

*E mau to ringa ki te kete tuauri, ki te kete tuatea, ki te kete aronui*

*Hold fast to the opportunities offered by education  
“Knowledge is a powerful tool”*

## INTRODUCTION

This document is part of a broader *My Masterton: Our People, Our Land/He Hiringa Tangata, He Hiringa Whenua Strategy* that has four key development areas: Social, Cultural, Economic and Environmental. This Economic Development area provides a framework for our economic development priorities. It has connectivity with other policies and plans that Council has developed, and with the other areas of focus that together form *He Hiringa Tangata, He Hiringa Whenua*.

A strong economy is an enabler for many other areas of people development e.g. improving work opportunities, incomes and affordability for our community, and opening doors for new and innovative industries including opportunities for more environmentally friendly technology and businesses.

## BACKGROUND

### MDC STRATEGIC CONTEXT

As part of the development of the *2015-25 Long-Term Plan (LTP)* Masterton District Council/Te Kaunihera ā-rohe o Whakaoriori (MDC) consulted on a range of planned and proposed projects. Our community ranked developing and implementing an economic development programme for Masterton number one, with 91.6% of respondents either supportive or extremely supportive. MDC subsequently made a commitment in the LTP to achieving a **Strong Resilient Economy** for our people.

### IWI/MĀORI STRATEGIC CONTEXT/PERSPECTIVES

The Kahungunu ki Wairarapa (KKW) *He Mahere Whakaneke Whakanuku Strategic Plan 2015-19* identifies economic development as a goal. KKW aspire to achieving a robust and sustainable economic base. Key strategies for achieving this are:

- alignment to the Post settlement Governance Entity;
- Iwi involvement in key economic networks and decision making bodies; and
- providing and promoting training opportunities focused on financial literacy and economic development.

KKW have expressed a desire to work collaboratively with others in achieving this aspiration, e.g. via identifying shared opportunities, regular participation in key economic networks, and contributing to the Economic Regional Development Plan.

MDC is committed to working collaboratively with both Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Kahungunu ki Wairarapa in the economic development space.

## NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

National and international trends and legislative frameworks can influence much of our local economy. Examples of these can include interest rates, trade agreements and government policy. While limited, there are avenues that local government can pursue to facilitate local economic growth. These are reflected in our “current economic development activity” outlined below.

In May 2017 the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) published *Growing New Zealand for All*, an economic narrative that identifies five key focus areas for New Zealand:

- More dynamic and fair business environment
- Increased number of highly skilled people and innovative firms
- More productive and prosperous people, sectors and regions
- The built environment better supports a well-functioning economy
- Greater value sustainably derived from the natural environment

Our local strategy is consistent with these priorities.

## WHERE WE ARE NOW?

### MASTERTON'S ECONOMY – CURRENT SITUATION AND TRENDS

Across most indicators, Masterton's economy is showing encouraging signs of growth. Our local economy grew by 4% over the year to March 2017, higher than New Zealand as a whole (2.9%) and higher again than the Wellington region (2.4%). [For more information see Appendix].

Key indicators of economic performance show that in year to March 2017:

- \$12m worth of non-residential building consents were issued, almost twice as high as the year before. Residential consents increased by 66.1%.
- Commercial vehicle registrations, a key forward-looking indicator of business activity, continued to rise. The total of 408 registrations is almost twice the 10-year average.
- Traffic flows in Masterton district increased by 5.2%.
- House prices in Masterton increased 17% and house sales increased by 22%. Growth in sales outperformed the rest of New Zealand, where sales fell by 4.5%.

While our economy is buoyant we need to ensure that this is sustainable for the long term. We also want to ensure that everyone benefits from our economy and has opportunities to succeed, in alignment with our social and cultural development areas; and that any development that supports our economy is not at the expense of our environment.

### COMMUNITY VIEWS

As highlighted, there was a strong directive from our community as part of the LTP process to prioritise economic development and MDC has acted on that. In addition, our 2017 Satisfaction Survey included some questions that relate to our economy and economic development activities:

- 79% of residents are very satisfied/satisfied with the efforts MDC makes to attract visitors or tourists to the area.
- 92% of residents are very satisfied/satisfied with the district's community events.
- 66% of households have attended a community event in the last 12 months (71% in 2016). Of these, 92% are very satisfied/satisfied.

