

# **A Planning Model to Incorporate Socially-Based Tenure Principles into Mainstream Planning,**

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## **SUMMARY**

The best-planned housing developments, with optimally designed and built houses, may nonetheless fail as viable communities. A possible contributing factor is the manner in which individualised tenure systems tend to divorce land rights from social responsibilities. Recognising this, some Māori planning initiatives in New Zealand have sought to re-introduce key communal or socially-based tenure principles to the planning equation. For example, that of emphasizing broad aspects of wellbeing, and of establishing meaningful relationships with stakeholders throughout the development process. This paper begins by contrasting the inherent strengths and weaknesses of socially-based tenure and individualised tenure, then considers the implications on land tenure when the strand of land rights is separated from the strand of interpersonal rights or social responsibilities. The paper goes on to describe early progress on a research project planned to run for approximately two more years, which sets out to describe the aspirations and complex factors involved in such Māori planning initiatives and the degree to which they are succeeding. The research also considers extra-ordinary agreements that provide “work around” solutions to cater for Māori land-right preferences that are not currently provided for by off-the-shelf cadastral options. Two case studies are discussed, a village project located in Hamilton, and a community development located in Kaitia. These cases were selected for initial analysis based on their documented use and adoption of one or more core social tenure principles, as well as for having demonstrated positive social outcomes over a sustained period of time. The paper establishes a theoretical context and rationale for building socially-based tenure principles into contemporary planning, with a suitable legislative framework, and concludes that transferable lessons and approaches could result.

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