



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

BrightEconomy Forum draws big response

The Rotorua BrightEconomy Advisory Board's successful Economic Growth Forum on Thursday is to be followed up with a series of workshops on growth opportunities for interested businesspeople.

The Forum drew 230 representatives from 170 businesses and a wide range of central, regional and local government agencies to hear the Board's plans to encourage sustainable economic growth in Rotorua.

Feedback forms from the guests rated the Forum as a success. Comments focused particularly on the need for more workshop groups to allow business people to discuss in more detail the six fields of opportunity identified by the Board.

Opening the Forum, Rotorua Mayor Kevin Winters called for a community-wide approach to economic growth, comparing it to the saying that it takes a village to bring up a child.

At a meeting on Friday morning the Board began planning to hold further workshop groups to allow more participation and to engage in driving things forward. The workshops will be held at different times to allow people to attend more than one area of interest.

The workshops will cover all six fields of opportunity separately. The fields are:

- Bio-materials
- Local energy generation
- Water
- Land use optimisation
- Research and development
- Immigration and lifestyle

All the Forum workshops called for a focus on commercialising well-research, well-founded entrepreneurial opportunities.

Several also advocated going beyond traditional business approaches to look for more ideas-based opportunities.

The Immigration and Lifestyle workshop identified Rotorua's central location between a number of centres as a positive asset, while the Local Energy Generation workshop agreed

on the need to get generation resource owners together to look at the scale of opportunities.

The BrightEconomy Advisory Board chairman, Bryce Heard, said the Board was delighted by the Forum's strong commitment to participating in more forums to help to develop real, sustainable growth opportunities.

"Those who attended know that sustainable development won't happen overnight. There is a lot of work to do to develop specific opportunities for growth and good quality employment, but the vast majority of those who gave feedback expressed their commitment to stay involved.

"The response to the Forum is a tribute to those who attended and made a commitment to a bright future for the district."

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