

WE ARE WAIRARAPA

**WAIRARAPA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY**

WE'VE TARGETED

Adding value

We're known for our wine and we're known for our artisans, but too often our food and beverages are seen as a commodity. We need to add value to get more value. We've got our success stories, but we need more.

Success means

- > Greater diversification into value-added primary products
- > More enterprise-level businesses producing more exports

Action/opportunities

- > A food and beverage acceleration service to support businesses and help access investment
- > Food origin labelling to create and support our identity
- > A food connections working group to build links with food networks and researchers

Knowledge-intensive industries

Knowledge-based industries are the fastest-growing in Wairarapa but by no means the largest business sector. They feed other industries and present opportunities for training younger people and skills development.

Success means

- > Continued growth at or near double-digit rates for the next 10 years
- > Knowledge-intensive capacity supporting value-added and tourism

Action/opportunities

- > Develop a knowledge-intensive industry cluster to deliver capability-building programmes
- > Prepare a "ways and means" assessment of directions for developing the sector
- > Developing a Wairarapa-based tech hub to help build technology capability in businesses

Tourism

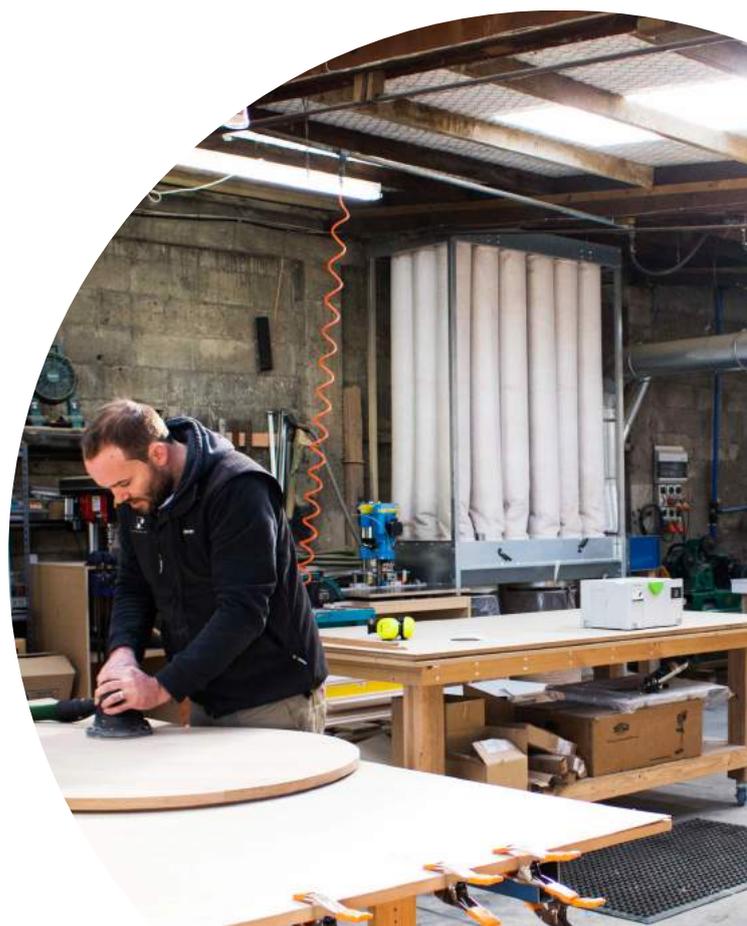
Currently our tourism is seasonal and weekend-focused. The ideal opportunity is to progress emerging attractions that will bring some balance but we need more, and we need tie-ins with our food and Māori culture. Improved transport and accommodation options are also critical.

Success means

- > A year-round calendar of conferences, events and attractions
- > A digitally linked tourism sector and more hospitality jobs

Action/opportunities

- > Prepare a destination strategy that ties in with the wider Wellington region
- > Support for the development of key year-round attractions
- > A tourism accommodation plan to identify gaps and opportunities



WE NEED

Knowledge and skills

Skills are at the core of our strategy and action plan, but Wairarapa has a skills deficit across key areas. Meanwhile, rising living costs, particularly in housing, are forcing more people to skip pre-entry training and go straight from school to work. The opportunity is to provide training options that can be combined with employment and treated as part of the employee's general development.

Success means

- >Increased knowledge and skills, and improved interest and participation in key areas
- >An overall reduction in unemployment, with reduced numbers in the NEET category

Action/opportunities

- >Support YETE (Youth in Education, Training and Employment) to get long-term funding
- >Establish a skills working group to build connections with training providers
- >Continue school-business collaboration to grow the knowledge sector

Business development

Wairarapa is a region of small business – in some cases very small. We need to develop and sustain businesses and scale them up, especially in the knowledge sector. Nearly 22% of people in Wairarapa are self-employed but productivity is below the national average.

Success means

- >Establishing and growing small businesses in key focus areas and improve productivity
- >Scaled up businesses to undertake significant economic activity

Action/opportunities

- >Develop an overall business development plan
- >From this will come a staged development plan and an investment plan for small businesses
- >Staged digitisation in key industries such as tourism, food and beverage, and agriculture

Housing/accommodation

Wairarapa faces two key issues with housing – increased demand and a shortage of social and affordable housing and rental accommodation. There is also an inadequate supply of seasonal workers' accommodation. This situation will get worse with the rapid growth of the region.

Success means

- >The ability for new housing to keep pace with demand
- >Sufficient social and affordable housing for private ownership and rent

Action/opportunities

- >A Wairarapa housing plan to establish requirements
- >A feasibility study on the merits of an urban development authority
- >An improved process to streamline building consents



WE NEED

Transport

Rail transport is a key to Wairarapa's success. While the Government has committed funds to upgrade the track, much more is needed, including passenger services throughout the day and weekends to boost visitor access. We also need the daily air link restored to boost business, tourism and resilience.

Success means

- >An all-day passenger train timetable that links to key attractions and boosts tourism
- >An air passenger service reinstated on an ongoing basis

Action/opportunities

- >More commuter capacity
- >An all-day passenger service, including on weekends, to allow day trips and encourage visitors
- >A Hood Aerodrome development plan including a business case for infrastructure upgrades

Water

Reliable fresh water is at the heart of everything we want to do in Wairarapa, but climate change and a growing population, are putting the system under pressure, especially in summer. Without adequate storage, we won't be able to sustain expansion.

Success means

- >Adequate storage to ensure a reliable supply when it is needed, especially in summer
- >Reliable water to support specialised crops and maintain river flows

Action/opportunities

- >A water resilience strategy that assesses all water requirements
- >Investigate the feasibility of a water storage project that will meet needs of urban communities and rural users and benefit the environment.

Trees

Wairarapa is one of the largest forestry areas in New Zealand, with big tracts of exotic forest and significant farm forest woodlots. We are an obvious candidate to be a major player in the Government's One Billion Trees programme. But forestry is vital for more than economic growth - 21% of the region's land is erosion-prone and we need riparian planting to protect water quality.

Success means

- >Expanded planting that will also stabilise erosion-prone land and boost water quality
- >Expanded commercial planting for cross-over benefits such as for Manuka honey

Action/opportunities

- >Wairarapa lets the Government know it is seriously interested in the One Billion Trees programme
- >A working party is established to work on feasibility of increased planting
- >Partnership with the regional council and iwi to develop the programme





We are Wairarapa

**View the full
strategy document @**

www.GrowWairarapa.nz