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Devonport Takapuna Draft Local Board Plan
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Submission to the Devonport Takapuna Draft Local Board Plan by Auckland North Community and Development Inc.

Auckland North Community and Development (ANCAD) works across five Local Board areas, including Devonport Takapuna, Kaipatiki, Hibiscus and Bays, Upper Harbour, and Rodney. We also work at a regional level both in the area of community development on a number of projects as well as the provision of training and education for the community across the Auckland region. We have developed one of the largest community databases in Auckland.

ANCAD has a membership base of over 150 community groups on Auckland’s North Shore including arts, environment, health, migrants & refugees, Māori, Pacific, older adults, family services, education, community, youth and disability sectors.

We are affiliated to Community Networks Aotearoa, Hui E Community Aotearoa, Christian Council of Social Services and ANGOA in the social policy field in Wellington.
ANCAD is the kaitiaki/guardian for the North Shore Family Violence Prevention Network, the North Shore Child Focus Group and the North Shore Cyber-Safety Group. We take a lead on many issues, disseminating information on social policy issues, social legislation and policy changes, to our members and across the region. We run workshops, seminars and training sessions across the city, last year partnering with Auckland Council, which was additional to the Tindall Foundation funded comprehensive training programme.

We thank the Devonport Takapuna Local Board for the opportunity to contribute to its future plans in this submission. We commend the work that has gone into developing the plan. ANCAD hosted a community meeting on the plan on 13th June, so our submission has been informed by this.

Comments and feedback

We support the 5 key Outcomes but would like to add additional wording:

Outcome 1: Quality parks, beaches and open spaces that everyone can enjoy

Outcome 2: A place of natural beauty and rich culture that embraces our heritage

Outcome 3: Efficient public transport and roads that keep people moving

Outcome 4: Our communities are empowered, engaged and inclusive where people feel safe

Outcome 5: Our area has a thriving local economy and vibrant, unique town centres.

Outcome 1: Quality parks, beaches and open spaces that everyone can enjoy

We support the local board in ensuring non-toxic weed control methods are used in our parks and reserves. Local shorelines have experienced erosion and loss of tree protection through recent severe weather events. We would encourage the Local Board to investigate and develop coastal planting on public land to slow down the rate of erosion. We would encourage the Local Board to work with Private land owners to progress this. Auckland Council’s Biodiversity Team have a Coastal cliff tops planting guide. https://www.naturespace.org.nz/sites/default/files/u4/BC2224-Coastal%20cliff%20top%20planting%20guide%20A4%20Web%29.pdf We support the proposed plan to develop new local paths as outlined in the Greenways network plan. We recognise open spaces are very important for the Devonport Takapuna area, particularly with the proposed intensification. We support the Board in ensuring there is sufficient open space as our population grows. We want to see all public
land and potential open spaces identified, and development prevented or reversed where there is any encroachment on to it.

Reducing pest plants and animals in the Local Board area. Increasing the levels of public awareness and education around pest plants so the wider community will assist in the eradication of plant and animal pests (Moth plant/seeding of agapanthus etc.).

We would recommend the Devonport Takapuna Local Board give some consideration to becoming leaders in an effort to create a low carbon and sustainable community. Reducing emissions, championing projects to reduce domestic energy use and water consumption be explored. Supporting businesses and households to reduce their carbon footprint by encouraging them to divert food waste from landfill, grow their own food, for example in community gardens, or source food locally and buying Fairtrade sources. The Local Board and community has a role to play, for example by expanding the use of electric vehicles, moving towards a zero emissions public transport, improving energy efficiencies across its properties, promoting sustainable design and implementing a food waste collection service.

The local board applies a coordinated approach to environmental issues and opportunities. It works with mana whenua, community partners and other local boards to improve environmental outcomes.

We would ask that the Local Board look at the issue of beach grooming with care and balance. Although we support the Local Board’s desire to keep our beaches free of litter we’re conscious that seaweed provides for beach food webs and ecosystems. We would be against its wholesale removal purely for aesthetic reasons.

