

10 May 2021

Wellington City Council
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By email to: policy.submissions@wcc.govt.nz

E te Koromatua, ngā Kaikaunihera mā, tēnā koutou katoa

Submission to: Wellington City Council
Subject: Wellington City Council 10-Year Plan 2021–2031 (the Plan)
From: Creative New Zealand

1. Creative New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on Wellington City Council's 10-year 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 as it makes decisions for the future of the city.
2. We'd be happy to discuss this submission with you further. The key contact person for matters relating to this submission is:
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Key Points

3. **We congratulate Council on its achievements to date since the last 10-Year Plan.** Council has made significant investment in the city's arts and culture infrastructure to ensure venues and community facilities are fit for purpose. The strengthening of the St James Theatre, construction of Tākina, pop-up libraries, temporary Royal New Zealand Ballet building and Waitohi Johnsonville Community Hub are all excellent examples.
4. **It's great to see Council's ongoing commitment to supporting Wellington arts communities through the development of Aho-Tini 2030.** Creative New Zealand will make a separate submission on the Strategy, and we encourage Council to ensure the 10-Year Plan shows tangible recognition of Aho-Tini's vision and direction.
5. **We strongly support Council's commitment to undertaking strengthening work to reopen the Central Library.** A modern, fit-for-purpose library that is centrally located is an essential

part of a vibrant, prosperous and inclusive city. We encourage Council to deliver a facility and services that are ambitious and progressive.

6. **As Council evaluates further venue upgrades, we encourage you to explore how you might enable greater access to spaces for arts communities to make, rehearse and perform their work.** Beyond the current venue developments underway, there's increasing need for accessible and affordable spaces where artists and practitioners can share their work with audiences.

Draft Long-Term Plan 2021–2031

Community Outcomes and Priority Objectives

7. It's great to see Council's community outcomes aligned with the four wellbeings, and a specific community outcome for cultural wellbeing. Aho-Tini 2030 is an important step towards delivering to this outcome of 'an innovative, inclusive and creative city'.
8. Arts communities are well-placed partners to help Council deliver wellbeing outcomes to Wellington's diverse communities. We encourage Council to also recognise the strong contribution investment in arts and culture makes to all four wellbeings. Artistic and cultural activity attracts investment, creates cohesive and connected communities and can contribute to finding innovative solutions to climate challenges.
9. The Plan outlines six priority objectives. It's fantastic to see specific mention made of arts and culture through the objective 'the city has resilient and fit-for-purpose community, creative and cultural spaces'. These facilities not only provide vital spaces for arts communities to make, share and present their work, but also foster knowledge, inquiry and creativity. They are a key vehicle through which councils can support the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of their communities.
10. We welcome Council's commitment to strong partnerships with mana whenua as another of the Plan's priority objectives. As one of its principles, partnership is essential for upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and for delivering Council's vision of becoming bilingual by 2040.
11. We note priority objectives two and three (housing and transport) are also valuable to Wellington arts communities. Affordable housing is essential for Wellington to attract and retain creative talent, and efficient public transport ensure audiences are able to access the city's artistic and cultural offerings.

Decision 5 – Te Ngākau Civic Precinct, Council Office Buildings

12. We support option one or option two for Te Ngākau Civic Precinct. Both options would provide opportunities for the National School of Music to be housed within the building, and present opportunities. It would be good for Council to keep in mind that:
 - partnering with private investment (option one) is a significant cost saving, which could provide opportunity for Council to direct more investment towards the activation and operation of the buildings (eg, investment to support creative activity in the newly formed facilities)
 - the base build proposal (option two) would have the buildings fit-for-use more quickly, and would retain existing heritage buildings.

13. We encourage Council to engage closely with arts communities to determine which option will best serve Wellington residents.

Decision 6 – Central Library

14. It's great to see Council prioritising the reopening of Te Matapihi Central Library. We support option one for the Central Library, to undertake high-level remediation strengthening now so that Council can open the building in 2025. A modern, fit-for-purpose library that is centrally located is an essential part of a vibrant, prosperous and inclusive city, and it's important to prioritise reopening this space as soon as possible.
15. The reactivation of the Te Matapihi space also provides a unique opportunity for Council to think about how might develop and enable Wellington's strong literary community, and provide spaces that are accessible to arts communities. We encourage Council to consider:
 - how it might continue working with the literary community to progress the development of a Literary Hub – this Hub could be an opportunity to share resources, amplify Wellington's reading and writing communities, and develop the library into a central home for reading and literature
 - whether it could partner with the literary community to programme and activate the space through projects, events and residencies
 - whether there's an opportunity to work with mana whenua to identify how the library can grow the broader public's understanding of and engagement with local stories and histories, mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori
 - how to ensure library facilities include spaces that are accessible to artists and community-based arts groups, where they can make and show their work to audiences.
16. We note that the pop-up libraries Council has established in the central city have been well-utilised, and Council may also wish to consider whether there's value in retaining pop-ups in addition to a centralised location.

