

Hamilton is at the cusp of an exciting opportunity, an opportunity that will not be grasped by a business as usual approach. Making a great city requires boldness and imagination. **The Creativity and Identity Strategy** responds to this and is an example of seeing the world afresh. What makes our city vibrant? What are our stories? How do we share them? How do we foster creativity and innovation? The potential of Hamilton is huge and, now more than ever, we have the means and desire to fulfill it. We invite you to engage in the discussion and to actively contribute to making **Hamilton** a great city.

Expanding the experience



rethinking hamilton

“City making is a complex art; it is not a formula. There is no simplistic, ten point plan that can be mechanically applied to guarantee success in an eventuality. But there are some strong principles that can help send good city-making on its way” **Charles Landry**

Charles Landry is regarded as an international authority on city futures and the use of culture in city revitalisation. With the support of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, we were fortunate to secure his services. He is highly sought after on the international circuit and in much demand as a lecturer, speaker and advisor to governments, national and regional authorities, funding agencies and a wide range of non-government sector organisations.

In July 2007, a group of key business and creative strategists were invited to engage with internationally renowned creative thinker, Charles Landry, in a conversation about Hamilton. It was a rich ideas-generating environment for a mix of minds from business, industry, Tainui, government, education and the creative sector.

They shared their local perspectives on Hamilton’s urban landscape and discussed ways of rising to the challenge of finding uniquely Hamilton ways to foster innovation and creativity in the city.

Some key themes emerged. Central to each of these themes is

the concept of Hamilton striving to be a city that introduces and explains itself – communicating in a way that demonstrates layers of depth, where the intent is grasped instantly. Its spaces and places resonate with and give rise to meaning. Through our natural and built environment, the city reflects who we are, where we have come from and what we aspire to.

The Creativity and Identity Strategy is a visioning document –stretching our thinking to a new mindset. It acknowledges that creating a great city requires a sophisticated, bold and imaginative approach.

**Creativity is a journey, not a destination.**

The Strategic Think Tank comprised:

Think Tank

- Mark Servian (performance art)
- Gareth Schott (new media)
- Heidi Mardon (sustainability)
- Chris Williams (advertising)
- Mandy Scott (hospitality)
- Cheryl Reynolds (creative industries)
- Ata Te Kanawa (publishing)
- Doug Sutton (education)
- Dame Cheryl Sotheran (creative industries)
- Venetia Sherson (journalism)
- Tom Roa (Tainui)
- Samuel Walsh (music and entertainment)
- Kate Vusoniwailala (arts and culture)
- Philip Burton (communications)
- Mayor Bob Simcock (local government)

# Seeing the world afresh

**This strategy takes a fresh perspective on Hamilton. It marks an attitudinal change to a city that is vibrant, energetic and says YES instead of no.**

Hamilton's attitude is increasingly metropolitan. We are changing the way we look at things and the way we think about our city. The strategy captures this momentum. Changing our frame of reference, it infuses a creative flavour into everything we do.

With its rapidly growing population, Hamilton now has many choices and opportunities open to it. Events like the 2010 World Rowing Cup and the 2011 World Rugby Cup are opportunities to showcase Hamilton. We want to use these opportunities, and any others we choose to grasp, to demonstrate this transformation.

The Creativity and Identity strategy will transform the city with a number of projects.

4  
40  
400  
4

4 themes  
40 projects  
400 days  
4 years

We have a target of completing 40 innovative projects over 4 years. Some of these will focus on the short-term '400 days' and the remainder longer term '4 years'. This is the first step on our journey. This process allows time for ideas to bubble, for building energy and engagement ...and re-engagement.

