

19 March 2021

Auckland Council  
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E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

**Submission to:** Auckland Council  
**Subject:** Auckland Council 10-year Budget (Recovery Budget / Long-term Plan) 2021–2031  
**From:** Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Auckland Council's 10-year Budget. Arts, culture and creativity are an important part of developing strong and prosperous cities, along with cohesive and healthy communities. **We encourage Auckland Council to recognise the essential role arts and culture play in the wellbeing of residents as it makes decisions for the future of the city.**
2. We'd be happy to discuss this submission with you further. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:  
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#### Key points

3. We acknowledge the challenging situation Auckland Council is facing as a result of COVID-19, and its need to manage significant revenue loss and competing interests. **The Recovery Budget presents a crucial opportunity to consider how Council can invest most effectively,** to provide the infrastructure, services and facilities that will enable Auckland to recover and develop into an even more vibrant and attractive place to live and visit.
4. **Arts and culture make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of Auckland's communities, and we encourage Council to maintain its investment.** Continued investment in arts and culture is of critical importance in the COVID context, given many in the arts sector continue to face disruption and revenue loss due to the cancellation of shows and events during lockdown. **Two in three Aucklanders agree that arts and culture have a vital role to**

play in the future of where they live, and four in 10 say the arts are an important part of their personal wellbeing.<sup>1</sup>

5. **We welcome the additional investment into Parks and Community, as well as Economic and Cultural Development.** It's great to see the overall budget for the Parks and Community area increasing from \$3.7 billion (2018–2028) to \$4.7 billion (2021–2031). We note this is an important area for Council's investment in arts and culture beyond Council-Controlled Organisations, and **encourage you to work with the arts sector to ensure additional investment reaches and supports Auckland's diverse communities.**
6. **It's excellent to see investment committed to supporting Māori outcomes, in line with Kia Ora Tāmaki Makarau.** Continued investment in marae development is an essential part of supporting Māori wellbeing, and providing key cultural and community hubs. The revitalisation of te reo Māori through the Te Reo Action Plan, and making ngā toi Māori a visible part of the urban landscape in line with Te Aranga design principles, are also vital parts of delivering to Te Tiriti and making Tāmaki Makaurau a vibrant and attractive place to live and visit.
7. **If Council chooses to explore new approaches to community facilities, we strongly encourage direct engagement with the arts community throughout this process.** Many artists and arts organisations rely upon Council facilities as venues and spaces to make and present their work. It's vital they are engaged as key stakeholders when considering future changes.
8. We were proud to support the development of Toi Whītiki and continue to endorse its six goals. **We encourage Council to ensure the Recovery Budget shows tangible recognition of its own commitment to arts and culture, and aligns with the vision of Toi Whītiki:** that 'all Aucklanders experience arts and culture as part of their everyday lives. It thrives, unites, delights, challenges and entertains as well as drives wealth and prosperity for individuals and for Auckland'.

### **Draft 10-year Budget 2021–2031**

#### *Objectives and strategic alignment*

9. We note the Recovery Budget outlines three recovery objectives to guide the next three years: **community, economy and jobs.** We encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution investment in arts and culture makes to each of these outcomes.
  - **Community:** Participating in arts and cultural activities builds inclusive and resilient communities and increases social cohesion.
  - **Economy:** Artistic and cultural activity have a strong multiplier effect and attract economic activity to communities and the city as a whole, to accelerate economic activity.
  - **Jobs:** The arts sector provides jobs and equips people with the skills needed to create a more highly skilled workforce.
10. One of the six key challenges outlined by Council in the Recovery Budget is the city's changing needs in light of its increasing diversity. With people from an estimated 180 ethnicities living in Auckland, we encourage you to consider how providing opportunities to engage in arts and

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<sup>1</sup> *New Zealanders and the arts: Ko Aotearoa me ōna toi* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

cultural activity can deliver social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to diverse communities, and provide a platform for hearing the needs of these communities. For example:

