

# Facilitating a connected community for future business growth



REPORT PREPARED BY  
Torbay Business Association

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## Background

The communities of Waiake, Torbay, Long Bay, and Okura share a collective cultural heritage and many values such as sustainability, community engagement and creativity. These areas also celebrate a unique lifestyle with a strong connection to the environment, the Marine Reserve, the local beaches and the Village shops.

Recent rapid urban growth has introduced increased demographic and cultural diversity, merging traditional Auckland suburbia with modern developments and lifestyle blocks on the city's edge.

Furthermore, pandemic-driven changes in work culture have increased the prevalence of remote work among employees, self-employed individuals, and small business owners.

This project set out to cultivate a more connected and supportive community, enhancing collaboration among local business people and enterprises to increase opportunities, promote greater resilience and ultimately, foster a thriving local economy.

### **Purpose and Scope of the Report**

This report has been commissioned by the Torbay Business Association (TBA) as part of a funding grant from the Hibiscus & Bays Local Board (HBLB). It's aim to identify insights and opportunities to enhance collaboration and connection among local businesses and the community to improve economic outcomes.

By facilitating these connections and offering support through community development initiatives, this project is helping enable local businesses to build resilience and motivate the local community towards collective success.

# Approach

Commencing in August 2023, and running through until May 2024, the project has funded a diverse range of activities and events from business workshops and networking events, community engagement through activities, markets and events, community and business surveys, and regular articles in the Torbay Magazine.

These activities have not only contributed to connecting the community and generating business support, it has also provided valuable data, summarised in this report, which outlines some key themes and opportunities to help guide TBA's future planning and activities. A plan and activities that will continue to contribute to fostering collaboration and resilience, and ultimately enhancing a more connected community and thriving local economy.

## Notable activities supported by the project grant include:

- TBA Business Networking Events: Hosted at Birds of a Feather, Long Bay
  - Visioning Our Future Workshop, 23 August 2023
  - Naomi Ballenytné, 19 March 2024
- Community Expo: An event providing local groups a platform to raise awareness and promote their activities, Sunday 17 September 2023
- Ground & Glow , A Mothers Day Wellness Celebration Event Torbay Village, Sunday 12 May 2024
- Torbay Village Market, Sunday 28 April 2024
- Community and Business Surveys during the project period

The Hibiscus & Bays Local Board has been acknowledged throughout the project and members were regularly consulted and invited to participate in all project activities.

## Methodology

Qualitative analysis to identify patterns and narratives in the community's responses, helping to form a cohesive understanding of perspectives and insights.

## Data sources and references

Torbay Magazine articles  
TBA Business Networking Events  
Community Survey results

“Over 60 people, aged mostly between 25 and 64 participated in the survey. About 60% lived in Torbay and there was a good spread of longer-term residents and people newer to our area. The surveys, while indicating a strong female participation, showed diverse age and demographic engagement, highlighting areas for future focus.”

# Themes; Insights & Opportunities



## Capitalising on our unique cultural heritage

The area's unique historical identity is a treasure, marked by rich Māori culture and significant archaeological sites.

### Insights

There's a collective appreciation for the region's rich history which plays a crucial role in community identity.

Recent efforts to preserve cultural heritage include the adoption of Māori names for new streets and existing sites in recognition of the area's traditional names and features but there is much more that can be achieved.

### Opportunities

Develop economic opportunities that capitalise on the area's rich historical and cultural assets. For instance, heritage-themed products or services such as a "Heritage Path" that could feature guided tours and educational signage at key historical sites.

- Engage with local Māori groups and the wider community to align to a future shared vision that incorporates the area's historical significance to enhance educational and cultural tourism.
- Honour the region's rich cultural past and continue to educate and involve the community in preserving the area's rich cultural heritage.
- Collaborate with local historians and cultural experts to create engaging content that can also be accessed digitally through an app or website.

### Direct quotes and excerpts

“The Hibiscus and Bays Local Board were one of the first boards to join the Council’s Te Kete Rukuruku programme launched in 2017, with the aim of showcasing Māori history. One strategy is to add names of significance to Māori to sites and facilities.”

