

8 May 2023



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E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Hamilton City Council
Subject: Hamilton City Council 2023-24 Draft Annual Plan (Year Three 2023-24 Plan)
From: Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Hamilton City Council's 2023-24 Draft Annual Plan, and acknowledges your continued focus on Year Three of your 2021-31 Long-Term Plan (LTP).
2. Arts, culture and creativity are an important part of developing strong and prosperous cities, and cohesive and healthy communities. We encourage Council to recognise the essential role arts and culture play in the wellbeing of your residents as you make decisions for the future of your city.
3. Our submission speaks to both Council's proposals for the Year Three 2023-24 Plan, and the LTP 2021-31, as they relate to arts, culture and creativity in Hamilton, while looking ahead to the current development of your next LTP for 2024-34.
4. While we do not wish to address Council in person in support of our submission, we would be happy to discuss any aspect of it with you further, should you wish. Contact details for the team are at the end of this submission.

Key points

5. We acknowledge Council is in a challenging position with balancing its budget while managing many competing priorities. We are encouraged though to see your ongoing commitment to cultural wellbeing. Investment in the creative sector is investment in inclusive and resilient communities, social cohesion, physical and mental wellbeing, and increased economic activity.

6. We welcome the Year Three 2023-24 Plan's focus on **shared community infrastructure**, including walkways, cycle paths, playgrounds and neighbourhood parks, alongside your Nature in the City programme. This mahi **presents an excellent opportunity for Council infrastructure teams to work closely with the creative community in Hamilton** to deliver wellbeing outcomes through these infrastructure projects.
8. **We encourage Council to work with artists and creatives to achieve greater community outcomes in other prioritised work across the central city**, including the street furniture replacement, Borman Horsham urban upgrade, and transport improvements. As connectors and innovators, arts communities are uniquely positioned to help Council communicate and deliver on these projects and can play a vital role in achieving Hamilton's vision of a great river city.
9. In advance of the Waikato Regional Theatre opening in the near future, **we are thrilled to see Creative Waikato's work in developing the [new performing arts strategy](#)**. This work recognises the importance of meaningfully connecting with local communities and enabling creative input from across Hamilton's performing arts and culture ecosystem into decision-making, while supporting the ongoing construction of the Waikato Regional Theatre as a new part of this ecosystem.
10. **We encourage Council to continue working with Creative Waikato, the arts community, business owners and tourism authorities to further develop strategies to attract residents and visitors to the theatre and downtown area**, and to view the theatre's opening as an opportunity to make Hamilton an even more vibrant place to live and visit. We're pleased to see the draft Year Three 2023-24 Plan retain a commitment to working on theatre access and the pedestrian environment. This work is a further opportunity to engage with creatives as our place-makers and storytellers.
11. Creative Waikato's new shared framework and community-led strategy, *The Waikato Arts Navigator*, can assist Council with making effective decisions about arts development in communities in your Year Three 2023-24 Plan. Drawing on the *Navigator* to develop and implement the Annual Plan also presents **a timely opportunity for Council to further develop its relationship with Creative Waikato**. The Creative Waikato team deliver vital wellbeing outcomes to Waikato communities through enhancing the role of arts, culture and creativity in the Hamilton region.

Long-Term Plan 2021–31

Vision

12. We note that your LTP outlines five priorities: a city that's easy to live in; a city where your people thrive; a central city where people love to be; a fun city with lots to do; and a green city. We encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution investment in arts, culture and creativity makes to all these outcomes by creating:
 - a city where people thrive — participating in arts and cultural activities contributes to our health and wellbeing, to education and skills development, to our understanding of cultural identity and increases social cohesion

- a central city where people love to be — artistic and cultural activity can play a major role in placemaking and rejuvenating cities to create great places to live, move to and return to
- a fun city with lots to do — artistic and cultural activity provides entertainment, enhances personal wellbeing, and is a way to meet new people and learn new skills.

A city that's easy to live in

13. As noted above, we welcome the Year Three 2023-24 Plan's focus on investment in shared infrastructure including walkways, cycle paths, playgrounds and neighbourhood parks, alongside your Nature in the City programme and significant water infrastructure upgrades. This mahi presents a valuable opportunity for Council's infrastructure teams to work more closely with the creative community in Hamilton.
14. **Arts and culture make a significant contribution to achieving placemaking and wellbeing outcomes through infrastructure projects**, including the development of murals, sculptures, performance and event platforms. To ensure adequate planning and resource allocation for these outcomes, we strongly recommend the development and adoption of a 'percent for art' funding mechanism by Council, where typically 0.5–1 percent of the total budgets for infrastructure projects are spent on artistic or creative components. Dunedin City Council's [Arts, Creativity and Infrastructure Policy](#) and Rotorua Lakes Council's [Percent for the Arts Policy](#) offer great examples of this policy in action.
15. We also support Council continuing to work in partnership with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency to improve public transport through bus routes, which will transform access for communities to arts, cultural and creative opportunities.