- 69 percent of Aucklanders say they learn about different cultures through the arts
- 57 percent of Aucklanders agree the arts are an important way of connecting with their culture
- 46 percent of Aucklanders agree they learn about Māori culture through ngā toi Māori, and 51 percent say they learn about Pacific culture through Pacific arts<sup>2</sup>
- Refugees and asylum seekers have reported that engagement with the arts following their displacement supported them to create new support networks and develop practical skills useful in finding work.<sup>3</sup>

### *Community facilities*

11. We understand Council's proposal to explore new approaches to community facilities and services, and its emphasis on ensuring these facilities are fit-for-purpose for the needs of their communities. When thinking about options for the future, we would encourage Council to carefully consider:

- the importance of kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) engagement for delivering specific wellbeing outcomes, such as increased social cohesion, connection and understanding
- the cultural importance that kanohi ki te kanohi engagement has for many communities, particularly Auckland's large Māori and Pasifika populations
- how digital services will impact equity (eg, which communities are without access to the Internet, or rely upon existing community facilities as their point of access?)
- whether the locations of community facilities are accessible to those they're meant to be serving
- whether artists and arts organisations have access to affordable, quality venues and spaces to make and present their work, which is not compromised by the amalgamation of services into multipurpose facilities
- that any leasing or partnership arrangements, which could affect the cost of using community facilities, don't compromise the affordability and accessibility of these facilities for community-based arts groups and organisations
- if the decreased demand for physical community facilities could be a result of decreased levels of investment in community facilities
- the access multipurpose hubs could provide for a wider range of communities to engage with the arts
- that greater focus on delivery of community services over assets could reduce the burden of maintenance and renewal costs, and free up more investment for spending on delivering services such as programming, grants and community partnerships.

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<sup>2</sup> *New Zealanders and the arts: Ko Aotearoa me ōna toi* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

<sup>3</sup> *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review* (2019). World Health Organization.

12. **We urge Council to work closely with Local Boards to engage directly and comprehensively with the communities that would be affected by any proposed changes to the delivery of community facilities and services.**
13. Given the range of communities who engage with these facilities and services, targeted engagement with specific communities (including arts communities) would likely be more effective than community-wide engagement, to ensure Council can understand the specific needs of each. We would therefore encourage Council to engage specifically with arts communities in the process of any future consultation. Creative New Zealand would be glad to offer support in this area if useful.

#### *Capital expenditure*

14. It's not clear from the Recovery Budget documentation whether any of the cuts to funding for arts and culture made under the Emergency Budget will be carried over to the Recovery Budget.
15. **We urge Council to maintain, as a minimum, pre-Emergency Budget levels of funding in the new Budget to ensure these changes do not have a negative effect on the Auckland arts sector in the medium- and long-term.**
16. Regarding additional capital funding of \$50 million to enable the restoration of the Art Gallery Heritage Building, we would welcome this additional spend and tautoko continued investment in the city's key cultural institutions.
17. We support the proposal for increased investment in Q Theatre. Q Theatre plays an integral role in Auckland's arts ecosystem and we are delighted to see additional support for running costs, arts development and venue maintenance be made available.
18. The Council's proposed city centre and local development projects present opportunities for the Council to work with artists, arts groups and organisations to incorporate art/cultural elements into infrastructure projects. This would help the Council to realise its aims of supporting business, strong and inclusive communities and showcasing Auckland's culture and identity, and to incorporating Te Aranga design principles in line with your commitments under Kia Ora Tāmaki Makaurau.
19. The Mayoral Proposal stated the proposed budget includes reinstatement of the contestable Regional Events Fund, Regional Community Development Grants, and Regional Arts and Culture Grants, which support organisations and communities in arts, culture and event spaces. While there wasn't specific mention of this in the Recovery Budget, we urge you to uphold this commitment. These funds provide crucial support for artists and arts organisations in Auckland.

