

Ellerslie Strategic Plan 2017-2022



Ellerslie Village
DISCOVER & CONNECT

Introduction

Over the past 15 years, Ellerslie has emerged from being a tired, run down and neglected main street to become a vibrant village town centre. It now has a real sense of integrity and purpose and has benefited from a strong community spirit that has created a genuine 'heart & soul' to Ellerslie. Without doubt, many acknowledge that Ellerslie is on an upward trajectory. The Board of Ellerslie Business Association ("EBA") recognise that Ellerslie has benefited from changing demographics, commercial developments, new offices and businesses, as well as the great work the EBA and local businesses have done to re-vitalise and inject energy into Ellerslie. This has allowed Ellerslie to develop into the position it is in today.

The Board now seeks to accelerate Ellerslie's development and wishes to set some aspirational strategic foundations that will help shape, direct and transform the Ellerslie of today, to the Ellerslie of tomorrow. This Strategic Plan seeks to grasp and extend Ellerslie's vibrancy, uniqueness and soul and become the town centre of choice. It will make use of its great transport connections, its business offering, pride and strong local community and economy to create an environment that makes Ellerslie a place where businesses, residents and workers will want to be, and offer visitors reasons why they should stop, visit and experience Ellerslie for themselves.

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide the strategic foundations that EBA will use to guide its operational focus (via its annual business plans) so that it can implement the strategic vision, themes and direction that the Board has set. This will allow EBA to 'change gears' and accelerate Ellerslie's development and help provide Ellerslie with sustainable growth opportunities into the future, for the future prosperity of the businesses and community that work and reside in Ellerslie.

EBA is a member of Auckland Council's Business Improvement District Program ("BID") and therefore is required to prepare a strategic plan as part of its funding obligations. This Strategic Plan has been conceptualised and developed over a series of strategic workshops with the EBA team, its Board, as well as representatives from the Local Orakei Board in conjunction with Elevate Capital Partners Limited.

The Board and EBA team are truly excited about the future of Ellerslie. We look forward to implementing the strategic foundations set out in this Strategic Plan as we go about realising the vision of what we want the Ellerslie of tomorrow to be.

EBA Chairman
John Rennell

EBA Manager
Megan Darrow

Our Purpose

The key purpose of the EBA is to enhance Ellerslie and promote economic growth so that it is an area where people desire to live, work and visit.

EBA currently represents the business owners within the Ellerslie town centre and is funded by a targeted rate on local business ratepayers administered by Auckland Council as part of Auckland Council's BID program.

The BID program has been created to collaborate with Auckland's businesses to create strong local economies and vibrant town centres that will enable Auckland Council to achieve its vision of making Auckland to be the "worlds most liveable city".

What this means to the EBA Board

Through our strategic workshops, we distilled what this means to the Board:

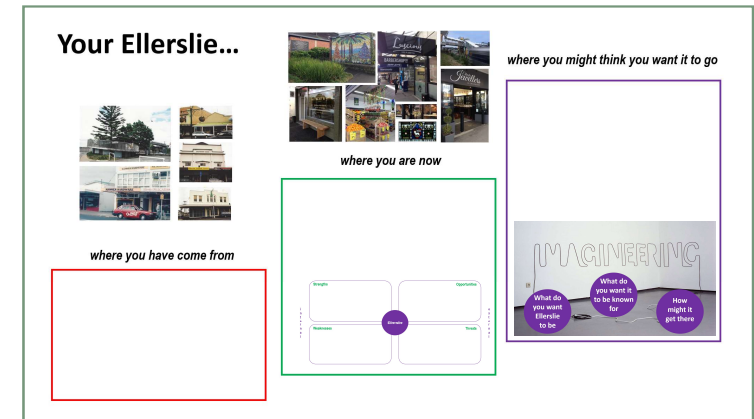


Where Ellerslie is Today and its Future Direction

During the strategic workshops, the EBA and Local Board spent time to reflect back on where Ellerslie has come from, where it is today, and then discussed its strengths and weaknesses and considered what opportunities and threats may lay ahead. These different lenses and view points helped steer and shape an 'imagineering session' where the group dreamed up what the Ellerslie of tomorrow could look like...

Ellerslie has a clear advantage with its central location, close transport interchange and accessibility for commuters across the Auckland Isthmus. It is a hub of business activity with a number of business parks and businesses choosing to reside in the wider Ellerslie area, which in turn brings people to the main street village area to shop, eat and drink.

