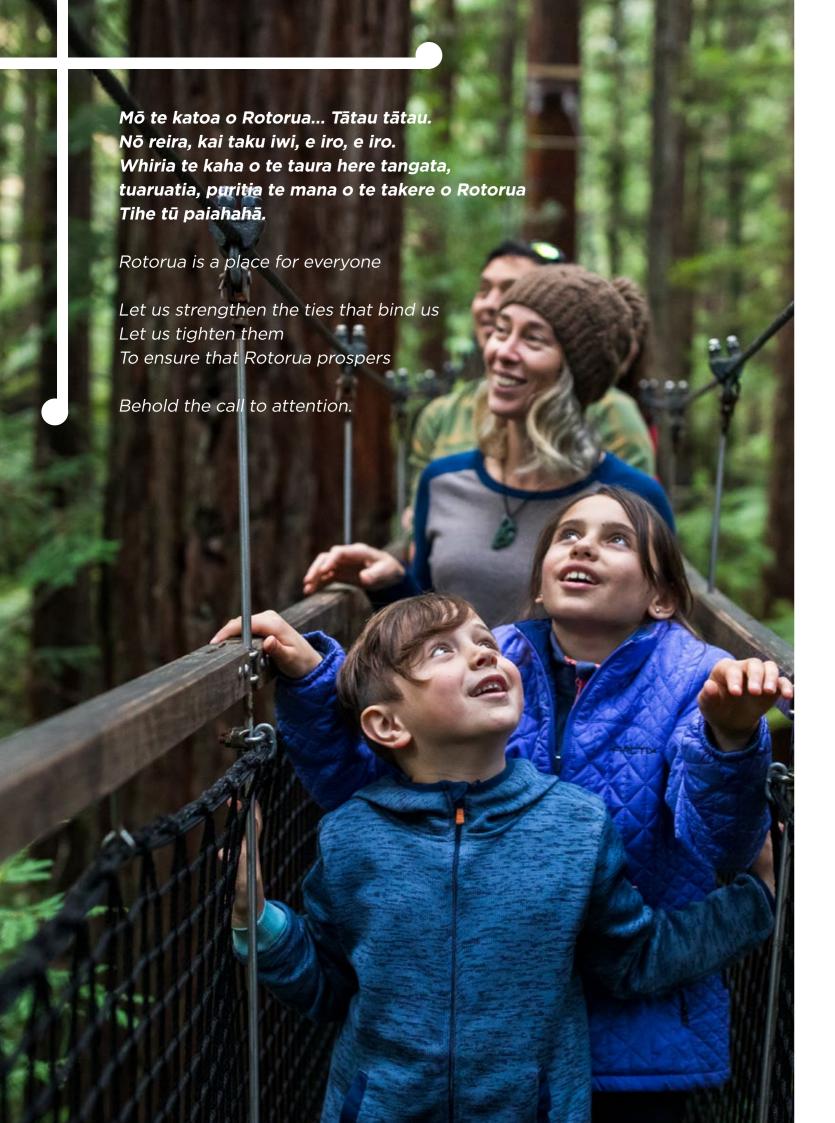


DRAFT Economic Development Strategy Framework

December 2020



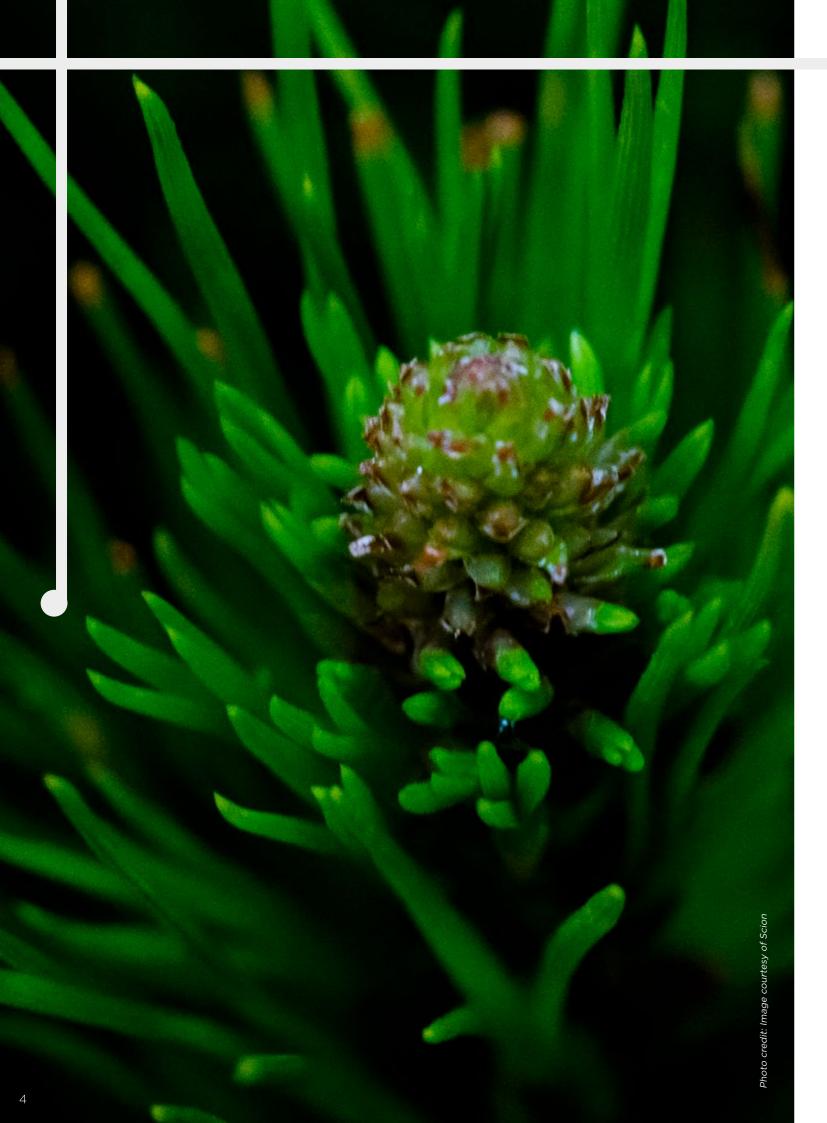


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Plan on a Page: Economic Development Strategy Framework





Tupu ki roto, Tupu ki waho, Tupu ki te whaiao, ki te ao mārama Tihe mauri ora

E huri taiāwhio ana te rere o ngā mihi o te wā ki a kōtou, tēnā kōtou katoa.

Ko te pātai ia, kua whakaaro rānei koe ki ngā rā kai mua i te aroaro, ki te ao kai tua i a koe?

Koinei tō tātau kāinga. Ko tātau ōna tāngata. Nā tātau tonu i ora ai te ahurea Māori me ōna

āhuatanga katoa. He iwi auaha tātau e tuku nei i tā tātau e ako nei.

E kōkiri nei tātau i te angitu, i te hihiri me ngā rerekētanga maha. E kaha tautoko nei tātau i te whakapūmautanga o te taiao. Mō te katoa o Rotorua... Tātau tātau.

Nō reira, kai taku iwi, e iro, e iro.

Whiria te kaha o te taura here tangata, tuaruatia, puritia te mana o te takere o Rotorua Tihe tū paiahahā.

When we **grow** within We **develop** without

We develop without

Together we gain understanding and reach our highest goals

We must ask the question, have we thought about what the immediate future now looks like

and what does the future look like beyond our existence?

This is our home; we are its people.

We're the heart of Te Arawa and a centre for Māori culture and expression.

We're innovative and we share what we learn.

We're driving opportunity, enterprise and diversity.

We're supporting a legacy of sustainability for our environment.

Rotorua is a place for everyone...

Let us strengthen the ties that bind us

Let us tighten them

To ensure that Rotorua prospers,

Behold the call to attention.

### INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to introduce our DRAFT Rotorua Economic Development Strategy Framework (EDS), created as a blueprint for economic recovery and longer-term growth in the District.

The Draft Strategy is intended to support the District's

- short-term imperatives of **economic recovery** in a world disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and
- our long-term **economic development** vision, critical to addressing many of the systemic challenges faced by our community.

This is an all-of-community response based on the principles of tatau tatau, a core value and enduring philosophy of partnership that characterises Rotorua.

This partnership model was immediately apparent during and post-lockdown, with Council, iwi, business and industry sector leaders coming together to determine priorities and make recommendations for recovery and growth. Council acknowledges this mahi and the continued commitment we have from these community leaders to deliver tangible outcomes from this process.

