



Papakura – where tikanga talks

Tikanga Talks is one of three initiatives emerging from Proud Papakura Proud, a business association-led, community-focused programme to make the southern district a better place to live, shop and do business.

Papakura Town Centre Manager Tracy Shackleton explains.



[Papakura Marae](#)

Visitors to Papakura Town Centre will have noticed our lovely *Proud Papakura Proud* flags flying down the Great South Road of Papakura and in Railway Street, along with our Papakura Business Association flags.

At the recent ATEED Local Economic Development Masterclass, keynote speaker Neil McInroy spoke about 'new urban economic movements' as the leading edge of LED thinking. Papakura's *Proud Papakura Proud* initiative is an exciting example of 'collective impact' in action and is the embodiment of this global way of thinking.

During the business association's annual planning process in 2015, assisted by our planning partners Business Lab, the burning issue to emerge for businesses in the town centre was concerns related to youth crime and safety.

With the local board present at the planning review, an innovative approach to digging deeper on this issue was discussed. Consequently, a project called ***Safe and Welcoming Papakura*** was confirmed and became the first co-funded initiative between the local board and town centre.

The project involved broader engagement with groups relevant to this issue. These included local schools, relevant public services and the local marae.

The main findings from this engagement were twofold:

Firstly, that due to a small number of negative incidents, a perception was growing that Maori youth seen in the town centre, often in small groups and wearing hoodies, reflected a greater problem; and

Secondly, that close to 30% of the local community are Māori which reflects a unique opportunity for the town centre.

Through several well-attended mixed stakeholder workshops including the local business community, the project was renamed *Proud Papakura Proud* and three initiatives were agreed:

1. A street festival to celebrate Papakura's unique cultural identity;
2. A youth employment initiative to encourage local businesses to employ local youth; &
3. **Tikanga Talks** based on the Ted Talks concept but showcasing Papakura's cultural diversity with an initial emphasis on the Māori community.

All three initiatives are progressing:

- a successful pilot and funding and resource consent being sought for a street festival in April 2018;
- a series of youth employment initiatives being held in partnership with Auckland Council and the Papakura Library; and
- two **Tikanga Talks** events, hosted at the Papakura Marae, promoting how Tikanga can underpin business success.

This is not a short-term project but, so far, it has greatly helped the BID's connectedness with partners essential for a healthy town centre such as the Papakura Marae who are now an associate member.

I have no doubt that, over time, PPP will play a significant role in not only making our town centre more welcoming, but to transform it into a destination due to its unique and colourful cultural diversity.

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