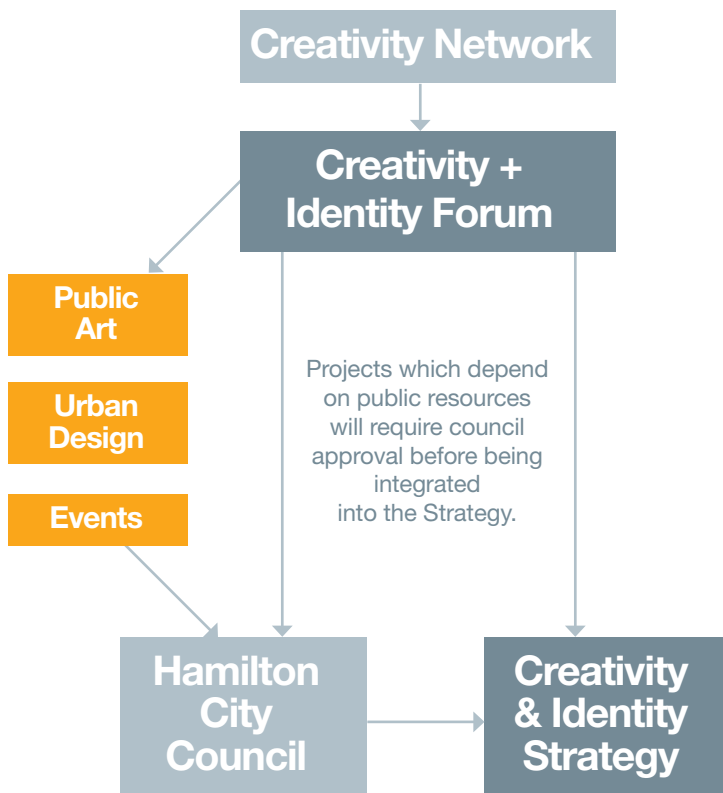
We will monitor the success of the strategy and report on the projects that bring it to life.

**Hamilton feels like a place ready to happen**

On-going debate and discussion is essential in helping to maintain an innovative perspective. To realise this a 'Creativity Network' will be established with the aim of generating project ideas.

# Nurturing the creative factor

## PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS



This network will include a wide range of people; those who have already been involved in the strategy thinking and those who are keen to become part of discussions about Hamilton and its potential. The Creativity Network will meet at least quarterly to discuss ideas and identify projects, partners and funding opportunities. This approach will ensure that the strategy is kept alive and current.

The leadership developed in the Strategic Think Tank will be channelled through the establishment of an on-going 'Creativity + Identity Forum'. Harnessing the creative energy of various sectors, this forum will provide valuable project development input and be responsible for endorsing a selection of 40 projects which communicate the aspirations of the strategy.

This forum will play a key role in adding value, identifying synergies and applying a consistent approach to project evaluation. This expertise is derived from their shared understanding gained from working with Charles Landry and their in-depth knowledge of the strategy concepts, theme areas and their relationship to Hamilton. Projects endorsed by the Forum will have potential to lever greater support and funding.

As a city strategy, we hope to stimulate the imagination of a wide range of individuals and organisations. In fact, leadership from across the city will be essential to initiate, champion, and fund these projects. There is a shared responsibility between council and those involved in creative sectors to make the most of opportunities.



# is it good enough for hamilton?

## core principles

### Everything is an opportunity for imagination and innovation

- > realising that things do not have to be the way they are
- > using a sense of creativity to turn things on their head
- > embracing ever evolving innovation
- > a place that engages the imagination our people and our visitors

### The city introduces and explains itself

- > the city is a communication device. It talks to you of its history, how it functions and of its aspirations for the future
- > a city 'with connectedness', which provides opportunities for communication and where community evolves from these conversations.

### Leadership dares to be brave and inclusive

- > leadership is common property
- > marrying long term views with courageous decisions

### The direction of the journey is from edge to the centre of creativity

- > escalating Hamilton's global visibility
- > a creative city without boundaries

### Hamilton now has choices and can be selective

- > it plans with foresight 30 years ahead
- > we now ask 'is it good enough for Hamilton'?
- > a city with strategy, growth and style

### Its future goes with the grain of its past

- > a city with a future that also has reflection
- > we embrace our cultural heritage

### We are enticed to fall in love with Hamilton

[ attract and grow talent ]



# attracting and growing

1

## proposition 1

As we work to develop new strategies for our future, we need to emphasise aspects of our city that will make it more attractive to talented workers. The creativity and talent inherent in the city's workforce will help shape its economic opportunities.