“The earliest evidence of Māori occupation dates from about the 15th century.”

“Numerous archaeological digs throughout the East Coast Bays, particularly around the seaside, have provided insights into daily life of the tribes that lived here. One significant example is the excavation and preservation works surrounding the old Long Bay Restaurant. Numerous burn pits have also been examined throughout Okura and Waiake. These burn pits were found to contain bones, shellfish remains and discarded tools.”

“Okura and Waiake provided resting spots for early traveling people, with the area known for its plentiful supplies of fish and shellfish. Ancient kumara pits have been discovered in Mairangi Bay, which was once known for its fertile soil and giant Kauri trees.”

“The lifestyle we sense as unique, that we treasure, was a place of bounty, a food bowl.”

“It’s old, history, character.”

## Reimagining one unified area and shared identity

There is strong desire to reestablish a once, unified area and shared identity that embraces our collective past while strengthening future cohesion and impact.

### Insights

Following on from our area's rich cultural heritage, the area, stretching from Waiake to Okura, was once known as Oneroa, in recognition of Te Oneroa o Kahu (Long Bay beach).

The community has expressed a strong desire to work collectively towards reestablishing this once unified area.

While there's pride in each area's unique characteristics, there's also distinct shared values and the desire to strengthen community and move towards a more inclusive, connected future.

### Opportunities

Working together towards a shared identity will instill a mindset of community over competition, strengthening any future local business and marketing initiatives for the area.

- Continue wider community engagement and consultation to build a consensus on a unified area and shared identity.
- Engage with local Māori groups and the wider community to navigate the challenges of respecting the distinct characters of each area while finding common ground through shared values.
- Develop a 'One Community' branding initiative that includes shared identity, vision and values.
- Create community storytelling projects through collaborative public art installations that represent the collective history and future aspirations of the region.
- Create a unique market or collective that further promotes a unified identity by producing local goods and services that reflect the community's values and history.



### Direct quotes & excerpts

“The area from Waiake to Okura was once one.”

#### A return to our roots

“The area was once known as Oneroa in recognition of Te Oneroa o Kahu (Long Bay beach). Oneroa literally breaks down into two words: one = sand, and roa = long. Te Oneroa o Kahu means Te (the) Oneroa (Long beach) o (of) Kahu (a Maori ancestress of the area.”

“Changing the name to Oneroa.”

“Sometimes referred to as Te Toroa.”

#### One community

“All the areas to be shaped into one community.”

“We are one ECB.”

“Are we Long Bay, Torbay, Bbay – can we just be ECB – take the labels away?”

“Inclusive of top of Bays areas as part of wider community.”

“They must be one.”

“Linking Torbay & Long Bay shops to promote a diverse community.”

“Abolish Long Bay market and make bigger one for all the areas.”

“One association to link suburbs together for the people at large.”

## Fostering inclusivity and community connection

As our community evolves post-Covid, the challenge to maintain a cohesive and supportive environment grows. The data reveals insightful perspectives on the current state of community values, the struggle with diversity, and the opportunities to strengthen community connection.

### Insights

The overall sentiment is positive, with a strong sense of community values and support for each other. However, there's also a sense of disconnection post-Covid, and a desire for more connection.

It's a community with a mix of old and new residents with challenges around inclusion. As we become more ethnically and culturally diverse, there's a greater need for inclusivity. And while there's excitement too, there's also concerns about divisions, indicating a critical need to foster unity in diversity.

A few people expressed nostalgia for past gatherings coupled with a current wish for more frequent events. This points to a collective desire for more shared experiences that further solidify the community.

Technology's role in the community is seen as a double-edged sword—both connecting and dividing. There's a need to leverage technology for community building without allowing it to replace face-to-face interactions.

### Opportunities

Continue efforts to run and promote regular groups, activities, events and communications that not only foster inclusivity and engagement but also enhance our local economy by serving as platforms for local businesses to showcase their products and services.