One of the survey questions also asked residents whether they thought that the district is better, about the same or a worse place to live than it was three years ago, in the context of amenities and activities that MDC can influence. Over the last three surveys, an average of 38.7% report that they think Masterton is a better place.

## CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

### *My Masterton*

Like most regional areas in recent decades, the Masterton district has long struggled to maintain sustained growth in population and this was highlighted as a potential barrier to successful business attraction.

Given that, in 2014 MDC launched the *My Masterton* campaign which focuses primarily on attracting residents from larger urban centres to Masterton. The expected 'flow on' effect of population growth is the attraction of new and complementary industry.

MDC set a population growth target of an average 2% per annum, which would see Masterton's population increase to nearly 30,000 by 2025. Achieving this would put Masterton in a good position to achieve other goals such as:

- 1-2% pa average income growth
- 1-2% GDP per capita growth
- Employment growth

The campaign started with a huge community engagement exercise that involved local residents in identifying what is great about Masterton. This feedback was then used to promote the district to people in the Auckland and Wellington regions in particular.

The *My Masterton* campaign has proven to be successful in building local pride in our town and in attracting new residents to Masterton.

The *My Masterton* Facebook page currently has over 5,500 followers and is a key tool for engaging with our community on a range of topics including economic development. The *My Masterton* website is a key source of information for people and business interested in considering a move to Masterton, as well as those who live here now.

Local real estate firms have indicated an increase in farm, lifestyle and house sales to new residents from Auckland, Wellington and other larger urban centres. This has been equally beneficial to Carterton and South Wairarapa districts.

Infometrics' Masterton District economic profile shows a 3.8% increase in population since 2010. This compares to 5.9% across the wider Wairarapa over the same period.

### *Local Economic Development Programme*

In 2016 MDC undertook to produce an innovative, council-facilitated, community-driven, local economic development initiative for the district. The aim of the programme is to empower industry-led activity, focused on strengthening Masterton's economy.

Reflecting MDC's commitment to local economic development, it will set out our vision of success, our desired outcomes and an action plan to achieve those outcomes.

Set to be in place in 2017-2018, the Economic Development Programme aims to foster:

- Ownership : Wider involvement in taking positive action
- Partnership: Stronger public private partnerships
- Culture: Strengthening the spirit of collaboration

### *Accelerate Wairarapa*

MDC has played a lead role in developing Accelerate Wairarapa, an innovative community driven programme focused on business investment, attraction and retention. The overall aim of the programme is to empower industry-led activity focused on strengthening Masterton. MDC is also committed to work with Carterton and South Wairarapa districts to expand this programme of work across the wider Wairarapa. MDC's investment in the programme reflects our commitment to local economic development.

Key objectives of Accelerate Wairarapa are to:

1. Establish a **working group of key stakeholders** to oversee a broader engagement process with the sector. A working group has been established
2. Develop a future-focused **collaborative strategic plan** that clearly identifies opportunities for improving business investment and attraction for the Masterton district
3. Ensure MDC's organisational **culture will be supportive** of the programme's planning outcomes
4. Investigate options for developing a **regional brand** that can support the implantation of the strategy
5. Ensure a **steering group** of sector representatives is in place to oversee the ongoing implementation of the plan. A steering group has been established.

Accelerate Wairarapa and five working groups, each with a different focus, have been established. The groups are led by industry and supported where appropriate by MDC. The steering group oversees the programme, provides guidance and ensures these five groups are communicating and sharing information and ideas. The groups are:

1. **Wairarapa Prospectus** – tasked with exploring options for promoting the region as a destination for new residents, business and investment.
2. **Talent Attraction** - developing initiatives that attract specific talent from outside the region, as determined by industry needs.
3. **Growing Local Talent** - growing Masterton's existing talent base from the 'ground up' to meet the skills needed by new and existing local employers. The objectives of this group are to:
  - Establish a small number of explicit activities to grow local talent with an end focus on business development/attraction. Provide support to existing organisations such as YETE
  - Promote the Licence to Work across all businesses
  - Create Education-Business Partnerships
  - Create Scholarship/internship partnerships with business.
4. **Innovation – to achieve the group's** vision that Wairarapa is "A place where innovation happens". The group has identified short, medium and long term measures of success:
  - Short-term: identify the organisations and people in the region already practising innovation, and provide them the information they need to discover others doing the same
  - Medium-term: Actively create opportunities for 'innovation collisions' to occur.
  - Long-term: Attract organisations and investment to the region based on the strength of the innovation occurring.

