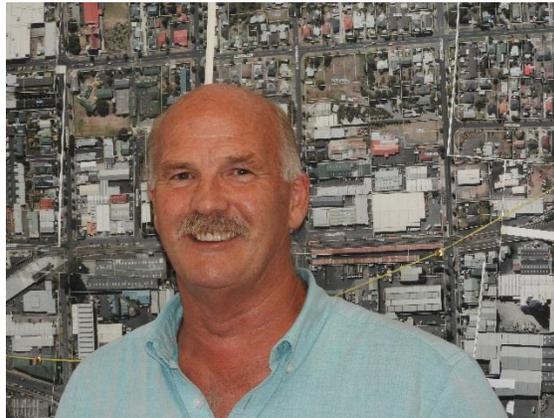


## View from the Chair – Peter Gibson



### A decade on and the challenges keep coming

Peter Gibson has chaired the Onehunga Business Association for 12 years and makes a formidable team with Town Manager Amanda Kinzett.

“Onehunga is the geographical centre of Auckland and we’re a key driver of the city’s economy,” says Peter who points out the strategic importance of the area that’s still lobbying hard for its share of the major infrastructural investment by local and central government.

“We’re delighted that Panuku Development Auckland has prioritised the regeneration of Onehunga and we’re working closely with them and other arms of council, including our Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Board, on this project. At last we have an agency (Panuku) with the expertise and, more importantly, the resources to unlock the potential of this special place. [READ MORE](#)

“Ours is a historical community with many inter-generational families still living, working and owning property in the area. Our roots are working class and we’re proud of that. Equally, we have a strong core of progressive thinkers within our business community and it is our role as a business association to help give voice to those ambitions.

“We’re a growing city and we’re on board with that. We want our place to move forward but in the right way and with the right connections,” he says.

Like all parts of Auckland, transport is the key issue that will determine Onehunga’s future. From the proposed [rail-to-airport project](#) to the [East-West link](#) and future access to the Onehunga foreshore, there are plenty of projects demanding the sustained attention of Peter and his 10-person board.

Peter says he’s frustrated that this vital focus on infrastructure is too often diverted onto social issues which he believes should not be the association’s to deal with.

“Too much of our budget is being spent on security and dealing with issues that social agencies should be dealing with,” he says.

This month marks the launch of a new signature event, the Onehunga Creative Arts Day (March 4<sup>th</sup>) which promises to attract people from across Auckland to the town centre which celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

Peter Gibson says Onehunga has the distinction of being the area with the highest level of intensification as set out in the city's new Unitary Plan, including greater use of Mixed Use zoning where residents will live alongside commercial operators.

"This presents challenges as well as opportunities. It will certainly be interesting but one thing's for sure, if the infrastructure's in place and we have stronger links with our harbour, then ours is an exciting future right at the very heart of Auckland," he says.