We know that Central Government's contribution is critical to our success, and we recognise the value of the recovery funding provided through the Crown Infrastructure Partnership (CIP) process. The investment of \$55m will be used to improve State Highway 30 and storm water infrastructure to speed up residential housing development in the eastern area of Rotorua.

Rotorua's economic recovery and development will rely on the continued collaborative response of all stakeholders ideally working together under one roof. By working together at a strategic level and focusing on key outcomes, we can drive economic growth and create jobs. These will ultimately contribute to improved living standards, and a better quality of life and wellbeing for our community on a sustainable basis.

This Draft Economic Development Strategy is a work in progress which will be finalised as more detailed action planning is completed. These plans are being led by Rotorua Lakes Council, business leaders and partners with anticipated delivery timeframes of 6-12 months from now. Implementation of actions is over a three year period.

## **SHARED VALUES**

**Tatau Tatau**We together

**Mā rau ringa e oti ai**Many hands make light work

## Whakahaumakotia, whakamanahia te mauri me te wairua

Enriched life force and spirit.

Respect for the whenua; positive, sustainable, long-lasting social and environmental outcomes

### Āheinga mahi

Create employment for the people of Rotorua, particularly our Māori youth

Toitū te whenua, whatungarongaro te tangata
As land remains, people perish

## Kia āhei ai te haumitanga me te whai rawa

Create commercial returns for the people of Rotorua and the wider region.

**Kia Rangatira ai te mahi**Quality collaboration



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- O1. Immediately after the April 2020 lockdown, Rotorua experienced the third largest economic contraction as a result of Covid 19, with an impact that is forecast to run deeper than the Global Financial Crisis of 2008.
- O2. The response from Rotorua's community and business sector leaders was collective, immediate and urgent. All recognised that positive economic drivers were going to be imperative to improved social outcomes in the longer term and a need to build greater resilience in our economy.
- The Draft Economic Development Strategy is the output from this work. It has two phases: **recovery** and **development**.
- The Draft Strategy recognises the economic foundations already in place, and so it binds together a number of core vision documents and post Covid reviews:
  - Rotorua Lakes Council Community Vision 2030
  - Te Arawa Vision 2050 Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora, Te Arawa E!
  - Whakahouhia te Whare Ohanga Build back better Sector and Steering Group
    - Work undertaken by business and industry sector leaders during and post lockdown to establish recommendations for recovery
  - Economic Recovery Taskforce Advisory Group
    - Established to co-ordinate a pipeline of recovery projects with representation from Te Arawa, business and Council.
- An overarching framework has been adopted to draw focus to the District's unique cultural, natural and strategic assets.
- Three key priorities have been identified with short term core actions and longer term Action Plans drafted for each:
  - a. Rotorua, a place of choice
  - b. Rotorua, the future of forestry
  - c. Rotorua, ready for business
- **O7.** The key measures of success will be based on shifting outcomes for our community, particularly for children and Māori. All success targets are aligned to this kaupapa.



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID ON ROTORUA

- The impact in Rotorua has been significant with the third biggest contraction in GDP in the country for the June 2020 quarter driven by the immediate loss of 40% of our visitor economy spend.
- It is forecast that the impact of Covid on Rotorua will be deeper than the Global Financial Crisis.
- The contracting local economy has led to rising unemployment. The number of Jobseeker Support recipients rose 26% to 4,688 in the September year, which is 37% above the 10 year average of 3,416.
- The district's unemployment rate has risen from a low of 5.5% in December 2019 to 6.4% in the September 2020 year.
- Economic activity showed an annual decline of 4.6% to September 2020.





# **ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS ALREADY IN PLACE**

The Framework recognises the economic foundations already in place and focuses on priority areas that leverage our strengths, are in need of transformation or where we can have the most impact.

#### Agreed Priorities - Why focus on these areas?

#### 01. Rotorua, a place of choice

The immediate loss of 40% of our visitor economy spend through the closure of international borders created an almost "seismic jolt" to many businesses in Rotorua. The visitor economy employs 33% of the workforce in Rotorua, over 8000 jobs, with 1 in 3 jobs linked to tourism. Rotorua has a significant portfolio of established tourism infrastructure and resources built around a long standing profile domestically and internationally as a visitor destination. Despite this profile Rotorua has not benefited from visitor spend growth on levels similar to the majority of regions in New Zealand. Increased value from visitors to support resilience and improved wages in the sector remains a key driver. The Destination Management Plan will set out opportunities for transformation.

