
KARANGAHAPE ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 – 2030



karangahaperoad.com

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Introduction

Karangahape Road is the cultural centre of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Our name is known all around and beyond Aotearoa. It references the welcoming call made by the tohunga Hape, an ancestor who is said to have a club foot, and represents the unexpected power in being different.

The welcome embodied in Karangahape Road's name draws diverse people to the street. Its identity as a safe haven for experimentalism and inclusivity of diverse cultural and ethnic identities extends from hospitality to entrepreneurs, social services and advocacy groups, street whānau, artists, sex workers, activists, and beyond. Karangahape Road is an incubator for all types of people challenging the norm, and this freedom to experiment is key for a sustainable economic environment.

Being a business on Karangahape means upholding the street's identity for all who spend time here. It is a place where people can do both their daily chores and simple errands like buying groceries and going to the doctor, as well as where they come to celebrate their biggest milestones, like getting married and producing culture-shifting works of art.

Finding balance between the high-low elements of Karangahape's identity, and enabling the social life of the street to thrive, is essential to building a lively, sustainable business environment on the street.

The following strategic direction will deliver on the Objects of the Association (Constitution of the Karangahape Business Association, Section 3) and prepare the business environment of the precinct for changes to come with the opening of the City Rail Link.



Key Facts



- Businesses come here specifically- 75% of businesses on Karangahape Road have just one location.
- Karangahape Road's economy is hyper-localised, and businesses are often each other's customers- a large proportion of spend on the street comes from within 2km of the street.
- There is a strong social aspect of doing business on Karangahape Road- being connected with the community is a recipe for success.
- Karangahape Road is viewed as the most experimental and innovative place to do business in Aotearoa while also providing the basics. The environment enables a wide range of business types, who often collaborate, and attract diverse customers.
- Our built heritage contributes significantly to the identity of the area. There is formal recognition and protection of the Karangahape Road Historic Heritage Area which includes six Category 2 and one Category 1 Heritage listed buildings, and a total of 18 individual historic heritage places that are recognised and protected in their own right.
- It's a place of this AND that: where you can see a drag show, and get your car fixed, sip fine wine, and buy a shirt from the \$2 rack. Keeping the balance is essential for the success of the precinct.

Looking Towards The Future

In 2026 the Karanga-a-Hape Train Station will open and make Karangahape Road much more accessible to Aucklanders, with a capacity of up to 40,000 people using the stations every day.

This boost of foot traffic will provide a large pool of customers for local businesses, but may lead to further gentrification and rent rises, which may push the unique smaller owner-operated businesses out of the neighbourhood.

This strategy aims to define opportunities in the KBA's programme that will protect and uphold the identity of Karangahape Road through different forces of change, and enable new businesses and audiences on the street to do the same.



KBA Purpose

The Business Improvement District (BID) Programme is a collaboration with Auckland Council to improve local business environments, ultimately to boost Auckland's regional economy.

The Karangahape Road Business Association receives funding via the City Centre Targeted Rate and BID Programme Targeted Rate Grant Funding.

The purpose of the Karangahape Road Business Association is to support and promote the wellbeing of businesses in the area by:

- Protecting and enhancing the district's unique social and cultural identity
- Promoting and marketing the precinct
- Advocating on behalf of its members to decision makers and resource holders
- Fostering collaboration among members

KBA Principles

The Karangahape Road Business Association is guided by the following principles, which ensure it operates in a way which upholds and sustains the aspirations and identity of its collective membership.

Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti is the reason many different people co-exist on Karangahape. Upholding Te Tiriti ensures inclusivity is the strongest force on the street.

Put people at the centre

Decision-making, storytelling, and planning should focus on the social and financial wellbeing of the people. Be invitational, and enhance and celebrate what already exists.

Be proactive, not reactive

Make time to plan ahead, and give businesses timely information so they can easily participate and engage with initiatives.

Be cutting edge

Karangahape Road is looked to as the creative centre of Aotearoa, so what the KBA puts into the world should always reflect this. Source talent, resources and skills from within.

Priority Areas



The following priority areas outline the strategic deliverables of the KBA for the next two years of its programme. These have been identified as key focus areas that will achieve the best outcomes for its membership, support business improvement and economic recovery, and are within the KBA's mandate, budget, and resources.

Tell Karangahape Road Stories

Protect, uphold and celebrate Karangahape Road's identity through people-centered story-telling, all year around.

Tell the story of Karangahape Road through communications and marketing that is consistently high-quality, and focuses on upholding and celebrating the social and cultural economy of the street, all year round. This should:

- Demonstrate the street's sophistication and our connectedness
- Highlight the diversity of businesses beyond the nighttime economy
- Demonstrate the welcome to our community of diverse cultures as much as possible
- Attract customers and make people feel welcome and safe
- Support business improvement
- Attract values-aligned investors and businesses who want to be a part of the community.

