

It is home to several business improvement districts including:



Ross Robertson
Deputy Chair



Kai mahi tahi, together we prosper

“Together we serve, together we prosper” – that’s what community means to a man who has served Papatoetoe for over three decades.

Ross Robertson, *pictured*, has served 27 years in Parliament and almost five years in local government. He is currently Deputy Chair of the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board and represents it on the Papatoetoe Central (old Papatoetoe) BID’s governance committee.

That business association operates one of three BID programmes wholly located within the ŌPLB area. Three others – GETBA, Wiri and Business Manukau – operate the smaller part of their BIDs within ŌPLB.

Togetherness is at the heart of Papatoetoe, its motto being *Kai mahi tahi* (let’s work together).



[Panuku is leading the renewal of the Old Papatoetoe mall](#)

How local boards impact BIDs

- The local board approves the establishment and expansion of all BID programmes
- Local boards are delegated the authority to recommend to the governing body to strike the BID targeted rate in its area as part of the Annual Plan process
- Local boards maintain regular contact with the business association operating the BID programme to keep their local economic development and other interests aligned
- The board may appoint a local board BID representative to the executive committee of each BID/business association to serve as a conduit of information to and from council.

In the [Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board Plan 2017](#), Ross and his fellow board members have spelled out the importance of a thriving local economy through **Outcome 2: Revitalising town centres.**

This is reinforced by the board putting its money - \$360,000 to be exact – where its mouth is, and allocating this amount in its local economic development (LED) budget for FY18-19.

This is believed to be the largest sum that any local board has set aside to boost town centres.

Within that sum, the three main 'BIDs' each get \$83,000 to supplement their BID targeted rate income while there's also a contestable fund of \$60,000.

Said Ross, "Previously each BID got \$103k each. They were used to getting such sums, a legacy from the old Manukau days.

"This year, we're seeking greater transparency, accountability and innovation."

As we reported last month, dual BID programme manager [Rana Judge](#) delivers several successful initiatives on the local board's behalf. Similarly, Hunters Corner's [Donna Lee](#) is growing the 'new' Papatoetoe economy with popular events and programmes.

"We're keen to see the Cultural Diversity Festival become *the* showcase event for the South," said Ross, who describes the area as the 'spiritual centre of New Zealand'.

"Ours is an increasingly diverse melting pot of cultures, languages and faiths. For example, Hunters Corner is surveying the locals to see whether they support adopting a '[Little India](#)', or similar bazaar theme.

"To me, community will always be about being united. Together we serve, together we prosper."



St George Street, Old Papatoetoe



Could Papatoetoe become a Little India?



Papatoetoe is ripe for intensification, more customers for its town centres.