



Dunedin Youth Council

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Submission to the Dunedin City Council's Long Term Plan – Dunedin Youth Council

To: Dunedin City Council
From: Dunedin Youth Council
Date: 29/4/2025

Subject: Youth-Centered Investments in Dunedin's Long Term Plan

Kia ora koutou,

On behalf of the Dunedin Youth Council (DYC), we would like to submit our thoughts and ideas on what we believe should be included in the Dunedin City Council's (DCC) Long Term Plan (LTP) to better support young people in our community.

1. Youth Hubs and Accessible Youth Spaces

We believe that youth hubs and youth spaces are essential for creating safe, welcoming, and accessible places where young people can meet, engage, and participate in activities. These spaces should be designed to support the social and emotional well-being needs of rangatahi but also provide space for all youth to participate in arts, culture, hobbies, interests and skills development while providing centralised spaces to access resources. Some examples of Youth Spaces in other towns and cities are listed below.

Auckland - <https://tetuhi.art/youth-space-at-botany-town-centre/>

Christchurch - <https://www.youthhubchch.org.nz/>

Wellington -

<https://wellington.govt.nz/community-support-and-resources/resources-and-facilities/community-centres/locations/central-city-youth-hub>

Hamilton -

<https://hamilton.govt.nz/your-council/news/community-environment/youth-hub-opening-kicks-off-crime-prevention-fund-initiatives>

Dunedin needs spaces like these, where young people can get together, learn new skills, access support and services, and just hang out in an environment that's comfortable and accessible. We also want to highlight the importance of accessibility – and believe that while there should be a central youth hub, there should also be investment across the city so youth spaces are available in multiple locations and accessible via public transport, so that all young people, regardless of where they

live, have access to places and spaces where they can connect with peers and feel as though they belong.

2. Youth Volunteering and Work Experience Opportunities

There should be more volunteer and work experience opportunities for young people across the city. For example, we suggest that DCC set up a youth-focused volunteer program at places like libraries, the Civic Centre, Moana Pool, and the Dunedin Public Art Gallery (DPAG), Toitū and the Otago Museum where young people can gain experience, develop skills including Civics based skills (In addition to what it offers via the DYC), and feel more connected to their community. This would also help bridge the gap for those who might struggle to find employment but are eager to contribute and learn.

3. Youth Engagement in Planning and Decision-Making

We believe that youth voices should be actively involved in decision-making processes, especially when it comes to planning for the future of the city. We recommend that the DCC engage more with the Dunedin Youth Council and other youth groups before planning new developments or community events. This ensures that the needs and wants of young people are taken into account and that we have spaces and opportunities that actually appeal to us.

Also, we'd like to see youth inclusion considered in all community events, making sure they are designed in a way that is engaging and relevant to young people. Youth-friendly events should be part of DCC's planning, ensuring they reflect the interests and needs of our generation. (please also see Youth Led Funding)

4. Youth Led Funding, Facility Upgrades, Accessibility and Improvements

As young people who live in Dunedin, we think it's important to enable youth centred and youth led kaupapa within the city so young people feel valued and included, dedicated youth funding from the DCC which is granted in collaboration with a youth panel and youth sector experts would ensure that events, activities, venues and services truly catered to the needs of the youth community. We see that in this draft plan there is no additional budget specifically targeted at youth. We would also like to see updates and improvements of some of the city's older facilities. For example, Moana Pool is a popular place for young people could use some upgrades to make it more modern and accessible, considering offering free or low entrance fee access some or all of the time to youth and low income whānau would also ensure their is more equitable access.

5. Funding for Diverse communities and people in Ōtepoti

Ōtepoti is a very diverse community, with many ethnicities, cultures, nationalities, migrants, refugees etc calling it home. However, we believe that there is a lack in the showcasing of ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds. Inputting better and more funding/ grants for different communities, cultural organisations and institutions will allow the implementation of diverse cultural festivities in order to make Ōtepoti a

more diverse community. This would also allow for connections to be made within the youth of Ōtepoti and the wider community.

5. Environmental Sustainability

While we understand that the long-term plan may have certain environmental goals, we were disappointed to see that the council has removed its originally intended investment carbon-zero policy from the nine-year plan. Climate change is a huge issue for young people, and we believe that Dunedin should continue to lead the way in environmental sustainability to ensure a better future for all.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we ask the Dunedin City Council to consider the following key points in the LTP:

Creation and maintenance of youth hubs and youth spaces that are accessible, welcoming, and diverse.

Investment in volunteer and work experience opportunities for young people at DCC-run facilities like libraries and pools.

Establishment of a youth grants fund to support youth-led events, services and initiatives.

Establishment of a Diverse communities and people grants fund to create inclusion and visibility of diverse communities.

Enhanced youth engagement in planning and decision-making processes.

Upgrades and reduced entrance fees for youth and low income whānau to Moana Pool.

Continuation of strong climate action policies and support for a carbon-zero future.

We believe that these investments will help create a Dunedin that is more inclusive, vibrant, and supportive of young people. We appreciate your consideration of our submission and look forward to seeing these ideas reflected in the Long Term Plan.

Ngā mihi nui,
Dunedin Youth Council