



Waitematā Local Board  
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## SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT WAITEMATĀ LOCAL BOARD PLAN 2023

The Parnell Business Association ('Association') welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Waitematā Local Board Plan 2023.

The association represents over 1,160 businesses in Parnell with a CV in excess of \$2,2 billion dollars. We believe we are an important suburb in the city fringe, not only for our proximity to the CBD, but also the transport routes that connect us, our heritage as Auckland's first suburb, as well as our offering as a tourist destination.

**While the Association is generally very supportive of the Waitematā Local Board Plan 2023, we would have liked the Local Board to have placed more priority on safety, reducing crime, graffiti control, maintenance of council infrastructure (especially of stormwater infrastructure), and 'getting the basics right' (such as street cleaning and footpath maintenance).**

### CRIME AND SAFETY

While you have referred to the safety of parks and open spaces, as well as the safety of other items such as water in your plan, I think the shooting incidents in the City Centre and some parks over the last few weeks illustrate just how seriously this topic should be addressed.

Retail crime has affected many of our businesses and it has now gone way beyond 'annoying' anti-social behaviour. Recent comments by Minister Megan Woods asking whether the majority of the offences were "kids stealing 20c bag of lollies", is frankly insulting.

The Parnell Business Association has invested in a Crime Prevention Programme for the last eight years and have built a strong capacity in this regard including a significant investment in CCTV. The budget has crept up over the years to represent around 30% of our expenditure on Member Services and Activities, as well as demanded extra staff resources. Every dollar we spend on this is a dollar we could be spending elsewhere on items such as marketing, promotions or streetscapes, and the business associations are compensating for a totally inadequate response from government.

Recently we have entered a formal agreement with Newmarket on live monitoring of our CCTV and certainly can validate the benefit of co-operation in this regard, as suspects move between our suburbs, living in one are, and committing crime in another.

- We were very grateful for the Special Grant from the Crime Prevention Fund, and will put it to good use. However, we know that crime displaces, and ‘we are not safe until we are all safe’. There are several areas in the City Fringe that have not been able to afford the Crime Prevention initiatives that we currently have. They need support plus further advocacy for more funding, to achieve this.
- The Local Board has a role to play here, and join us in advocating (to and with Auckland Council), for government to address a holistic cross agency approach to crime including
  - Increased police resourcing and presence on the street
  - Better management of emergency housing, and
  - Additional services for mental health and addiction.
- Without this we will continue to experience the emotional and financial distress that results from crime, not to mention the brand reputation damage for Auckland. It also jeopardises all **your** outcomes as outlined in this plan.

## **GRAFFITI CONTROL**

As with the above topic, the reporting of tagging in our areas is relentless. We do know that council contractor resources are limited in this regard, but the budget spend to remediate tagging is excessive and consequences need to be brought to bear, to deter future incidents.

## **GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT**

In a restrained financial environment, the maintenance of council infrastructure (especially of stormwater infrastructure), and ‘getting the basics right’ (such as street cleaning and footpath maintenance) is of vital importance, while advocacy continues for long-term projects.

- We submitted on the overall Auckland Council Annual Budget saying that we believe that it is paramount to focus on improving core services, the maintenance of parks and community facilities, until we are in a position again to revive some of the additional activities.
- We noted our concern about the proposal to reduce open space maintenance and expressed our view on gardens and no-mow areas, feeling that those in our town centre were not suitable candidates. In our view, keeping our region, but especially our town centres tidy and free from litter, is core business and must be maintained.

## **ADDRESSING THE OUTCOMES IN YOUR 2023 PLAN**

**Turning to more specific aspects of the Waitematā Local Board Plan 2023 that affect Parnell, the Association would like to make the following submissions:**

### **Climate Change**

You note that the impacts from climate change were assessed recently and that Stanley Street and the The Strand found to be vulnerable to coastal inundation as well as catchment flooding, as we experienced in January of this year. We look

forward to your Shoreline Adaptation Plan being developed as well as addressing those areas vulnerable to climate change and the ability of communities (and businesses) to adapt.

