

From: Jeremy Mayall <jeremy@creativewaikato.co.nz>
Sent: Monday, 28 April 2025 8:00 am
To: haveyoursay
Subject: Annual Plan Submission
Attachments: Waitomo DC submission - Annual Plan 2025.pdf

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

[Block sender](#) | [Report](#)

Kia ora,
Please find attached a document in submission to the consultation on the Waitomo Annual Plan.
This is an organisational submission on behalf of Creative Waikato.

Ngā mihi nui,

-J

--

Dr. Jeremy Mayall (he/him)
CEO

021 967 067 11 Garden Place
0508 427 892 Hamilton 3240



[Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#)

Submission by: Creative Waikato

This submission is made in response to **Waitomo District Council's Annual Plan 2025-26** with specific reference to:

- **Draft Rates Remission Policy 2025**
- **Revenue and Financing Policy 2025, and**
- **Proposed Fees and Charges 2025-26**

1. **Council's activities**

- Creative Waikato would firstly like to thank Waitomo District Council for the work it does in its district. We appreciate the balance council has to make between implementing fees and charges as an important contributor to council's finances, and also ensuring any review is fair and represents the right portion of its total revenue.
- We also acknowledge the work council has done in its rates remission and revenue policies, to ensure fair and equitable outcomes for its communities.
- Our recent 'Creativity Lives in Waikato' campaign highlighted some incredible artists living and contributing to the social and artistic fabric of your district.
- Creative Waikato looks forward to strengthening a strategic partnership with Waitomo District Council to achieve our shared outcomes regarding wellbeing in the district.

2. **Strategic initiatives**

Creative Waikato has led key strategic initiatives which have contributed to long-term impact in the areas of arts, culture and creativity in the Waikato region.

- **Waikato Arts Navigator 2023** - A shared framework, including a vision and strategy, for supporting and strengthening our arts and culture in the region. It guides planning and decision making.
- **Waikato Creative Infrastructure Plan 2024** - A high-level update on the Waikato Creative Infrastructure report originally prepared in 2014.
- **Performing Arts Strategy 2023** - A strategy informed by the performing arts sector which builds on the strengths of local performing arts activity and connects with the new Waikato Regional Theatre.
- **Wellbeing and Arts, Culture and Creativity in the Waikato 2022** - Social impact reports that assess the impact of arts, culture and creativity on the people of the Waikato region.

Additional Strategic Outcomes: Maintaining relationships with Creative New Zealand, Ministry of Culture and Heritage, NZ Music Commission, Regional Arts Network Aotearoa, and Te Ora Auaha to support positive outcomes through funding and support for Hamilton and Waikato artists.

3. **Specific comments on the Draft Rates Remission Policy 2025**

Creative Waikato provides the following comments:

Remissions for Community Organisations, Clubs and Societies

- We commend council for recognising 'not for profit' community organisations, recreational clubs and societies in the Waitomo District.

- We acknowledge rates remissions including, but not limited to, those ‘not for profit’ organisations which exist primarily for the provision of emergency services, community halls, museums, art galleries, marae, churches and pre-schools.
- We specifically acknowledge the support for *‘the development of arts and culture in the Waitomo District’*.

Remission for Organisations Providing Care for the Elderly

- We acknowledge support for those organisations that provide facilities and services that care for and enable the elderly to reside in the Waitomo District.
- We commend council’s commitment for Waitomo to be a district which values its older people and promotes their meaningful contribution to the wider community, and to support the provision of a range of accessible, safe and affordable housing for the elderly.
- We recognise council’s acknowledgement of the PioPio Retirement Village and its role in the Piopio community.

