**Saturday 1 August 2020**

**Media Statement**

**Art Deco Trust welcomes Covid-19 funding injection**

***$500,000 Government grant to retain Art Deco Festivals and heritage walks and tours***

The Art Deco Trust has welcomed today’s announcement by the Minister of Tourism, Hon Kelvin Davis of $500,000 support spread over two years from the Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Plan, ensuring the Trust’s flagship festival events and heritage walks and tours can continue.

In the wake of Covid-19 and a dramatic drop in revenue from international visitors and community funding sources, the Trust has recently made changes to ensure it can maintain its focus on preserving and protecting Napier’s art deco buildings and continue promoting the city’s unique heritage.

Today’s announcement recognises the Trust as a strategic regional tourism asset and provides a much-needed cash injection to ensure the summer and winter Art Deco Festivals can be staged and heritage walking and vintage car tours can be retained over the next two years.

Trust Chairman Michael Fowler says the announcement reinforces the tremendous asset the Trust represents to Napier and the wider region and comes as a welcome relief.

“Covid-19 has turned off the tap of international visitors for the foreseeable future and that has left a massive hole in our income. With other sources of local funding no longer so readily available either, like so many organisations, we have had to adapt to survive.”

“Alongside the changes we have already made, this funding boost will make a big difference to our immediate circumstances and means we can confidently move ahead with planning for this summer’s Art Deco Festival. We will also be able maintain our Heritage Walks and Tours for domestic visitors and locals.” he says.

More than 40,000 visitors attend the five-day summer Art Deco Festival, generating a net benefit of $2.11 million for Hawke’s Bay.

“We are delighted that with the help of today’s funding announcement, the region can now look forward with to that much-needed economic boost in February.” says Michael Fowler.

Napier MP Stuart Nash, a former CE of the Art Deco Trust, said the Festival and the heritage tours have significant economic value to the region.

“It’s been an absolute pleasure to advocate for this with Kelvin Davis who has now ensured the Trust can continue to put on a world class show for all citizens of Napier”

“Now more than ever we need a thriving arts and cultural sector. We saw in the aftermath of the Canterbury earthquakes the potential of creativity and culture to create jobs, drive economic recovery and enhance social wellbeing, and they can help us do it again.”

**ENDS**

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**About the Art Deco Trust**

Napier’s unique heritage is passionately protected under the careful governance of the Art Deco Trust. The Trust drives Napier’s art deco preservation movement, providing leadership, networking, co-ordination, advocacy and promotion.

The Trust is responsible for Napier’s iconic summer and winter Art Deco Festivals attracting thousands of visitors to the city each year and runs guided walks and tours of Napier’s art deco CBD, vintage car tours and the art deco retail shop on the corner of Tennyson and Herschell Streets.

The Trust also has an important role in preserving and protecting Napier’s art deco buildings.

The Trust is funded through public membership, corporate sponsorship, community grants and local government funding support; as well as revenue earned from its walks and tours business and the art deco festivals.