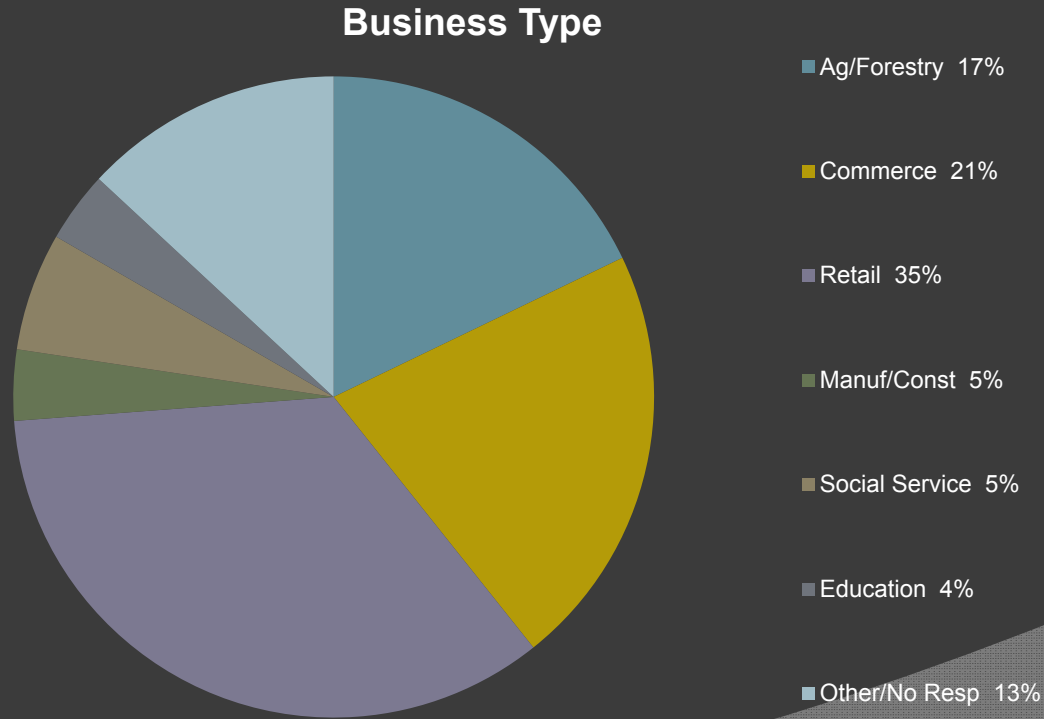


This report was prepared by independent consultant Dr Terrence Loomis for **Vision Projects** who have been commissioned by the Wairoa District Council, to undertake a programme of economic development planning and action for the district.

# WAIROA BUSINESS SURVEY

The survey was mailed to every commercial ratepayer in the Wairoa district.  
84 Business owners returned questionnaires  
36% had been in business over 30 years

There were many we spoke with who wouldn't fill out the survey for various reasons – felt it was irrelevant, concerned there may be negative consequences.  
The verbal feedback from our businesses has been included in our actions moving forward.



# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**From the four main topics**

# 1) BARRIERS AND POSITIVES FACTORS IN BUSINESS SUCCESS

## BARRIERS TO BUSINESS

Declining population

Difficulty in finding qualified staff

People shopping outside the town

Districts logistical isolation

## POSITIVE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO BUSINESS

Loyal customers

Loyal and valued employees

Niche market

Summer tourist trade

## 2) EDUCATION AND TRAINING NEEDS

Two thirds of respondents indicated that they were likely to benefit from additional training for themselves and their staff. The areas they considered most important were:

- ⦿ **Advertising**
- ⦿ **Marketing**
- ⦿ **Social media**
- ⦿ **New communication technologies**

### 3) SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

#### MAIN REASONS FOR LACK OF PRIDE IN WAIROA WERE:

- High rates and a poorly performing / obstructive council
- The need for better maintenance and town centre improvements
- Community's poor national image

#### MAIN REASONS FOR PRIDE IN WAIROA WERE:

- Lifestyle and a good place to live
- Helpful friendly people
- Area's good climate

#### MAIN REASONS FOR FEELING UNSAFE IN THE TOWN CENTRE:

- Youth problem
- Alcohol and drugs problem

## **MAIN REASONS CONTRIBUTING TO A SENSE OF COMMUNITY:**

Good community facilities

Strong club activities

Plenty of community events

## **MAIN REASONS FOR LACK OF A SENSE OF COMMUNITY:**

People being busy

Lack of scheduled community events

**Positive quality of life factors can be important for attracting people to a community, just as negative factors can drive people away.**

**Quality of life factors are also an important measure of the community's cohesiveness. They can be an indicator of citizens sense of collective ownership, and their willingness to work together to improve their community.**

# 4) GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## MAIN REASONS GIVEN FOR DISTRICT POPULATION DECLINE:

- lack of business
- employment and career opportunities
- attraction of amenities
- wages and lifestyles elsewhere

## BIGGEST ISSUES STALLING ECONOMIC GROWTH:

- District Council's inadequate performance
- High rates and lack of leadership
- Lack of stable, full time well paid employment
- Inadequate / costly transport systems

## THE MOST PROMISING ECONOMIC GROWTH AREA:

**TOURISM**



# The Magic Wand to improve Wairoa:

## ⊙ Improving infrastructure, amenities and safety

**IDEAS** included transport improvements, better public services, creating a more attractive town centre, fixing the gang problem, a more visible police presence and helping troubled youth.