- Create a visual activities calendar as an insert within the Torbay Magazine, and as posters for display in common spaces or shop windows.
- Create a community hub where people can pop in to find out what's happening, sign up for activities, events and a place for groups to advertise.
- Reintroduce and re-invent previously successful events that celebrate our various cultures or introduce a "Community Celebration Grant" where local groups can apply to host events.
- Establish an initiative that supports local families dealing with dementia by developing a protocol for a compassionate community response.
- Blend online and offline initiatives like offering digital literacy for older adults or Te Reo courses, balanced with tech-free zones in our local areas that encourage face-to-face communication.
- Implement recognition initiatives for acts of kindness to encourage community spirit.

### Direct quotes & excerpts

“Know how much the community made a difference to one family during a very difficult time Thank you Torbay, you are what it means to be a community. Your humanity, compassion, kindness and care have touched us deeply as a family and will be remembered forever.”

### Connection

“A bit disconnected since Covid.”

“More community liaison with the powers that be.”

“Technology is dividing us but also connecting us as there’s no boundaries online but it stops us talking in person.”

### Diversity & Inclusion

“A mix of old residents and new.”

“Generational families.”

“Language barriers.”

“Migrants have chosen to live here so they’re invested in making it work.”

“Perceived racism.”

“Less state housing.”

“More inclusion.”

“More things for teenagers and older people.”

“More opportunity for white-centric residents to experience Te Ao Maori.”

“I hope Torbay Village can remain a place where people, especially people who have called Torbay home all their life, can always feel like they belong.”

### People & Values

“We share values.” (12)

“It’s people.”

“Loving caring people.”

“Always someone you know.”

“Consideration of everyone.”

“Looking out for each other.”

“Taking care of people around you.”

“Residents stick together.”

“Neighbourly concern for each other.”

“Friendly.”

“Greeting in the street.”

“Supportive community.”

“Love the sense of community and village feel.”

“Village feeling.”

“Torbay Village is mostly loved because it is convenient and friendly.”

“Sense of neighbourhood security.”

### Activities & Groups

“Get together to share values and ideas.”

“More community activities.” (2)

“Neighbourhood groups.”

“Have a shared community space where people could chat, read, create art.” (2)

### Events

“Community events to get everyone together.”

“Community gatherings at the beach.”

“Streets getting to know each other.”

“Meet your street.” “Street Party.”

“Encourage local events/yachting/fairs/street parties.”

“Family events.”

“More things for children.”

“Local events.”

“Community fairs.”

“More markets”

“Market days.”

“Xmas market.”

“More involvement in Theatre.”

“Music.” “Musicals.” “Mardi Gras.”

“Art Exhibition.” “Concerts at beach.”

“Movies in the park.”

“Have a Go day.”

“More attractions during winter.”

“Pub quiz nights.”

“Fundraisers.”

“Community fun days like we used to have.”

“Fun Days of old.”

“Community days as per one in Long Bay a few years ago.”

## Harnessing our lifestyle and environment for social and economic impact

This theme focuses on the synergy between our lifestyle quality and unique natural environment. There's a need for safeguarding the community and environmental integrity amidst rapid urban development, while aiming to enhance our area's appeal as a destination for businesses and visitors to improve both social and economic wellbeing.

### Insights

The relaxed lifestyle and local environment, including the marine reserve and parks, not only contributes to a quality lifestyle, but it also makes it a unique and significant draw card for new residents, businesses and visitors.

Visitors travel across Auckland to enjoy our beaches and surrounding parks. They come from across the country to retreats at Vaughan Park, and the Okura Forest Festival, Auckland's largest environmental festival, which alone, attracts more than 1,500 people annually.

All of these factors are opportunities to continue to evolve the area as a 'destination' to grow our local businesses and economy (as also emphasised in the following, interconnected theme).

But there are recurring concerns about urban growth, traffic access, safety and the need for infrastructural improvements to support both the growing population and the preservation of the unique environment, as well as enhancing the much valued 'village vibe' and 'beachy' lifestyle.

People also expressed a desire for more reliable and frequent public transport which would help reduce dependency on vehicles, and parking issues, while supporting a more sustainable, local economy.