5. **Regional Intelligence** – identifying opportunities for improving access (road, rail, air and telecommunications) to Wairarapa.

In addition to these work streams, a small group of local industry leaders have set up a working group dedicated to considering issues and solutions around access. This includes transport such as rail, air and road as well as connectivity such as rural broadband.

#### *Re-orientating our Regulatory Approach*

MDC has re-orientated its regulatory approach to better enable a ‘community-led, council-supported’ way of working, and to prioritise education and engagement first.

While MDC must still work within the legislative framework set by central government and our own regulatory framework, improved communication, information, processes and customer service helps to better facilitate development. Pre-lodgement meetings in our planning and building areas, for example, enable all those involved to better understand the needs of both parties (and the regulations), and to work together to facilitate a smooth and timely consent process.

#### *Investing in Our Infrastructure to Support Growth and Development*

Over the past decade, MDC has invested significantly in key infrastructure. This has ensured that the district can actively pursue an increase in population and attract new businesses and industry.

The Masterton water treatment plant, for example, delivers the highest grade water supply at lower-than-average cost. Recent investments have also ensured that essential components of the plant are seismically sound.

MDC’s sewerage scheme has been designed for increased urban and trade waste. A nearly \$50m investment in this facility has ensured that the scheme is future-proofed for greater demand.

Such key infrastructure, in conjunction with an extensive roading network that has the capacity for higher traffic flows, can give potential new residents and industry confidence that Masterton is equipped to cater for significant growth.

In addition, MDC has invested extensively in recreational assets. Facilities include an athletics track, world-class artificial rugby and football turf, walking tracks, swimming pools, and Henley Lake. These facilities ensure that there is an attractive environment – providing a standard of living that can assist industry to attract new employees to the district.

## **STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES**

Masterton’s economy, like every other regional economy, has many strengths while facing some significant challenges, which in themselves can also present further opportunities.

Masterton/Whakaoriori district’s economic development potential and performance depends on the quality of all available resources. This includes our people and communities, which underpin the district’s strengths and challenges.

Masterton district has several sources of current and potential economic advantage, many of which are unique in New Zealand. MDC is committed to exploring ways in which the district can build on these sources of advantage.

At the same time, Masterton district faces a number of challenges to improving its economic performance. While some are shared with other regional districts in New Zealand, other challenges are less widespread. In order to plan for economic development in Masterton, understanding the challenges assist MDC to identify corresponding opportunities.

Masterton/Whakaoriori strengths and challenges are summarised in the table below and discussed in more detail under each of the identified priorities.

Strengths:	Challenges:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Cost of Living</li> <li>• Lifestyle</li> <li>• Housing Affordability</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Diversification</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population</li> <li>• Connectivity</li> <li>• Talent Base</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Earthquake Prone Buildings</li> </ul>

### **Key Challenges:**

**Population:** While some encouraging population growth has been experienced since 2012, Masterton’s relatively small population presents a challenge to economic growth. Larger districts benefit from the productivity gains that a higher concentration of people and businesses provides. The opposite can often be said for districts that have struggled to grow in size. Small populations can challenge markets, availability of required skills and access to customers and suppliers.

Masterton district therefore is reliant on the wider Wairarapa valley and Wellington regional economy to provide resources, talent and investment. It could also be true that potential investment is hampered by the perceived disadvantages and restrictions of a smaller population.

Masterton’s population is also disproportionately older, with a higher proportion than the New Zealand average in every age bracket between 55-59 and 85+. This raises challenges to MDC infrastructure and planning, healthcare needs, as well as concerns over an ageing workforce.

**Talent Base:** Masterton’s talent pool is less qualified than the New Zealand average. 72% of people aged 15 years and over (working age population) in Masterton district have a formal qualification, compared with nearly 80% of people in New Zealand. 12% of the working age population in Masterton hold a bachelor's degree or higher as their highest qualification, compared with 20% for New Zealand as a whole. Source: Statistics NZ. This suggests that Masterton struggles to bring back those who have grown up in the district and left for tertiary study, as well as to attract new talent.

