

1 April 2021

New Plymouth District Council
Private Bag 2025
New Plymouth 4340

By email to: submissions@npdc.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: New Plymouth District Council
Subject: New Plymouth District Council Ten-year Plan 2021–2031 (the Plan)
From: Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on New Plymouth District Council's ten-year plan (the Plan). 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 its residents in its decision-making for the future of the district.
2. We'd be happy to discuss this submission with you further. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:
Name: David Pannett
Position: Senior Manager, Strategy and Engagement
Email: david.pannett@creativenz.govt.nz
Phone (DDI): 04 473 0772

Key points

3. **We welcome the additional investment to support the formal establishment of Creative Taranaki.** The network will provide vital support to the broader arts community, including mid-career and emerging artists and practitioners, and enhance the wellbeing outcomes the arts community are delivering.
4. **We tautoko (support) the Plan's emphasis on partnerships, and strongly encourage Council to explore opportunities to strengthen partnerships with the arts community** for continued and cost-effective investment in arts and culture.
5. **We're disappointed to see a \$400,000 cut to the Govett-Brewster Arts Gallery's operational budgets across the Plan.** We encourage Council to reconsider this cut and make a commitment to restoring any operational budget cuts over the latter years of the Plan so that the gallery can remain open consistently and confidently.

6. **It's excellent to see an ongoing commitment to partnership with Māori**, and we encourage you to **continue strengthening partnerships with mana whenua to deliver to the Plan**.
7. **We welcome Council's commitment to continue funding Zeal Taranaki**. Ongoing support can ensure that rangatahi in New Plymouth continue to benefit from the important wellbeing outcomes delivered through Zeal's creative arts programmes.

Draft Ten-Year Plan 2021–2031

Vision and challenges

8. The Plan outlines five goals (community outcomes): partnerships, delivery, community, sustainability and prosperity. We encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution that investing in arts and culture makes to these outcomes, in particular:
 - Partnerships – artistic and cultural activity increases social cohesion through connecting people and communities
 - Community – participating in arts and cultural activities builds inclusive and resilient communities and contributes to our wellbeing
 - Prosperity – artistic and cultural activity have a strong multiplier effect and attract economic activity to our towns and cities, support tourism, provide jobs and equip people with the skills needed to create a more highly-skilled workforce.
9. The Plan notes that 'key to achieving all parts of our plan are partnerships'. We encourage Council to continue strengthening its partnerships with the arts community. Working with organisations such as Creative Taranaki, Taranaki Arts Festival Trust, the Govett-Brewster and Zeal Taranaki can help Council collectively realise New Plymouth's vision of being a Sustainable Lifestyle Capital.
10. It's good to see commitment to and investment in partnerships with mana whenua. Investment in marae as key cultural and community hubs, as well as a commitment to incorporating ngā toi Māori in local and regional projects, is vital for delivering to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and making New Plymouth a vibrant and attractive place to live and visit.
11. The Plan notes that one of the primary challenges facing the district is a fast-growing population; one which is ageing, and increasingly diverse. We encourage you to consider how providing opportunities to engage in arts and cultural activities can deliver social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to diverse communities, as well as to older people. For example:
 - two in three New Zealanders say they learn about different cultures through the arts¹
 - 71 percent of Māori agree that ngā toi Māori is an important way of connecting with their culture/identity²
 - older people who take part in creative activities experience physical health benefits including better sleep, increased physical activity, fewer health visits and less use of medication, as well as psychological benefits such as increased self-efficacy, social contact and decreased depression and loneliness³

¹ *New Zealanders and the Arts* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

² *New Zealanders and the Arts* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

³ *The Arts in Health* (2014). Pegasus Health.

- going to museums, galleries, the theatre, concerts or the opera every few months or more often in older age has been associated with a slower rate of cognitive decline and a lower risk of developing dementia.⁴

'Big call' priorities

12. It's great to see extension of New Plymouth's **tracks and trails network** feature as a part of the Plan's priorities. Council has a strong track record of incorporating arts and culture elements within infrastructure projects (eg, Te Rewa Bridge and Len Lye's Wind Wand). When extending tracks and trails, we would encourage Council to consider the following:
- how Council could work with artists and arts organisations to incorporate arts and culture elements into the new trails
 - where Council can continue working with mana whenua to incorporate distinct cultural concepts and narratives through ngā toi Māori to make known sites of historical significance (following the success of the New Plymouth Airport project), specifically:
 - working with Puketapu, Manukorihi and Otaraua hapū on the Bell Block-Waitara Coastal Walkway extension
 - working with ngā Mahanga and Ngāti Tairi hapū on the Te Ara a Ruhihiwerapini (The trail of Ruhihiwerapini).
13. We support Council's proposal to contribute to the building of a **multi-sport hub**. As plans for a hub progress, we encourage you to continue seeking perspectives from the range of communities that could benefit from these facilities. We encourage Council to think about:
- whether any of the new spaces developed could support the arts community (eg, could an indoor multi-court space function as a multipurpose space used for rehearsals or performing arts events)
 - how multipurpose facilities could provide more people with opportunities to engage with and participate in arts and culture, which has similar benefits to sport for communities' physical and mental wellbeing
 - how these facilities can be used to compliment TSB Stadium, a site the arts community currently uses, which the Plan notes is operating near capacity.

