

**Maroondah City Council**

**Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2014 – 2018**

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### Welcome to the Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2014-2018

Maroondah City Council, in the spirit of reconciliation, acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri.

We accept, respect and have shared with the Wurundjeri people in their customs of welcome.

The Wurundjeri people support the coming together of all people, respecting their individuality, to focus on a unified and cohesive nation.

Mayor’s Message

On behalf of my fellow Councillors, I am delighted to present to you the inaugural Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy.

In developing this Strategy, Council recognises that arts and cultural development are vital ingredients in achieving the community’s vision for a vibrant and diverse community.

Over the past eighteen months Council has engaged with artists, residents, community members and other stakeholders – they have told us what they value in arts and culture in Maroondah, and what their priorities are for the future.

The Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2014–2018 builds on the recently developed Maroondah 2040 Community Vision, which includes a vision for Maroondah as a creative, cosmopolitan community, recognised for its celebration and promotion of arts and culture.

Council looks forward to working in partnership with the creative and artistic community of Maroondah, along with our community groups and businesses, to build a creative and culturally vibrant community together.

**Cr Les Willmott JP, Mayor**

### Executive Summary

The Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy represents an historic commitment for our community and provides the way forward for four years of exciting activity. This strategy marks the first occasion that Maroondah City Council has developed a specific Arts and Cultural Development Strategy, rather than simply including arts and culture within the broader picture of leisure and recreation.

More than 2,400 people have contributed their ideas about arts and cultural development in Maroondah. Extensive consultations have been undertaken over the past three years, from the Maroondah 2040 consultations, to surveying audiences at the Maroondah Festival in 2013. Feedback from the community has provided a strong and clear message that people want to experience the arts as a key part of everyday life in Maroondah and they want to be part of a culturally rich and vibrant municipality.

The City of Maroondah’s key cultural facilities include the Maroondah Art Gallery, the Wyreena Community Arts Centre and the Karralyka Centre. Historically, Council’s support has focused on the development and maintenance of these facilities. Support for these facilities and our valued traditions and heritage will continue through this strategy.

However, the community is in a period of transition. The redevelopment of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre provides a once in a generation opportunity to transform this site. The cutting-edge Realm, Ringwood’s new Library, Learning and Cultural Centre, will extend opportunities for people to create, enjoy and immerse themselves in the arts. The sites and public spaces around this centre will be networked and linked to create a web of ever-changing cultural activity and experiences.

Our demographics are changing. The population is increasing, diversifying and aging. The arts provide a platform for all members of the community – young and old, of all abilities and diverse cultures, from long-standing residents to new arrivals – to share cultural and local heritages, and to create new stories and contemporary cultural experiences.

To realise the community’s vision for a creative and culturally vibrant city, four key themes have been developed for this strategy:

* A Creative and Prosperous City
* A Culturally Active and Engaged Community
* Diversity and Celebration
* Vibrant Places and Spaces.

Over the next four years, the Arts and Cultural Development team, working in partnership with teams across Council and the community, will develop and explore these themes.

In today’s interconnected world, culture’s power to transform societies is clear. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary art forms – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways*.*

UNESCO, Protecting our heritage and fostering creativity

### What is the Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2014–2018?

The Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy represents an historic commitment for our community.

This is the first occasion that the City of Maroondah has developed a strategy focussing specifically on arts and cultural development, rather than just including arts and culture in the broader picture of leisure and recreation.

The City of Maroondah has a longstanding reputation for its key cultural facilities – the Maroondah Art Gallery located within the Maroondah Federation Estate, the Wyreena Community Arts Centre, one of Croydon’s historic buildings located on acres of gardens, and the theatre located within Karralyka Centre, a building designed by celebrated architect Harry Seidler.

Historically, Council’s support for arts and cultural activity has focussed on the development and maintenance of these facilities, support for cultural programming, a grants program for local projects, activities and groups, an arts newsletter and an annual public art commission.

Times, however, are changing and so are the expectations and aspirations of Maroondah’s community. Over the past two years, Council has undertaken extensive consultations to find out what is important to the community in terms of arts and culture.

