

19 April 2024

Te Kaunihera o Te Tairāwhiti
Gisborne District Council
15 Fitzherbert Street
Gisborne

By email: service@gdc.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Te Kaunihera o Te Tairāwhiti Gisborne District Council
Subject: Draft Three-Year Plan 2024–2027
From: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback on Te Tairāwhiti Gisborne District Council's Three-Year Plan 2024–2027.
2. We acknowledge Council's immense challenges in healing Te Tairāwhiti after the severe weather in 2023, and thank Council for its ongoing support of arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori in the district. Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori are an important part of recovery for Tairāwhiti, by helping build connected, healthy and socially cohesive communities.
3. As you make decisions for the Three-Year Plan, we encourage Council to **work closely with the creative sector and ngā toi Māori practitioners and organisations**, as they go about making significant contributions to supporting Tairāwhiti residents and communities.

Response to Three-Year Plan 2024–2027

4. Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi are vital tools for Council to strengthen its communities, through connection, empowerment and placemaking. Investment in the arts and ngā toi, is investment in social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing, and will help Council navigate current challenges.
5. From our most recent *New Zealanders and the Arts—Ko Aotearoa me ōna Toi* research in 2023, we know that New Zealanders' personal connection with the arts continues to grow, and many feel the arts contribute strongly to their mental health and wellbeing. More broadly, 61 percent of New Zealanders agree that the arts make an important contribution to community resilience and wellbeing.
6. New Zealanders are also increasingly recognising the economic benefits of the arts, and support for public funding of the arts is higher than ever. More than half of New Zealanders

(54 percent) agree that their local council should give money to support the arts, with a quarter of them agreeing strongly with this statement.

7. The arts play a particularly significant role within te ao Māori and ngā toi a rohe are an integral form of expression, identity-building and belonging. Ngā toi Māori is increasingly embraced by Māori and New Zealanders as a whole, with more New Zealanders agreeing that they learn about Māori culture through ngā toi Māori and that it motivates them to kōrero Māori.
8. **Artists and creatives can support Council to achieve greater community outcomes in other prioritised work across the city**, including city centre upgrades, infrastructure development, climate change adaptation and housing improvements. As connectors and innovators, creative communities are uniquely positioned to help Council communicate and deliver on these projects and can play a vital role in helping Te Tairāwhiti thrive.

Creative sector's support for recovery

9. The creative sector supports recovery from natural disasters by bringing people together and offering shared experiences. It supports a stronger sense of connection to place for residents by enhancing and sharing distinctive stories and experiences unique to a rohe.
10. Aotearoa knows the importance of arts and culture in recovery from previous and recent experience. In Christchurch, strategic investment in arts and culture strengthened the social, cultural and economic life of the city after the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011.¹ More recently, the Government targeted investment into arts and culture as part of its COVID-19 recovery work, to protect jobs and support livelihoods, as well as enable the arts to continue bringing New Zealanders together in a time of crisis.
11. Creative organisations in Te Tairāwhiti have already been doing important work in bringing residents together to reflect, connect and find relief during the recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle. As part of Matariki 2023, an innovative cultural festival rescued trees felled by Cyclone Gabrielle in Okahuatū, turning them into works of art through a carving symposium held at Eastwoodhill. The event was run by Te Whānau a Kai in partnership with Te Māra Rākaunui O Aotearoa (New Zealand's National Arboretum) with the support of Creative New Zealand and Te Tairāwhiti Arts Festival. It was free to the public, with around 6,000 people attending the festival over the course of a week, having the opportunity to engage with ngā toi practitioners celebrating Matariki and facilitating cyclone recovery with sculpture.
12. Investment in creativity and ngā toi in Te Tairāwhiti by Council in this budget cycle is an opportunity for the region to not only recover from recent challenges, but to grow and thrive. The COVID-19 pandemic showed us the value of arts and ngā toi in challenging times, with the power to inspire, delight and provoke us. They help people understand, interpret and adapt to the world, enabling us to express our identities and help to build social cohesion.