The KBA should fully resource this workstream as their main investment focus.

Activate Spaces



Support safety, vibrancy, experimentation and identity.

The KBA is Auckland Council's key activation partner for the Karangahape Road Precinct. Activations should focus on enhancing what is already happening and also provide opportunities for innovation and experimentation while driving spend and vibrancy.

This should be done by:

- Leveraging and supporting existing ideas by connecting resources and brokering opportunities
- Activating new spaces created through the CRL and supporting businesses impacted by construction
- Providing support to strategically aligned events which uphold Karangahape Road's identity
- Developing an activation fund to support business-to-business collaborations that are innovative and reflect the principles of Karangahape Road
- Working with landlords with vacant spaces to enable pop-ups and business incubators, or community centred initiatives
- Celebrating and protecting our heritage buildings
- Bringing joy to the street and improving the feeling of safety, day and night.

Strengthen Advocacy, Partnerships and Relationships

Be the voice and the connector for the business community

The KBA's relationships with its members enable it to learn where needs, gaps, and opportunities are, and to turn this into advice for decision-makers, funders, and investors.

The KBA has a mandate to be a voice in the political arena of Auckland, and demand policy and operational decisions that benefit the business and social economy of Karangahape.

This should be done by:

- Advocating on behalf of the street to decision makers and funders
- Leverage the media through positive storytelling to counter negative narratives or respond to issues
- Seek partnership opportunities with possible funding partners who can support the KBA's principles, purpose and priority areas
- Supporting networking activities between businesses across the year
- Effectively communicating with businesses
- Working with landlords to encourage high tenancy uptake
- Balance historical preservation with innovation
- Establish a meaningful relationship with Mana Whenua



Build an Authentic Matariki Programme



A Māori-led cornerstone event

Matariki has become a central event in Karangahape's calendar, marking the middle of the year and the time to reflect and reconnect. The KBA should operate within a culturally safe framework, that aligns with the purpose of Matariki, and offers opportunities to deliver a meaningful programme for the street and its visitors.

This should be done by:

- Commissioning a Matariki Programme framework from local experts and Mana Whenua
- An EOI for Māori event producers to develop the Matariki programme.



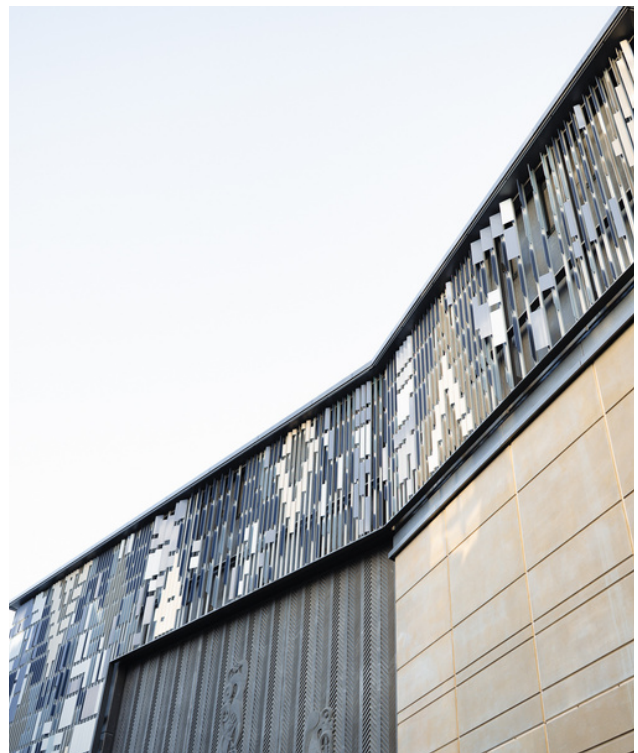
Get Ready for the City Rail Link

A new gateway to the street

The CRL opening in 2026 will mean a new population will travel to and through Karangahape Road every day. While the street welcomes the increase in access to our neighbourhood, our identity and values as a place that fosters duality needs to be protected and upheld through this significant change.

This should be done by:

- Working in concert with the Link Alliance to maintain the areas around the stations and keep neighbouring businesses up to date with works and timelines
- Working with Auckland Transport to get the best outcomes for the street in its designs for upgrades around the stations, in a clear and inclusive process
- Ensure all updates about the CRL project are shared in a timely manner as part of the regular communications to businesses
- Develop action plans to monitor the stations' impact on local businesses, traffic management etc, from day one
- Celebrate the opening of the stations with an event that upholds Karangahape's unique identity as a destination





Ngā mihi

Karangahape Road Business Association Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030