ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA

19 April 2024

Te Kaunihera o Kirikiriroa Hamilton City Council
Private Bag 3010
Hamilton 3240

By email: haveyoursay@hcc.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to:	**Te Kaunihera o Kirikiriroa Hamilton City Council**
Subject:	**Draft Long-Term Plan 2024–2034**
From:	**Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)**

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback on Hamilton City Council's Long-Term Plan 2024–2034 (LTP).

2. We thank Council for its ongoing support of arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori in Kirikiriroa Hamilton, and acknowledge the challenges Council currently faces in preparing the LTP, including financial pressures and those around climate change.

3. As a central government organisation, we are weathering our own financial pressures and constraints, and understand the need for sharpening strategic focus to effectively respond to dynamic times.

4. Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori are vital parts of the communities and identity of Kirikiriroa Hamilton. They make valuable contributions to the city's social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing by connecting people to place, shaping community identity and building social cohesion.

5. **We urge Council to recognise the essential role of the creative sector in the wellbeing and resilience of your residents, as you make decisions for the future of your city through the LTP.**

6. As Supreme Court Justice Sir Joe Williams said at Creative New Zealand's national arts sector conference *Nui te Kōrero* in 2021, "No meaningful social change occurs without some filmmaker, some songwriter, some artist, some poet, triggering the possibility long before anyone realises what the triggering was."

7. We look forward to attending the public hearing to speak in support of our submission. If you wish to discuss any aspect of the submission in the meantime, please find contact details for the team at the end of this submission.

Key points

8. We acknowledge the challenges currently faced by Council in preparing its LTP, while managing many competing priorities. The LTP presents a **valuable opportunity for Council to effectively invest in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori**, to support the resilience and wellbeing of Hamilton's communities and ensure the city and region can thrive.

9. **We do not support the proposed reduction in funding for community grants or event sponsorship**. We are concerned that the reductions will likely have a long-term, negative impact on the fragile arts and culture ecosystem in Hamilton.

10. We urge Council to ensure that **proposed reductions in Council's personnel costs by around $10.4 million per year do not impact the capacity and capability of Council to deliver its arts and cultural services.**

11. **We encourage Council to work with artists and creatives to achieve greater community outcomes in 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 Hamilton thrive.

12. **Creative Waikato** delivers vital wellbeing outcomes to Waikato communities through enhancing the role of arts, culture and creativity in Hamilton and around the region. Their shared framework and community-led strategy *The Waikato Arts Navigator* can assist Council with making effective decisions about arts development in communities. They are a valuable partner for Council to deliver its LTP, and we encourage Council to continue developing this relationship.

Response to draft Long-Term Plan 2024–2034

Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori are a vital part of communities in Hamilton

13. Investment in the creative sector is investment in inclusive and resilient communities, social cohesion, physical and mental wellbeing, and increased economic activity.

14. There is substantial evidence that the creative sector can support Council to meet the opportunities and challenges in its LTP. For example:

    - engagement with arts, culture and creativity positively enhances wellbeing, and means communities are more likely to have strong connections to community, land and place[1]
    - two-thirds of Waikato residents agree the arts contribute positively to our economy, and around six in 10 Waikato residents feel the arts are important in creating a vibrant place to live, and in their community's future[2]
    - over 70 percent of Waikato residents believe arts, culture and creativity is important to the wellbeing of their family and whānau[3]
    - the creative sector contributed $12.9 billion to New Zealand's GDP in 2022.[4]

15. 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. New Zealanders are also increasingly recognising the economic benefits of the arts, and support for public funding of the arts is higher than ever.

---

1 Wellbeing and Arts, Culture and Creativity in the Waikato: Understanding the impact of arts, culture and creativity on the people of the Waikato region. (2022).

2 *New Zealanders and the Arts—Ko Aotearoa me ōna Toi* (2020). Creative New Zealand.

3 *Creative Waikato Toi Waikato* (2022).

4 *Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage* (2023).

16. Creative practices and activities support the wellbeing of all Hamilton residents. *Creativity Every Day* is an example of where Hamilton's creative sector is working hard to ensure arts, culture and creativity is accessible to everyone. An innovative creativity and wellbeing personal development programme run by Creative Waikato, *Creativity Every Day* provides Hamilton workplaces with a framework for building creative skills that are exercised daily to encourage positive productivity and innovative thinking.

