

## ŌCB submission - DCC 9 year plan

Ōtepoti Community Builders is a volunteer-run network of organisations, groups and people from across the community sector. We support grassroots, community-led development in the city, elevate community voices and leadership, and share knowledge of best practice.

We heartily congratulate the Council for their foresight and courage in supporting the development of Te Taki Haruru. We acknowledge and thank mana whenua and mātāwaka Māori for their strategic, visionary thinking and their generosity in sharing this. The intention statements, goals, principles and values in Taki Haruru provide a strong guide for decision-making in Ōtepoti over the course of this 9 year plan and beyond. We are confident that the DCC will have strong support from the community sector in implementing this strategy, and that many community organisations will integrate Taki Haruru into their own thinking and planning over the coming decades. We look forward to being part of this journey.

During the engagement period for the proposed 9 year plan, we held a hui on community funding attended by more than 100 people. Mana whenua, grassroots groups, social service agencies, and local, regional and national government and funders were all represented. One of the highlights of our hui – and a reason why people return – is the value of connections between those present and the opportunities to build relationships, explore collaborations and learn more about each other and our mahi. We would like to acknowledge the councillors who attended and spoke – Mayor Jules Radich and Councillors Chris Garey, Carmen Houlahan, Marie Laufiso and Steve Walker. This was a significant opportunity to engage with a broad cross-section of the community during the long term planning process, and the community has a clear sense of who shows up and walks alongside them.

Through our research, networking and relationships, we know that the social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing of Ōtepoti Dunedin depends on well-resourced community and arts sectors. The work that our agencies, trusts, place-based groups, festivals and organisations do is essential. It builds strong, resilient communities, ensures our young people thrive, and creates opportunities for celebration and hope. However, too often this work is under-resourced and those who are closest to the flaxroots are marginalised or not heard when the DCC makes significant decisions.

Currently, a grants review is underway without representation or input from the arts or community sectors, the place-based fund has been frozen, a strategic refresh is underway with limited public involvement, and many of the things that have had strong community backing over recent years have been pulled from the 9 year plan. It is difficult for community groups to plan or operate with any certainty in this environment, and the impacts are already being felt.

We ask the Council to make its grants review process transparent and open, to increase the funding pools for the community and arts sectors annually to account for CPI and other economic factors, and to recommit to the previously agreed increase for the place-based fund, along with an annual CPI adjustment (at minimum).

As a community network, it is difficult to make sense of the decisions that inform the 9 year plan. It is unclear what vision is being enacted through the proposed plan, what values are being met, and whose needs are being served. Overall, it appears that community-centred work has been deprioritised in favour of mainstream and commercial interests. How is this Council enacting its own strategic frameworks through this 9 year plan? How are its long term work plans and budgets giving life to the Social Wellbeing, Ara Toi and Economic Development strategies, Te Ao Tūroa, Te Taki Haruru and the Zero Carbon Plan?

We acknowledge that significant investment in the city's 3 Waters and transport infrastructure is needed over coming years, and that this cost profoundly shapes the proposed budgets and planned activity. However, there seems to have been less coherent thinking about how to build cultural, social and community infrastructure and invest in the facilities and opportunities that our people need to thrive. Over recent years, community organisations have seen and promoted opportunities to develop youth spaces, performing arts infrastructure, community hubs and more, but these haven't progressed effectively. We encourage the Council to improve its ability to build effective collaborations and resource community-led initiatives so that more of these opportunities may be realised.

We also urge the Council not to shy away from its commitments to climate change action, the performing arts, community housing, public toilets, active transport and more. The lack of follow through in these areas is contributing to a sense of community disappointment and disillusionment in the Council's direction. We implore you to be a council that stands for accountability, vision and a legacy we can all be proud of.