#### 02. Rotorua, the future of forestry

Rotorua is at the heart of New Zealand's forestry, wood processing, research and forest carbon management. Over 15% of our employment is in forestry or forestry related sectors. Over 60% of timber produced in New Zealand is exported as unprocessed logs. There is a real opportunity to utilise these for value-added processing creating employment and business opportunities. Māori own some 48% of commercially planted forest land in New Zealand, and Māori ownership of land and forests will increase as Treaty of Waitangi settlements conclude. Central Government is focusing resources on timber industry transformation and zero carbon initiatives. These priorities strongly align with Rotorua strengths. The Forestry Futures Action Plan will set out the opportunities for growth and development within this sector.

#### 03. Rotorua, ready for business

Rotorua has a major housing shortage with research showing we have a deficit of 1500-1750 homes. Rotorua's population has grown by 13% over the last 7 years but housing stock has been growing at 3.3% in the same period. Despite this shortfall it has not catalysed sufficient new builds. 85% of Households in emergency housing in Rotorua identify as Māori and there are currently over 300 children housed in motels. We need to do something different to address this shortfall and we need to act with pace. Large scale developments are complex and in the current financial market difficult to progress. Rotorua also has limited commercial and industrial land availability which holds back business and employment growth. Actions identified in this strategy framework are focused on unlocking housing, accelerating land development and investment. In addition, a vibrant and functional CBD is critical as part of our destination offering. An Inner City Plan will set out opportunities for transformation to ensure the CBD is the heart of our city.

## **CORE VISION DOCUMENTS**

In December 2015 an agreement was signed with Te Tatau o Te Arawa and Rotorua Lakes Council which focused on partnership to achieve enhanced socio-economic and prosperity for Te Arawa, for Māori and for the wider community in the Rotorua district.

In 2020 the Te Arawa 2050 Vision, MAURI TŪ, MAURI ORA, TE ARAWA E! was launched. The Te Arawa 2050 Vision is an initiative driven by Te Arawa, who wanted a new and united, Te Arawa Vision. A collective made up of decision-makers representing 16 Te Arawa mandated organisations came together to form a working group, Te Arawa 2050 Rōpū Whakahaere, which formed in February 2019, to develop a future plan. Project managed by Te Tatau o Te Arawa, it oversaw the roll-out of a Te Arawa-wide engagement plan to help develop the Te Arawa 2050 Vision.

Some actions within the Te Arawa Vision have been included in the Draft Economic Development Strategy Framework. Further actions will be considered in consultation with Te Arawa and settlement entities as the Action Plans across the three priorities are developed.

Vision 2030 sets out seven long-term goals and this framework is aligned to the achievement of these.

- Papa whakatipu Outstanding places to play
- Waahi pūmanawa Vibrant city heart
- · Whakawhanake pākihi Business innovation and prosperity
- Kāinga noho, kāinga haumaru Homes that match needs
- He hāpori pūmanawa A resilient community
- He huarahi hōu Employment choices
- Tiakina to taiao enhanced environment

# **OVERARCHING FRAMEWORK**

Our Economic Development Strategy Framework (EDS) has been developed to provide a clear direction to unify and direct our collective effort.

It brings together an acknowledgment of our challenges, recognises the impact of Covid-19 and focuses on areas of transformation while leveraging our unique strengths.

SYNTHESIS / **COLLABORATIONS** 

> Working together for a

better Rotorua

**Unified Goals** & Values

Long Term

Planning

**STRATEGY** 

**IMPLEMENTATION** 

**FUTURE STATE** 

#### **BASELINE**

## KAUPAPA

# **VISION** 2030

Te Arawa C19 Response

Whakahouhia te Whare Ohanga (Build Back Better) Sector Groups

> Provincial Growth Fund / Crown Infrastructure Projects

**Economic Recovery Taskforce** 

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Place Based Assessment

**TE ARAWA** 2050

**Council Controlled Organisations** Board Analysis

**DIRECTION** 

Housing Strategy

DRAFT Economic

01. Rotorua, a Place of Choice

Overaching engagement with relevant stakeholders

02. Rotorua, the Future of Forestry

**03. Rotorua, Ready for Business** 

Infrastructure Planning / Long Term Plan

TWELVE WORKSTREAMS

FINAL

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Implementation

**Development of supporting infrastructure** 

# **AGREED KEY PRIORITIES:**

# 01. Rotorua, a place of choice

#### **Outcomes**

Success will be attracting and retaining, talent, students, visitors and investors who contribute to the vibrancy of our bilingual city, engage in regenerative tourism, and sustain year-round productive jobs.

