

MEDIA RELEASE

UTF Marks 5-Year Anniversary Championing Tauranga's Growth and Future

TAURANGA, Wednesday 4 February 2026: UTF is marking five years as a collective voice for those invested in the future of Tauranga and the wider Western Bay — people who care deeply about how the city grows, works, and serves its community.

UTF Chair Scott Adams says the five-year milestone is a chance to reflect on what has been achieved — and why it matters.

“UTF exists because our members care about this city,” says Adams. “They want Tauranga to succeed — economically, socially, and as a place people are proud to live and invest in. What makes UTF impactful is the willingness of people to step up, share their experiences, and advocate for what’s in the best interests of the wider community,” he says.

Over the past five years, UTF has helped bridge the gap between industry, councils, and government.

“We’ve challenged decisions when needed, supported good leadership, and worked hard to be part of the solution — not just another voice from the sidelines,” says Adams.

UTF brings together people and businesses who are actively invested in Tauranga — from developers, owners, managers, planners and consultants, iwi, professionals, and industry leaders — aligning their collective knowledge and relationships to better understand what the city needs to thrive.

Members describe UTF as a place where industry peers come together not just to talk about problems, but to work through solutions that balance growth, liveability, and community outcomes.

They are the multisector voice for Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty on issues affecting land use and development,” says another member.

Adams says the UTF Board brings a combined 230 years of property industry knowledge and expertise to the organisation.

Formed in 2021 during a period of rapid change and uncertainty, UTF was created by members of the property and development sector who believed Tauranga needed something more than fragmented voices and reactive decision-making. The aim was simple but ambitious: to be a champion for a great city, grounded in real-world experience, collaboration, and a commitment to the long-term public good.

Timeline of Success:

Over its first two years, UTF focused on establishing credibility, building relationships, and showing up consistently. Members attended educational events, contributed their expertise, and engaged constructively with councils, elected representatives, and decision-makers. From the outset, UTF positioned itself as a practical, solutions-focused advocacy group — willing to challenge when necessary, but always with the wider interests of the region in mind.

As UTF grew, so did its advocacy impact. During the 2022–2023 year, UTF completed nine submissions to local council and central government, represented members at hearings, commissioned a legal opinion on Plan Change 27, and lodged an appeal with the Environment Court, with mediation ongoing. This work reflected what members consistently say they value most — a collective body that does the heavy lifting on complex planning and policy issues that no single business can tackle alone.

UTF also strengthened its role as a trusted stakeholder, holding regular meetings with Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga Commissioners, and local Members of Parliament. UTF secured a seat on the Western Bay of Plenty Infrastructure Forum and completed a review of the Infrastructure Development Code, helping to shape more informed and workable outcomes for the region.

Alongside advocacy, UTF invested heavily in connection and education. Despite disruption, UTF delivered nine events during this period, including the 2022 Focus Series on the Tauranga Housing Market, attracting more than 750 attendees. These events became an important space for members to share insight, hear directly from decision-makers, and stay

informed on issues affecting land use and development across Tauranga and Mount Maunganui.

Momentum continued through 2023–2024, with eight council and central government submissions and hearings, expanded representation across planning and infrastructure forums, and a growing events programme with more than 820 attendances across 12 events. Membership increased again, reinforcing UTF’s position as a credible, multisector voice on development and business issues affecting Tauranga.

The 2024–2025 year featured a significant advocacy programme, with involvement across 14 submissions, hearings, workstreams, and community consultations. The education programme also excelled, setting a new attendance record of 174 participants at a single event.

Membership grew steadily, reflecting the value of a strong, united voice — representing several thousand property professionals across the region.

As UTF concludes the 2025–2026 year, it will have actively represented its membership through ten significant submissions. Alongside this advocacy work, a record-breaking events programme delivered 13 informative, networking, and educational opportunities for members.

Looking ahead, UTF remains focused on advocating for better planning outcomes, unlocking sustainable growth, and continuing to build an ecosystem of like-minded businesses committed to Tauranga and Western Bay of Plenty’s future.

“UTF is about shaping a region that works — now and for generations to come,” says Adams. “The next chapter is about continuing to collaborate, speak up, and contribute positively as our region evolves.”

As UTF marks its fifth anniversary, it extends its thanks to members, partners, and supporters for their ongoing commitment and looks ahead to the work still to come.

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