



BUSINESS WAIRARAPA LONG TERM / ANNUAL PLAN SUBMISSION 2024-2027 REPORTING

2024-25 Funding received:

- Masterton District Council - \$30,000
- Carterton District Council - \$15,000
- South Wairarapa District Council - \$15,000

SUMMARY JANUARY 2025

Business Wairarapa has made significant strides in fostering economic growth and business development across the Wairarapa region in 2024.

Key achievements for 2024 include:

- Establishment of Tupu Ana Business Masterton and the Featherston Business Engine - strengthening local business communities and business representation
- High engagement and participation in cross-district surveys, such as the Hood Aerodrome survey, demonstrating Business Wairarapa's effective representation and deep database.
- Expansion of the Business Wairarapa Board in November 2024, welcoming new members with strong community ties and strategic skills
<https://wairarapachamber.co.nz/wairarapa-business-leadership/>

Business Wairarapa's commitment to fostering a vibrant business ecosystem is further exemplified by the successful 2024 Business Summit and the Spark Business Hub Wairarapa Awards , which showcased the region's diverse and innovative enterprises.

JANUARY 2025 – REPORTING ON BUSINESS WAIRARAPA INITIATIVES 2024-2027

Continuation of Joint Council Partnership (Business as Usual)

- A comprehensive events schedule of at least one training/capability event and one networking and/or advocacy event per month - facilitated by local and national trainers, leaders and speakers
From July to December 2024, we designed and facilitated 18 training and networking events (3 per month), and a total of 40 cross-district events Jan-Dec 2024.
- Facilitation of business development initiatives as funded by Government (MBIE, MPI)
July – Dec 2024, Business Wairarapa co-designed and facilitated 3 ‘one-to-some’ Regional Business Partners Programme (RBP) MBIE co-funded workshops in leadership, communication skills, and governance.
- Opportunities for businesses to engage with and speak to local and national political leaders
In early October 2024, Business Wairarapa hosted ACT party leader David Seymour who spoke directly with our sub-regional business partner representatives, community groups such as Y2WW, and larger businesses. A large part of the conversation addressed issues around Wairarapa’s resilience in the form of access and the Remutaka Hill.
- Facilitation of business-to-business introductions and mentorship
With 26% of Wairarapa’s total workforce in self-employment, B2B introduction and networking plays an integral part in connection, advocacy and growth. Business Wairarapa continues to work ever closer with our sub-regional partners to maximise these opportunities through co-hosted Business after 5 and capability events.
- Supply of a region-wide Business App that includes a collaborative events calendar and business-to-business benefits
The Business Wairarapa Member App has 559 registered IDs

One of the most significant achievements of 2024 was the establishment of Masterton’s own representative body – Tupu Ana Business Masterton. Business Wairarapa led creation, lending support and resources so that Tupu Ana Business Masterton could stand on its own as a connected and engaged body with sound leadership. Equally, in South Wairarapa, Featherston Business engine was established due to partnership with Featherston Community Centre, and all memberships cross-district are growing – directly, and via the Business Wairarapa website.

- Database reach = 1,833

<p>Commitment to WaiHost Wairarapa Skills Training</p>	<p>Business Wairarapa held to its commitment to continue the WaiHost training programme, designing and facilitating five workshops to a total of 100 attendees.</p> <p>To make this programme accessible, we've identified a 'sweet spot' price of \$99 per attendee for a half-day workshop, which has proven effective for our SMEs. However, achieving this price point requires co-funding. Securing co-funding through community groups has been challenging, as businesses are often excluded from their funding narratives. While we've had some success with WEDS / WellingtonNZ and the RBP, we frequently need to adapt the programme to align with these funding streams' requirements.</p>
<p>Expansion of a Business Helpline</p>	<p>The 0800 Helpline continues to be utilised – and the service has expanded to include monthly HR and Employment Advice delivered via the Business Wairarapa newsletter – which has led to higher engagement between member businesses and the Helpline providers.</p>
<p>Contribution to the Annual Business Summit</p>	<p>Held in July 2024, the Wairarapa Business Summit drew a full house of 240 attendees who gained valuable insights from speakers such as Brad Olsen speaking on Wairarapa-specific economic data, and Nadia Lim who spoke about the Agri-Tourism opportunity for the region.</p>
<p>Contribution to the Annual Business Awards</p>	<p>The Business Awards held in November 2024, was a resounding success, with a record 75 entries and a sold-out crowd of 330 participants. Held at Matahiwi Estate north of Masterton with Hilary Barry as MC, the Awards demonstrated a united Wairarapa, as businesses, sponsors, community groups, iwi and councils came together to celebrate a thriving district-wide, economic community.</p>
<p>Contribution to Region Wide Initiatives'</p>	<p>A highlight of the year was the MONOPOLY - Wairarapa Edition project, designed and led by Business Wairarapa. The project engaged over 60 businesses and showcased Wairarapa nationally and internationally as a united region while generating revenue for the continuation of Business Wairarapa's products and services.</p>
<p>Long Term Partnership</p>	<p><i>Monitor the overall health, vibrancy, and growth of the local business sector by tracking key economic indicators, such as job creation, business expansion, and business retention, and adjust strategies as needed to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals.</i></p> <p>In December 2024, Business Wairarapa conducted a Business Needs Survey (APPENDIX #1).</p>

This information cements the importance of supporting a largely SME region through tangible products and services. From this report, Business Wairarapa is designing a skills training programme – that along with independent business sponsorship, will be accessible cross-district, as a year-long calendar of workshops.

Infometrics' Brad Olsen will be returning to the Wairarapa Business Summit in 2025 with an analysis of Wairarapa-specific data, challenges and opportunities which will be shared with Wairarapa businesses and Councils.