



**Maureen Collins-Wright**, pictured, assumed the chair of Wiri Business Association at the BID's 2018 AGM.

We caught up with Maureen to discuss her new role.



## Growing pains, governance and staffing gains

In 2017, the Wiri Business Improvement District went from being Auckland's tenth smallest to the largest by area, following a hard-won expansion.

We interviewed the industrial precinct's BID programme manager Audrey Williams last June to learn more about how Wiri grew four-fold. [READ MORE](#)

We recently caught up with Wiri's newly elected chair, **Maureen Collins-Wright**, to find out more about the governance challenges that came with expanding from 321 members to over 1,400.

Maureen's family firm, Ross's Plumbing, has been based in Wiri since 2013 and she has served on BID-operating business association's board for the past three years, most recently as treasurer.

**"What I look to bring to the role of chairperson is a long term bigger picture and strategic thinking to grow the value for our members."**

Having worked in both corporate and small business environments gives Maureen broad experience to call on in considering the differing needs of Wiri's members.

After the successful BID expansion, Wiri's 2017 annual report spoke of 'restructuring' and 'growing' the board with diversified expertise.

We asked Maureen what has transpired over the past year to future-proof the board.



“Our board has developed in size and diversity over the last two years. We have been in the fortunate position of voting for places on the board at our AGM rather than trying to find enough people willing to stand,” she says.

**“Our aim is to have a range of skills, experiences, industries and geographical spread amongst our board members.”**

We asked Maureen what governance challenges/opportunities the expanded Wiri BID had faced over the past year.

“The biggest challenge we have had is both the board and the general manager adjusting to the expansion from a small BID (120ha) to a very large BID (860ha) and fully understanding what that means and the requirements (compliance and members) that goes along with that.

“The opportunities with the expansion are many and the first one is to grow the staff to enable us to fulfil the business and strategic plans,” she says.

With the expanded BID area now traversing two local board areas, we asked how the governance-to-governance relationship had developed.

**“Our strong relationship we have developed over the years with the Manurewa Local Board continues to grow. We have been presenting and liaising through the previous year with the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board and look to continue to build that relationship this year between the general manager and the chairperson.”**

On the subject of management, Wiri has restructured its staffing model, effectively to double its resource.

Maureen says the next 12 months will be a very busy time recruiting so will be two-fold in finding the right people.

“Our team will spend more time with members and to understand and serve their needs.”



“We will also increase our communications and events through different channels, including print, electronic and social media.

“We will develop a transport strategy, with increased advocacy and support. There is a new trucking logistics company moving into the area which will increase the truck traffic in our area.

“Finally, we will sustain our strong focus on security.”

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