**Employment:** Masterton’s sustained economic growth since 2011 has seen our unemployment rate decrease to an annual average of 5.9% in 2016. This is an improvement on the peak of 6.6% in 2013. Nevertheless, there was still a 3.0% increase in the average number of people receiving Jobseeker Support over the past year, which indicates that there is a group of vulnerable people that are not able to take advantage of some of these employment opportunities. *Source: Infometrics*

**Connectivity:** Much of urban Masterton now has access to ultra-fast broadband. This has assisted businesses to increase their productivity and allowed Masterton to remain attractive as a destination for work-from-home practitioners and new businesses. Nevertheless, much of the rural areas of Masterton district still struggle to access reliable broadband and mobile coverage, affecting profitability and employment opportunities.

*Transport:* The regular commuter and off-peak train services is a strength in terms of accessibility to Wellington. However, this service is comparatively irregular, particularly when placed alongside the Hutt services and the electrified Kāpiti Coast lines. Improving access to Wellington via the train services could be a key economic driver, particularly if it encourages population growth into Masterton as Wellington's population drifts north.

Similarly, reintroducing a flight service between Masterton and Auckland is seen as a potential economic driver. Access to Masterton as a conference and tourism venue was significantly hampered by the loss of the Air New Zealand service in September 2013. In terms of business attraction, reinstating this air route should prove beneficial when competing with other regional economies that may have direct air routes to Auckland.

*Earthquake prone buildings:* Masterton's historic central business district, in particular its main retail street of Queen Street, houses a number of buildings which will require significant investment over the next decade in order to reach new seismic building standards. Some buildings may need to be removed. This presents a challenge in regards to business attraction and the CBD development project.

## WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

As part of the establishment of an *Economic Development Strategy*, stakeholders were asked to identify their vision for the development of Masterton's economy:

*Masterton/ Whakaoriori is a vibrant, happy community  
with a strong and sustainable economy*

This vision acknowledges that economic development is intrinsically linked with community development.

## HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

The table below sets out how we're going to achieve our overall vision and aspiration for economic development.

OUR VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Masterton/Whakaoriori is a vibrant, happy community with a strong and sustainable economy	
OUR PRIORITIES	OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
Business Attraction and Industry Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressing the objectives of the Accelerate Wairarapa programme to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a supportive regulatory environment that enables sustainable infrastructure development and growth.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for considered intervention by MDC to attract investment and facilitate development.</li> <li>Enable sustainable growth in traditionally strong industries.</li> <li>Encourage new innovative and entrepreneurial high-value activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Population Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to promote Masterton through the My Masterton campaign and exploring new opportunities or target markets to expand the campaign.</li> <li>Progressing objectives of the Accelerate Wairarapa programme to attract new residents and business.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing MDC's <i>Education Strategy</i> to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract both domestic and international students</li> <li>Provide skills to local industries.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Supporting Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Destination Wairarapa to attract visitors through the promotion of our region to domestic and international tourism markets</li> <li>Supporting and facilitating initiatives and events that attract visitors to the region.</li> <li>Investing in infrastructure that supports the attraction of visitors and tourism-based businesses.</li> </ul>
Collaborative Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring opportunities to partner with Iwi and/or the private sector to progress our economic development priorities.</li> <li>Working collaboratively with our community and supporting community led initiatives across our economic development priorities.</li> </ul>

### BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND INDUSTRY GROWTH

Business attraction and growth have been identified as priorities via the Accelerate Wairarapa programme. New businesses and industry growth can both encourage diversification and build resilience in our economy, as well as facilitating population growth and potentially attracting further investment and development.

While the Masterton/Whakaoriori economy has traditionally been heavily reliant on our primary industries, a comparative analysis of similar regional economies highlights that Masterton district remains in a relatively encouraging position, with significantly less reliance on the primary industries.

In Central Hawke's Bay, Ashburton and Horowhenua, the primary sector's share of GDP is 30.4%, 26% and 16.4% respectively. Furthermore, an analysis using the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI), which

measures the level of diversification of an economy, shows that Masterton has a far more diverse economy than that of the New Zealand average (across all 66 territorial authorities).

Masterton district had a standardised HHI of 28.0 in 2015. Conversely, New Zealand had a standardised HHI of 57.0 (the higher the index, the more concentrated economic activity is in a few industries).

### Diversification

Diversification of industry is vital for a district to ensure resilience and sustainability of its economy. If a local economy is disproportionately reliant on a small number of industries it is vulnerable to shocks that could impact key sectors, such as climatic conditions and commodity price fluctuations.