A city where people thrive

16. We are encouraged to see Council's recent establishment of the Welcoming Communities Fund, which will continue to enable your diverse communities to share their voices and contribute to shaping your city.
17. Our [New Zealanders and the arts—Ko Aotearoa me ōna toi 2020](#) research found that:
 - 66 percent of New Zealanders say they learn about different cultures through the arts
 - 71 percent of Māori agree that ngā toi Māori is an important way of connecting with their culture/identity, and 77 percent of Pacific peoples say that Pacific arts are an important way of connecting with their culture/identity
 - 72 percent of New Zealanders agree the arts should reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural diversity.
18. We look forward to seeing how the Welcoming Communities Fund will support projects in the arts that can enhance people's connection to culture and their communities.
19. Creative Waikato's recent research, [Wellbeing and Arts, Culture and Creativity in the Waikato](#), found that the more often we attend, create or participate in artistic and cultural events, the more likely we are to be connected to community and place, and the higher our wellbeing is likely to be.

A central city where people love to be

20. As mentioned above, it's great to see continued progress toward opening the **Waikato Regional Theatre**. This large-scale, high-quality venue presents an opportunity to increase participation in and access to the arts in Hamilton by supporting creative activity, building audiences and making arts experiences more accessible to the region's diverse communities. The theatre opening also presents a major opportunity to activate the theatre and downtown area by attracting more residents and visitors.
21. We note that activating the Theatre and Hamilton's downtown area aligns strongly with Council's Infrastructure Strategy which states, 'Our central city should support a thriving visual arts and performance scene through our iconic local theatres and bring the area around our Waikato Regional theatre alive'. There are also strategic opportunities for Council to be:
- working with mana whenua to create inclusive civic spaces that incorporate ngā toi Māori and reflect the distinctive stories of Kirikiriroa Hamilton
 - working with tourism organisations, artists and arts organisations to promote upcoming events and shows and make arts and culture a more visible part of Hamilton's unique identity
 - working with the arts community to develop and create works in the central city that attract and engage diverse communities
 - managing regulatory levers in a way that enables other sectors (eg, hospitality and events) to work alongside the Theatre to drive economic, social and cultural growth.
22. It is also encouraging to see Creative Waikato's development of a new [performing arts strategy](#) with the local community.

A fun city with lots to do

23. We welcome the Year Three 2023-24 Plan's focus on park development across Peacocke and Rotokauri communities, and we encourage Council to explore incorporating arts and cultural elements into these community spaces. **Public art and ngā toi Māori design can encourage a sense of ownership and community pride, create landmarks in the urban landscape, and increase the use of public spaces.** Council could explore ways to work with mana whenua to incorporate toi Māori design principles to profile important cultural and historical narratives.

Creative partners

24. Creative Waikato continue to work broadly across the Waikato region to support councils, regional enablers and the arts community with a collective vision for supporting and strengthening arts, culture and creativity through the implementation of the [Waikato Arts Navigator](#). This regional arts framework and strategy presents a unique opportunity for Council to further develop its relationship with Creative Waikato. As noted above, **we also encourage you to consider how you can use the *Waikato Arts Navigator*** to support the arts community and deliver wellbeing outcomes to the Hamilton community through your annual and long-term plans.
25. [Creative Waikato staff](#) are developing strong regional and national connections while contributing to work of national significance such as Creative New Zealand's advocacy guide

[Narratives for Change](#). This guide is designed to support a collective approach to advocating for change for the way our communities value and understand arts, culture and creativity.

26. We encourage Council to continue supporting Creative Waikato and enable them to continue delivering innovative programmes and connecting and growing their programmes with other members of the arts ecosystem. They are strong ambassadors for the Waikato at a national level, we are looking forward to seeing the work this amazing team will produce next.

Creative New Zealand's interest and investment in the arts in Hamilton and the Waikato

27. Creative New Zealand is the arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We're an autonomous Crown entity continued under the [Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014](#). Our legislative purpose is to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders.
28. We recognise the importance of the Waikato to arts, culture and creativity in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in the Waikato region, **\$1,905,882** of direct financial support was provided by Creative New Zealand in 2021/22. Of this, **\$999,177** in funding went directly to Kirikirōa Hamilton, supporting individual arts projects and arts and cultural organisations.
29. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2021/22, funding of **\$429,317** was provided to the Waikato region, which included **\$116,580** to Hamilton City Council and your creative community.

Concluding points

30. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft Year Three 2023-24 Plan. We understand there is considerable pressure on all Council budgets and acknowledge your continued commitment to investing in arts, culture and creativity as part of the overall investment in your community's wellbeing.
31. We were thrilled to visit Kirikirōa Hamilton in March 2023 to co-host with the Arts Foundation [All in for Arts—He waka toi e eke noa nei tātou](#). We were excited to work with the Hamilton creative community and hear from locals, who talked about how arts and creativity impact their lives every day.
32. To quote Councillor Louise Hutt, '...the role of a good politician is to bring people together with a shared vision of the future, and I often pull from the toolbox of arts when it comes to inspiring hearts and minds in our debate chamber. The ability to be a storyteller, to not only imagine a better future, say, one where we triumph over climate change, one where we no longer have inequality and poverty... to share that vision of the future we need that more than ever.' We wholeheartedly agree.

33. We share your aspirations for Kirikiriroa Hamilton and look forward to working with you to realise the potential of arts, culture and creativity to support your community to thrive. We will continue to participate in ongoing conversations about the long-term direction of the Waikato region, including as you develop the next LTP 2024-34. Our collective approach will ensure arts, culture and creativity can deliver value to all New Zealanders and to communities throughout Aotearoa.
34. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further. The key contact person is:

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Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, nā



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Pou Whakahaere Matua, Rautaki me te Tūhono