

10 April 2017

**Submission on the:** Draft Waikato Plan 2017

**Made to the:** Waikato Local Authority Shared Services (LASS)

**From:** The Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to consider and make submissions on LASS's **Draft Waikato Plan 2017**.
2. We are available to discuss our submission if desired.
3. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission:

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#### Initial Comments

4. Creative New Zealand is supportive of the priorities and key actions outlined in The Waikato Plan. We commend all those involved in developing this plan and the commitment by the participating councils toward long-term strategic planning.
5. The Waikato Plan succinctly encapsulates suitable priority areas for the region. It also presents clear, workable actions for the councils to undertake and to align with their planning.
6. We are encouraged by the role that arts and culture can play in achieving and aiding these priorities. In particular we wish to bring to attention the three priorities we believe the arts and culture can most readily assist.
7. Through our relationships in the Waikato we remain assured that the involved councils and The Waikato Plan will fully consider the importance of the arts and culture to the development of the region.

#### Priority 1: Planning for population change

8. Managing projected population changes in the Waikato region means addressing infrastructure needs, including for the arts and culture. This has been clearly demonstrated in the Waikato region through the trouble experienced by arts organisations in, and touring to, Hamilton due to the Founders Theatre being decommissioned.
9. In planning for population changes, councils will have to consider expenditure on arts and cultural services and facilities from a regional perspective. We understand similar issues have arisen previously with Hamilton City funding large facilities that are utilised by the residents of bordering councils and the ensuing question of how those councils should contribute.

10. We are pleased to see The Waikato Plan address this through *Action 1.5.1 Top priorities for regional facilities*.
11. Another consideration is the cultural activities new residents to the region may expect upon moving from larger metropolitan centres. Those moving from Auckland or Wellington may not anticipate the exact same degree of cultural activity in the Waikato, but they will have an expectation of a level of cultural vibrancy.
12. Without a vibrant cultural scene, the Waikato region may be less appealing to those highly skilled and educated individuals the region wishes to attract. Creative employees are drawn to regions with creative vibrancy.
13. This is addressed indirectly through *Action 5.3.1 Grow regional visitor numbers* but might also be usefully considered in its own right.

### **Priority 3: Partnering with Iwi/Māori**

14. We are encouraged that supporting cultural heritage features prominently in *Action 3.1.1 Work collaboratively to develop and encourage enduring partnerships that enable Iwi/Māori aspirations to be achieved*.
15. Iwi/Māori have a vital role in the cultural identity of the Waikato region and we are very supportive of the priority this partnership receives in The Waikato Plan. Māori arts and culture do present instrumental benefits, but perhaps most importantly they are a defining feature of the Waikato region.

### **Priority 5: Advancing regional economic development**

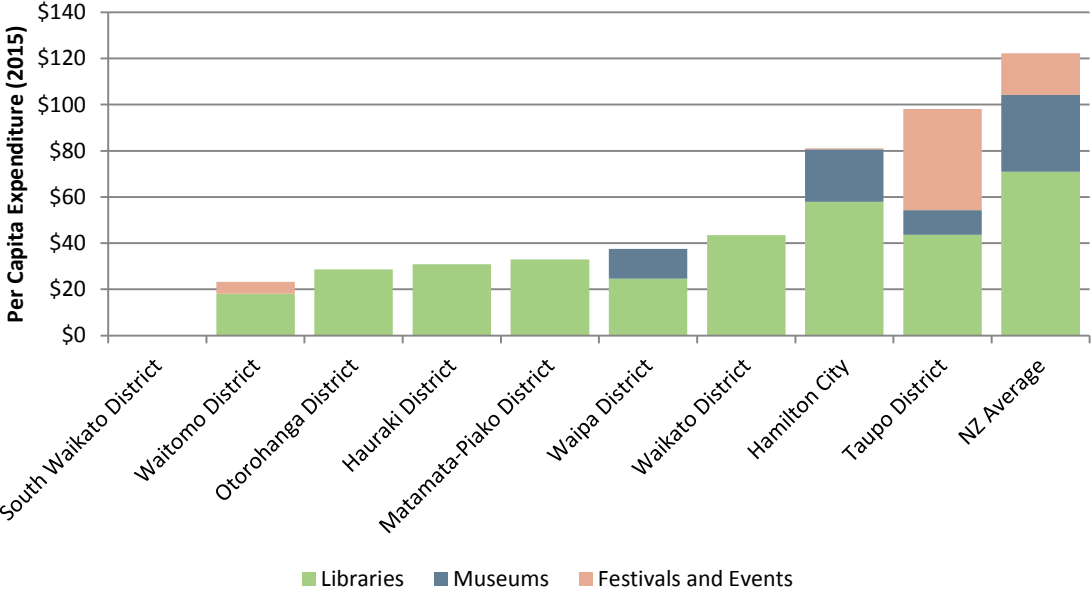
16. An extensive body of research demonstrates the instrumental value of the arts and culture to regional economic development.<sup>1</sup> Any strategy determined to advance regional economic development should consider the role of the arts and culture.
17. As mentioned in paragraph 13, this work is indirectly addressed in *Action 5.3.1 Grow regional visitor numbers*. We hope the arts and culture sector is considered alongside tourism and other industries in the regional economic development priority.

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<sup>1</sup> Creative New Zealand – [Advocacy Toolkit: The Evidence for Advocacy – The arts contribute to the economy](#)

**Existing support for the arts and culture**

18. Self-reported spending on culture by councils in the Waikato region was lower than the New Zealand average in 2015. Strategic spending on arts and culture may require councils to reconsider the level of their investment in culture.



Source: Stats NZ – Local Authority Financial Statistics income and expenditure by activity 2015

**Creative New Zealand and its interest in this consultation**

- 19. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage as well as the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board. In 2015/16, Creative New Zealand invested over **\$42.4 million** into New Zealand’s arts sector.
- 20. In 2015/16, Creative New Zealand invested almost \$900,000 in the Waikato region. This amount includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as Creative New Zealand’s support for the Regional Arts Pilot and Creative Waikato.
- 21. Creative New Zealand also granted over \$390,000 in 2015/16 to Waikato’s councils through the Creative Communities Scheme (CCS), in order to support and encourage local communities to create and present a wide variety of arts in the Waikato.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment, and please don’t hesitate to contact me if you wish to further discuss this submission.

Yours sincerely

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