



It was a case of third time lucky for Warkworth when it finally established a BID programme in the north-eastern satellite town that's home to a mix of retail and industrial businesses.

The power of advocacy

- Business champions key to getting BID over the line

BID programme manager, **Murray Chapman**, *pictured above*, says Warkworth's quest for BID status has been a long and, at times, very divisive road.

"Previous business associations - with the best of intentions but without the resources - have tried and failed to convince local businesses of the benefits," said the former Auckland Chamber of Commerce executive.

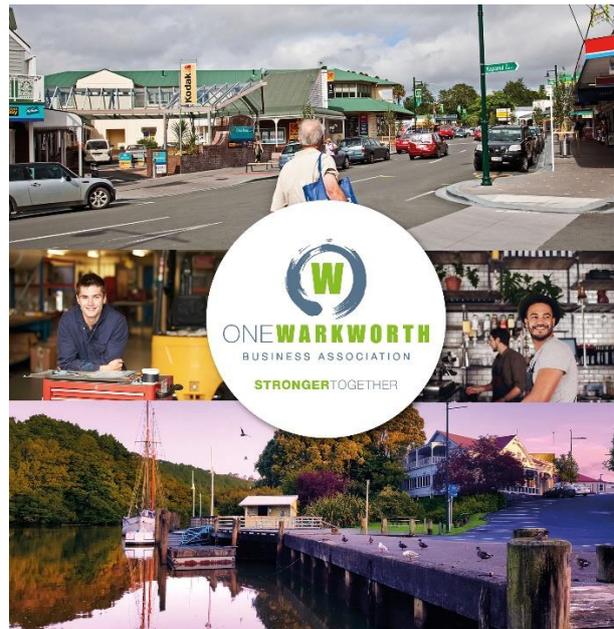


"It was only once we had some paid staff who managed to get things done and unite both the retail and industrial sides that we could get it across the line," said Murray, who works closely with the BID's communications specialist, Rachel Callender, a fellow Warkworth resident.

"This campaign worked because we had shown the local business community the power of advocacy from a committed business association and because we worked very hard to put events and benefits in place that help drive visitors and networking for all."

"Warkworth is a quaint riverside town that still has that lovely laidback vibe where the pace of life is slower than the big city. . . it's a town where you can get any type of product or service - and it's supplied with a smile."

- MURRAY CHAPMAN



Lessons learnt

In October 2016, the new One Warkworth Business Association Inc was launched on the back of the (second) unsuccessful 2016 BID ballot. The first failed attempt was in 2009.

Between 2017 and early 2019, the OWBA focused on identifying what needed to be done to strengthen the establishment project to ensure there was a strong foundation for a successful outcome in 2020.

Business and property owners were balloted during Feb-March, with each receiving an information booklet highlighting the purpose of the ballot and the benefits and costs of being part of the BID programme.

They could vote online or return the completed ballot form in a pre-paid envelope.



BID by the numbers:

- 593 business & property owners
- \$575 targeted flat rate
- \$135,000 total BID grant

The result?

✓ **223 – 28 in favour**



Campaign champions are key

The BID team's Claire Siddens has advised a great many business associations on the policy requirements and clever campaigning needed to establish BID programmes.

In Claire's experience, one of the most critical elements is having business and property owners loudly and proudly championing the benefits of having a BID programme in their town centre or precinct, working their networks to convince voters to tick 'yes'.

"Establishing a BID programme is like running a campaign and requires bold and brave leadership and a clear call to action.

"This time round, Warkworth's business leaders came forward, took charge and, together, owned the need for the BID," she said.



We asked Murray Chapman to share his advice to those business associations contemplating establishing their own BID programmes.

“My advice would be to first work out how being a BID will benefit your businesses and what runs have you got on the board that demonstrates the value you as an association bring to the area. Once you have that, then you have a story to tell of how much more you can achieve if you are sustainably funded, it’s all about what you can do that will benefit them.”

So, what would be the three most important things to achieve for the businesses of Warkworth?

- Convince AT and NZTA that Hill Street intersection needs to have work started on it as the Matakana Link Road is finished.
- Put in place a compelling programme of events and training that will add value to our members businesses and attract visitors to our region.
- Work to make the Warkworth Information Centre the place people go to for any sort of information, not just tourism but all things.



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New community transport hub for Warkworth

A new park and ride facility in Warkworth will deliver 131 car parks, bike racks, and bus stops.

The Warkworth Community Transport Hub design approved by project funder, the Rodney Local Board, will be delivered by council agency, Auckland Transport.

It will address a variety of concerns raised by the community including the One Warkworth Business Association, bus users and potential bus users, and those struggling to find all-day parking in the Warkworth township due to commuters using long-term parking spots.

The hub will feature dedicated mobility and kiss 'n' ride spaces (drop-off area), and two bus stops.

Situated at 80 Great North Road, the facility will reduce parking and bus congestion in Warkworth, provide parking overflow for the adjacent Warkworth Showgrounds and deliver safe vehicular access from SH1 just north of the Hill Street intersection.

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