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**Deaths**

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# Tauranga weighs costs



**Samantha Motion**



**T**HE Government wants to give Tauranga a \$230 million interest-free loan for new infrastructure to fast-track the building of 35,000 houses over the next decade.

However, the big question hanging over yesterday's announcement about divvying up the Government's billion-dollar Housing Infrastructure Fund was whether the city council could afford the debt.

Three Tauranga projects

**GO-AHEAD:** Simon Bridges, Nick Smith and Greg Brownless at the waterfront for the Housing Infrastructure Fund announcement. PHOTO/ALAN GIBSON

were approved, putting the city in line for almost a quarter of a billion dollars by 2021 for new roads and upgrades to wastewater and water systems.

It would be enough new infrastructure to fast-track the building of another 35,000 houses over 10 years, adding about 100,000 people to the city, Building and Construction Minister Dr Nick Smith told guests at Tauranga's waterfront.

"The Government's perspective is the single most important thing is to bring more sections and land into the supply.

"But your council and others have raised the huge challenge around how you fund the infrastructure to be able to bring those new sections."

The fund was announced a year ago to meet that need, Dr Smith said.

A criticism of the fund has been that debt-laden councils would exceed borrowing limits if

# WWII torpedo bomber arrives



**John Cousins**

A former World War II torpedo bomber that children used to clamber over in a Hawke's Bay playground is ready to be transformed at Tauranga's Classic Flyers Museum.

The fuselage of the Grumman Avenger was unloaded last week, with a further trip needed to pick up the rest of the components from a shed in West Auckland.

"It is a real basket case of parts," Classic Flyers chief executive Andrew Gormlie said.

The two- or three-year restoration by the museum's expert team of restorers was a joint venture with its Auckland owners, with the aircraft to go on permanent display once the job was finished.

The fuselage had hung under a belt of trees for many years. When the owners read about Classic Flyers' restoration of another former RNZAF Grumman Avenger, they contacted the museum.

Mr Gormlie said it meant that

**Grumman TBF Avenger**

- Heaviest single-engined aircraft of World War II.
- Displayed for the first time on the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, December 7, 1941.
- Used in pioneering trials for aerial top dressing in New Zealand, 1945.

the public would have the opportunity at the next airshow to see a flying Grumman Avenger, the existing restored non-flying Avenger at Classic Flyers and the third Avenger under restoration.

It was a timely venture with the Auckland owners because once their Grumman Avenger was ready for display, the museum's current restored Avenger would be ready to go to the Gisborne Aviation Preservation Society.

This aircraft was restored in another joint venture with Classic Flyers.

Mr Gormlie said the two Avengers were the last of the ex-RNZAF aircraft to be parked in children's playgrounds. The restored aircraft previously stood in the Taranaki town of



**NEW LIFE:** The fuselage of one of the most formidable torpedo bombers of World War II arrives into the caring hands of Tauranga's Classic Flyers Museum chief executive Andrew Gormlie (pictured).

Opunake for 10 years while the current restoration project was in Havelock North.

He estimated that they had 80 per cent of a complete aircraft and would be scouring New Zealand and the rest of the world looking for the rest of the parts.

Mr Gormlie said the previous restoration took two years and Classic Flyers' restorers had the big advantage this time round of using the previous project as a template.

The heavy restoration work

project would be carried out by a dedicated band of 15 to 20 volunteers. And like the previous Avenger restoration, the aircraft would be able to taxi down the runway but not take off. Making them airworthy cost a couple of million dollars extra.

Once the restoration was complete and the engine running, the hydraulics that operated the Avenger's folding wings would allow the aircraft's special feature (for stowing on aircraft carriers) to be shown off.

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