#### **Our Ground Truths**

- Rotorua is synonymous with tourism and known nationally and internationally for its unique natural landscapes and cultural experiences
- We have a large portfolio of established tourism infrastructure in the attractions, activities, accommodation and hospitality sectors
- Border closures due to Covid-19 resulted in the loss of over \$354 million in international visitor spend locally
- Comparative domestic visitor spend is declining due to increased competition and has not offset the loss of international visitors
- Some of Rotorua's largest tourism attraction sites and accommodation providers are planning on remaining closed until the border fully reopens
- · The deficit in visitor spend has had a detrimental impact on the Rotorua economy
- Mountain biking has driven significant visitor growth to the destination and supports a growing business ecosystem
- Housing availability constrains talent attraction and retention
- Rotorua became New Zealand's first bilingual city and district in August 2017
- Rotorua is one of only six globally recognised Gold level mountain biking centres in the world with over 180km of trails
- Crankworx the world's preeminent mountain biking event is held in Rotorua, New Zealand one of three international locations including Whistler - Canada and Innsbruck - Austria
- Quality public infrastructure and private sector partnerships are transforming our destination

#### **The Opportunity**

- Rotorua is a leader in providing authentic experiences, a place that provides the space to connect with friends and family, and a natural environment to inspire and sustain wellbeing
- Those who visit feel a sense of connection with our people and our place
  - being welcomed not as a guest but as a friend
- International travellers consider Rotorua as a "must visit" when travel is possible
- Rotorua is a viable contender for an increase in domestic market share and spend, with 45% of the population living within three hours' driving distance
- Build on the significant strategic advantage we have as New Zealand's premier and internationally endorsed mountain biking capital
- Work with Te Arawa to enhance Toi Māori excellence
- Continued investment in "placemaking" will deliver an attractive place for people to live, enjoy and explore
- Destination management plans will ensure we welcome targeted visitors that support and enhance business and community vibrancy





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# How do we get there?

Focus Area	Initi	al Actions	<b>Delivery Partners</b>	Timeframe	Status
Brand and Identity	1.0	Work to develop an aligned Rotorua Place Brand	RED, RLC, Te Tatau o Te Arawa, RTIPP, Chamber	30.06.21	Underway
	1.1	Create guidance for business that builds respect for Te Arawa culture, heritage, history, art forms, assets and capabilities	RLC, RED, Te Tatau o Te Arawa RCOC	30.06.21	
	1.2	Reorua - City wide bilingual signage and wāhi reo Māori	RLC, Te Tatau o Te Arawa	30.06.22	
	1.3	Showcase our destination as a place of choice (marketing and promotion)	RED, RLC, RTIPP	Ongoing	
Destination Development	2.0	Develop a Destination Management Plan aligned to our local brand identity and the Tourism Futures Taskforce recommendations	RED, MBIE, RTIPP, RLC, Iwi	30.06.21	Underway
		Specific areas of focus within the plan will include:			
		<ul> <li>Accommodation offering</li> <li>Connectivity</li> <li>Product development &amp; experience</li> <li>Major Events</li> <li>Corporate travellers</li> </ul>			
	2.1	Strengthen alignment of training with industry and destination requirements	RLC, Industry and Training providers	30.06.22	
Major Place Developments	3.0	Aquatic Centre redevelopment and ongoing development of Kuirau Park (providing family- based activity for locals and domestic visitors)	RLC, CLM	Planning Stage	Underway
	3.1	Completing Lakefront development plan and commercial building development	RLC, RED, TALT, Iwi	RFP due 30.06.21	
	3.2	Complete Titokorangi (Long Mile) visitor centre and commercial development	RLC, RED, CNI	RFP complete by 30.06.21	
	3.3	Te Whare o Toanga (Museum), Government Gardens, Sir Howard Morrison centre completion	RLC, MCH, private sector, arts community, Iwi	2022	
	3.4	Continue development of trail network around Te Putake o Tawa & Whakarewarewa	NZ Cycle ways, CNI, RLC, Trails Trust	2021	Underway
	3.5	New National cycle way trail development and city connections	CNI, RLC, Trails Trust	2022	
	3.6	Trail network development in Whakarewarewa forest	CNI, RLC, Trails Trust	2021	

# **AGREED KEY PRIORITIES:**

# **02.** Rotorua, the future of forestry

#### **Outcomes**

Rotorua led initiatives underpin our position as the Centre of Excellence in forestry and wood processing. Rotorua's "Wood First" policy recognises the economic, environmental, cultural and social significance of wood and promotes increased use of wood in housing and commercial construction.