Main street businesses have embraced increased customers (local residents, workers, or visitors) and brought with it a renaissance of a true "community village centre". The main street has seen an increasing number of unique, upmarket and contemporary stores and eateries which in turn brings more people to the area. There is a sense of pride in the local owner operators on the main street, whether that is the artisanal or specialist products, the way things are



presented, the product range, or the general design, style or signage used. The EBA, Council and local community have also assisted in transforming the local amenity value through landscaping, plantings, quirky activities and events. This vibrancy has created the heart and soul of what Ellerslie is today, and it is important that this is maintained and curated.

The EBA acknowledges that a lot of what it has focussed on in the past has been "locally community driven". This has been purposely done to build vibrancy in the town centre to bring people back to the village. It must continue to build on this, but it must now also look to focus on activities that help to support and build the businesses that choose to reside in Ellerslie. These businesses will continue to drive traffic and customers to the main street and this further strengthens the vibrancy of the village. A key theme should focus on entrepreneurship, innovation and collaboration amongst corporates, SMEs and start-ups that reside, or could reside (and may live), in Ellerslie. However, with growth, there needs to be a robust plan to deal with increased numbers of people and vehicles in and around Ellerslie. Parking, pedestrian and increased vehicle movements (both car and bus) puts pressure on the main street and a coordinated plan needs to be agreed to ensure traffic flows efficiently and is integrated with transport options without disrupting short visitation to the village and access to parking.

Visual appeal and amenity value needs to be maintained, leveraged and improved to continually make Ellerslie an attractive place to live, work and play. Events and attractions play an important role in connecting, and bringing people to Ellerslie as a destination. The EBA has invested time and resource into a number of events, and these should be extended to capitalise on the investment i.e. growing and extending the spring Fairy Festival so that it is "known" Auckland wide as an iconic event, and new ones developed that embrace Ellerslie's unique and rich history around its settlement, zoological, botanical and racing endeavours. Ellerslie can use digital means to bring its "history to life" and market this as an Auckland first and unique feature to attract visitors to Ellerslie.

Our Thoughts, Our Vision

Our thoughts have been shaped by a few key observations...

- 1 EBA's boundary is a small boundary, yet huge businesses are very nearby
- 2 How relevant is the EBA to businesses v's the resident community?
- 3 What is the identity and brand of Ellerslie?
- 4 Ellerslie has a rich past that can be enabled for the future
- 5 The strong "village" feel and a sense of "belonging" is incredibly important



... and this means

- 1 Having an identity, and maintaining and improving our vibrant community village is an imperative
- 2 We need to focus on building better businesses to support a strong and local economy
- 3 Striving for the beautification of our streetscape and local amenity is key
- 4 We should develop Ellerslie as a destination by embracing and promoting our past, our events and our place
- 5 Advocating for the right infrastructure and master planning for Ellerslie including transport, parking, parks, gardens and events

Our Plan

2017-2022

1 Entrench our identity and grow ourselves

2 Build better businesses

3 Be bold
Be beautiful


4 Develop our destination

5 Curate our home and our place

Ellerslie



This Strategic Plan goes above and beyond what we have done before. It will set Ellerslie on a visionary future that we are truly excited about and we are incredibly energised to deliver on it. In setting this Strategic Plan, the EBA has recognised that things like 'good governance', 'promoting businesses' and 'promoting Ellerslie' is part of our "*business as usual*" (BAU). Therefore, the strategic themes in this Plan go above and beyond BAU to provide a number of transformational options that are ambitious, make us aim high, but will deliver an awesome place to live, work, visit and play.



Entrench our identity and grow

Branding, image and communications

Refresh and rebrand Ellerslie to align with its identity and its uniqueness. Work with businesses and property owners so they are aligned with the brand/vision and are engaged. Have the right platforms to communicate effectively and ensure Ellerslie is actively promoted through the right channels, whether in print, digital or social forms.

Deepen what Ellerslie is known for

Keep focused on leveraging, developing and maintaining what Ellerslie is known for – its vibrancy, its integrity, its heart, its soul and its friendly village feel. It is on a strong urban revival trend that has a contemporary and bespoke look and feel. Embrace it, and look for ways to connect with trends in innovation, technology and sustainability to position Ellerslie for the future and the needs of its community whether they are locals, visitors, businesses or workers.