Capital expenditure

14. We welcome the additional investment to support the **formal establishment of Creative Taranaki**, via Council's Community Partnerships function. Creative Taranaki will take up a vital role as a leader, facilitator and partner in Taranaki's arts community, and its establishment signals Council's recognition of the value arts and culture create for the region. Creative Taranaki's establishment can support:
- a more cohesive and connected arts community who can deliver greater wellbeing outcomes to Taranaki communities
 - support, training and capability building for a wider range of artists and creative practitioners: professional, mid-career and emerging

⁴ *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review* (2019). World Health Organisation.

- the delivery of initiatives and projects that benefit both the arts community as well as Taranaki's diverse communities.
15. We're disappointed to see a \$400,000 cut to the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery's operational budgets across the Plan. The gallery delivers social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to New Plymouth residents, as well as visitors to the region, and attracts economic activity to the central city. Following COVID-19 disruptions, visitor numbers to the Govett-Brewster are increasing, customer satisfaction remains particularly high, and the gallery continues to make a strong contribution to the community. We encourage Council to reconsider this cut and make a commitment to restore any cuts to operational budgets over the latter years of the Plan, to ensure the gallery has adequate support to remain consistently and confidently open.
 16. We encourage Council to maintain the Govett-Brewster's current opening hours. Lost revenue from ticket sales, tours, events and communicating a change in hours would offset a large proportion of any savings. Furthermore, reduced hours have caused higher levels of negative feedback from out-of town visitors in the past. Maintaining current opening hours can ensure the gallery continues to be viewed as an asset that provides visitors with a positive experience.
 17. We note the Govett-Brewster currently provides free entry to residents from the New Plymouth District. There's an opportunity for Council to work with South Taranaki and Stratford District Councils to explore ways in which councils could work together to extend free entry to residents from these districts. This partnership approach would support a Team Taranaki perspective and increase visitation from regional residents.

Council services

18. We encourage the Community Partnerships team to continue engaging with the arts community. A number of arts organisations in New Plymouth have strong, existing relationships with mana whenua, funders, government, non-profits, businesses and other community groups. A strong relationship between Community Partnerships and the arts community can, in turn, foster new partnerships between those with an interest in the arts.
19. We encourage the Central City Facilitator to work directly with the arts community to explore how artists and arts organisations can help Council to revitalise the central city and create a more vibrant downtown area. Incorporating arts and culture elements and projects in the central city can increase the use of public spaces, showcase New Plymouth's culture and identity, and increase economic activity. The budget for CBD Strategy Projects is an opportunity to work with and support local artists to deliver these outcomes.
20. The formal establishment of Creative Taranaki and Council's development of a strategy for the central city is a timely opportunity to engage the arts community in the central city's transformation. Artists and creative practitioners are particularly skilled at designing and delivering innovative, strategic and cost-effective solutions, and we encourage Council to consider how the arts community can contribute to the CBD revitalisation.
21. It's great to see Council's commitment to delivering a range of community events with diverse and inclusive content, and we welcome the allocation of funding for a winter event and a New Year's event. Much of the arts community has faced revenue loss due to the cancellation of shows and events during COVID-19 lockdowns, and these proposals are excellent opportunities for the arts community to be involved in, and support Council in, the delivery of new events.

22. We welcome Council's commitment to continue funding Zeal Taranaki for Years 1 to 3 of the Plan. Zeal uses creative arts to deliver wellbeing outcomes to rangatahi in New Plymouth, contributing to health and wellbeing, social cohesion, and education and skills development. Increasing support to cover the lease of Zeal's central city location would ensure rangatahi in New Plymouth can continue to access and benefit from the free events, creative programmes and mentoring that Zeal provides on a longer-term basis. We encourage Council to continue to work with Zeal to engage young people in the CBD revitalisation, given Zeal's central location.
23. We support the upgrade to the TSB Showplace to ensure this can remain one of New Plymouth's leading performing arts venues. As upgrades take place, we also encourage Council to work with the arts community to identify how it can ensure venue access remains affordable.
24. We support Council's plans to work with iwi on a bid to host the 2024 Te Matatini in the New Plymouth District. Te Matatini is one of Aotearoa's most important cultural events and brings together people of all ages and backgrounds to attend and participate in a celebration of kapa haka. Hosting Te Matatini would deliver strongly to wellbeing outcomes, particularly cultural and economic wellbeing.

Creative New Zealand's interest in the arts in New Plymouth

25. 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.
26. We recognise the importance of Taranaki to the arts in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in Taranaki, **\$748,148** of direct financial support was provided in 2019/20. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as major Taranaki-based cultural organisations, such as the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.
27. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2019/20, funding provided to New Plymouth District Council under the Scheme totalled **\$64,140**.
28. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to us if you wish to discuss this submission further (contact details are at the start of the submission).

Ngā mihi rārau ki a koutou katoa, nā



Stephen Wainwright
Tumu Whakarae
Chief Executive