People in Sunnynook are keen to see an initiative to have a skate park installed next door to the basketball courts at 138 Sunnynook Road. They are positive about putting a skate park in that position. The particular benefit of that position is that it can be seen from the road. The idea is to put a park that can be used by younger children on their scooters as well as young people on their skate boards and create a space that would be well used by young people in the area. Children from Target Road Primary School presented recently about how they would really like a skate park and what benefits it would bring to the area.

Outcome 2: A place of natural beauty and rich culture that embraces our heritage

We support preserving our natural heritage, enhancing our built heritage and the restoration of historic structures. We support the development and implementation of heritage trails in Devonport, Milford and Takapuna. We would love to see a potential walkway/cycleway explored that went from Devonport to Takapuna on the
eastern coastal side (across Takapuna Grammar land with a view to the coast and water.)
Identify and promote sites of cultural and historic significance, e.g. to restore and develop the grave site of Patuone in Devonport.
Fund projects to document the rich history of the Devonport Takapuna Local Board area.
Shoal and Ngataringa Bays are very special places, a tidal estuary teaming with birdlife. As such we support the intention to progress a pest free strategy for Devonport Takapuna. Not only is this a great opportunity to support native species it also serves as an effective community development and resilience tool for bringing streets and neighbourhoods together around a common purpose.
We support the intention to establish an Eco-Neighbourhoods programme in a similar vein to that which has been developed in the Puketapapa Local Board Area. There are local champions such as the Devonport Community Recycling Centre and the two local community gardens with whom the Local Board could partner and resource.
We support the intention to grow our network of community gardens. There are already two such gardens in the Local Board area, the Devonport Community and the Ngataringa Organic Gardens. Perhaps the opportunity is supporting and resourcing these places to become local eco-exemplars.
There is opportunity to develop and showcase the precinct of initiatives at 27 Lake Road as an environmentally sound, low carbon precinct. We are fortunate to have the Ngataringa Organic Garden, Community Recycling Centre and Community Makerspace (The Claystore) all in the same location. What an incredible collection of community assets to build upon and promote.

Outcome 3: Efficient public transport and roads that keep people moving
We would like to see a plan for safer and better walking and cycling routes which will help connect people where they need to go and make it easier for people to choose public transport, walk, cycle or ferry to get to work, school or go about their daily lives. Concentrating on building bigger roads to allow for more cars is not going to solve our traffic issues.
We would like to see the Local Board take a positive stance on the campaign for Rail to the Shore through the proposed second harbour crossing. The addition of such an alternative high capacity mode capable of carrying many more people would have a positive effect on congestion issues in Devonport Takapuna.
One of the major findings of the Bayswater and Belmont Community Wellbeing survey was local concern at the safety of people and particularly children along Bayswater Ave. We would like the Local Board to actively advocate for measures to reduce speeds along the avenue and improve walking and cycling amenity.
People in Sunnynook who use the bus to get to and from work report that the streets are not well lit and walking home at night, especially in winter, that they don’t feel safe. They would like Council to do a thorough survey of the street lighting up to 15 – 20 minutes’ walk from the busway and to put in better lighting where required.

**Outcome 4: Our communities are empowered, engaged and inclusive where people feel safe**

A key initiative outlines the Local Board delivering workshops and forums to provide capacity building opportunities for groups in our area. We would like to suggest that the Local Board partner with community organisations already delivering capacity building workshops in the local area. The identified areas of governance, human resources, health and safety responsibilities and financial capability is already delivered by ANCAD.

We support the reinstatement of the Devonport i-Site in the downstairs of 3 Victoria Road.

