant on the support of sponsors (65% of income comes from 23 businesses). This has inherent risk for long-time viability.
A strong history of philanthropic support in the community	Negative perceptions of Auckland Council and concern that AC may 'control' the BID funding.

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Co-ordinate strong responses that influence Council and governmental decision making for the benefit of the business community	Neighbouring business communities e.g. Matakana and Snells Beach, feel threatened and May wish to compete with Warkworth rather than supporting regional benefits
Attract new businesses to Warkworth through the exciting growth prospects of the town, and help these businesses establish and achieve success, growing local employment.	Targeted rate does not achieve enough revenue for the BID to achieve significant benefits to prove its worth
Influence structure planning and work with landlords and real estate agents to attract the right businesses / business tenants to Warkworth	BID detractors undermine activities of the BID impacting on what can be achieved
Create a Unique Selling Proposition for Warkworth as a visitor destination in its own right. Attract passing traffic to stop and stay in Warkworth	Development is developer led and Warkworth becomes just another unattractive and disconnected Auckland suburb. Existing retail and commercial centres are exposed to increased local competition from new, disjointed hubs.

Improve attractiveness and accessibility of Warkworth	BID is unsuccessful – the support of a small group of sponsors is unsustainable and the Association once again founders.
Build on reputation of OneWW by providing more high-quality business support services, activities and events	Growth in competition from Silverdale as Millwater/ Milldale expands.
Achieve greater cut through and better value for money for local business advertising and marketing	Wrong types of businesses (heavy industry?) come to Warkworth, and a lack of variety impacts on attractiveness and desirability
Identify alternative ways of managing parking and advocate to increase where possible	
Provide indirect benefits to neighbouring business communities contributing to regional economic growth	

Goals (our focus):

1. **ADVOCACY:** We will ensure Warkworth has an effective, strong and co-ordinated approach that successfully influences Auckland Council and governmental decision making for the benefit of Warkworth businesses.
2. **ACTIVITIES:** We will provide support and deliver activities that make doing business in Warkworth easier, safer and more profitable.
3. **ATTRACTION:** We will attract and retain diverse, high-value commercial tenants and businesses and an increasing number of loyal customers, clients and visitors to Warkworth.
4. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We will have appropriate, robust and transparent measures in place so our members can contribute to decision making, and know what is being done (outputs) and achieved (outcomes).

1. ADVOCACY

Deliverable
Continue submission process for planning and private plan change processes for Warkworth’s future growth, including advocating for more appropriate and better industrial land to meet the needs of the town.
Continue advocating to Council & AT for local business needs, roading (e.g. Hill St, Southern Interchange, Western Collector), parking , public transport, connectivity and place-making.

Continue advocating to Council, CCOs and government agencies for necessary infrastructure improvements to support business expansion (river restoration and quality of potable water).
Continue attending broader Mahurangi area community group local meetings and providing support as appropriate.
Develop stronger and closer ties with secondary and tertiary institutions for better coordination with future workforce planning.
Be an effective voice for BID members by addressing the lack of reliable, high-speed broadband and fibre optic to government representatives and agencies.
Attend relevant Council committee and local board meetings to lobby on behalf of business members.
Hold regular meetings with landlords and real estate agents to encourage the right diversity of businesses and commercial tenants.

2. ACTIVITIES

Deliverable
Develop a new website as a key communications and engagement channel, promoting the association, the area itself and our members businesses
Review the branding of the Association to ensure continued relevance to both our members (within BID area) and also associate members in the broader Mahurangi district.
Provide a series of relevant networking, training and professional development opportunities to meet the different needs of our members.
Develop an events/ activities calendar for the year and make available to members
Run and/or support ' Hero Events ' through the community that bring the community together and create opportunities for our businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Santa Parade (Dec 20) - Wine & Food Festival (Mar 21) - Mahurangi Festival of Lights (Jul 21) - Kowhai Festival (as a major sponsor – Oct 20)
Run a Warkworth Information Centre that supports local businesses and generates new business
Obtain input from members regarding local safety, security or nuisance issues in the area, and work with the Police and security firms on behalf of all businesses to develop and implement crime prevention initiatives.
Drive a strong family of sponsors for the association and provide benefits to the sponsors to ensure long term relationships

Develop a member services directory and benefits package.
Identify alternative funding streams and support local groups' access this funding to reduce pressure on local businesses to contribute.
Collaborate with neighbouring BIDs for best practice learning and cost savings.
Work with community agencies and business members on youth into employment schemes.
Engage with members to identify and implement parking options for the town centre and commercial areas.
Build support for seven-day trading and consistent opening hours by implementing 'keep it local' campaigns

3. ATTRACTION

Deliverable
Promote ' buy local ' and Warkworth as a destination at the centre of the Mahurangi district, offering our members businesses exposure to the broader community. A new website, and effective email and social campaigns are a critical element of this, together with ongoing promotion in local media.
Work with Council to improve gateway signage on SH1, Matakana and Sandspit roads. Improve wayfinding signage for all business precincts and key community facilities.
Promote the benefits of doing business in Warkworth and Mahurangi for potential business investors, new businesses and commercial tenants e.g. purchase and distribute local market view data
Identify beautification opportunities and priorities around Warkworth and the Mahurangi district, and work with community groups to implement key findings that will enhance the physical environment.
Marketing plan: Develop a dynamic marketing plan that maximises exposure for BID properties, businesses, attractions and event to increase and volume and value of business transactions.
Visitor strategy: Work with tourism agencies e.g. Matakana Coast to increase the number of visitors and lengthen their stay Warkworth.
Develop information packs for potential business investors, new businesses and commercial tenants.
Encourage and support local community groups that are actively involved in improving public amenities that bring more people to Warkworth e.g. Riverbank Enhancement Group, Mahurangi Sports Collective.
Explore appetite for feasibility study of opening existing buildings up to river frontage.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

Deliverable
Develop and implement a communications plan to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed. May include website, print, social media, EDM etc.
Agendas, minutes, correspondence and reports are easily accessible by members and in accordance with the constitution and BID Policy (member only website pages).
Ensure all activities undertaken have appropriate measures in place so that outcomes as well as outputs can be reported. Development of these measures will be done in the first few months of the year.
Provide monthly work in progress updates.
Undertake bi-annual member surveys ensuring satisfaction levels of the members are inline with benchmarks.

References

Background documents that have informed this strategy:

- Rodney Local Board Plan 2017
- Auckland Council: Final Auckland Unitary Plan
- Auckland Council: Future Urban Land Supply Strategy