It will be essential for Hamilton to have places where talented people interact in stimulating environments that encourage open thought, self-expression, new ideas and experimentation.

Hamilton's youthful population and our tertiary oomph will create a powerful gravitational pull for other young people to sustain our creative gene pool.

### Hamilton is a seeding ground for success, a place...

- which backs winners that reinforce our strengths
- where people dare to experiment
- which fosters intellectual property and ensures its dissemination into our core industries
- creates ladders of opportunity for the young and talented
- is grounded and aware of itself and its possibilities
- that celebrates our people who find success elsewhere and finds bridges for them to contribute back
- provides accessibility to venues and space to allow people to think and act creatively

## project expectations

A good idea is more than just a checklist of parts, and each project will have its own challenges and opportunities which must be explored as part of the Creativity and Identity Forum process. However, projects designed to communicate iconically about this theme should demonstrate some of the following elements:

- provides spaces and events which allow creative people to showcase their talent
- promotes and celebrates success in the creative sector, both nationally and internationally
- provides opportunities, infrastructure and support for talented individuals to climb the ladder of creative development
- builds social capital and recognises economic development spin-offs
- contributes to a diverse and tolerant environment
- recognises art and culture as an investment in the city to create lifestyle
- removes barriers to attract talent and allow greater participation in the creative industries
- fosters partnerships between industry and education sectors
- creates an environment to attract higher value-added industries
- is relevant to the city's youth



# talent

[ creates ladders of opportunity for the young and talented ]

[ enhancing the aesthetic experience ]



# enhancing

## proposition 2

Our city is a 'living work of art' where everyone is engaged in creating spaces, interactions, and an aesthetic that inspires and motivates. The urban form recognizes our heritage whilst encouraging a contemporary response that celebrates our innovation and diversity.

We live in an 'urban village', where we enjoy the best of both worlds: the diversity, choice and independence of the urban city and the comfort, accessibility and familiarity of the village. We want to have the quiet tree lined street with quick access to global markets. We desire a place of repose as well as a place of activity. When developing buildings, streets and other hardware, the real focus is not on the physical objects but on the human relations.

### As Hamilton grows it retains and enhances a sense of the urban village, a place:

- where our rich cultural history is translated into our built environment.
- where signs and clues tell people where they are and recount our stories in an innovative and engaging way
- which builds sustainability into urban form, reflecting the connections between the land and the city
- where public institutions and facilities are challenged to become places of imaginative civic redesign and engagement
- our iconic cultural facilities inspire and challenge us and galvanize our sense of place and identity.
- that encourages the chance encounter, where casual contact can flourish to generate new possibilities and development
- where our central city provides rich and diverse culinary, entertainment and arts experiences that generate vitality and discourse
- where public art functions as a conversation piece to foster human exchange
- that fosters a culture for creativity through an innovative and fresh administration of the rules and regulations of the city
- where areas of special character are recognised and given a lasting future



### project expectations

A good idea is more than just a checklist of parts, and each project will have its own challenges and opportunities which must be explored as part of the Creativity and Identity Forum process. However, projects designed to communicate iconically about this theme should demonstrate some of the following elements:

- develops the heart of the city as a magnet, where people are drawn to and have a reason for being there
- creates spaces that are people oriented and 'rooms' in the city that surprise and engage people
- celebrates and acknowledges Tainui as tangata whenua
- contributes to an understanding of Hamilton based on history and multicultural heritage
- builds sustainability into urban form, reflecting the connections between the land and the city
- forges a new contemporary identity and encourages us to look at the city in a different way
- uses public art to encourage dialogue and debate
- simplifies the regulatory regime
- provides for richer and more diverse experiences beyond the nine to five
- creates cultural and visual landmarks which put Hamilton on the radar screen
- celebrates and enhances our heritage



# the aesthetic experience

[ our iconic cultural facilities inspire and challenge us  
and galvanize our sense of place and identity ]

[ re-connecting to the Waikato river ]

# re-connecting to the Waikato



## 3 proposition 3

“Ko au te awa, te awa ko au”  
“I am the river, the river is me”

– The late Arikiniui Te Atairangikaahu

Physically, historically and spiritually, the river reflects the city, and the city must therefore, reflect the river.