17. **Ngā toi Māori** has ritualistic, cultural, historical, communal and spiritual significance for Māori, and is deeply rooted in mātauranga Māori for the benefit of the community. Sixty-five percent of Māori residents in the Waikato say ngā toi is an important way of connecting with their culture, and more than half say it motivates them to learn and kōrero Māori. We know from our research that ngā toi Māori is increasingly embraced by Māori and New Zealanders as a whole.

18. **Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori provide essential infrastructure for strong, prosperous, connected and healthy communities in Hamilton**. This includes community hubs, whare taonga, museums, art centres, festivals, art schools, whare wānanga, galleries, creative skill development workshops, education programmes, residencies, master classes, exhibitions, performances, makers' spaces and internships, among many others.

19. As with other infrastructure such as transport and water, arts and culture **require secure, stable investment from core funders**, including Council, to survive and service the region. The impact of unstable or paused investment could lead to loss of vital arts and culture infrastructure – costing more in the long run as it is harder to rebuild, than to maintain.

20. We know it's a challenging time for New Zealanders and many sectors across the country. The creative sector is no exception. It was one of the hardest hit by COVID-19 and is adversely affected by the current, difficult economic environment.

21. The current outlook for the creative sector is very difficult. Creative New Zealand's *Profile of Creative Professionals* research found the median income for creative professionals is just $37,000, substantially less than the median income for New Zealanders earning a wage or salary ($61,000).[5] Forty-four percent of creative professionals supplement their creative income with other work; the median income from creative pursuits alone is just $19,500 per year. Arts organisations, which rely on a mix of central and local government funding, community/private funding, earned revenue and other support, operate on thin margins and are vulnerable to shocks. With revenue streams under pressure, organisational arts infrastructure remains vulnerable.

22. **Arts, cultural and ngā toi Māori practitioners and organisations are valuable partners** for Council to achieve its broader priorities and vision, by strengthening communities through connection, empowerment and placemaking. They will support Council to effectively respond to current problems, such as storm response/resilience and climate change.

23. Hamilton City Council is a critical investor in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in Hamilton, and we value our shared investment in the region. Ongoing collaboration and co-investment between central and local government is vital for a vibrant and resilient creative sector.

24. As Council decides on its priorities for the LTP, we strongly encourage Council to **ensure its investment in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi is reaching across the wider creative**

[5] *Profile of Creative Professionals* (2023). Creative New Zealand.

ecosystem (artists, creatives, arts communities and arts organisations), to retain its valuable contributions to Hamilton and its communities.

'Our five priorities'

25. We support Council's ongoing committment to its five priorities, and encourage Council to recognise the strong contribution arts, culture and creativity makes to each outcome, particularly:

    - Shaping a central city where people love to be – artistic and cultural activity can play a major role in placemaking and rejuvenating cities to create great places to live
    - Shaping a city where our people thrive – participating in arts and cultural activities contributes to our health and wellbeing, to education and skills development, to our understanding of cultural identity and increases social cohesion
    - Shaping a fun city with lots to do – artistic and cultural activity provides entertainment, enhances personal wellbeing, and is a way to meet new people and learn new skills.

Priority One: Shaping a city that's easy to live in

26. It's fantastic to see Council putting more focus on neighbourhoods having community identity and supporting community spaces across our city. The arts are a powerful tool for community building – they help individuals find support, develop networks and gain a sense of belonging, as well as increasing community cooperation.[6] We encourage Council to work with local creative organisations and practitioners who are well placed to support the creation of a strong sense of community identity.

27. We further encourage Council to ensure that community spaces are accessible to arts practitioners and community-based arts groups, as places where they can make and show their work to audiences. Artistic and cultural activity and expression is also a powerful way to enable diverse communities in Hamilton to share their voice, and shape their city.

28. The creative sector is a vital partner for Council to deliver this priority. The sector has strong, existing relationships with mana whenua, funders, government, businesses and other community groups. A strong relationship between Council and the creative community can support more connected communities in Hamilton.

Priority Two: Shaping a city where our people thrive

29. Investment in the creative sector is investment in thriving communities, including increased economic activity and opportunities, and will support Council to create opportunities for people to thrive in Hamilton Kirikiriroa. Providing Hamiltonians with opportunities to engage with arts and culture can benefit many aspects of their wellbeing.

