

Mt Albert Civic Square

The Albert Eden local board area is fortunate to have been settled in immigrant waves from 1840 to the present day. City founders and later Mt Albert and Mt Eden Borough and then City Councils secured land in the hearts of our historic town centres of Mt Eden, Sandringham, Balmoral, Greenwoods Corner, Pt Chevalier, Eden Valley and Kingsland.

Latterly this Local Board purchased a long-term lease over the land for the Mt Albert civic square. The sub-leases that were in place when the long-term lease was acquired have delayed the development of the square until 2021-2022. Instead the land is leased out under Panuku's management for car-parking mainly for the leased buildings on the town centre land managed by Panuku.

While over \$5 million funding was set aside for the transforming to a 'civic square' under the former Auckland City Council, and was retained as a 'legacy' in 2010, it funded instead the Mt Albert town centre 'transformation' upgrade which opened by the Mayor and Prime Minister in 2017. Auckland Transport also invested around \$4 million in the new train station and the Board funded the bridge from Kiwi rail land into the 'civic square'.

Over 20 years' worth of local resident, business and Community and Local Board advocacy to bring Mt Albert into the 21st century will be finally finished with the opening of the Mt Albert Civic Square.

The 'civic square' will be the culmination of the work already done but the Board needs additional budget, already signalled to the Mayor and Governing Body, to finish the job once the encumbrances on the land come to an end in 2021-22.

The Unitary Plan is in force and our town centres will change dramatically over the next 10 years. It allows for extensive urban intensification in all our town centres. The 'civic village squares' will be important gathering points for all our new homeowners as they 'shop local' 'meet their neighbours' and catch public transport. The Unitec site development will see around 4000 new families welcomed into the Mt Albert neighbourhood in the next three years.

Wikipedia tells us: 'A **town square** is an open public space is commonly found in the heart of a traditional **town** used for community gatherings. Other names for town square civic centre, city square, urban square, market square, public square, piazza, plaza, and town green.

Most town squares are hardscapes suitable for open markets, music concerts, political rallies, and other events that require firm ground. Being centrally located, town squares are usually surrounded by small shops such as bakeries, meat markets, cheese stores, and clothing stores. At their centre is often a fountain, well, monument or statue.'

It is the intention of this Board that all its historic town centres have 'civic squares'.

To that end the Board must plan now and advocate to the Governing Body for funding for the new Mt Albert Civic Square.

- a. That the Albert Eden Local Board notes that local boards are allocated decision-making power for 'place-making' in town centres.
- b. That the Albert Eden Local Board notes that there are 'village or civic squares' in Kingsland, Eden Valley, Mt Eden, Sandringham and Pt Chevalier
- c. That the Albert Eden Local Board requests that work now begin on planning and budget allocation for the Mt Albert Civic Square.
- d. That the Albert Eden Local Board identifies Mt Albert Civic Square as a priority in 2021/22 and request budget of \$50,000 from 2018/2019 is allocated in the work programme to undertake the "Albert Eden Civic Square Plan' which includes identifying budget and the planning process, and a timescale for turning the land into a civic square".

Moved Glenda Fryer

Seconded Peter Haynes



Civic Square in Sandringham town centre



Essex Civic Square in Mt Eden behind the Mt Eden shops



Kingsland Civic Square



Ballantyne Square Civic Square in Eden Valley



Pt Chevalier Civic Square



Future Civic Square in Mt Albert Town centre