Flowing through the heart of the city, the Waikato river is iconic to Hamilton. Its momentum, sheer strength, life force and natural beauty is captured in both its rich history and its impending future. A future, that sees a commitment for its cleansing and therefore a giving back of people who have long taken.

We share a dependence and inter-dependence with the river. The essence and aspects of the river’s cultural links are intrinsic to a great many existing, as well as new aesthetic applications throughout the city.

### The river is the city, the city is the river:

- It is part of the city’s consciousness
- It is creatively connected to all parts of the city
- It is a source of both passage and respite with huge potential to be more
- It is a unique artery and symbolic to the city
- It is valued by the people of Hamilton

### project expectations

A good idea is more than just a checklist of parts, and each project will have its own challenges and opportunities which must be explored as part of the Creativity and Identity Forum process. However, projects designed to communicate iconically about this theme should demonstrate some of the following elements:

- recognises the special relationship and status of Tainui
- translates our rich cultural history
- incorporates a modern take on traditional concepts
- establishes the presence of the river in different parts of the city including the suburbs
- galvanises our sense of place and identity.
- recounts our stories of the river and its history in innovative and engaging ways
- reflects the connections between the land and the city, communicating its special role in the natural system
- considers the entire sensory landscape, making connections beyond just sight
- promotes a new perspective or outlook
- includes interactive learning experiences
- recreates the riverbank into a central garden, a place of activity and amenity in the heart of the city
- supports positive environmental change



# river

[ It is a source of both passage and respite with huge potential to be more ]

[ making small effective ]



# making small

## 4 proposition 4

Hamilton's size is its advantage. We are able to retain a village feel while enjoying the pleasures and vibrancy of metropolitan life.

It is a nimble city that can rapidly respond to opportunities as they present themselves. We have a proud tradition of experimentation and risk taking. Our size advantage and history of innovation is key to this. We must now encourage this spirit across the community.

We must use technology innovatively to enhance communication between and within cultures and generations. It allows us to express ourselves to each other and define our identity to the rest of the world. Hamilton is information rich and by sharing this effectively the community is empowered with knowledge.

By working creatively we can shape the city so that the sum of our work is greater than the individual efforts that go into it.

**Hamilton embraces its size as a strength. It is a place where:**

- people feel a sense of connectedness
- everything is do-able
- the sum is greater than the whole of the parts
- two-way conversations exist between 'the artist' and the audience
- better linkages with 'idea generating' institutions are developed and pools of knowledge are utilized
- technology is a part of our cultural furniture connecting us nationally and globally

### project expectations

A good idea is more than just a checklist of parts, and each project will have its own challenges and opportunities which must be explored as part of the Creativity and Identity Forum process. However, projects designed to communicate iconically about this theme should demonstrate some of the following elements:

- supports the community in creating and recording their stories
- satisfies our desire for identity
- develops the heart of the city as a magnet, where people are drawn to and have a reason for being there
- makes innovative use of technology
- make users feel privileged
- utilizes and enhances the digital infrastructure of the city
- contributes to a interactive urban environment creating experiences that say YES instead of no
- strengthens connectedness in existing communities, introduces it into new communities, and makes connections between communities
- grows diverse strategic relationships in the city
- encourages high level debate and better communication
- uses visiting experts to trigger dialogue and action
- considers the longer term and future proofs the city

# effective

[ technology is a part of our cultural furniture connecting us nationally and globally ]



# Now it's over to you Hamilton

The Creativity and Identity Strategy does not attempt to document 'flagship projects'. Why? The generation of project ideas, their development and implementation is an organic and on-going process.

To get some idea of the look and feel of projects ideas bubbling up visit this interactive website

[www.hamiltoncity.co.nz/thinkingoutloud](http://www.hamiltoncity.co.nz/thinkingoutloud)

It reflects the discussions and networking that has occurred to date and will record future input and ideas. Watch this space - the 40 projects endorsed by the Creativity + Identity Forum will be showcased here.

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