Remission of Rates on Māori Freehold Land

- We acknowledge the objectives of this policy to:
 - Support the use of the land by the owners for traditional purposes
 - Recognise and support the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land
 - Avoid further alienation of Māori freehold land
 - Support the owners to develop or convert unproductive and unoccupied land for economic use
 - Ensure the fair and equitable collection of rates for all sectors of the community, recognising that certain Māori owned lands have particular conditions, features, ownership structures, or other circumstances that make it appropriate to provide relief from rates.
- We specifically acknowledge council’s position that all land that was changed to general land as part of the Māori Affairs Amendment Act 1967 (although was subsequently repealed, some properties have remained general land on the title) is considered to be Māori freehold land for the purposes of this remission policy.
- It is vital that we embrace a Te Ao Māori lens in the way we operate and our collective vision for a shared future. This is an integral framework within the Waikato Arts Navigator, our regional arts strategy. Recognising that land is a taonga tuku iho, we must acknowledge the wellbeing of tangata whenua and understand things from a Te Ao Māori perspective as being central to our understanding of wellbeing in Aotearoa.

Remission of Rates for Cases of Financial Hardship

- We acknowledge the objective of this policy to provide relief for residential ratepayers and ‘not for profit’ community organisations experiencing extreme hardship.
- Given that employment in the arts and creative sectors is mostly cyclical and/or inconsistent, it is difficult for people working in those sectors to maintain a regular wage, and if they do, it is lower than average.

- Taking such circumstances into account is important.

Remission of Rates for New Businesses

- We acknowledge the objective of this policy to promote employment and economic development within the district by assisting new businesses.
- Specifically the consideration of remission of rates to a new business where that business supports community development, as well as having regard to development that protects or retains cultural aspects of the district e.g., maintains and protects a heritage building.
- We support development that adds improved, new and/or visibly attractive infrastructure or buildings to the district where it would be commercially otherwise unviable to do so.
- Opportunities to embed cultural heritage and/or narrative within hard infrastructure (facilities/venues) can further enhance economic development for both residents and visitors to the district.

4. Specific comments on Draft Revenue and Financing Policy 2025

Creative Waikato provides the following comments:

- We acknowledge the importance of council in providing **leadership and governance** of the district. We encourage council to engage with Creative Waikato on plans and projects that can provide civic, cultural and creative solutions for its communities.
- Council acknowledges that **community development** has broad district benefit and should accordingly be considered as such. Safe communities, making grants to the community, provision of service contracts and youth engagement are vital to enhancing the social fabric of Waitomo District.
- **District Promotions** are also essential to attract visitors to the district as well as enhance pride in residents. We acknowledge the success of events such as the Great NZ Muster which showcases lots of arts and cultural events such as music and dance.
- **Economic development** and supporting and promoting business-related programmes and activities is also integral to the growth and culture of Waitomo District.