Despite a slight decrease in diversification since 2000, Masterton remains well placed compared with similar regional economies.

Primary industries hold an 11.6% share of Masterton District's GDP, compared with 7.8% for the whole country. Secondary industries account for 17% of Masterton's GDP, and 19% of New Zealand's. Tertiary and quaternary industries account for similar shares of both Masterton and New Zealand's GDP<sup>1</sup>.

### Resilience

MDC has an opportunity to work constructively with industry groups and membership-based organisations such as Federated Farmers, to explore areas for further collaboration with their industry. Exploring possibilities where MDC can assist in facilitating industry-led initiatives is a key opportunity to build resilience within an industry while also exploring any potential opportunities for investment. This may include opportunities to explore the best way to secure IT infrastructure upgrades, with a particular focus on broadband upgrades for rural areas and the mobile network. An example of this is the recent Council-facilitated application to the Sustainable Farming Fund to implement a Cropping Strategy across Wairarapa. This was partly in response to the Pea Weevil outbreak and was seen as an opportunity to work constructively with the arable crops and seeds industry.

### Potential Key Actions

MDC will:

- Continue to support the implementation of Accelerate Wairarapa to achieve the desired outcomes of business investment, attraction and retention which align with this strategy.
- Develop and implement an economic development strategy for existing industries located within the Masterton district.
- An example of how this might work is the industry-led, council supported cropping strategy working group. Its aims are:
  1. Establish a working group of key cropping stakeholders to oversee a broader engagement process with the industry.
  2. Develop a future focused collaborative strategic plan for the sector that takes into consideration the current Pea Weevil issue.
  3. Ensure a Steering Group of sector representative is in place to oversee the ongoing implementation of the plan.

MDC will use the Cropping Strategy as a test case for how a partnership could be developed across Primary Industries.

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<sup>1</sup> The primary sector extracts or harvests products from the earth and includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining. The secondary sector produces manufactured and other processed goods and includes manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, and construction. The tertiary sector includes all service industries that are not knowledge intensive, such as retail trade, and food and accommodation services. The quaternary sector includes knowledge intensive service industries. Source: Infometrics

## POPULATION GROWTH

Masterton's proximity to Wellington, weather, infrastructure, quality of life, high-quality education providers and cost of living provides a compelling proposition for moving here. People can have the best of country living, on the doorstep of New Zealand's capital city. Masterton offers the choice of lifestyle and connectivity – be that by either working in Wairarapa and getting their city fix in the weekend, or taking advantage of the comfortable and scenic commuter train trip to Wellington. In the time it takes to get from Auckland Airport to the Sky Tower!

As the eyes of those who want to secure less frenetic futures start to look outside the cities, Masterton district stands out as a place where it's easy to make a home. Land and houses are affordable, and opportunities to forge a satisfying future are everywhere.

People want to make this beautiful part of the world their home because at its heart is a town that has everything they are looking for – big brand stores, all of the services needed and sporting and recreational amenities all within a five-minute drive or short walk.

The My Masterton website says it best, "Masterton offers a place where smart 20-somethings can secure their futures with canny property investments, where IT entrepreneurs work for the world from their home offices and 50-somethings embrace a sophisticated social fabric, richly studded with ever-changing good food, wine and leisure activities."

A recent survey showed that Masterton residents are the most satisfied with their lives in the region that boasts the greatest percentage of happy people.

### *Potential Key Actions*

Council will:

- Continue its '**My Masterton**' campaign to promote the district to potential new residents.
- Explore new opportunities and target markets to expand the My Masterton campaign.
- Continue to support the implementation of **Accelerate Wairarapa** to achieve the desired outcomes which includes population growth by attracting the skills needed by locally-based industries.

## EDUCATION

The Education sector is one of Masterton's largest employers, and offers considerable potential in terms of economic growth, particularly in regards to attracting international students.

The Masterton district, both rural and urban, is well serviced by an eclectic network of high quality early childhood services and schools. Masterton is unique in that such a variety of primary and secondary providers are on offer in a district of only 24,600 people.

Tertiary education and training is also offered by the Wairarapa branch of the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) and the Taratahi Agricultural Training College, just south of Masterton.

There are 21 early childhood providers in Masterton, including kindergartens, child care and education centres, home-based services, play centre and Kōhanga Reo. This, along with the district's 12 primary schools, means parents enjoy a wide range of options. Masterton also offers parents a great variety of secondary education opportunities – far more so than most communities of its size, or indeed major urban areas.