### Opportunities

A focus on enhancing the area's infrastructure as well as environmental stewardship will continue to increase the area's attractiveness as a safe, accessible location to support local businesses and the area as a visitor destination while ensuring it remains an attractive place for families and businesses to work, live and play.

- Build on, or create new initiatives, that not only preserve the natural environment but leverage the community's position to become leaders in community sustainable practices to attract like-minded businesses and visitors.
- Partner with local and regional tourism boards to promote the area as a key destination in broader marketing efforts
- Continue upgrading the area including improved signage, pedestrian pathways, transport and roading access, and amenities.
- Look at ways to fund the area's safety through measures including traffic safety, better street lighting and better security in shopping areas.

**Direct quotes & excerpts**

“The long-standing broken promise to make the Glenvar/ East Coast Road intersection safer” was mentioned often. “We have lived here for over 50 years and have been promised that Glenvar Rd would be properly upgraded and finished. It’s a disgrace that this is still not a priority.”

**Lifestyle**

“The lifestyle and atmosphere.” (13)  
 “A place to raise children and play.”  
 “People who are outdoorsy.”  
 “Cozy.” “Idyllic.” “Intimate.” “Inviting.”  
 “Healthy/vibrant.” “Lively.” “Lovely.”  
 “Quietness.” “Beautiful.” “Safe.”  
 “Small, relaxed.”  
 “Perception of distance from CBD.”  
 “Escape from Browns Bay, more relaxed.” “Open expanse.”  
 “Enjoy markets - good schools and recreational assets.”  
 “Rural residential mixture.”  
 “Relaxed, sunny, community village.”  
 “Community living – keep Torbay village shops.”  
 “Village mentality.”  
 “Village feel/friendly.” (29)  
 “Love Torbay village and its friendliness!” (20)  
 “Village feel by the sea.”  
 “Beachy.” (2) “Coastal.”  
 “Long walks at Long Bay, cycling out to Coatsville and popping in to see friendly faces at Torbay shops for a latte and cake.”

**Environment**

“Improve infrastructure to reduce sewage run-off into our beaches.”  
 “More resource for environment.”  
 “Restoration and preservation of natural habitats.”  
 “Monitoring building sites that create sedimentation run-off to the beaches and marine reserve, and related to this people want harsher penalties when sites cause this to happen.”  
 “Stop developing rural land with high density housing.”  
 “Less multi buildings.”  
 “Not encouraging one old house being replaced by a row of sterile townhouses with no gardens.”  
 “I feel values are different because of all the housing and rebuilds.”  
 “Congestion with new housing and apartments.”  
 “Better parking for all homes rather than street.”  
 “Parking becoming more difficult.”  
 “Fewer parked cars down local streets.”  
 “Clean and tidy.” “Clean environment.”  
 “Pride in the environment, people pick up litter.”

“More landscaping/planting.” (6)  
 “More seating around the village.” (5)  
 “More vibrant Torbay town centre.”  
 “More beachy feel – outdoor restaurants, village green style.”  
 “More murals /art.”  
 “More sheltered outdoor areas for entertainment and café style eating.” (2)  
 “Upgrade the look and feel/tidy up of the area” (6)  
 “Replace pavings with cobbles or fix the broken pavings!” (3)  
 “Paving in Torbay village is not invalid friendly.” “Would like current parking area to be paved.” (2)  
 “Would like a playground for kids in Torbay” (2)

**Safety & Security**

“Lower speed on Beach Rd to Torbay.”  
 “Speed limit on Beach Rd by the beach from Sharon Rd to Waiake St.”  
 “Yellow lines to ensure safety.”  
 “Better visibility at Crossings in Village esp near Scout.” (2)  
 “Street lighting improvement.” (20)  
 “Crime Prevention/Community Patrol.”  
 “Safer community.”  
 “Less crime & boy racers.”  
 “Sense of neighbourhood security.”

## Empowering our local businesses for economic resilience

Local businesses are the backbone of our community, underpinning the economic and social landscape of Waiake, Torbay, Long Bay, and Okura. They are not only key to economic sustainability, but integral to defining our collective identity and lifestyle.