Our strength in timber science and carbon management support Rotorua and New Zealand's goals of sustainability and emission reduction.

#### **Our Ground Truths**

- Rotorua is at the heart of New Zealand's forestry, wood processing, research and forest carbon management
- Half of New Zealand's timber is harvested within a 100km radius of Rotorua
- We are 45 minutes from the Port of Tauranga, New Zealand's largest export gateway for forestry products
- Over 15% of Rotorua's employment is in forestry or forestry related activities
- Iwi are the largest forestry land owner in New Zealand, key investor in wood lots and critical in the processing and forest management sectors
- This industry contributed \$246 million in GDP to the Rotorua district in 2019
- Rotorua is home to New Zealand's largest sawmill, Red Stag Timber, major forest management companies, forestry industry services and specialty pine manufacturers
- Rotorua-based Scion (the New Zealand Forest Research Institute) leads national activity in research, science and technology development for the forestry, wood product, wood-derived materials, and other biomaterial sectors
- Rotorua is a key centre of forestry and timber training
- Te Uru Rākau (New Zealand's lead government agency for forestry) is located in Rotorua and is focused on sustainable forestry and manages the Emissions Trading Scheme
- Rotorua was the first city in New Zealand to adopt a "Wood First" policy

#### The Opportunity

- A growing wood harvest and log supply offers attractive volume-to-value investment opportunities to develop new world-class wood processing operations
- Ensure wood is the first material of choice for developments within Rotorua
- Taking the Wood First concept to a wider national and international audience
- Showcase value added timber solutions in local buildings
- Align training with industry requirements to grow high-wage jobs, particularly for rangatahi
- Leverage the science capacity at Scion to provide bio-circular solutions and new commercial opportunities
- Align with Central government initiatives to encourage industry transformation and support the country's transition to a zero-carbon economy
- We anticipate further opportunities from Government's Billion Trees framework





# How do we get there?

Focus Area	Initia	l Actions	<b>Delivery Partners</b>	Timeframe	Status
Forestry Futures Plan	4.0	Complete a Forestry Futures Plan Contribute to forestry industry transformation plans	RLC, Te Uru Rākau, Scion, RED, Iwi, Private sector	2021	Underway
	5.0	Work with Scion to progress the development of a facility to validate commercial scale biomaterials	RLC, Scion, MPI, Te Uru Rākau, RED, private sector, Iwi	2022	Underway
Place-making Initiatives	6.0	Review RLC Wood First Policy to look at how we incentivise the utilisation of wood products	RLC, Scion, Te Uru Rākau, Private Sector, Iwi	2021	
	6.1	Work at a national level to advocate for increased domestic timber use through reference sites and case studies	RLC, RED, Te Uru Rākau, MPI, MBIE, Private sector and Iwi	2023	
	6.2	Establish a showcase CLT Building	RLC, RED, Iwi, Private sector, developers, Crown	2023	
Insights	7.0	Deliver insights and connectivity to the timber industry on housing developments	RLC, RED, private sectors	2022	
	7.1	Align training with industry requirements to ensure a pipeline of skilled, work ready people to fill higher value jobs	RLC, RED, industry and training providers	2021	
Centre of Excellence	8.0	Champion establishment of a Centre of Excellence for forestry, timber innovation & carbon management	Scion, Te Uru Rākau, Industry partners, Private sector, Iwi, MBIE, MPI	2023	

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## **AGREED KEY PRIORITIES:**

# 03. Rotorua, ready for business

#### **Outcomes**

Rotorua is open and ready to support businesses to grow and thrive by providing desirable commercial, industrial and housing solutions.

People relocate to Rotorua to live an 'exceptional' life and create new jobs and vibrancy for our city.