As identified in the Economic Development Programme, education offers many opportunities for economic development in the Masterton District. There are opportunities in working with each educational provider to assist in identifying points of difference which can be leveraged in order to ensure sustainable growth in student numbers and attract international students.

An example is Solway College, which has been identified as having strong links with the equestrian sector. This Council-facilitated initiative saw the establishment of the Solway Equestrian Academy Trust which will oversee the development of an Equestrian Academy for students, located at world-class facilities only a few kilometres from the school. It is clear that there are many opportunities for MDC to assist other education providers in identifying similar points of difference and leveraging them.

There is also an opportunity to explore the feasibility of increasing the presence of tertiary education providers in the district, such as Massey University or Victoria University.

In addition, Masterton benefits from community initiatives with an education focus such as the Masterton Trust Lands Trust and the recently formed Youth Education, Training and Employment Network (YETE). MDC can look to further support these initiatives and align resources and efforts in the whole of the Wairarapa to support our young people to reach their vocational and/or educational potential.

### *Potential Key Actions*

MDC will:

- Implement the **Education Strategy** developed by MDC. This includes:
  1. A focus on enhancing the employability of local students and the attraction of domestic and international students.
  2. Establishing a steering group of sector representatives to oversee the ongoing implementation of the plan.

## **SUPPORTING TOURISM**

Masterton's proximity to Wellington is ideal for its reputation as Wellington's playground. As international flights into Wellington grow, increasing opportunities for growth in international tourism too.

Tourism offers many opportunities for the Masterton district and the wider Wairarapa region. MDC is committed to working constructively with Destination Wairarapa, our Regional Tourism Organisation, which is responsible for promoting the Wairarapa region to domestic and international visitors and seeing 3% growth in tourism GDP per annum for the Masterton district.

Destination Wairarapa promotes the region at business events and trade shows, through online marketing campaigns and works with Tourism New Zealand and the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency (WREDA) on strategic marketing campaigns. Recent tourism product developments include: a coastal guided tour, a new mountain bike park and growing the Remutaka Cycle Trail. In addition they are currently working on the Five Towns Trail, which is a new cycle route connecting Featherston with Masterton and the 2017 Lions Tour. Destination Wairarapa also delivers and promotes New Zealand's only Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) sanctioned race held in the country, the New Zealand Cycle Classic, and instigated Huri Huri: the Wairarapa Bike Festival. They also deliver workshops to raise the capability of tourism operators in the region, including recent workshops on becoming 'China ready'.

As tourism's share of Masterton's GDP continues to grow, MDC sees further opportunities to work constructively with the industry.

### *New Opportunities*

MDC owns and manages community infrastructure such as Hood aerodrome, parks, recreation facilities and our natural environment that contribute to tourism by attracting visitors and/or enabling events and other initiatives. Hood Aerodrome, for example, is a MDC-owned facility, catering for local users and wider Wairarapa aviation needs. The Aerodrome offers considerable opportunities for the district.

Hood is an ideal stop off or transit airfield for pilots flying in the lower North Island. It is also home to multiple collections of rare aircraft and is the home of the world-class biennial Wings Over Wairarapa air show. MDC is committed to assisting projects that seek to enhance the viability of Hood Aerodrome as a regional hub for aviation.

#### *Potential Key Actions*

MDC will:

- Continue to support Destination Wairarapa to **promote our district** to domestic and international visitors.
- Continue to support **events and activities** that attract visitors to Masterton.
- Explore, facilitate and, where feasible and affordable, support **new ventures and opportunities** that will attract visitors to Masterton.
- Maintain and develop community infrastructure (hood aerodrome, parks, recreation facilities and our natural environment etc.) that help to **make the district attractive** to visitors.

#### **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

This strategy identifies priorities that cannot be achieved by MDC alone. We need to be working together collaboratively and/or in partnership. In the context of economic development, this means:

- Exploring opportunities to partner with Iwi and/or the private sector to progress our economic development priorities.
- Working collaboratively with our community and supporting community led initiatives across our economic development priorities.

## REFERENCES

Kahungunu ki Wairarapa (2015) *He Mahere Whakaneke Whakanuku Strategic Plan 2015-19*

Masterton District Council (2015) *Long-Term Plan 2015-2025*

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