From these consultations we understand clearly that our community wants to experience the arts as a key part of everyday life in Maroondah and they want to be part of a culturally rich and vibrant municipality. In addition to consulting extensively with its community, Council has looked at how Maroondah fits into the bigger picture of the region and how it can ensure that Maroondah is an exciting and inspiring place to visit.

Through this strategy, we will be exploring new territory and new opportunities for our city. We are also ensuring that our traditions, heritage and valued arts and cultural facilities remain important features of Maroondah’s future cultural life.

Key centres of everyday social and economic life offer enormous opportunities to integrate the arts into our everyday lives. As government and private investment flows into the redevelopment of the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre, we recognise this as a great opportunity to create the vibrant and exciting neighbourhood where the arts will truly be a part of the natural and everyday fabric of life. Beyond the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre, there is a clear need and exciting opportunities to ensure that arts and culture is a valued part of the life of Maroondah.

Likewise, there are new and emerging opportunities for Maroondah to grow and attract creative industries, bringing economic and social benefits to our community.

Our demographics are changing. Each year, Maroondah is becoming a more culturally diverse community. Through the arts, we have a powerful platform to share experiences of both established and newly arriving communities, to learn and celebrate our rich cultural heritages and to share in developing new stories and local cultures.

Together, these imperatives create an ideal opportunity for the arts and cultural development to shape our community of the future.

Through embracing the community’s vision and recognising the unique opportunities for Maroondah at this time of change and development, arts and cultural development will be an enormous and enriching aspect of our changing city.

### Maroondah’s Integrated Planning Framework

The Arts and Cultural Development Strategy sets out our road map for the next four years. This work sits within Maroondah’s Integrated Planning Framework, shown in the diagram below. This framework is underpinned by the long-term strategic vision outlined in Maroondah 2040 and Council’s four-year plan that establishes medium-term strategies and resourcing. It includes legislated plans and strategies, and our long-term financial strategy. The Integrated Planning

Council Policies and Strategies

**Maroondah 2040**

Council Plan 2013-2017

& Long Term Financial Strategy

Legislated Plans and Strategies

Municipal Strategic Statement

Community Wellbeing Plan

Service Delivery Plans

and Annual Budget

Framework provides a clear link between community needs and aspirations, our vision, strategies, policies and day-to-day activities. It also enables transparent and accountable reporting of our performance.

#### How does the Arts and Cultural Development Strategy link to Maroondah 2040?

Maroondah 2040 sets out the community’s vision for the future of Maroondah. Consultations undertaken to develop the Maroondah 2040 vision demonstrate that the community places a high value on the future of Maroondah as a safe, inclusive, diverse and attractive place in which to live, learn, work and visit. One outcome the community wishes to see over the coming decades is Maroondah’s development as a vibrant and culturally rich city. The community clearly sees that arts and culture can activate and enrich the city and these aspirations are addressed through the Arts and Cultural Development Strategy.

### How was the Arts and Cultural Development Strategy developed?

The Arts and Cultural Development Strategy was developed through a wide range of research and consultation approaches.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Policy context** | Establishing the national, state and local government policy context for our work. |
| **Community consultation** | Over a period of two years, we have undertaken consultations with the general community and with the arts and cultural sector about their short and medium term aspirations.  Consultations with the community around the Maroondah 2040 have provided a clear long-term vision. |
| **Regional context & local benchmarking** | Investigating our key directions in comparison to the work of our neighbouring councils. |
| **Strategy development** | Development of the strategy has been based on this work and further refined by consultation throughout Council. |

#### Community Consultation

To ensure that the community was involved in the development of this strategy, community consultations were undertaken involving focus group sessions with the creative sector and public surveys which were distributed widely through Council’s website, customer service centres and cultural facilities.

