Developed in partnership with iwi, businesses and industry sector leaders, the draft Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is a blueprint for economic recovery and longer-term growth in the District. The strategy is intended to support the District's:

- Short-term needs for **economic recovery** in a world disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Long-term **economic development** vision, which is critical to addressing the systemic challenges faced by our community

The EDS is a work in progress, which will be finalised when detailed action plans are created for each of the three priority areas. Rotorua Lakes Council, business leaders and partners, are leading the development of these plans. The action plans are expected to be finalised by December 2021 and implementation will be initiated during the first three years of the Long-term Plan.

Agreed key priorities:

#1 Rotorua, a place of choice

Rotorua is a leader in providing authentic experiences; a place that provides the space to connect with friends and family; and has a natural environment to inspire and sustain wellbeing.

Success will mean 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.

#2 Rotorua, the future of forestry

Rotorua led initiatives to underpin our status 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 has resulted in the increased use of timber solutions and a "Wood First" concept embraced at a national level.

#3 Rotorua, ready for business

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

To complement our existing industries, we nurture and attract technology-based and creative industries offering local people the chance to move into higher skilled and higher wages activity. Talent, entrepreneurs and business innovators relocated to Rotorua to live an 'exceptional' lifestyle and create new jobs and vibrancy for our city.

Alongside the finalisation of the EDS other economic development initiatives will include:

- $26 million - $22.3 million in 2021/22 (commitment in 2020/21 was $3.7 million). to support economic recovery and economic development projects
- Partnering with developers and landowners to unlock residential land
- Completion of master planning for stormwater and key infrastructure for new residential and industrial development
- Partnering with iwi and landowners to unlock 25ha of greenfield industrial and business parkland to support business relocation and expansion
- Creation of an Inner-City Plan to build investor and development confidence in our CBD
- Developing an incentives policy to support inner-city residential development
- Completion of infrastructure projects that support local business – Lakefront, Titokorangi (Long Mile) Road, Te Whare o Taonga (Museum), Mountain bike trail development, Te Ngae Road and Amohia Street upgrades
- Re-stating and strengthening of our tourism offerings and positioning Rotorua as the destination of choice, ready to receive international visitors once international borders open again
- Implementation of ReoRua – city-wide bilingual signage to complement "destination of choice' and our 'first bilingual city' status
- Creation of a Forestry Future plan as identified in the Economic Development Strategy to outline opportunities for growth and development in this sector
- Reviewing the Wood First policy to encourage and or incentivise the utilisation of wood products