We endorse your key initiative, under the heading of Climate Action, to work with BIDs to promote the prosperity of the rohe, achieve climate outcomes and address safety and anti-social behaviour.

### Outcome 1: Our People

*All our people are thriving and have what they need to live a good life  
Partnering for positive community outcomes and recognising expertise  
Supporting and facilitating community-driven action  
Champion for safe inclusion, engagement, and accessibility*

We acknowledge your key initiatives to support or partner with community organisations and groups to lead and deliver events, activations, and programmes in local areas, such as with seed funding, or support from the community brokers and access to resources and expertise, to build community-capability. We believe our Association and BIDs generally are well-placed to lead and deliver events, activations, and programmes in our local areas with support and funding from the Local Board. But we also think it would be advantageous for community-led events to grow in our public spaces, but very often the funding and the bureaucracy involved, are deterrents. Thus we support your intention to develop a partnership model for community-led delivery that follows best practice and is easy to implement.

We also support your key initiative to continue to fund, produce, and deliver targeted events and activations that support or enhance community delivered programmes. As noted previously, while the Parnell Festival of Roses is well liked by the Parnell residential community, it does nothing to support the business community.

Turning to advocacy, we support your calls for community involvement and engagement on activation and infrastructure planning to ensure robust consultation and feedback processes, particularly for CCO work programmes (such as those of Auckland Transport).

- In this regard we need the reinstatement of a BID liaison person at AT.
- We need the local board to take a stand on transport projects that are proposed via veiled safety initiatives, but will damage the fragile business environment that exists in our town centre, such as the proposed cycleway in Parnell Road.

Further, on advocacy:-

- We support the Board advocating to the Governing Body and Central Government for increased support to address homelessness and the housing crisis.
- We support your advocacy to the Governing Body and Central Government to increase funding for assertive street outreach and mental health and addiction support for our communities sleeping rough.
- We support advocacy to central government and the New Zealand Police for greater police presence and visibility, especially in our BID areas.
- We support advocacy to the Governing Body for the support and enhancement of Auckland's creative industries.

- While we support advocacy to ensure regional funding of city centre projects and initiatives focussed on improving safety and perceptions of safety, we ask this be widened to include the city fringe as well.

## Outcome 2: Our Environment

*Our built and natural environment is resilient to natural hazards and the effects of climate change. Our natural environment is rich in biodiversity and provides clean waterways.*

*Clean water, clean air, healthy streams, safe oceans*

*Biodiversity and Urban Ngahere*

*Resilient against natural hazards and climate change*

We acknowledge your key initiatives to empower communities, schools, and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change as well as encouraging them to reduce, reuse and recycle and make sustainable choices.

You have noted that you will continue to support local communities to implement local composting and grow a local low-carbon, resilient food production system, such as through community gardens, with which we agree.

Turning to advocacy:-

- We especially support your call for an increase in funding for water quality improvements to stormwater.

## Outcome 3: Our Community

*Our community is resilient and have places and activities to connect and foster a sense of belonging.*

*Delivering for our current and future communities*

*Our parks and open spaces*

*Community connections*

We acknowledge and support your key initiative to work with the community to investigate options to **progress delivering community aspirations for Heard Park** including the park, play space and the building that was the previous Plunket Room, with the primary objective to create an activated and vibrant space that will complement local business.

We look forward to soon working with a stakeholder group of residents and local business to progress the detailed design work needed for the park and play space, and unlock the council funding allocations over the next few years.

#### Outcome 4: Our Places

*Waitematā is a great place to live, work, learn and play. Our neighbourhoods are well designed to be sustainable, well-connected and celebrate our heritage and unique identities.*

*Growth and development*

*Parks and open spaces*

*Transport and accessibility*

*Town centres and neighbourhoods*

*City Centre*

We agree with your acknowledgement that the urban villages within Waitematā, such as Parnell and Newmarket are important shopping, entertainment, and tourism destinations.

We also agree with your commitment to deliver projects and activities that will achieve the vision and outcomes of the local plans that have been developed, such as the Parnell Plan.

