



The creative force behind *I Love Ponsonby*, Vivienne (Viv) Rosenberg, has managed the iconic precinct's BID programme since 2012.

We asked Viv how the brand "Auckland's Hippest Strip" came about.

PONSONBY *Auckland's Hippest Strip*

Ponsonby Road is among the city's iconic addresses and deserving of an enduring brand identity to reflect its status.

From renowned eateries to fashion houses and the annual Pride Parade, it's a happening place 24/7.

South African-born Viv Rosenberg brought an international advertising and marketing background to the task of rebranding the place beloved by locals and visitors alike.

"Our brief was tight as was our budget," said Viv, herself a Ponsonby resident.

"All we had to start with was the street sign 'Ponsonby Road'. It wasn't negative at all, merely geographic and functional.

"Back in 2012, Ponsonby was part of the old Mainstreet programme and the landing page on our old website focused on the (Ponsonby) business association rather than the place," Viv said.

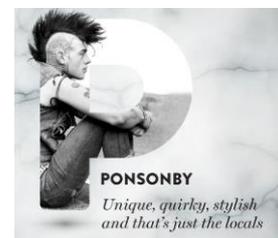
"I was really clear at the outset that this was not to be about us (the business association) but rather the place and the businesses that collectively make us what we are.

"Ponsonby Road is made up of one-third retail, one-third professional services and one-third hospitality with some places opening at 6am and others that stay open till 4am.

"We set about working with our large, diverse membership to ensure our new brand worked for them and their businesses. It was an inclusive process as we wanted to embrace both night and day."

Viv explains that the introduction of the 'I Love Ponsonby' theme, playing to the emotional connection that people shared, has proved a 'fertile bulls-eye'.

"We've used this as our [website address](#), on social media feeds and hashtags, and it's still proving popular today, trending widely. It's flattering that others have chosen to follow suit."



Viv said the brand, while respecting Ponsonby's past, had to be timeless, flexible and inexpensive to use.

"The soul of Ponsonby was something we didn't want to lose. It was really important for us to include and celebrate Ponsonby's heritage," said Viv, who lectured in marketing at AUT University when she arrived in New Zealand almost two decades ago.

"The brand also had to offer us longevity and live successfully into the future. There's no point having to rebrand every time we update our strategic plan."

"'Strip' is a 24/7 word and best sums up a feel-good place where people want to congregate, stay and enjoy," Viv said.

"Finding an adjective to go with it proved to be an incredibly difficult and contentious decision. 'Hippest', while a sixties-seventies word, was chosen to keep alive our soul, our heritage and our history *and* position Ponsonby as a brand going forward.

"Some members questioned the call to channel a time when Ponsonby wasn't the prime real estate it is today, but it has helped us to maintain a unique identity.

"Whatever we chose had to be instantly recognisable. If you cover up the P/Ponsonby, then the words 'Auckland's hippest strip' stand alone and clearly represent Ponsonby."

The brand's flexibility has come to the fore, firstly four years ago when Ponsonby called itself "Auckland's Proudest Strip" to celebrate the return of the Pride Parade, *pictured above right*.

"That was when we realised the strength of what we'd achieved," said Viv, who has used the style for Auckland's *tastiest, most fashionable* and *kindest* strip in subsequent campaigns.

<http://iloveponsonby.co.nz/>