Further community consultations were undertaken through the recent processes to develop the Maroondah 2040 vision and through the Arts and Culture in Maroondah survey, conducted in November 2013 at the Maroondah Festival. In total, more than 2,400 people have contributed their ideas about arts and cultural life of Maroondah in the future.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 269 | 1079 | 700 | 68 | 299 |
| Ringwood Library Learning & Cultural Centre community and stakeholder workshops | Ringwood Library Learning & Cultural Centre survey | Maroondah 2040 consultations | Maroondah Arts and Culture Survey | Maroondah Arts and Cultural Services Survey |

#### What did the community say about arts and culture?

Through our various consultations, a number of key and consistent themes emerged.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ringwood Library Learning and Cultural Centre and the surrounding precinct** | * An activated, vibrant and contemporary town square * Activities, facilities and arts sites connected and networked within and around Ringwood’s shopping, commercial and transport centres * Access to innovative and new technologies * Creative arts exhibitions and performances * A desire to participate in social activities and connect with people * Creative spaces, performance and rehearsal spaces * Spaces for visual arts expression * Indigenous cultural programs and public art * Celebrations of cultural diversity in the civic realm |
| **Arts and Cultural Development consultations** | * Greater involvement and engagement of young people * More options for people 25–60 years * Urban vitality and cultural diversity needed in public places * More and better promotion of creative and cultural activities * More creative spaces for artists to create and exhibit * More innovative and special events, more involvement and participation * ‘Art everywhere’, ‘Art and music on the streets’, ‘Art in unexpected places’ |
| **Maroondah 2040 consultations** | * The community’s vision is for a vibrant and culturally rich Maroondah * Thriving cafe culture, diverse entertainment spaces, events and activities * Innovative, contemporary and socially engaged arts practice * Promote opportunities and spaces for artists to create and display their work * Encourage community–business–government partnerships that support local artists |

#### Strategic Intent

We believe that in order to support the community’s vision of a creative and culturally vibrant Maroondah we can do more to promote, facilitate, support and provide for arts and cultural development. The diagram below shows our intentions for the next four years.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Where is Maroondah now?** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| Traditional arts and crafts classes, exhibitions and performances | | | Focus on organised activities for children and older people | | | | Good structural base and cultural facilities | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| **What does our community want?** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| Art everyday, everywhere | Opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and cultures to participate | | | Intergenerational and intercultural experiences | | Art as a lifestyle choice | | | A vibrant cultural precinct and a network of arts sites, facilities and programs in the heart of Ringwood |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| **What will Council do over the next four years?** | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| Promote… | | Facilitate… | | | Support… | | | Provide… | |
| A creative and prosperous city | | A culturally active and engaged community | | | Diversity and celebration | | | Vibrant places and spaces | |

### What will the Maroondah of the future look like?

Based on community consultations and research, the way forward is clear. The vision for Maroondah is that of‘*a vibrant cosmopolitan community recognised for its creativity and innovation, and for its celebration and promotion of arts and culture. Participation and engagement in contemporary and traditional forms of cultural expression contribute to Maroondah as a healthy, prosperous and thriving community.’*

Through our Arts and Cultural Development strategy, we will focus on four key themes:

* A Creative and Prosperous City
* A Culturally Active and Engaged Community
* Diversity and Celebration
* Vibrant Places and Spaces

#### What does a creative and culturally vibrant community look like?

When we asked the community and internal stakeholders what a culturally vibrant Maroondah of the future would look like, they emphasised energy, activity, events, cafes, restaurants, entertainment, festivals, music, public art, youth activities and nightlife. A culturally vibrant city is also seen as interesting, exciting, inclusive and welcoming. The word cloud below combines the ideas of internal and external stakeholders.