Seek growth to become stronger, relevant and enable key projects

Growth in the BID boundary will allow EBA to become much stronger and resilient to changes happening in and around Ellerslie and is a key enabler of strategic projects in this plan. The EBA will become more relevant to the wider business community and the large range of businesses in close proximity to the village town centre. Enlarging the EBA BID boundary to the wider Ellerslie business community will create an eco-system of networks, support, and deeper/meaningful reasons to connect surrounding businesses and workers to Ellerslie and the main street. Investigate revitalised pathways and explore ways for workers to get here (i.e. e-bikes).



Build better businesses

Refocus on our business members and celebrate success

Provide the networks, forums and tools to help the businesses that reside in Ellerslie to succeed. Provide strong communications to members and ensure they are up-to-date on key developments, issues, opportunities and challenges facing their business, as well as Ellerslie. Look to recognise great businesses in Ellerslie by celebrating success, that in turn builds a strong network amongst the business members.

Advocacy and lobbying

Continue to advocate and lobby for the right plans, infrastructure and amenities for Ellerslie businesses to succeed into the future. Ensure businesses are aligned to our brand, vision and image through effective dialogue with members.

Innovation and collaboration

Work with Council and property owners around building an innovation and collaboration workplace in Ellerslie given the strong transport links, high concentration of "at home" workers in Orakei/Maungakiekie and the impressive number of leading NZ corporates that can cohabitate and support start-ups and entrepreneurs. Programs like this can help foster ATEED's vision of an innovation corridor* from North to South Auckland.

* Supporting Auckland's growth and competitiveness, ATEED



Be bold Be beautiful

Be bold and encourage beautification of our streetscape

EBA has actively encouraged the visual appeal of Ellerslie. We now want to amplify this and truly transform Ellerslie through an ambitious and bold 'beautification program'. Ellerslie has had a long standing association with gardens and natural beauty through the zoological/botanical gardens on the old racecourse site, the Ellerslie Flower Show and plantings in and around the town centre. We want to bring this back and have Ellerslie known for its stunning visual landscape and beauty. It is imperative that this is aligned to the brand and vision that we will have for the Ellerslie of the future.

Partner with council

Through EBA and Local Board involvement, we will seek to partner with Council to develop, showcase and help fund how beautification can work in and around our town centre, through the parks, gardens, lighting, bus stops, transport connections, street fronts and car parks.

Encourage businesses and property owners to upgrade

To make this work, we will need to actively lobby and seek the support of the local businesses and property owners to join us on this campaign. It will require investment into the design and visual appeal of our buildings, the look and feel of our neighbourhood and the way our businesses present themselves to their customers. This won't happen overnight, but the movement starts today.

Encourage 'best in class' and promote a local offering to attract customers

Ellerslie retailers take pride in their presentation, their produce, their food, and their specialties – let's encourage retailers to lift their game further. We will also identify and then focus on our core local offerings and promote them throughout the year – artisanal market days, organics / nature, seasonal festivals, gardens/flowers and focus months.



Make our events and activities iconic

EBA has led a number of events and activities that generates much community engagement. We will seek to leverage our investments into these and focus on extending these further to make them iconic events and activities that will attract the wider Auckland community to them.



Develop our destination

Lead a digital journey

Make Ellerslie a digital destination – the first of its kind in Auckland. Make visiting, shopping and learning about Ellerslie a digital experience through the use of mobile, digital display and VR/AR storytelling. Integrate into other platforms such as retail, transport, restaurant/café reviews to become a digital town centre.