Community-led plans

13. It's great to see Council is supporting communities across the region with identifying recovery priorities, including Pasifika, sports and recreation and whaikaha communities.

¹ *Gauging the Impacts of Post-Disaster Arts and Culture Initiatives in Christchurch – a Literature Review*, prepared by Life in Vacant Spaces Charitable Trust for the Ministry for Culture & Heritage. Available at: <https://thehub.swa.govt.nz/resources/gauging-the-impacts-of-post-disaster-arts-and-culture-initiatives-in-christchurch-a-literature-review/>

14. Arts practitioners and creative organisations in Te Tairāwhiti are also valuable partners for Council to work with communities in prioritising work for recovery, and we encourage Council to reach out to them to support this focus. They hold close relationships with mana whenua, central government and businesses, and are also particularly skilled at designing and delivering innovative, strategic and cost-effective solutions.
15. HOEA! Gallery and Arts centre in Tūranga Nui a Kiwa, run by wāhine Māori to support and profile the Māori art community in Te Tairāwhiti, is a public gallery that offers wānanga and programming for local communities, including at Wairoa Museum and working with tamariki in te reo Māori. Creative New Zealand has funded their work through our Arts Grants funding and *Toi Ake – Mātauranga Māori Te Awe Kōtuku Fund*, to support their work with Te Horo marae to create new kowhaiwhai.
16. On a larger scale, Te Tairāwhiti Arts Festival is an annual celebration of the people and place of Te Tairāwhiti, elevating the kōrero, taonga and talent of Te Tairāwhiti. Led by Tama Waipara, the festival creates world-class artistic experiences while making them accessible to as many people as possible. Creative New Zealand supports the Festival through our Toi Uru Kahikatea Investment programme and recognises its important work in connecting local communities to place, culture and identity. The Festival welcomes collaborations and would be a strong partner for Council to support communities in Te Tairāwhiti.

City centre revitalisation

17. Council's work to revitalise the city centre presents a valuable opportunity for Council to work with creative communities in Te Tairāwhiti. Artistic and cultural activity can play a major role in placemaking and rejuvenating cities to create inspiring places to live, visit and invest in. We encourage Council to work with creatives and ngā toi practitioners to explore projects and initiatives for revitalisation that can enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Te Tairāwhiti residents.

Our townships

18. Strong cultural infrastructure will support Council to respond to current challenges. Supported creative organisations and regular arts and culture experiences feed other parts of the local economy in Te Tairāwhiti, including education, health and trade. As we face a less certain future, the arts have a crucial role in improving wellbeing by building and regenerating strong, connected and healthy communities.

Creative New Zealand's interest and investment in the arts in Te Tairāwhiti

19. Creative New Zealand is the national arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand, responsible for delivering government support for the arts. We're an autonomous Crown entity under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014.
20. Our legislative purpose is to *encourage, promote, and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders*. We do this by *Investing in the arts, Developing the arts, Advocating for the arts, providing Leadership in the arts, and Partnering for the arts*.
21. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board Te Puna Tahua. In 2022/23, Creative New Zealand **invested nearly \$74 million in the arts**.

22. We recognise the importance of Te Tairāwhiti to arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in Aotearoa. In 2022/23, Creative New Zealand provided **\$1.1 million** of direct financial support to the district, supporting individual arts projects, and arts and cultural organisations.
23. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2022/23, funding of **\$44,460** was provided to Council and your creative communities.

Final thoughts

24. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Three-Year Plan. We understand there is considerable pressure on your budget to navigate Te Tairāwhiti through its recovery.
25. We share your aspirations for Te Tairāwhiti and look forward to working with you to realise the potential of arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi to support your communities to thrive. Our collective approach will ensure arts, culture and creativity can deliver value to all New Zealanders and to communities throughout Aotearoa.
26. While we do not wish to address Council in person in support of our submission, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss it further. The key contact person is:

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Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, nā



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