



AGM 27th September 2023

Joint Co-Chairs' Report - Dave Stott and Bevan Morrison

It has been another tough year for business with high inflation, interest rates and a reluctance for the community to take risks, probably as the aftermath of Covid. However, there are some positive trends and the July issue of *Marketview* shows a very positive overall growth in expenditure for our region. There was an increase in spending of 18.7% from the same time last year and a 12% increase for the full year to July. It is accepted that there are significant differences depending on the business sectors with accommodation and the automotive industries faring worst but significant increases in spending for groceries, liquor, and general consumer spending. So hopefully this is a portent for better times to come.

The Association has been running a number of events through the year and we will get Murray to report on these, although we do need to mention in particular the huge success of *the Mahurangi Winter Festival of Lights* and the permanent installation of the beautiful lights on the far bank of the river. One Mahurangi would like to acknowledge the huge effort volunteers from the *Mahurangi Winter Festival of Lights* independent committee demonstrated in delivering such a successful event to the benefit of the Warkworth business community.

Both of Bevan and I wish to acknowledge the huge contribution of Murray Chapman, our General Manager, Lauren Kumerich, Manager of Communications and Marketing and Alison Hitchcock, Manager of the Information Centre to the planning, implementation, and success of these events. We also want to acknowledge the role of the many volunteers that make these events successful. We also wish to thank our team for their tireless work through the rest of the year that helps make Warkworth such a pleasant and user-friendly community.

Many thanks to our BID members and Associate members. We also wish to acknowledge and thank our sponsors for their continued support including a number of new sponsors that have joined us in the last 12 months. Your support is invaluable and without it, we would struggle to provide the community with the services that we are currently able to provide, as the BID member payments alone are not sufficient to finance all of our activities.

We continue to have a positive relationship with the Council's BID Team and continue to get positive feedback from them regarding our management of the BID process and the success of many of our activities. Our BID targeted rate for the next 12 months is \$148,500 of a total budget of \$259,000. As Warkworth grows, we are hopeful we will see a commensurate increase in the number of businesses enabling the BID income to increase. Unlike all other BIDs in Auckland who base their BID fees on a percentage of the ever increasing rates; One Mahurangi has a flat \$500 fee so we are dependent on new business growth to support our growth. Our budget for the coming 12 months is extremely tight and we are looking at a number of other ways to increase income so that we would be able to provide a greater range of services to you.

One Mahurangi continues to see advocacy as an important part of our work. With the rapid growth in our town we believe it essential that a strong local community voice influences key decision making for new infrastructure, well planned new development in keeping with the character of the town and for the development of a prosperous and vibrant business environment.

To that end some of our key advocacy efforts and successes are listed below:

- Hill St - despite the noticeable decrease in traffic using Hill St since the opening of the motorway, we still believe that the current configuration of Hill St will not cope with the proposed future growth of Warkworth in the North East, from Warkworth Ridge and from future growth in Matakana and the Eastern beaches. We continue to work with Auckland Transport Design Team and we are almost at the point of agreement of a final design. Because of Auckland Council budget cuts, we will once again have to go through a lobbying process to get construction funding in the RLTP round of next year.
- Watercare - we have continued to lobby Watercare over the route of the new wastewater line and appear to have been successful in persuading them not to run the line down Queen St. They are currently assessing two other proposals. This is good news for the retail sector.
- Notices of Requirement - many of you will be aware that Supporting Growth Alliance (SGA) has issued a number of Notices of Requirement for route protection of proposed roading networks. We have been lobbying SGA on behalf of landowners to reduce the width of these NOR corridors, challenging some of the routes and requesting from SGA far better communication with landowners on mitigation and compensation rights. We are working closely with our Councillor Greg Sayers and the Local Community Board on these matters and also looking to delay the activating of those Notices of Requirements where land may not be required for decades.
- Auckland Future Development Strategy - For a number of reasons including budget cuts, inability to provide timely infrastructure, promotion of medium density housing in existing urban areas, reduction of carbon footprint etc, Auckland Council has issued a proposed new strategy to delay Greenfields development including in Warkworth. The proposed delays are up to 20 to 25 years but several of the very large developments that Council wishes to delay are already underway. The situation is also complicated by the recent issue of documents concerning flood prone areas and flood plains, that if adopted would mean that virtually all of the Warkworth area would be unsuitable for future

development. OMBA with local planners and WALG have made a detailed submission to Council and are continuing with the Local Board to lobby Council to come up with a more rational and sensible future strategy.

- Centre Plan - we were a participant with other community groups to develop a Centre Plan for Warkworth. The final plan has lots of good ideas but now needs someone to fund the implementation of these ideas.
- Parking Plan - we are working with Auckland Transport to develop a future parking strategy for the CBD, particularly when some of the new developments come on stream and parking will be at a premium.
- Other advocacy projects include involvement in the development of a Tourist Destination Plan, campaign against the removal of the weir, illegal parking in Glenmore St, reverse sensitivity issues with future urban roads, improved maintenance and improvement of unsealed roads, revocation of SH1 between Puhoi and Warkworth, and implementation of a shuttle bus service around Warkworth. Other advocacy projects include involvement in the development of a Tourist Destination Plan, campaign against the removal of the weir, lobbying the Government on Wetlands legislation, submitting to Government and Council on Medium Density Housing Intensification, illegal parking in Glenmore St, reverse sensitivity issues with future urban roads.

Our successes in advocacy have been in no small part due to the positive working relationships that we have developed with our local MP's, the Local Community Board and other community groups. This was acknowledged by the Mayor in a recent meeting where he advocated that we should do a presentation to the Board of Auckland Transport on how Council Agencies could successfully work with local communities.

Finally thank you to everyone who makes up One Mahurangi - sponsors, members, volunteers - together we appreciate your support and we will continue to provide you with assistance as best we can through 2023 and into 2024.