#### *Access to arts and cultural services*

20. We support the proposal to remove late return fines on library books and items. Despite the loss of revenue, we applaud Council's willingness to put forth a proposal that will ensure access to important library services and is consistent with its objective of equity.

21. It is great to see a continued commitment to delivering arts and culture activities for all Aucklanders as a part of regional community services. When considering how to deliver these activities, we would encourage Council to keep in mind the following.
- The first two points focus on investing in digital channels and increasing accessibility options. We support increasing the accessibility of arts and culture, and urge you to consider digital expansion with an accessibility lens to ensure that any development of digital channels is both:
    - in line with the needs and desires of the communities it is intended to serve
    - takes into account potential equity issues surrounding access to digital services.
  - We tautoko your commitment to supporting Aucklanders to maintain their cultural identities and traditions through opportunities for cultural expression. We encourage you to consider this in relation to the redevelopment of community services and facilities to ensure Council engages with specific communities to ensure the services and facilities provided are fit-for-purpose.

#### *Local Boards*

22. We agree with the proposal that no changes be made to the Local Board Funding Policy. It's important that Local Boards continue to be empowered and resourced to make good local level decisions, as those who are closest to their respective communities. Grassroots arts communities in particular benefit from the services and support provided by Local Boards.
23. We were pleased to see more than half of the local boards make specific reference to arts and culture in their priorities for 2021/22. Mention of arts and culture priorities was made by the Devonport-Takapuna, Henderson-Massey, Hibiscus and Bays, Manurewa, Ōrākei, Papakura, Puketāpapa, Waiheke, Waitākere, Waitemātā, and Whau local boards.

#### *Concluding points*

24. Research into New Zealanders' attitudes to, attendance at and participation in the arts show that most Aucklanders see the arts as important. For example:
- 64 percent of Aucklanders agree the arts contribute positively to our economy
  - 60 percent of Aucklanders agree the arts should receive public funding, and 53% agree that their local council should give money to support the arts
  - 66 percent of Aucklanders agree that major arts facilities are important to create a vibrant place to live
  - 61 percent of Aucklanders agree the arts make an important contribution to community resilience and wellbeing.<sup>4</sup>
25. We urge Council to continue supporting and developing ways for Aucklanders to engage with and participate in the arts over the next 10 years. Arts and culture have an essential role to play in the wellbeing of Māori, Pasifika and Auckland's diverse communities, as well as social cohesion between the many communities that call Auckland home.

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<sup>4</sup> *New Zealanders and the arts: Ko Aotearoa me ōna toi* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

26. Given the significant cost pressures that Auckland Council will face over the coming months and years, we'd encourage you to consider how artists and creative practitioners can support the Council in addressing unique challenges. Artists and creative practitioners are particularly skilled in designing and delivering innovative, strategic and cost-effective solutions, and we encourage the Council to look at ways to involve artists in the delivery of the Recovery Budget.

#### **Creative New Zealand's interest in the arts in Auckland**

27. Creative New Zealand is the arts development agency of Aotearoa, 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 Auckland to the arts in New Zealand. A number of our staff are based at Creative New Zealand's Auckland office, and over a quarter of our current total investment in the arts goes into Auckland. We have responded to the COVID-19 crisis by using the reserves at our disposal and additional government investment via the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. For arts that are delivered in Auckland specifically, we provided **\$19.8 million** of direct financial support in 2019/20, up from **\$12.99 million** in 2018/19. We will continue to work with the Auckland Arts Investors Forum to coordinate and align our investment in Auckland-based arts.
29. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as over 30 significant Auckland-based arts organisations. These include orchestras, theatre companies, festivals, opera, craft/object and art galleries, dance companies, publishers and residencies.
30. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2019/20, funding provided to Auckland Council under the Scheme totalled **\$1.03 million**.
31. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further (contact details for David Pannett, Senior Manager, Strategy & Engagement are at the start of the submission).

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa, nā



Stephen Wainwright  
**Tumu Whakarae—Chief Executive**