Energetic Busy streets Active Noisy Evolving Engaging Colourful

Depth of diversity Culturally diverse Newly arrived communities Lots of events Lots of options Connected Participatory Sense of personal satisfaction and self esteem Community ownership Community pride Music from different traditions in the public space Musical

Passion Food – diverse gatherings Cafes Food vans Aesthetically vibrant activated open spaces, ‘untidy’, eclectic with high levels of spontaneity People Interesting Exciting Attractive Happy Public art Street theatre Performing arts in surprising spaces It’s a buzz Inner city feel Cultural Welcoming Tolerant Accessible

Inclusive Approachable Safe Increased tourism A destination Multi-lingual signage Kiosk with area info High-end fashion Talent No sport on big screens Shiny Visible

Natural – not contrived or ‘cookie cutter’ Meaningful Point of difference / innovative

Integrated / entwined / embedded ‘All that we do’ – streetscape, programs Intuitive

### What is a creative and culturally vibrant community?

*In today’s interconnected world, culture’s power to transform societies is clear. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary art forms – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways.*

UNESCO, Protecting our heritage and fostering creativity

A creative and culturally vibrant community embraces the all-encompassing nature of arts and culture. Feedback from our community about arts and culture shows that they see this not as an add-on, but as an integral aspect of everyday life. It’s about creative expression, it’s about our urban environment, and it’s about the buzz in the streets. It is about having local opportunities to see, hear, attend and experience creative events. It is about engaging people of all ages, all abilities and from all communities. It is a great platform for bringing a community together.

Arts and culture create strong and meaningful connections to cultural heritage and traditions. The arts reach towards the past and connect us to the future. A culturally vibrant community supports and attracts creative industries, groups and individual practitioners and values and promotes their contributions. It provides opportunities for community-wide celebrations and events, as well as activities on smaller scales for groups and individuals.

#### What are the features of a creative and culturally vibrant community?

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| * A Creative and Prosperous City   Richard Florida, the influential urban studies theorist, identifies that ‘*first, a creative city places a priority on technology. Second, a creative city is driven by talent – talented people. The most valuable asset that a city has is its people. Finally, a creative city must be a place of social inclusion and tolerance*.’ A creative city sponsors and fosters creativity. It thrives on diversity. It is a place where artists, creative people and creative industries are valued and can flourish. A creative city generates and supports creative industries and the whole community prospers from this industry. | Access to talented and creative people is to modern business what access to coal and iron ore was to steelmaking. It determines where companies will chose to locate and grow, and this in turn changes the ways that cities must compete.  Richard Florida *The Rise of the Creative Class Revisited* |

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| The arts can promote health and wellbeing through building empathy and kindness, developing skills and self-efficacy, reducing prejudice, creating a sense of pride and belonging, and producing further options for increasing physical activity.  VicHealth, *Arts for Health* | * A Culturally Active and Engaged Community   A culturally vibrant community encourages its citizens to be actively engaged in creativity and the arts as a vital part of civic life. It is a community where arts and culture is supported as a platform for expression and dialogue, celebration and inspiration. Culturally vibrant communities recognise that everyone has a right to cultural expression and everyone can participate in creative activities. The benefits of a citizenry actively engaged in their community’s creative and cultural life flow to the health and wellbeing of individuals and to the whole community. |

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| * Supports and Celebrates Diversity   A truly creative and vibrant community is one which invites and includes all members of the community in creative pursuits and activities, from the traditional owners of the land to the newest arrivals in our community, from the youngest to the oldest members of the community. The spectrum of ways to engage with the arts should be available to everyone in the community who wants to participate. This ranges from passive or individual activities such as watching a movie or reading a book, through to attending arts events and institutions, or participating in a creative activity. The arts provide us with powerful ways to share, learn about and celebrate traditions new and old. | | Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and its benefits.  Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 27 |
| *There’s no doubt that art enriches our lives and Maroondah Council has recognised this. It’s terrific to see art brought into everyday spaces and places.*  Heidi Victoria  Miinister for the Arts  Launching the  Maroondah Arts Trail | * Provides and Supports Vibrant Places and Spaces   When asked to describe what vibrant places and spaces would look like, our community used words like‘noisy, colourful, buzz, surprising…’ Vibrant places and spaces have an energy that attracts people. They combine elements of good design, attractive public spaces, as well as permanent and changing art and events. They can be in an urban or commercial location or part of green and open spaces. Vibrancy cannot be artificially created, but the conditions can be created to foster it. | | |

Great places embody seven elements. They are places of anchorage, they feel like home, there is a sense of stability, tradition and distinctiveness. They are places of possibility, ‘can do’, stimulation and buzz. They are places of communication and networking, where it is easy to connect, interact and move around, the outside world is accessible, and you feel you are part of a bigger, extensive web. They are places to self-improve, learn and reflect. They are places of inspiration. Culture is alive and, finally, a great city is well put together through design.

