

## Media Release

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### **Curtain rises on Cultural Precinct Stage One**

The City of Gold Coast will take its first steps towards delivering a \$365 million landmark Cultural Precinct at Evandale with Council committing \$5.6 million for design and construction planning in 2014-15.

To be developed over four years – and in time for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018 - the \$37 million Gold Coast Cultural Precinct Stage One will include:

- a versatile outdoor amphitheatre for civic, artistic and cultural celebration, with seating for up to 2500 people and a total capacity for special events of between 8000 and 10,000.
- a Riverside Gallery to store and display more of the city's visual art collection, and
- early outdoor Artscape works including enhancements to Evandale Lake and landscaping and paving connecting the amphitheatre and new Riverside Gallery.

Demolition of Council's ageing Surfers Paradise Administration Building will commence in 2016 to make way for the precinct's evolution.

Mayor Tom Tate said Stage One would be the 'curtain raiser' to a defining project for the city over the coming decade, underpinning efforts to support and strengthen the arts, culture, creative enterprise and cultural tourism for our city.

"Masterplanning of the site has been underway this year, in partnership with our design competition winners ARM Architecture + Topotek1," said Mayor Tom Tate.

"We have investigated a range of funding options to ensure we build a must-visit destination that is affordable for our city. Now it's time to start to deliver."

Mayor Tate said a project of this size and complexity required tremendous planning.

"Among other considerations, we need to move Council staff offsite, stage construction to facilitate ongoing operations of The Arts Centre and Council's own civic and customer service facilities, and ensure we have all the necessary approvals in place," he said.

"Funding during 2014-15 will enable Council to commence the necessary studies, approvals and detailed design required to commence Stage One construction. We will also see some early preparatory works on site."

Cr Tate said one of the great strengths of ARM Architecture's design was its ability to be delivered incrementally, as funding allowed.

"We have been working with the winning team on a staging plan that is affordable, practical and will allow facilities to evolve to meet the most pressing needs," he said.

"That is why in Stage One, the existing Riverside Building will be transformed into the Riverside Gallery. It will be a generous, exhibition rated, well-designed space to allow more of the city's celebrated art collection to be displayed and properly stored until we can construct the precinct's signature Art Tower on site.

"Stage One is an important first step. In 2018, we hope visitors to our city will come to the precinct, enjoy a wide program of activities and events around the Commonwealth Games, and share our vision for the precinct's next stages."

ARM Architecture's precinct concept also includes a 14-storey multi-coloured Art Tower, expanded and enhanced performing arts facilities, green bridge to Chevron Island and site-wide landscaped outdoor Artscape.