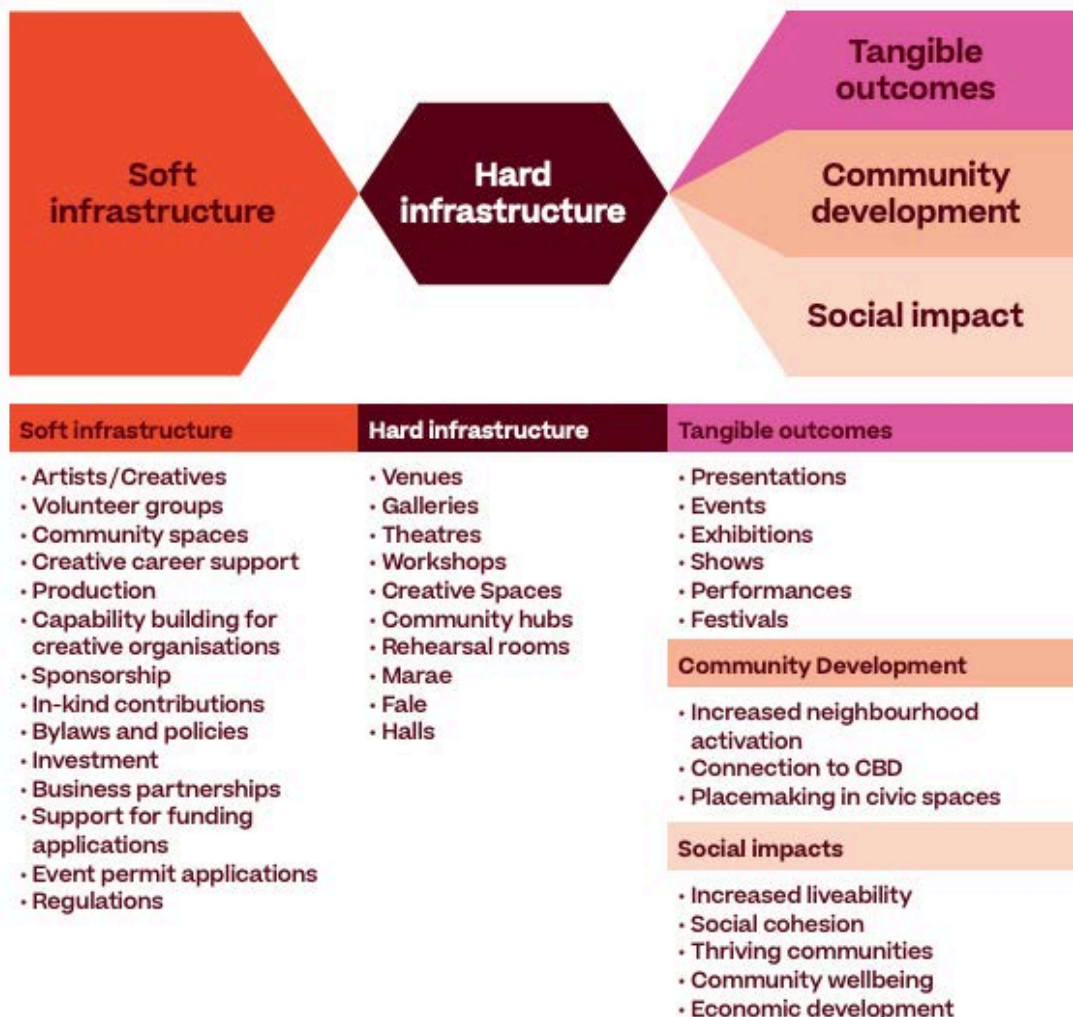
5. Specific comments on Proposed Fees & Charges 2025-26

- We acknowledge that fees & charges are necessary to ensure the costs of providing council services are recovered by those who use them.
- We also acknowledge that for those services for which there is an increase and are limited to less than 3% i.e., streets stalls and mobile shops, hall hire (Les Munro Centre and community halls) parks and reserves (community group hire) library rentals and equipment hireage.
- These services enable economic development, social connectedness and cohesion. Any fees imposed must be offset by these benefits.

6. Importance of soft infrastructure - people and services

The Waikato Creative Infrastructure Plan 2025 provides an initial high-level scan of hard and soft infrastructure in the Waikato, building on an initial report that was developed in 2014.

- Soft infrastructure is associated with the development of human and social capital integral to community-building and the promotion of ‘high quality’ living¹. It is the mahi and expertise required to activate hard infrastructure. Forms of soft infrastructure include programmes and facilitators in libraries, museums and other community resources.
- Whilst hard infrastructure (facilities, venues etc) is important, it is the people (soft infrastructure) that are most important. Supporting those people and services which activate hard infrastructure contributes to thriving communities.
- We encourage council to continue to support soft infrastructure that provides community service, whether this is existing or new infrastructure.



¹ Brail, S., Mizrokhi, E. and Ralston, S. (2017) ‘Examining the transformation of Regent Park, Toronto’, in: N. Wise and J. Clark (eds). *Urban Transformations: Geographies of Renewal and Creative Change* pp. 177-194, London: Routledge in Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research ‘Infrastructure, placemaking and sustainability’ A Report for Places for People (May 2020)

https://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/files/documents/DownloadTemplate_49.pdf

7. Investing in communities and arts, culture and creativity

Creative Waikato encourages council to continue to enable and support soft infrastructure (people and services), which provides tangible community outcomes such as community cohesion, connection to place, land and self.

We thank the council for the opportunity to make this submission.

Submitted by:

Sam Cunnane
Board Chair

Dr. Jeremy Mayall
CEO

On behalf of Creative Waikato
hello@creativewaikato.co.nz