<http://charleslandry.com>

### What is Council’s role in arts and cultural development?

Council has a vital leadership role in arts and cultural development, setting the vision and policy direction. We also liaise and consult across local government and other levels of government, as well as plan and integrate the work of arts and cultural development across Council departments and service areas. Our key roles and examples of our work in these areas are provided below.

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| * **Advocate** | Advocating at the state government level on behalf of the people of Maroondah about arts policy and practice which impacts on the cultural vitality of our city. |
| * **Plan** | Ensuring that resourcing of our arts and cultural infrastructure and programming meet the needs of our growing population and that arts and cultural opportunities are located in the appropriate areas as population densities change in our municipality.  Ensuring that Council is responsive to changing community needs and aspirations. |
| * **Provide** | Providing and sponsoring arts and cultural events. This includes arts and cultural programming as part of community festivals and events, in community and cultural facilities and our outdoor and open spaces.  Managing our key facilities including the Maroondah Art Gallery at Maroondah Federation Estate, Wyreena Community Arts Centre, the Karralyka Centre and Realm, the new Ringwood Library, Learning and Cultural Centre. |
| * **Promote** | Effective marketing and promotion of arts and culture through Council’s publications, online and digital media and in local media. Providing prominent and accessible information about arts activities and events across Maroondah. |
| * **Develop** | Seeking and actively developing partnerships and networks with a creative or cultural focus to support, develop and promote the arts in Maroondah. |

### Who are our partners?

Achieving a creative and culturally vibrant city is not the work of Council alone. As with most of our work in the community, realising this vision requires a combined approach with key partners who share our passion and vision. This includes partners from:

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| * **Community** | Our partners from the community sector come from a broad base. They include artists, arts groups and organisations who practise and promote traditional and contemporary visual and performing artforms; the Indigenous community and diverse cultural communities, and organisations using the arts in their work with special target groups such as people with disabilities and specific cultural communities, community organisations which provide and promote arts programs and opportunities such as Neighbourhood Houses, and Indigenous community organisations.  We will also connect with schools and tertiary institutions, and community health services and hospitals. |
| * **Business** | We will liaise through Council’s Business and Development unit with local business networks, groups and individual businesses to promote sustainable creative enterprises and to ensure that our key commercial precincts are culturally vibrant places to shop and visit. Over the life of this strategy, we will partner to develop Realm and the adjoining Town Square and spaces within the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre as a vibrant web of arts and cultural activities and experiences. |
| * **Government** | We will work with our neighbouring councils as part of a thriving regional arts network. We will actively participate in local government networks to ensure that we are up to date with key trends and local government initiatives across the state.  We will work with State and Commonwealth governments where there are opportunities to influence policies and policy framework or to seek funding. |
| * **Council** | Within Maroondah City Council, this strategy will be led and implemented by the Arts and Cultural Development team. Given the clear reach of arts and culture across community life, to implement this strategy the Arts and Cultural Development team will also liaise and partner with other key service areas in Council including Youth Services, Business and Development, Eastern Regional Libraries, the Karralyka Centre, Maroondah Federation Estate, Community Planning and Development, Communications and Marketing, Leisure, Open Spaces, Strategic Planning and Engineering. |

### Where are we on the map?

Maroondah’s key arts and cultural facilities are based in Ringwood and Croydon and focus on both the visual and performing arts.