### Insights

There's a strong sense of local pride and desire to support our local businesses which are valued for their range of quality shops and services, their convenience, friendliness, and the village vibe. Not only do they serve as economic anchors, but they're also central to our area's identity and lifestyle.

Destination businesses that draw visitors from beyond our local area significantly boost our economy and enhance our reputation as a vibrant hub.

There is a growing demand for more destination businesses and for beautifying shared spaces, including an expansion of restaurant and cafe options to invigorate the area's appeal as a leisure destination.

Integrating community events with local businesses, such as the Mother's Day event, will continue to enhance visibility for businesses and community engagement. There is a recognised need to further promote local events and attractions. Effective marketing is essential to increase local tourism and regular foot traffic, which in turn benefits our businesses.

Addressing infrastructure challenges, such as the urgent need to improve road connectivity and reduce congestion, is critical. Enhancing

Infrastructure will not only ensure safety as highlighted in the previous theme, but also make our area, and local businesses, more accessible.

The impact of larger retailers like New World on our smaller local stores is also a notable concern that would benefit from strategies that either differentiate them or link them to strengthen the local economy.

The cost of living crisis, and other changing consumer behaviors, are also seen as barriers to shopping locally.

There is also interest in initiatives like a local loyalty card to encourage residents to shop locally, helping to keep economic benefits within the community.

Proposals for better use of local natural resources (like the regional parks) for events also indicate a community-focused approach to economic and social revitalisation.

As we navigate challenging market conditions and the accelerating changes in consumer behaviours, we must be realistic. Our focus must be on achievable actions that provide immediate relief.

### Opportunities

- Building on the success of events like the Naomi Ballentyne Networking event which saw a record 40 people attend, strengthen and expand the TBA so it can function across a wider area, serving a broader range of businesses and participants to address shared business challenges, foster greater connectivity and collaborate for better economic outcomes.
- Establish financial grants or support to help local businesses adapt to economic pressures and shifting markets, for example:
  - developing stronger online platforms and presence, allowing them to reach a wider audience beyond physical boundaries, especially during the quieter winter months
  - diversification of goods and services to meet a broader range of consumer needs
  - sustainability practices to support innovations that integrate the unique lifestyle and cultural elements of the area into their business models, such as creating spaces that serve as both cultural hubs, commercial enterprises or green businesses.
- Consider restructuring existing local markets, or establishing a new one, that better serves the needs of the wider area to attract more visitors. Consider adding more entertainment and leisure activities.
- Foster stronger connections between community events and local businesses (like the Yoga Roots & Sauna Collective Mother's Day event), ensuring businesses are involved in, and can benefit from every local event, enhancing their visibility and community integration, as well as drawing more visitors into the community.
- Develop collaborative initiatives involving all businesses in Torbay, Long Bay and Waiake. This could include a loyalty card that incentivises shopping locally, joint advertising campaigns, or themed shopping days that encourage cross-visitation between locations to bolster economic spend and strengthen the local economy.
- Work with local government to address accessibility, public transportation and traffic flow to increase accessibility without the need for private cars and potentially increasing foot traffic to businesses.
- Develop and implement a more aggressive local marketing strategy, including better signage and more integrated digital platforms for promoting local events and businesses.
- Develop a coworking space for local work-from-home businesses to work and network from.

We must also develop longer-term strategies focused around uniting and transforming our region into a dynamic destination with a thriving economy.

This will require coordination between multiple stakeholders, including local governments, business leaders, community groups, and investors.

Together, the area can position itself as a forward-thinking, economically vibrant community that attracts a diverse array of businesses and residents.