We further agree with your acknowledgement that the extreme weather events in early 2023 highlighted climate change challenges, especially flooding, and the need to adapt our planning and improve our infrastructure and its maintenance to better manage these risks.

We especially wish to emphasise the opportunity you highlight to undertake regular road maintenance to ensure that surfacing condition, bus stops, road marking, parking and pedestrian spaces are appropriate and that **stormwater networks can handle heavy rain events**. We agree that a future sponge city approach to urban design incorporating green-blue corridors with buffer planting to manage flooding will have more positive outcomes, but we have to better maintain our current existing piped stormwater infrastructure.

We acknowledge your key initiative to work with Watercare and CCO partners to upgrade and deliver key infrastructure to adapt to climate impacts. This must include stormwater infrastructure.

We also support your key initiative to work with CCOs and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to support safety initiatives in the fringe town centres (such as Parnell Newmarket, Uptown, K’Road and Ponsonby).

You have noted you will work with Auckland Transport and utilise the Local Board Transport Capital Fund to improve road safety and wayfinding around schools in our town centres. **We ask that you try and expedite the wayfinding in and around Parnell that we have been asking for since 2016.**

We acknowledge and support your key initiative to work with Auckland Transport and Eke Panuku to provide accessible pedestrian and cycling connections to **Parnell Station including progressing the Greenways route from the Strand through the old Parnell rail tunnel and develop and signpost active transport routes including an east-west link in Parnell.**

Turning to advocacy:-

- We support the progress of the east and west stitch as outlined in the City Centre Master Plan to enable better movement between Parnell, city centre, the Domain and the Learning Quarter.
- We support the need to provide accessible pedestrian and cycling connections to Parnell Station.
- We support opening the **Greenways route from the Strand through the old Parnell rail tunnel and create accessible pedestrian connections from Parnell Station to the Domain, the Strand and Parnell Town Centre**
- **We support St Georges Bay Road/Faraday streetscape upgrade as a priority action in the Parnell Plan**, to be a focus for improving the walking and cycling connectivity that results in a high-amenity pedestrian-focused streetscape upgrade.

#### **Outcome 4: Our economy**

*Our city centre and fringe town centres are thriving and support a resilient diverse economy that embraces new opportunities and drives prosperity.  
Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and business associations.  
Thriving city and town centres  
Diverse and resilient economy  
Creative industries*

We acknowledge and endorse your statement that: *“We are fortunate to have strong relationships with seven well-established business associations. Our BIDs have told us to focus on connectivity, good quality infrastructure and services, placemaking, COVID-19 impacts and changing approaches. We are committed to working closely with them to recover and grow our local economy and encourage the establishment and expansion of BID programmes.”*

We agree with your key initiative and the opportunity to deliver further on the City Fringe Economic Development Action Plan. We also agree with the initiative to work with BIDs to promote the prosperity of the Waitemātā Local Board area, achieve climate outcomes and improve safety.

We also agree with your key initiative to partner with BIDs to investigate and deliver placemaking opportunities and public realm improvements that will deliver economic benefits to the area as well as your support for arts and events that bring more people into our town centres and the major events delivered in the Local Board area.

#### **Conclusions**

Our Association welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to the Waitemātā Local Board Plan 2023.

While we are generally very supportive of the Waitemātā Local Board Plan 2023, we would have liked the Local Board to have placed more priority on safety, reducing crime, maintenance of council infrastructure and ‘getting the basics right’.

We have aspirations to realise some of the major projects outlined in the Parnell Plan, which was launched in 2019. However we understand that there is limited funding at the moment. We are thrilled that there will be funding towards the development of Heard Park. The most important service we require from the local board at this

time is advocacy, and to serve as an integral link between ourselves and the wider council family- Auckland Council and CCO's. We need the board to facilitate and enable pathways so our projects can find their way into the next rounds of long-term planning and funding, when hopefully more funding will be available, and help us avoid wasteful spending with projects that will not enhance our business community.

We wish to be heard at any hearings.

Yours sincerely,  
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