

17 April 2025

Porirua City Council
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By email: submissions@porirua.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Porirua City Council
Subject: Draft Annual Plan 2025/26
From: Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback on Porirua City Council's draft Annual Plan 2025/26.
2. We thank Council for its ongoing support of arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi, and acknowledge the pressures faced by Council in planning for Porirua's future.
3. Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi are vital parts of developing strong and prosperous cities, and cohesive and healthy communities. 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.
4. Pacific arts are an especially unique and important presence in the region, and we are thrilled to see the ways that the Pacific Strategy, *Ola Kamataga: Beginning of Life*, is already supporting Pacific cultures, arts, languages and stories. We commend Council's hard work to bring the strategy to life.
5. Secure and stable investment from Council in cultural infrastructure, services and activities is vital for a strong, vibrant and resilient arts and culture ecosystem in Porirua. **We strongly encourage Council to retain its investment in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in the Annual Plan**, including the Event Investment Programme. This enables creative communities to continue making valuable contributions to Porirua.
6. We share your aspirations for Porirua 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 ensures arts, culture and creativity can deliver value to all New Zealanders and communities throughout Aotearoa.

Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi Māori are vital parts of local communities

7. 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.

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, including funding from councils, is higher than ever.

8. Research tells us that the arts are good for our communities.
 - 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
 - 61 percent of New Zealanders agree that the arts make an important contribution to community resilience and wellbeing.²
 - The creative sector contributed \$17.4 billion to New Zealand's GDP in 2024.³
9. **Young people, Deaf and disabled, Māori, and Pacific peoples** participate in the arts most frequently, and are more likely to agree that the arts are important to their personal wellbeing. **LGBTQIA+ communities** also participate highly in the arts and need more accessible and inclusive environments to support their engagement.
10. **Pacific arts, culture and creativity** make significant contributions to the cultural, social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Porirua, with a wide range of contemporary and heritage artforms. Pacific peoples are more likely to feel the arts are an important way of connecting with their culture and that the arts support their identity. Pacific communities also participate in the arts more often, with 23 percent participating more than 12 times a year (compared to the national average of 19 percent).
11. We strongly encourage Council to ensure the Annual Plan is retaining the valuable contributions of the creative sector and ngā toi to Porirua and its communities. As with other infrastructure, such as transport and water, arts and culture require secure, stable investment from Council as a core funder to survive and service the region.

Investment in arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi, is investment in prosperous, healthy and vibrant rohe and communities

12. We're heartened to see Council's support for arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi infrastructure and activities in Porirua, especially through *Ola Kamataga: Beginning of Life*. This work is essential to strengthen Porirua's arts and cultural sector, and its contributions to the wellbeing of the city's communities.
13. It's fantastic to see the ways Council is working with local Pacific arts organisations and leaders through *Ola Kamataga*, to empower and strengthen Pacific communities. This includes celebrating and enhancing access to Pacific arts and culture, through events, language weeks and exhibitions that share knowledge and stories at the heart of Porirua communities.
14. Supported arts organisations and regular arts and culture experiences also feed other parts of the creative ecosystem and local economy, including education, health, trade, hospitality, retail and tourism. The creative industries in Porirua create jobs, drive

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* (2023). Creative New Zealand.

³ *Infometrics sector profiles 2024*. Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage.

economic growth and attract new businesses, while enhancing the city's reputation as a destination to visit, live and invest in.

15. In light of this progress, **we do not support the proposed reduction to the Event Investment Programme**. The suggested rates reduction of 0.17 percent to save \$0.17 million, with \$110,000 reduced for events, is likely to have an outsized impact on the organisations that rely on this support to run arts and cultural events in Porirua.
16. While it's good to see that the proposal will not affect funding already allocated for Te Kiwa Nui Festival, we urge Council to ensure it understands the potential impact on the wider arts and cultural ecosystem in Porirua. Arts and cultural organisations operating events in local communities run on very thin margins with funding from multiple sources, and are vulnerable to shocks. The Council's grants, even if relatively modest, offer crucial support for these organisations and the arts and cultural ecosystem in Porirua, enabling successful events such as Creekfest with 20,000 attendees, the African Arts & Culture Festival, and the 2024 Watercolour NZ exhibition.
17. Unstable investment can lead to loss of vital arts and infrastructure. This costs more in the long run, as it's harder to rebuild than to maintain. 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.
18. Porirua has many arts organisations and practitioners creating nationally and regionally renowned work that supports the wellbeing of local communities. The recent exhibitions programme at Pātaka – including *Cry of the Stolen People*, and *Red Wave, Blue Wave* – included excellent examples of high profile, international exhibitions that brought local communities together and highlighted Pacific histories and stories. *Cry of the Stolen People – Black Birding of the Tokelau Islands*, by Porirua-based Tokelauan artists Jack Kirifi, Moses Viliamu and Matthew Lepaio and the late Zac Mateo, strengthened local identity by telling the largely unknown history of Pacific slavery.

