



Media release

## **CIVIC DEVELOPMENT SNEAK PEEK: TAURANGA ART GALLERY UNVEILS FIRST LOOK AT DESIGN PLANS**

27 March 2024 - Tauranga Art Gallery has today unveiled the plans for the next stage in its redevelopment and redesign currently being undertaken as part of Tauranga's transformative civic redevelopment. The Gallery sits at the heart of the city's future civic precinct, Te Manawataki o Te Papa, and the redevelopment plans include expanded exhibition spaces, a Creativity Centre, retail and hospitality offerings, and upgraded facilities.

The redevelopment, which sees a reorientation of the Gallery to face Masonic Park along with a new entrance and interior fit-out, is underway. While closed, the Gallery will also upgrade the lighting and air-conditioning systems, bringing it up to international museum standards – a requirement to be able to loan artworks from institutions such as Te Papa.

Tauranga Art Gallery Patron and former Deputy Mayor Mary Dillon says, "The redeveloped Art Gallery is going to position Tauranga alongside other cities around the country, and the world, which take art, and the arts more broadly, seriously in regard to their impact on people, communities, human development and wellbeing, and the local economy."

This is the first time work on the Gallery has been undertaken since 2007 when architects David Mitchell and Julie Stout converted the 1960s Bank of New Zealand building into an NZIA award-winning design.

The plans released today include the first design concepts by architects Warren and Mahoney Architects. Principal Vajini Pannila says, "This extension to the main building represents a moment in the Gallery's evolution, honoring its genealogy whilst also being fresh and contemporary."

During the concept design, Tauranga Art Gallery suggested Warren and Mahoney Architects review the work of artists who had recently exhibited at the gallery. Their resulting architectural response, specifically the plans for the new café and lobby which will sit harmoniously alongside the existing building, reference the practice of artist Marea Timutimu (Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi) whose work has provided inspiration using themes of layering, connection, and composition.

The new entrance brings a refreshed sophistication to the building whilst anchoring it in the natural environment through the use of organic materials such as Hineura stone. Brass joinery and accents are a nod to the mid-century design of the building. Timutimu is advising the gallery



and architectural teams on the interior, which through design, colour and materials will be a sensory experience, and one which is intrinsically Tauranga Moana.

While the redevelopment has progressed, it has been recognised that to support the sustainability of the building, some additional seismic strengthening work will be required. To realise the full cost of this, Tauranga Art Gallery Trust has negotiated an arrangement to sell the land to Tauranga City Council who will in turn lease it back to the Trust for \$1 annually. In addition, the Tauranga Art Gallery Foundation, TECT and Pub Charity have contributed towards the capital development and upgraded facilities.

Tauranga Art Gallery Trust Board Chair Rosemary Protheroe says, “The Trust is committed to the full scope of this project and future-proofing this important community asset, while also minimising the time the Gallery is closed to the public. Thus, in the interests of time, cost, and sustainability, we have decided to complete the necessary seismic strengthening at the same time as the reorientation and redevelopment. To meet these costs, which took us outside of the initial \$3.38m redevelopment funding, we had to consider all possible sources of income.”

Tauranga City Council Commission Chair Anne Tolley says, “The Council recognises the great value cultural institutions like the Art Gallery provide a city and region. We chose to support the Gallery in this way to ensure it can continue to guide and contribute to the cultural fabric of the city for generations to come.”

Former Tauranga Art Gallery Chair Graeme Horsley says, “The Art Gallery was set up as an artistic and architectural landmark designed to deliver cultural, social and economic benefits to the region, and provide Tauranga residents and visitors to the city with a world-class regional gallery at the heart of the city. The team have achieved so much since then and this redesign and redevelopment heralds the start of the next chapter, embedding the gallery in the heart of Tauranga’s civic redevelopment.”

Of the projected reopening date, Protheroe says, “We’re aiming to re-open early 2025 but will have a more definitive idea of exact dates when the construction has progressed further, around the middle of this year.”

In the coming months, the Gallery will host public open days at its pop-up venue at 42-44 Devonport Road. People can stroll into the temporary space at their leisure to see the plans and designs and talk to Gallery staff about the future of this precious regional taonga.

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For further information, images and interviews, please contact Siobhan Waterhouse, Publicist, on +64 22 126 4149 or [siobhan@siobhanwaterhouse.nz](mailto:siobhan@siobhanwaterhouse.nz)

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