



Tauranga’s Collective Property & Business Voice Grows Stronger As New Milestone Reached

TAURANGA, Thursday 8 February 2024: Tauranga’s Urban Task Force (UTF) is celebrating its third anniversary, having more than doubled its membership during a transformational time for our city.

The organisation represents Tauranga’s property owners, developers and business communities and advocates for positive progress and smart decisions that will support our city’s growth and encourage collaboration.

UTF Chair Scott Adams and his fellow board members are committed business professionals who have over 230 years of combined property industry knowledge and expertise.

“In late 2020 the idea of a Tauranga-focussed property industry group was initially floated, to unite some of the growing factions and work together for a prosperous city built on the backbone of a strong and successful property and development sector,” Adams recalls.

“At the time, Tauranga was in a state of crisis, with non-performing elected councillors replaced by commissioners, a deserted CBD, record property prices despite decades of under investment in local assets and civic amenities, and a severe shortage of zoned and serviced land for new housing.”

Since its official launch on 4 February 2021, UTF has worked hard to provide leadership and successful advocacy to help move development in the city forward.

In the past 12 months alone UTF has weighed in on local government planning changes, housing development proposals, natural hazard mapping, SmartGrowth strategies, infrastructure decisions, and Tauranga City Council’s Long-term Plan.

They've also held public meetings to hear from local political candidates and hosted guest speakers such as former Finance Minister Grant Robertson and ASB Chief Economist Nick Tuffley.

“We've proven that a collective voice and unified action is the most effective way to drive change,” Adams says. “Our members are passionate about Tauranga and seeing the wider region succeed. We've seen some strong steps in the right direction to invest in much-needed infrastructure and community amenities. But there's still a lot to do.”

Tauranga continues to have a chronic housing and land shortage. Based on current growth projections, the city will be short 80,000 houses and 400ha of industrial space by 2050.

Tauranga's upcoming local body elections in July will be a pivotal event, and UTF members will be closely scrutinising candidates to ensure those with the right knowledge, skills and mindset get nominated for election.

“As an organisation, we are looking forward to working with the newly elected council and mayor later this year to continue the progress being made, and to help tackle the big issues like transport and land supply that continue to hold Tauranga back.”

Adams says access to housing, community facilities and infrastructure such as roading remain a priority. UTF will continue to focus on specific goals of increasing land supply, attracting central Government funding, investment in transport, infrastructure, education and civic amenities for the benefit of the whole community.

“The Urban Task Force has a busy calendar of activities throughout the year which are linked to our strategic priorities. These work programmes drive our mission to encourage positive planning, strategic decision-making and investment approaches which will create meaningful changes to Tauranga and our wider community.

“Since our first year, we have more than doubled our membership and all our members are accountable to their counterparts, their colleagues and community. The future of Tauranga will be our members' legacy.”

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For more information about the Urban Task Force see: <https://urbantaskforce.co.nz>