

30 April 2021

Rotorua Lakes Council  
Private Bag 3029  
Rotorua 3046

By email to: [letstalk@rotorualc.nz](mailto:letstalk@rotorualc.nz)

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

**Submission to:** Rotorua Lakes Council  
**Subject:** 2021-2031 Long-Term Plan (the Plan)  
**From:** Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Rotorua Lakes Council's long-term plan. Arts, culture and creativity are an important part of developing strong and prosperous towns, 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.
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 & Engagement  
**Email:** [david.pannett@creativenz.govt.nz](mailto:david.pannett@creativenz.govt.nz)  
**Phone (DDI):** 04 473 0772

#### Key Points

3. **It's excellent to see Council's commitment to opening the Sir Howard Morrison Performing Arts Centre later this year.** In the lead up to the Centre's opening, we encourage Council to continue to work with arts communities, business owners and tourism authorities to attract residents and visitors to the Centre and view its opening as an opportunity to make Rotorua an even more vibrant place to live and visit.
4. **We welcome Council's commitment to completing work on Te Whare o Taonga o Te Arawa (Rotorua Museum).** The Museum is a highly valued community asset that delivers important social and cultural wellbeing outcomes to the Rotorua Lakes region.
5. **There's strong appetite from local arts communities to see a clearer and more collective vision for arts and culture in the region.** We encourage Council to explore how it might work with arts communities, hapū and iwi, training institutions and funders to develop a new

strategy that can guide the development of arts and culture in Rotorua – and, in turn, enhance the wellbeing of its communities.

### **Draft Long-term Plan 2021–2031**

#### *He Papakāinga, He Hāpori Taurikura – Homes and Thriving communities*

6. It's good to see Council's Homes and Thriving Communities Strategic Framework coming into effect through the LTP. We note the Framework includes the outcome 'increased measures of Te Arawa connectedness including participation in kōhanga and kura kaupapa, participation in cultural activities eg, kapa haka, sports, mahinga kai and visual arts, and attendance at marae' under several of its objectives. We encourage Council to continue working closely with Te Arawa iwi and hapū to create spaces and programmes that deliver to Māori communities and provide opportunities to engage with a wide range of arts practices.
7. To deliver to this outcome, we encourage Council to give particular consideration as to how it might work with ngā toi Māori artists and practitioners to provide opportunities that support a for Māori by Māori approach.
8. We encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution that arts and culture makes to thriving communities. Artistic and cultural activity can:
  - play a major role in placemaking and creating great places to live
  - contribute to our identity as individuals, whānau and communities and allow us to tell the unique stories of who we are
  - build inclusive and connected communities, and contributes to all aspects of hauora
  - contribute to education and skills development, and create a more highly skilled workforce.
9. We note Council plans to develop an Eastside Community Wellness Plan and a Westside Wellness and regeneration plan. We encourage Council to consider how it might partner with Rotorua's arts communities in the development and delivery of these plans, in recognition of the contribution artistic activity makes towards our wellness, including mental and physical health. For example, 61% of New Zealanders agree that the arts make an important contribution to community resilience and wellbeing.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Whakahaumarū Hāpori – Community Safety*

10. It's great to see a proposal to develop Community Centre Hubs that enable community-led delivery of social and other services. As Council develops plans to ensure these Hubs are fit-for-purpose, we encourage it to consider:
  - whether the locations of the hubs are accessible to those they are intended to serve
  - whether any of the new spaces developed could support arts communities by providing spaces where they can make and show their work to audiences
  - how to work with local artists and practitioners to create a strong sense of cultural identity at each of these facilities.

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

11. We welcome the proposal to support a range of programmes that keep people connected through positive activities in our public spaces including parks and reserves, city streets and neighbourhoods. Again, as connectors, activators and innovators, arts communities are uniquely positioned to help Council deliver these programmes. We encourage Council to ensure there is support for programmes that enable creative activity, and programmes that deliver to Māori communities.
12. Whether Council agrees to a \$500k or \$750k commitment to the community plan's implementation, we encourage it to ensure there is scope for supporting artistic and creative initiatives within its given budget that can activate public spaces and support community resilience.

#### *Whanake Ōhanga – Economic Development*

13. It's great to see Council's commitment to infrastructure projects that will create opportunities in the CBD. We encourage Council to involve arts communities in the creation of the Inner City Plan to consider how they might help strengthen the city as a vibrant, creative location. Artists and creative practitioners are uniquely well positioned to help Council to create inclusive civic spaces that reflect the distinctive stories and history of Rotorua.
14. It's excellent to see the Sir Howard Morrison Performing Arts Centre's opening scheduled for later this year. A large-scale, high-quality venue will support creative activity, build audiences and make arts experiences more affordable and accessible. Its opening presents a major opportunity to activate the Centre and downtown area to attract more residents and visitors.
15. Prior to the Centre's opening, we encourage Council to actively engage with arts communities, business owners and tourism stakeholders to consider:
  - how to work with tourism organisations, artists and arts organisations to promote upcoming events and shows and make arts and culture a more visible part of Rotorua's unique identity
  - how the arts community could 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 Centre to drive economic, social and cultural growth.

#### *Hurihanga Āhuarangi - Climate Change*

16. We note Council identified 'Delivering education and communicating clearly with our communities' as one action in response to its focus on Climate Change. We encourage Council to consider how Rotorua's arts communities might help Council to achieve this action. Artists and creative practitioners are particularly skilled at communicating, education and designing and delivering innovative, strategic and cost-effective solutions.

#### *Rautaki Hangaroto - Infrastructure Strategy*

17. As Council implements its 30 year Infrastructure Strategy, we current it to consider how arts and cultural elements can be incorporated into the city's infrastructure to reflect the stories and identities of Rotorua's communities. Council may consider establishing an Arts Advisory Panel as a part of its infrastructure work or developing a public art policy. Examples of existing

policies include Auckland Council's [Public Art Policy](#), and Dunedin City Council's [Art and Creativity in Infrastructure Policy](#).

#### *Final Comments*

18. There's strong appetite from local arts communities to see clear outcomes and vision from Council regarding its support for arts and culture. We encourage Council to consider redeveloping its arts strategy and exploring how it might develop a broader, partnership approach to supporting arts and culture in the region. There's good potential for Council to work in partnership with arts communities, hapū and iwi, training institutions and funders to develop a collective vision for strengthening arts and culture in Rotorua, which can enhance community wellbeing by delivering cultural, social and economic outcomes.
19. We encourage Council to engage Rotorua arts communities in its planning and policy development to ensure its investment and programmes are responsive to the needs of the community. We also note the importance of making sure artists and practitioners have the resource and support needed to engage with Council to ensure these relationships are sustainable.

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

20. 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.
21. We recognise the importance of Rotorua to the arts in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in the wider Bay of Plenty region, **\$2.41 million** of direct financial support was provided in 2019/20. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as arts and cultural organisations.
22. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. Funding provided to Rotorua Lakes Council under the Scheme totalled **\$58,500** in 2019/20.
23. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or 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



David Pannett  
**Senior Manager, Strategy & Engagement**  
**Pou Whakahaere Matua, Rautaki me te Tūhono**