Community Infrastructure Investments

17. We welcome Council's recognition of the need to invest in community infrastructure to support residents as the city grows. We encourage Council to ensure arts communities are well engaged throughout the development of Council's spatial plan, which may change the mix of community assets. Reviewing community infrastructure investments is also an opportunity to activate focus area three of Aho-Tini 2030, 'Aho Whenua – our city as a stage'. It would be good to consider:
 - the importance of communities having opportunities for face-to-face engagement, particularly for building social cohesion and bridging differences
 - the location of services and facilities to ensure they are accessible to the communities they are intended to serve
 - how any leasing or partnership arrangements may result in changes to the costs of using these facilities (since smaller community-based arts groups and organisations would likely struggle to keep up with cost increases)
 - whether any of the new spaces developed could support arts communities by providing spaces where they can make and show their work to audiences

- whether any former spaces that Council may look to deploy could be repurposed to provide vital space for arts communities to make, share and present their work.

Venues Strengthening and Upgrades

18. It's positive to see work continuing on the St James Theatre and the Town Hall. The availability of these venues will have a significant impact on the arts sector once completed. They provide high-quality spaces that can grow and develop audiences, attract investment, increase economic activity, and further strengthen the city's tourism offering.
19. We welcome Council's planning to determine which other venues also require upgrades, and encourage Council to work closely with arts communities to ensure any developments or upgrades are in line with the needs of those who use the facilities. In particular, it is important to ensure that these venues are affordable both to arts organisations and groups, as well as to the new and diverse audiences that they and the city wish to attract.

Statements of Service Provision

Rangapū Māori/Mana Whenua – Māori and mana whenua partnerships

20. We strongly support Council's focus on further developing and strengthening partnerships with Māori and mana whenua. In addition to ensuring that community events and engagements incorporate a Māori cultural perspective for the city, we encourage Council to consider how it might also support a 'by Māori, for Māori' approach to community events.

Whakatairanga Tāone / Tautoko ā Pākihi – City promotions and business support

21. We encourage Council to continue providing support for high-quality arts and cultural events, and to work closely with arts communities in the design and delivery of these events to uphold Wellington's reputation as the Creative Capital.

Ngohe Toi, Ahurea Hoki – Arts and cultural activities

22. We welcome the development of the Aho-Tini 2030 strategy, and applaud Council's leadership and ongoing commitment to supporting Wellington's arts communities. Following the consultation period, we urge Council to consider two main areas.
 - How it will partner and collaborate with arts communities to deliver the Strategy (ie, what will be delivered by Council, what could be commissioned and what could be delivered by partners? How can Council use the strategy as a mechanism for supporting and enabling existing work?).
 - What additional resource will be needed to delivery to the Strategy's focus areas (eg, whether some funding provision for core work and operational support is better able to support the people and pathways focus areas than solely project-based funding).
23. We strongly support Council's proposal of a \$300,000 grants fund for non-Council event organisers to apply for Living Wage events. It's great to see recognition that providing a living wage is necessary for the city to attract and retain talented professionals.

Tautoko Hāpori – Community Support

24. We'd encourage Council to consider whether there's an opportunity to involve arts communities in the Te Kainga programme for housing (ie, how might this programme support the city to retain talent by providing space for creative practitioners to live and work?). We

strongly encourage Council to involve and consider arts communities in its work on city housing provision and proactive development.

25. There's a large number of community facility upgrades proposed over the next 10 years. Again, we'd encourage Council to work closely with arts communities to consider how these facilities might provide vital spaces to make and present work, and how arts communities might help Council to deliver wellbeing outcomes to the wider community through these facilities.

Creative New Zealand's interest in the arts in Wellington

26. 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.
27. We recognise the importance of Wellington to the arts in New Zealand. For arts that are delivered in Wellington specifically, we provided **\$9.74 million** of direct financial support in 2019/20. Our overall support includes the funding of individual arts projects as well as over 17 significant Wellington-based arts organisations and programmes. These include theatre companies, festivals, art galleries, dance companies, publishers and residencies.
28. Under the Creative Communities Scheme, we also fund territorial authorities directly to support local arts activities. In 2019/20, funding provided to Wellington City Council under the Scheme totalled **\$432,834**.
29. 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



Stephen Wainwright
Tumu Whakarae
Chief Executive