30. Supported arts organisations and regular arts and culture experiences feed other parts of the local economy, including education, health, trade and enterprise, hospitality, retail and tourism. Strong creative industries create jobs, drive economic growth and attract new businesses. They enhance the reputation of a city or district as a destination to live, visit and invest in.

31. Ngā toi Māori has ritualistic, cultural, historical, communal and spiritual significance for Māori and is deeply rooted in mātauranga Māori for the benefit of the community. Seven out of 10

---

6 *Creative Practice for Youth Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand* (2019). University of Auckland.

Māori agree that ngā toi are an important way of connecting with their culture and identity. Ngā toi ā rohe (the arts of a particular region, iwi, hapū) play a significant role in the protection, preservation and transmission of language, culture, and mātauranga, and express the mana motuhake and unique identity of people of an area, such as iwi and hapū in Kirikiriroa.

32. Investment in ngā toi Māori also supports the revitalisation of te reo Māori and te ao Māori. It grows knowledge and value of the stories, values and places of importance to tangata whenua. Art-making activities connect participants to their whakapapa, tīpuna, manga and awa, aiding wellbeing and a deep sense of belonging.[7]

Priority Three: Shaping a city where people love to be

33. We welcome the commitment to create performance spaces, such as the new regional theatre, and leverage existing central city spaces to **support arts and cultural initiatives**.

34. As a large-scale, high-quality venue, the **Waikato Regional Theatre** presents a valuable opportunity to increase participation in and support access to the arts in Hamilton by supporting creative activity, building audiences and making arts experiences more affordable and accessible.

35. In leveraging existing central city spaces to further support arts and cultural initiatives, we encourage Council to strategically and actively engage with the creative community to:

- work with tourism organisations, arts practitioners and creative organisations to promote upcoming events and shows, and make arts and culture more visible in Hamilton's unique identity
- support the creative community to create works that attract and engage diverse communities
- work with mana whenua to ensure these spaces incorporate ngā toi Māori and reflect the distinctive stories of Kirikiriroa
- ensure these spaces are accessible for Hamilton's diverse communities, especially Deaf and disabled people who participate highly in the arts
- continue to support the existing performing arts infrastructure as the pathway connecting both artists and creatives and audiences.

36. Creative Waikato have developed a performing arts strategy that can support delivery of this work.

Priority Four: Shaping a fun city with lots to do

37. We encourage Council to explore ways to incorporate arts and cultural elements into community spaces. Public art and ngā toi Māori can encourage greater use of public spaces and a greater sense of community pride. The Margaret Mahy Playground in Christchurch is a good example of where this has been successful. Council could explore ways to work with mana whenua to incorporate ngā toi Māori design principles to profile important cultural and historic narratives.

38. It's fantastic to see a commitment to invest in and enhance Waikato Museum and Hamilton Gardens. These are important venues for arts and cultural events in the city, and these

[7] Ōtautahi Creative Spaces Trust (2017).

investments will help to ensure the creative sector can continue to deliver projects and events that enhance the wellbeing of Hamilton residents and visitors.

39. We are heartened to see that Council will host and celebrate city events like the Hamilton Garden Arts Festival. These events foster participation in arts and culture, and support the city's creative sector by providing employment opportunities.

Proposals to reduce costs

40. We are **concerned about the potential long-term and negative impact of Council's proposals to reduce funding for community grants and event sponsorship, and reducing staff roles within Council** for the city's creative communities.

41. Arts and creative organisations and practitioners rely on Council's community grants and event sponsorship to earn income by producing and sharing work with Hamilton's residents, as well as deliver projects that enhance people's connection to culture and their communities. These reductions could have a significant impact on an already fragile ecosystem – from the survival of arts organisations, collectives and groups, wage reductions and people leaving their professions, to people losing opportunities to develop skills and spaces to connect with culture and identity.

42. The funding reductions to community grants would also **disproportionately impact marginalised communities** who rely on Council funding of arts and cultural experiences, including Māori, Pacific peoples, the Rainbow community, young people, migrant communities, and people with disabilities.

43. In response to the proposal to reduce personnel and consultant costs, any loss of capacity and resourcing for Council's delivery of its support for arts and culture would be significant. Experienced and dedicated cultural staff at Council hold long-lasting and meaningful relationships with organisations throughout Hamilton. Their work is essential in strengthening Council's connections with local communities and ability to meet its statutory obligation of enhancing cultural wellbeing.