### Opportunities longer-term

- Develop a 'One Community' brand strategy that positions the area as a unique and sustainable destination for both shopping and tourism. Promote through campaigns and partnerships with regional tourism boards.
- Encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices which align with community values and attract customers interested in eco-friendly lifestyles. This could include promoting green businesses or events that highlight sustainability.
- Integrate cultural and environmental initiatives into business practices. For example, businesses could sponsor local art displays or environmental clean-ups, improving the area and building their brand as community-focused and environmentally conscious.
- Develop a plan for a local sustainable transport network, potentially including electric bikes/scooters and a free shuttle bus running from Albany. Introduce a hop-on-hop-off bus to reduce carbon footprint, ease parking pressure, and increase visitor numbers.
- Capitalise on the area's potential as a destination by enhancing unique offerings such as outdoor dining, beach atmosphere, and destination-specific events like larger markets and signature events.
- Beyond beach-related themes, develop tourist attractions like historical tours, eco-tourism, to draw diverse visitors year-round.
- Encourage the opening of varied businesses that can serve different community needs and preferences, possibly through incentives for entry, enriching the local economic and cultural landscape.
- Set up a Community Investment Fund that allow residents to invest in local projects and businesses, fostering a sense of ownership and direct involvement in local development.
- Long-term investment in infrastructure to support tourism and local commerce.
- Establish relationships with sister communities to facilitate cultural and business exchanges, opening up networking and collaboration opportunities.



### Direct quotes & excerpts

“Used to be a great place until the medical centre took over half of the shops and there used to be good parking. Not anymore. We will have a meal at Chands restaurant once a month but anything else, unless there is parking, just drive on through.”

### Shop local

“Everything here is accessible.”  
 “Convenience.” (18)  
 “Small useful businesses with great service.” (5)  
 “I have been buying more locally here in Torbay.”  
 “Tend to use local more frequently.”  
 “I go more frequently because I now only work part-time.”  
 “Torbay Fruit & Vege out competed by Farmer Joe at Northcross.”  
 ‘New World Long Bay taking away business from 4Square.’  
 “New World taking away business from green grocer and butcher.”  
 “Community is using New World more.”  
 “Concerned that it is now competing with Long Bay (think that Torbay is disadvantaged).”  
 “Competition is good.”  
 “Resident Card which rewards local patrons.” (3)  
 “Concerns for the security and safety of the shops in our local centres.”

### Accessibility

“Accessibility and flow of traffic.”  
 “Open Vaughan’s Road Link.”  
 “Easier access.”  
 “Easier access to each area.” (2)  
 “Heavier traffic flow.”  
 “Improving the reliability and frequency of public transport in the Bays.”  
 “Better bus services.”  
 “Electric bikes dedicated to Waiake, Torbay, Long Bay.”  
 “Hop on shuttle bus/combi van with van on top? To pop between local areas.”

### Destination

“Make the area a destination.”  
 “Destination services help to ensure Torbay’s evolution as a destination village.”  
 “Torbay now has a number of destination businesses.”  
 “Coastal village destination.”  
 “Make it a day out: bars, shops, restaurants.”  
 “Need to have more ‘beach’ atmosphere with outdoor restaurants village green style.”

“More sheltered outdoor areas for entertainment/café style eating.” (2)  
 “More vibrant Torbay town centre.”  
 “Would like to see some lights around the shops or possibly a sculpture of lights like in Browns Bay.”  
 “More accommodation, camping destination.”  
 “More shops filled.”  
 “More businesses open, shops full, thriving.”  
 “Businesses staying open.”  
 “There’s less retail – the cost of things – rent is so expensive.”  
 “Another Café.”  
 “Good café.”  
 “More cafés and Restaurants.”  
 “More eateries.”  
 “More restaurants.”  
 “Signature food/drink/eat.”  
 “Specialty shops.”  
 “ Unique boutique area.”  
 “Cafes & Gallery Spaces.”  
 “More community spaces & retail.”  
 “(Delivery) services looking to be here.”

**Direct quotes & excerpts**

“Another thing we have done under this grant is support Yoga Roots and Sauna Collective to host a Mother’s Day event in Torbay Village. We sponsored promotion and gifts from local businesses. It was a great opportunity for TBA to support such as event that will bring people into the Village, and lift Torbay profile. Sauna Collective is going to park up in the same spot on a regular basis, so we are letting our local restaurants know in case they could offer some kind of ‘apre sauna’ tonic, vege bowl or later in winter- gluhwein! This kind of connecting businesses in with events, helping them with ideas e.g. for Parallel 23 to do coffee and have cafe-like pastries is what the TBA could be doing more of (funding permitted).”

