

Hon Dr Megan Woods

Minister of Housing



Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Minister of Social Development

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PĀNUI PĀPĀHO

MEDIA STATEMENT

Building a better housing and urban future for Rotorua, together

- Housing Accord signed today renews the commitment by Government, Rotorua Lakes Council, Te Arawa and Ngāti Whakaue for better housing and social outcomes in Rotorua.
- The Accord seeks to:
 - reduce the reliance on emergency housing
 - provide better support and care to people in emergency housing
 - increase housing supply to ensure more Rotorua people have access to safe, dry, warm, permanent homes
- This pipeline of public, affordable, iwi and Māori housing will ensure Rotorua can be a strong, vibrant city with robust housing infrastructure in the years ahead.

Ensuring Rotorua has better and more sustainable housing outcomes for its people is behind the Rotorua Housing Accord, signed by central and local government, Rotorua Lakes Council, Te Arawa and Ngāti Whakaue as mana whenua which gifted land to establish the Rotorua township.

The accord between Government, Rotorua Lakes Council, and Te Arawa Iwi renews the commitment to work collaboratively to address Rotorua's chronic housing shortage, improve emergency housing and the wellbeing of the community, says Minister for Housing Megan Woods and Social Development Minister Carmel Sepuloni.

Megan Woods says Rotorua has experienced significant population growth in recent years, with over 9000 people coming into Rotorua since 2013 and only 1200 private homes built and a net loss of public homes during the period of the last National Government.

"This has created an unacceptable rise in house prices and rental costs," Megan Woods said.

"Today's Accord spells out clearly the Government's current and ongoing commitment to Rotorua as it works with the community to deliver more public, transitional and affordable housing, and also provide safe, supported emergency accommodation.

Rotorua Mayor Tania Tapsell says the Accord responds to the urgent need to end mixed use tourism accommodation and deliver better housing solutions for those in need.

The Council is already making more progress in speeding up development with more than a 150 per cent increase in new dwelling consents issued in the last two years since September 2020.

“But lasting change cannot be achieved without the three Parties working together to deliver better outcomes for everyone who lives here in our beautiful district,” Tania Tapsell said.

Megan Woods says the Accord seeks to progressively reduce the use of motels for emergency housing in Rotorua to near zero, provide quality delivery of care and wrap-around support to people in emergency accommodation and build more public homes to address the housing shortage in Rotorua.

“Significant work is underway, with around 330 public and transitional homes under construction or in planning by Kāinga Ora, Community Housing Providers and Iwi and Māori.

“There has been huge investment in infrastructure, including \$84.6 million for stormwater improvements through the Infrastructure Acceleration Fund. This pipeline of public and transitional housing will ensure Rotorua can be a strong, vibrant city with a robust housing infrastructure in the years ahead.

“There has also been a strong partnership with Māori resulting in several new housing developments across Rotorua, by, for and with Māori. I acknowledge the work of the Te Arawa and Ngāti Whakaue, who have been working assiduously with the Government to get better housing outcomes for whānau and individuals in Rotorua,” says Megan Woods.

Rawiri Waru, the chairman of a Te Arawa Working Party responding to emergency housing, says it was established to investigate and identify solutions.

“We listened to the concerns of our people which has led us to today’s signing.”

Mr Waru says people must come first.

“He kura tangata, a human being is precious. As mana whenua, Te Arawa and in particular Ngāti Whakaue, respect and strive to take care of everyone in our rohe. We agree that housing development, which is environmentally friendly and sustainable, is desperately needed in Rotorua. But, above all Te Arawa is driven by our inherited value of protecting the wellbeing and safety of people who reside in Rotorua and manuhiri who come to our rohe. “This Accord recognises our collaborative duty to address the chronic housing crisis and tackle the many issues that have emerged from it. Me whai mana nui hoki ngā mātāpono a Te Arawa ki tēnei take kīhai ki tā Te Arawa whakataui ai. Te Arawa beliefs and ideologies must be given mana and applied as directed by Te Arawa,” Rawiri Waru said.

Minister for Social Development Carmel Sepuloni says today’s Accord provides a holistic approach to housing.

“The care and wellbeing of individuals and whānau reliant on emergency housing is a key focus. The Government is committed to ensuring all people who have short-term

accommodation needs can get these met while longer term housing supply is established, until there is no further need for emergency housing,” says Carmel Sepuloni

The Accord signed today provides a commitment from the Government in partnership with Te Arawa and Rotorua Lakes Council to ensure a better housing future alongside improved economic and social outcomes for the people of Rotorua. We thank all the signatories for their commitment to a better housing and urban future in Rotorua,” say Ministers Woods and Sepuloni. [ENDS]

Note:

The Rotorua Housing Accord builds on the progress of the Rotorua Housing Taskforce between Rotorua Lakes Council, Ministry of Social Development (MSD), Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities (Kāinga Ora), and Te Puni Kōkiri. All parties are committed to working to make significant long- term changes to removing the barriers to building more homes and helping communities meet their needs.