Our spaces and places enable people to connect with each other and can create a sense of belonging within the community. This is especially important in our area as the predicted population increase and apartment living could result in isolation and disconnection. In addition to the Youth Centre in Takapuna (which we support), we would also like to see the Local Board support the development of a community hub (with a focus on children and families) in the Mary Thomas Centre. This is an ideal location right next door to the library and there is no facility like this in Takapuna. Takapuna has no community house. ANCAD is beginning the development and there is a groundswell of community support for this facility, but it will require further support from other avenues for its successful development.

Feeling safe in our neighbourhoods is essential to building communities. We note that there is no reference to safety in this draft plan and we would like to see an initiative referring to working with local community stakeholders to implement safety focused initiatives and to provide well-lit, secure and safe public spaces and facilities. Our urban environment, economy, open spaces, facilities, culture and most importantly our people will only develop to their fullest potential if safety is adequately considered. Funding projects that improve well-being and safety should be considered. The Local Board support Auckland Council and government policies aimed at reducing harm caused by alcohol, smoking or gambling.

A concern in the Local Board area is that it is essential that adequate infrastructure be provided ahead of any intensification taking place. Many community organisations’ services are already at full or over capacity so any further load will create problems. Public transport needs considerable improvement to accommodate
increased population density. We would like to see good transport links and access to parks and green spaces and an integrated green belt in any new developments. The Local Board invest in Youth Connections which works with local businesses, youth services and schools to connect young people and employers. We have been concerned at the manner and scope of the Fit for the Future library staff restructure. This process has been a cut to an integral community service. Devonport and Takapuna libraries have lost valuable members of staff and a huge amount of experience. Our libraries are valuable community hubs, serving an indisputable and universal public good. Claims that the process will have no impact on the services provided is simply erroneous. How can a $1.8 million annual budget reduction and the loss of a substantial number of skilled and experienced librarians not have an impact? We appreciate that the levels of staffing is beyond the influence of the Local Board but we would call upon the Board to act as a stronger voice for our local libraries and librarians and closely monitor the impact these changes have on the services provided.

We would like to see some Local Board focus on how we better hear the voice of children in local plans and developments. ANCAD has a strong focus on safer whanau/family environments and better lives for children. We would like to work more closely with the local board on bringing a stronger children’s lens to local board and wider community activity.

Another finding of the Bayswater and Belmont Community Wellbeing survey was that people perceive insufficient community facilities in Belmont and Bayswater. We have the Rose Centre but for a variety of reasons people don’t feel this is accessible or for them. The new manager has shown enthusiasm that the Centre be more of a local Community Hub. It would be greater if the Local Board resourced and supported this intention.

It is acknowledged that the Devonport Takapuna Local Board area does not have a marae (except for the Naval Marae in Devonport). Some community members felt it would be great if the Local Board gave some consideration working with mana whenua to explore the possible development of a local marae.

It was also acknowledged that sporting facilities were not mentioned in the plan. There is community interest in developing the facilities at Allen Hill stadium to provide opportunities for greater involvement by children and the general public.

Outcome 5: Our area has a thriving local economy and vibrant, unique town centres.

We support the goal of creating a more attractive and connected Takapuna town centre. We strongly support a more pedestrian friendly town centre and would like
to see the option explored of closing Hurstmere Road to cars for a pedestrian walkway.

We support a community led town centre plan for Belmont. Another finding of the Bayswater and Belmont Community Wellbeing survey was that people feel the area lacks “a community heart” and that the area lacks the community spirit that Devonport has. Part of the issue seems to be that the centre is not perceived as an inviting place to congregate and lacks amenity.

We acknowledge there are a number of key stakeholders in the Unlock Takapuna planning and we are concerned that there is not one body that has an overview of each of the planning elements. We strongly recommend some thought is given to how an overview and connection and consideration is given across all planned developments. We would like to see an aligned vision for Takapuna ensuring the Local Board, the community, Panuku Development and Auckland Transport have a united vision.

The Local Board work with social housing providers, community organisations, developers and Housing New Zealand to advocate for affordable community centred housing developments.