**Destination events**

“Large signature events.”  
 “Free events – regular events; signature events.”  
 “More alcohol events.”  
 “Christmas in the Park.”  
 “Teddy Bears Picnic.”  
 “Park/water sports events – not just sailing.”  
 “Larger markets rather than several small ones.”  
 “Abolish Long Bay market and make bigger one for all the areas.”  
 “Markets.” “Christmas market.”  
 “Food trucks – getting people together.”

**Network events**

“Networking events.”  
 “The difference with the Naomi Ballentyne business networking event was opening it up to the public. We had 40 people attend. There were local businesspeople who work from home that we don’t usually see, and people who come from further afield. We also had people from the North Harbour BNI group and Torbay Magazine advertisers and supporters. Some of the attendees were surprised and said “I didn’t know these kind of events were happening.” It was really appreciated. Another lesson for future success is having people bring someone with them than previous events which we limited to one person per TBA full and associate members as a priority.”

**Identity & Promotion**

“Build an identity for the area.”  
 “Best kept secret.”  
 “One association to link suburbs together for the people at large.”  
 “More advertising of all events.”  
 “Notify in your magazine events before they happen. I’m annoyed to see results of events that we didn’t know about.”  
 “More advertising/Signage, etc.”  
 “More information (marketing) about Theatre & activities”  
 “More community activities well advertised.”  
 “More promotion of our special environment.”  
 “Better promotion of Regional park – for weddings, events etc.”  
 “Promotion of events, services.”  
 “More communication.”  
 “Communication.” (2)