## ⊙ Community and tourism promotion

**EMPHASIS** on ongoing pro-active promotional efforts to counter community's negative image, highlight positive aspects and target events and activities for tourists.

## ⊙ Encouraging and facilitating new business development

**TARGETING** medium to large businesses involved in high value production and research activities in order to provide stable, better paying career opportunities for young people.

**TARGETED** business assistance (eg affordable finance, rates adjustments) as a tool to encourage new businesses.

Where to from here?  
What needs to be done?  
Where are our opportunities?  
What do we do with this information?  
Who will do it?

BUSINESS

COUNCIL

COMMUNITY

# THE AREAS OF CONCERN

- OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED A LACK OF ACCESS TO UP TO DATE TECHNOLOGY (BROADBAND, SOCIAL MEDIA) AND LOCALLY STAGED NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FEATURING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE AS AN ISSUE
- THERE IS A PERCEPTION FROM OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT COUNCIL LACKS A CLEAR VISION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH
- THE ISSUE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING NOT MATCHING OUR BUSINESS NEEDS WAS IDENTIFIED ALONG WITH THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THESE SERVICE PROVIDERS AND OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY
- THE PERCEIVED OBSTRUCTIVE NATURE OF OUR BUILDING CONSENT PROCESSES AND LACK OF BUSINESS FACILITATION WAS IDENTIFIED AS DISCOURAGING BUILDING DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISTRICT
- A LACK OF A COHESIVE AND POSITIVE WAIROA BRAND HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED AS AN ISSUE AFFECTING THE MORAL OF WHOLE DISTRICT

# VISION PROJECTS

## ACTIONS TO DATE

### ⊙ WEDA TRUST

The Wairoa Economic Development Agency has been developed to deliver the Wairoa District Councils Economic Development strategy in partnership with the local government body. The Trust aims to facilitate and encourage further economic growth by developing relationships/projects with other relevant stakeholders.

### ⊙ KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

We staged our initial key note speaker event by inviting the Chief Executive from the Heart of Gisborne and the Gisborne District Council Economic Development officer Phil Wauchop. This successfully launched the Upstream concept.

### ⊙ UPSTREAM WAIROA INCORPORATED

This Business Action Group has been established to provide the Wairoa Township with a calendar of promotions and activities designed to uplift revitalize and encourage economic spend from local and visitors alike. This group is about to launch further Christmas activities and a Summer Events promotion. They are currently planning to address the issue of derelict shops On Marine Parade and the lacklustre entrances to our town.

### ⊙ NETWORKING

Collaborative relationships are being formed with key stakeholders including Business Hawke's Bay, The Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce, DOC, Hawke's Bay Tourism, Tourism Eastland, EIT, Kahungunu Executive, Wairoa Taiwhenua, Safe Communities

### ⊙ BUSINESS FACILITATION

Meeting with individual businesses on request to address their business issues and needs moving forward. This may include recommendations to engage other professional development such as a Business mentor.

### ⊙ ADDITIONAL FUNDING

We regularly assist groups to access funding -to date this includes the Little Theatre, The Wairoa Lighthouse festival, Upstream Wairoa The Wairoa Young Achievers Trust.

### ⊙ DOC TOURISM

Familiarized ourselves with the Tourism providers around Lake Waikaremoana and the Te Urewera National Park area by attending a DOC famil day, meeting with key stakeholders including DOC Management, Whakamarino Lodge Board members and tourism operators.

# FUTURE PLANNING

BROADBAND COVERAGE FOR THE WAIROA DISTRICT ESPECIALLY THE RURAL SECTOR

CREATE A POSITIVE TRUE IDENTITY FOR THE WAIROA DISTRICT USING MIXED MEDIA

DEVELOP FREQUENT NETWORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING OPPORTUNITIES

DEVELOP INITIATIVES THAT CREATE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STREAMS FOR WEDA AND UPSTREAM WAIROA ASSISTING THEM TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES

LAND USE FORUM

BUILDING/ BUSINESS FACILITATION FORUM

TO FAMILIARISE OURSELVES WITH THE AMALGAMATION PROCESS

SUPPORT THE REQUEST TO HAVE STATE HIGHWAY 2 NAMED AS A ROAD OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE NOW THE RAILWAY HAS BEEN MOTHBALLED

CONTINUED SUPPORT OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN WAIROA'S ECONOMIC FUTURE ESPECIALLY BETWEEN THE WAIROA DISTRICT COUNCIL, OUR BUSINESS SECTOR AND OUR COMMUNITY