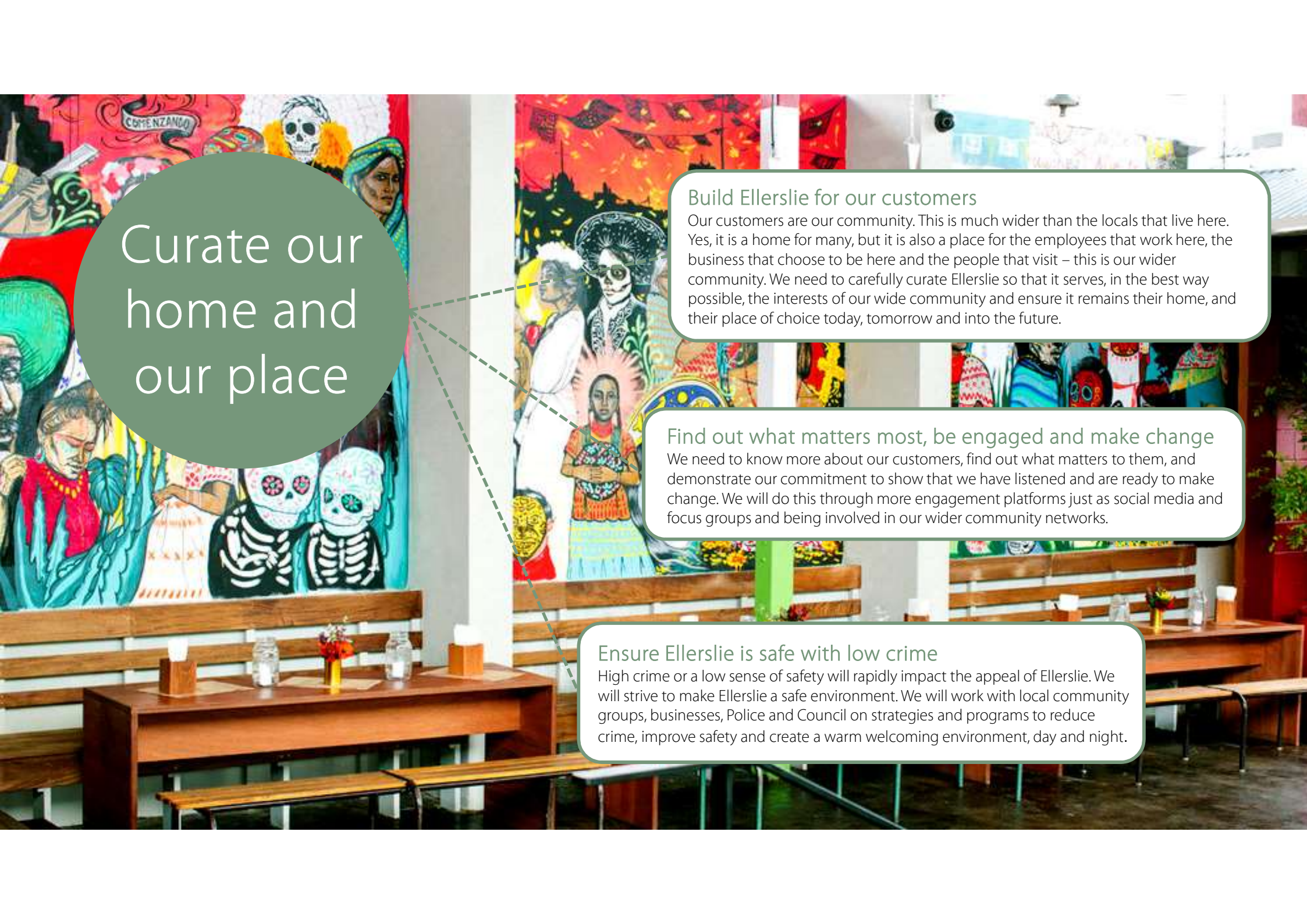


Connect our history and affiliations to new major drawcard events

Ellerslie has a rich history that could be incorporated into a series of new events:

- (1) Its strong racing history and "the Cup",
- (2) our founder Robert Graham, his zoological gardens, the Borough and early Ellerslie history as an outpost dependent on horse drawn cart and rail, (3) the original home of the Ellerslie Flower Show.





Curate our home and our place

Build Ellerslie for our customers

Our customers are our community. This is much wider than the locals that live here. Yes, it is a home for many, but it is also a place for the employees that work here, the business that choose to be here and the people that visit – this is our wider community. We need to carefully curate Ellerslie so that it serves, in the best way possible, the interests of our wide community and ensure it remains their home, and their place of choice today, tomorrow and into the future.

Find out what matters most, be engaged and make change

We need to know more about our customers, find out what matters to them, and demonstrate our commitment to show that we have listened and are ready to make change. We will do this through more engagement platforms just as social media and focus groups and being involved in our wider community networks.

Ensure Ellerslie is safe with low crime

High crime or a low sense of safety will rapidly impact the appeal of Ellerslie. We will strive to make Ellerslie a safe environment. We will work with local community groups, businesses, Police and Council on strategies and programs to reduce crime, improve safety and create a warm welcoming environment, day and night.

Our Vision

To be the town centre of choice that embraces being a modern and contemporary “village”. It is a place where businesses, residents and workers want to live, work and play and it becomes known as an iconic place where visitors will want to stop, visit and enjoy.

We will seek to:

Maintain the integrity, heart and soul of Ellerslie and ensure the vibrancy that has been created, and the connections the wider community has with Ellerslie, are both enhanced and amplified further.

Our Strategic Plan 2017-2020 provides the focus areas to bring this to life through the projects we undertake in our annual business plans.