# Summary



| Cultural Heritage   | Unified Area & Identity   | People & Community   | Lifestyle & Environment  | Local Businesses & Economy   |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Develop economic opportunities that capitalise on the area’s rich historical and cultural assets. For instance, heritage-themed products or services such as a “Heritage Path” that could feature guided tours and educational signage at key historical sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with local Māori groups and the wider community to align to a future shared vision that incorporates the area’s historical significance to enhance educational and cultural tourism.</li> <li>Honour the region’s rich cultural past and continue to educate and involve the community in preserving the area’s rich cultural heritage.</li> <li>Collaborate with local historians and cultural experts to create engaging content that can also be accessed digitally through an app or website.</li> </ul> | <p>Working together towards a shared identity will instill a mindset of community over competition, strengthening any future local business and marketing initiatives for the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue community engagement and consultation to build a consensus on a unified area and shared identity.</li> <li>Engage with local Māori groups and the wider community to navigate the challenges of respecting the distinct characters of each area while finding common ground through shared values.</li> <li>Develop a ‘One Community’ branding initiative that includes shared identity, vision and values.</li> <li>Create community storytelling projects through collaborative public art installations that represent the collective history and future aspirations of the region.</li> <li>Create a unique market or collective that further promotes a unified identity by producing local goods and services that reflect the community’s values and history.</li> </ul> | <p>Continue efforts to run and promote regular groups, activities, events and communications that not only foster inclusivity and engagement but also enhance our local economy by serving as platforms for local businesses to showcase their products and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a visual activities calendar as an insert within the Torbay Magazine, and as posters for display in common spaces or shop windows.</li> <li>Create a community hub where people can pop in to find out what’s happening, sign up for activities, events and a place for groups to advertise.</li> <li>Reintroduce and re-invent previously successful events that celebrate our various cultures or Introduce a “Community Celebration Grant” where local groups can apply to host events.</li> <li>Establish an initiative that supports local families dealing with dementia by developing a protocol for a compassionate community response.</li> <li>Blend online and offline initiatives like offering digital literacy for older adults or Te Reo courses, balanced with tech-free zones in our local areas that encourage face-to-face</li> </ul> | <p>A focus on enhancing the area’s infrastructure as well as environmental stewardship will continue to increase the area’s attractiveness as a safe, accessible location to support local businesses and the area as a visitor destination while ensuring it remains an attractive place for families and businesses to work, live and play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on, or create new initiatives, that not only preserve the natural environment but leverage the community’s position to become leaders in community sustainable practices to attract like-minded businesses and visitors.</li> <li>Partner with local and regional tourism boards to promote the area as a key destination in broader marketing efforts</li> <li>Continue upgrading the area including improved signage, pedestrian pathways, transport and roading access, and amenities.</li> <li>Look at ways to fund the area’s safety through measures including traffic safety, better street lighting and better security in shopping areas.</li> </ul> | <p>As we navigate challenging market conditions and the accelerating changes in consumer behaviours, we must be realistic. Our focus must be on achievable actions that provide immediate relief.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on the success of events like the Naomi Ballentyne Networking event which saw a record 40 people attend, strengthen and expand the TBA so it can function across a wider area, serving a broader range of businesses and participants to address shared business challenges, foster greater connectivity and collaborate for better economic outcomes.</li> <li>Establish financial grants or support to help local businesses adapt to economic pressures and shifting markets, for example:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing stronger online platforms and presence, allowing them to reach a wider audience beyond physical boundaries, especially during the quieter winter months</li> <li>diversification of goods and services to meet a broader range of consumer needs</li> <li>sustainability practices to support innovations that integrate the unique lifestyle and cultural elements of the area into their business models, such as creating spaces that serve as both cultural hubs, commercial enterprises or green businesses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Consider restructuring existing markets, or establishing a new one, that better serves the needs of the wider area to attract more visitors. Consider adding more entertainment and leisure activities.</li> <li>Foster stronger connections between community events and local businesses (like the Yoga Roots &amp; Sauna Collective Mother’s Day event), ensuring businesses are involved in, and can benefit from every local event, enhancing their visibility and community integration, as well as drawing more visitors into the community.</li> <li>Develop collaborative initiatives involving all businesses in Torbay, Long Bay and Waiake. This could include a loyalty card that incentivises shopping locally, joint advertising campaigns, or themed shopping days that encourage cross-visitation between locations to bolster economic spend and strengthen the local economy.</li> <li>Work with local government to address accessibility, public transportation and traffic flow to increase accessibility without the need for private cars and potentially increasing foot traffic to businesses.</li> <li>Develop and implement a more aggressive local marketing strategy, including better signage and more integrated digital platforms for promoting local events and businesses.</li> <li>Develop a coworking space for local work-from-home businesses to work and network from.</li> </ul> |

## A last word

The themes and opportunities identified in this report provide an initial view of local businesses and the community's aspirations for a more connected community and thriving economic future. It's the first step in developing a strategic plan for both immediate and enduring impact, a roadmap for sustainable growth and prosperity for Torbay, Long Bay, Waiake and Okura.

And while the report offers valuable guidance, it's critical that any future planning or decisions by the TBA are informed by further engagement with a wider audience as well as overlaying broader environmental trends and data. By integrating insights from changes in consumer behaviour, economic indicators, and other key factors, the TBA can ensure that any future strategies remain agile and responsive to evolving circumstances.

In conclusion, this report represents a milestone in envisioning further economic potential and social vitality of the Waiake, Torbay, Long Bay, and Okura communities. Armed with these insights, the TBA is well-positioned for further discussion, engagement and planning to lead the charge in fostering collaboration, driving innovation, and securing a prosperous future for all involved.

**In the midst of a post-pandemic recession, our immediate focus must be on supporting our local businesses, not to thrive, but to simply survive.**

“Running a small business can be tough, especially during a pandemic. In New Zealand, just 37% of ‘micro businesses’ (that’s those with <5 staff and <\$2m turnover – so yes, a large chunk of our small business community) exist after two years.”  
According to Statistic’s NZ.

<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/27313-small-business-factsheet-2022-pdf>

<https://www.nzpostbusinessiq.co.nz/latest-ecommerce-insights/how-online-shoppers-navigated-2023s-rough-economic-seas>

<https://insights.klarna.com/shopping-pulse-new-zealand/>