44. We note that these reductions in spending will also likely impact the arts and cultural organisations who deliver to Council's five priorities. Arts, culture and creativity are vital tools for Council to strengthen communities through connection, empowerment and placemaking, and will support Hamilton through the current challenges it faces by helping build healthy and strong communities.

45. **We encourage Hamilton City Council to undertake careful analysis and research on how these funding reductions would impact the creative sectors before it makes decisions**. Future decisions on any reductions to community services must consider the implications for Hamilton's communities to engage and participate in the arts.

Council is a crucial investor in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi

46. We acknowledge Council is facing significant challenges in drafting its LTP, and needs to balance prudent fiscal management alongside investment in critical infrastructure and the needs of a growing community.

47. Hamilton City Council is a major, and crucial, investor and partner in arts and culture. Many arts organisations receive core investment from Council, often in partnership with central government and community/private funders.

48. Hamilton's arts and culture facilities and services are reliant on local government contributions, as this support is not guaranteed from other sources. Creative New Zealand's own ability to support the sector is under strain, and we have materially less funding to invest from 2024/25 (around 30 percent) than for the previous five years.

49. We know it is a challenging time for New Zealanders and many sectors across the country. The creative sector is no exception. It was one of the hardest hit by COVID-19 and is adversely affected by the current, difficult economic environment. Arts organisations, which rely on a mix of central and local government funding, along with other support and earned revenue, operate on thin margins and are vulnerable to shocks. With revenue streams under pressure, organisational arts infrastructure remains vulnerable.

50. As with other infrastructure such as transport and water, arts and culture requires secure, stable investment from core funders, including Council, to survive and service the region. The impact of unstable or paused investment could lead to loss of vital arts and culture infrastructure – costing more in the long run as it is harder to rebuild, rather than maintain.

51. Shared investment is vital for a resilient and supported arts and cultural sector. **To maintain this collective approach, we encourage Council to ensure funding support for arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori is a core part of its LTP.**

52. Council's investment in arts and culture is vital for creating a strong, autonomous and resilient local arts, culture and ngā toi infrastructure. Strong cultural infrastructure will support Council to successfully and cost-effectively respond to current challenges. As we face a less certain future, the arts have a crucial role in improving social wellbeing by building and regenerating strong, connected and health communities.

Creative partners

53. Creative Waikato continues to work broadly across the Waikato region to support councils, regional enablers and the arts community. Creative Waikato staff are developing strong regional and national connections while contributing to work of national significance such as Creative New Zealand's advocacy work.

54. They have developed a collective vision for supporting and strengthening arts, culture and creativity through the *Waikato Arts Navigator*. This regional arts framework and strategy presents a unique opportunity for Council to further develop its relationship with Creative Waikato. We **encourage you to consider how you can use the *Waikato Arts Navigator*** to support the creative sector and deliver wellbeing outcomes to Hamilton through your LTP.

55. We encourage Council to continue supporting Creative Waikato and enable them to continue to provide leadership, deliver innovative programmes, and grow their connections. They are strong ambassadors for the Waikato at a national level, and we are looking forward to seeing the work this amazing team will produce next.

Creative New Zealand's interest and investment in the arts in Kirikiriroa Hamilton

56. 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.

57. 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*.

58. 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**.

59. We recognise the importance of Hamilton to arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in Aotearoa. For arts that are delivered in the Waikato region, **$1.9 million** of direct financial support was provided by Creative New Zealand in 2022/23. Of this, just over **$1 million** in funding went directly to Hamilton, supporting individual arts projects and arts and cultural organisations.

60. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2022/23, funding of **$470,704** was provided to the Waikato region, which included **$116,580** to Hamilton City Council and your creative communities.

Final thoughts

61. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the LTP. We understand there is considerable pressure on all local councils' budgets and acknowledge your continued commitment to investing in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi as part of the overall investment in your community's wellbeing.

62. We share your aspirations for Kirikiriroa Hamilton and look forward to working with you to realise the potential of arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi to support your community to thrive. Our collective approach will ensure arts, culture and creativity can deliver value to all New Zealanders and to communities throughout Aotearoa.

63. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss this submission further. The key contact person is:

Name: Cara Paterson

Position: Senior Advisor, Advocacy (Local Government)
Kaiwhakamahere Matua Taunaki, Kāwanatanga ā Kainga

Contact: cara.paterson@creativenz.govt.nz

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, nā

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