Te reo, mātauranga and ngā toi Māori, brought to life by tangata whenua and ringatoi, strengthen communities' sense of belonging and connection and are central to our unique national and regional identities

19. We're heartened to see Council's commitment to supporting, elevating and enabling the future aspirations of Māori through its *Maungaroa 2050 Strategy*.
20. We strongly encourage Council to invest in ngā toi Māori, as it supports many of the Strategy's priorities and objectives, including increasing the visibility and presence of Ngāti Toa and Māori histories, narratives and culture across the city.
21. Ngā toi Māori is increasingly embraced by Māori and New Zealanders as a whole. Fifty-eight percent of Māori and 32 percent of all New Zealanders agree that ngā toi Māori motivates them to kōrero Māori. Seventy-eight percent of Māori agree ngā toi Māori is an important way of connecting with their culture and identity.
22. Success in protecting, revitalising and promoting Māori artforms supports many artists, practitioners and organisations in the region, and positively enhances Porirua's reputation nationally and internationally. Investment in ngā toi Māori also supports the revitalisation of te reo Māori and te ao Māori. It grows knowledge and appreciation of the stories, values and places of importance to tangata whenua. It can also drive demand for more public art, touring work, lively events and festivals.

23. Council's support is a crucial part of ensuring ngā toi is being produced, enjoyed and celebrated. Dedicated funding and leadership of ngā toi Māori in Council supports capacity building, and partnerships with iwi and hapū are valuable ways to build well-resourced, thriving and visible ngā toi Māori practice and Māori cultural institutions.

Local councils play a crucial role in offering stable support for arts, cultural and creative activity and infrastructure that enable communities to thrive

24. We acknowledge Council is facing financial challenges, and needs to balance prudent fiscal management alongside investment in critical infrastructure and the needs of its communities.
25. Council is a critical investor and partner in arts and culture. Many arts organisations and practitioners receive core investment from Council, often in partnership with central government and community and private funders.
26. As with other infrastructure such as transport and water, arts and culture in Porirua need secure, stable support from Council to survive and service the city. 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.
27. The area's arts and culture services are reliant on local government contributions, as this support is not guaranteed from other sources, with Creative New Zealand's own ability to support the sector under strain.
28. Ongoing collaboration between central and local government, and shared investment, is vital for a resilient and supported arts and cultural sector. To maintain this collective approach, **we encourage Council to ensure support for arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi is a core part of its future plans**, including by working with the creative community as well-placed partners to deliver these outcomes for Porirua communities.

Arts, cultural and ngā toi Māori organisations, iwi and hapū can be wonderful collaborators with Council to build strong relationships with communities and create flourishing localities

29. Artists and creatives in Porirua are valuable partners for Council to achieve its priorities and vision, by strengthening communities through connection, empowerment and placemaking.
30. Strong relationships with creative communities and mana whenua fosters new partnerships and collective approaches. Arts organisations and practitioners in Porirua hold valuable relationships with funders, government, non-profits, businesses and other community groups.
31. As an example, Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust, a recent recipient of Creative Communities Scheme funding, run accessible, inclusive and holistic music education programmes. Supported by Creative New Zealand and the Tindall Foundation, among others, the Trust collaborates closely with other chamber music groups around the country to offer tuition and orchestral scholarships for students with diverse backgrounds in the Wellington region.
32. As connectors and innovators, artists and creatives are also uniquely positioned to help Council communicate and deliver on prioritised work across the city, including city centre upgrades, housing, and water services. They are particularly skilled at designing and

delivering innovative, strategic, and cost-effective solutions to challenges, and bringing communities together.

33. We strongly encourage Council to work with local Pacific artists, creatives and arts organisations to successfully deliver outcomes for Porirua and enhance the wellbeing of your communities.

Creative New Zealand's interest and investment in the arts in Porirua

34. 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.
35. 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*.
36. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board Te Puna Tahua. In 2023/24, Creative New Zealand **invested nearly \$79.4 million in the arts**.
37. Creative New Zealand has a dedicated and expert Pacific Arts team who develop multiple strategic partnerships and investment in Pacific arts. This involves supporting arts and culture in Porirua, including:
- the development of the Aniva Residency alongside Porirua City Council, a three-month residency based at Pātaka Art + Museum for LGBTQIA+ and MVPFAFF+ communities. The residency supports creatives to engage and share their work with local Pacific communities and stakeholders. Following a successful 2022 pilot, this residency has been offered in 2023, 2024 and 2025. It is the only artistic residency in the country available specifically to the Pasifika queer community and aligns with our 'access, inclusion and equity' organisational focus.
 - under the Pacific Arts Strategy, Creative New Zealand has made significant investment, funding and support for Pacific arts, culture and creativity in Porirua. These included festival support under the Pasifika Festivals Initiative (2020–2023), Porirua Whānau Center, Wellington Northern Region Polyfest Trust, and Te Kiwa Nui (2022–2023, \$20,000).
38. We recognise the importance of Porirua to arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi in Aotearoa. For arts that are delivered in the Wellington region, **\$11.4 million** of direct financial support was provided by Creative New Zealand in 2023/24. Of this, **\$853,878** in funding went directly to Porirua, supporting individual arts projects and arts and cultural organisations.
39. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2023/24, funding of **\$569,876** was provided to the Wellington region, which included **\$49,080** to Porirua City Council and your creative communities.

Final thoughts

40. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on your Annual Plan.

41. We understand that there's considerable pressure on all local councils' budgets, and are heartened to see your continued commitment to investing in arts, culture and creativity. By working together, and in partnership with creative communities and mana whenua, we can continue to build strong, healthy, prosperous and vibrant communities.
42. 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