#### **Our Ground Truths**

- · Greenfield commercial and industrial development has been limited for over 10 years
- Rotorua's population has grown by 13% over the last 7 years with housing stock increasing by 3.3% in the same period
- A recent place-based assessment showed that Rotorua is short an estimated 1500-1750 homes based on current population
- The shortfall in houses (demand) has not catalysed new builds (supply), primarily because of
  - land availability (the subsequent cost of land)
  - complex planning and consenting requirements
  - infrastructure and storm-water development costs
  - substitution (people living elsewhere and commuting to their job in Rotorua)
- Businesses looking to grow or relocate also consider availability of housing or rental accommodation for their employees Rotorua's lack of housing is impacting business relocations
- Covid-19 has contributed to business closures especially in the city centre
- Rotorua, like many cities, is facing changes in consumer behaviour and purchasing preferences leading to increased commercial and retail vacancies in the city centre

#### The Opportunity

- Our natural and cultural advantages that make Rotorua a place of choice are matched by availability of homes for everyone
- Accelerate the development of residential subdivisions and building of new homes
- Improve housing accessibility and availability across all typographies
- Capitalise on the growing trend to live outside of high-density cities in places where high amenity value is available
- Enhance the role of the central business district (CBD) as the "heart" of the city
- Drive the transformation of the CBD from predominantly retail to a place of connection, service delivery, inner city living / accommodation and entertainment
- Leverage key elements of our city centre, a natural "high street" and successful niche operators
- · Celebrate bilingual capabilities especially in business and a connection to Rotorua
- Develop a business ecosystem that creates an environment where it is easy and efficient to invest and do business
- Unlock greenfield commercial and industrial land development opportunities
- Nurture emerging sectors to rebuild and future-proof the economy



# How do we get there?

Focus Area	Initia	Actions	<b>Delivery Partners</b>	Timeframe	Status
Commercial and Industrial land development	9.0	Partner to unlock 25ha of greenfield industrial land to establish new industrial business parks to support business relocation and expansion	RLC, RED, Airport, Iwi, landowners	3 years	Underway
Residential land development	10.0	Improve availability of emergency, transitional and social housing in Rotorua  Partner with landowners, lwi and the Crown to increase the supply of sections for housing (new and infill) to deliver 2000 sections and build 1000 homes	RLC, KāingaOra, MHUD, landowners, Iwi, developers RLC, KāingaOra, MHUD, RED landowners, Iwi, developers	3 years 3 years	Underway
Advance a vibrant city centre	11.0	in the district  Build investment and development confidence in the	RED, Iwi, Business sector, Chamber,	3 years	Underway
city contro	44.4	CBD through an Inner City Plan and targeted incentives	Developers, Landowners	7.10040	
	11.1	Partner with major investors and developers to establish 2 place making CBD projects that support inner city residential living	RLC, RED, Iwi, Business sector, Building owners, Developers, Landowners	3 years	
	11.2	Partner with Central Government to ensure investment supports city vibrancy and resilience	RLC, Central govt. agencies and departments	3 years	
Infrastructure and planning	12.0	Complete master-planning of storm water and other key infrastructure for residential and industrial development	RLC, Regional Council, Iwi, Developers, Landowners	3 years	
	12.1	Complete plan changes for Eastside, Airport, and Pukehangi for residential and commercial land	RLC, Regional Council, Iwi, Developers, Landowners	3 years	Underway
Emerging Sectors	13.0	Support for emerging sectors including:  Film & Creative Micro -geothermal	RED, Iwi, Business sector, Chamber, Developers, Landowners	1 year	
	13.1	New technologies & materials  Align training with emerging industry sectors requirements to encourage young people into higher skilled roles	RLC, RED, Training providers, Schools	3 years	Underway



## **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

This strategy will be successful when our economic development priorities provide the mechanisms to address the high levels of unemployment and inequality being experienced in Rotorua, particularly for children, Māori and vulnerable groups within our community.

The overall monitoring plan for this strategy will be developed once the initial actions and priority area Action Plans are completed. These will be in line with the New Zealand Treasury Wellbeing measures based on the Living Standards Framework. The Framework provides a shared understanding of what helps achieve higher living standards to support intergenerational wellbeing.

# **NEXT STEPS**

- O1. This strategic document will be finalised once the detailed Action Plans and stakeholder engagement has been completed.
- Many of the priority actions identified only can be undertaken in collaboration with key partners. In this context, it will be important to work closely alongside Central Government agencies, local iwi, business leaders, industry organisations, tertiary and research institutes and private funders to ensure that strategies, plans and timelines are aligned.