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| --- |
| **The Maroondah Art Gallery**  The Maroondah Art Gallery is located at Maroondah Federation Estate, the site of the former Ringwood Primary School. Established in 2001, the Maroondah Art Gallery is one of Victoria’s youngest public galleries. Owned and managed by [Maroondah City Council](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/), the Gallery has established itself as an outstanding exhibitions venue with strong links to the local community and to Melbourne’s dynamic arts scene.  During the course of this strategy, contemporary curated visual arts and performance spaces will be developed within Realm, the Ringwood Library, Learning and Cultural Centre. The current Maroondah Art Gallery will be supported by Council as an Access Gallery for emerging artists and community-based arts groups. |
| **Wyreena Community Arts Centre**  Wyreena Community Arts Centre is located in a park setting in Croydon. Established in the 1970s, it is a well-loved and patronised institution attracting strong visitation from new and established clients within the region.  Facilities at Wyreena include studios, a community hall, a community radio station, a cafe, and function space. Regular programming includes a range of traditional arts, crafts and lifestyle skills, a monthly music cafe and exhibitions within its informal gallery. |
| **Karralyka Centre**  A functions and performing arts centre designed by internationally renowned architect Harry Seidler and built in 1980, Karralyka Centre provides Maroondah with a venue for the presentation of local productions, touring and packaged theatre and music performances. The theatre at Karralyka seats 430 people and has traditionally been operated with a focus on commercially viable theatre.  Karralyka has recently embarked on providing targeted support to several local innovative theatre productions including youth theatre and access for all abilities groups. |

Council also provides:

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| **Arts and Cultural Grants**  An annual program to support community-led arts and cultural activities. The grants support local groups, artists and organisations to develop and deliver community arts projects, festivals, events, heritage practices and exhibitions. |
| **Art in Public Places**  The Art in Public Places program plans, commissions and project manages a collection of public art works for spaces across the municipality. |

### What is happening within our region?

The National Arts and Culture Accord (2013) identifies that local governments ‘*have a particularly important role in infrastructure development, renewal and maintenance of cultural support and encouraging Australians to participate in arts and cultural activity… Local governments invest in local arts, heritage and cultural development activities and resources, and have key responsibility for supporting local institutions such as libraries and galleries.*’ (p.7)

In our region, we sit amongst a range of local-government-managed performing arts centres, galleries, studios and community arts centres. (see Appendix 1) These include a range of art centres such as the Box Hill Community Art Centre, Knox Community Art Centre and Burrinja Cultural Centre, which provide opportunities for both creative and receptive participation. We also have the Heide Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Bulleen and TarraWarra in the Yarra Valley, both significant galleries, outside the local government sector.

Maroondah compares well against surrounding municipalities from a facility provision perspective although audience and participation levels in Maroondah are generally lower than in surrounding municipalities. Statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that the number of people involved in artistic occupations in Maroondah is lower than the surrounding local government areas, with Whitehorse having the largest number of people recording the arts as their occupation.

As we know, the position and programming of arts and cultural facilities is only one part of the picture. While local arts and cultural vitality is linked to the activity that is supported in and generated from these facilities, a genuinely vibrant community sees the arts as permeating places and spaces throughout the municipality. Each of our neighbours is working with their local communities to provide programmes and activities that respond to their needs. Those municipalities which are recognised for their arts and cultural vibrancy have developed strategic strengths which maximise their profiles as interesting and unique places to visit, as well as places in which artists can live, flourish and be recognised as a vital part of their communities. They are also leading their communities to create, document and respond to their sense of place.

With the designation of Ringwood as a Metropolitan Activity Area and our strategic importance as a gateway between Melbourne’s CBD and the Yarra Valley, it is vital that Maroondah defines and promotes our place as a key cultural destination on this east–west route.

#### The Victorian Government is a key partner in our work in the arts

Arts Victoria’s *Creating the Future – Towards 2020* strategy is a framework which informs its funding and partnership programs. The strategy recognises key existing strengths within Victoria such as existing cultural diversity and strong cultural industries, as well as looking to future challenges and opportunities such as emerging knowledge economy and digital industries. The strategy’s guiding themes are developing cultural identity, creating content, forging connections and capturing value.

#### Nationally

Creative Australia, the National Cultural Policy released in 2013, described the essential role that arts and culture play in the life of every Australian and how creativity is central to Australia’s economic and social success: a creative nation is a productive nation. This policy also promoted the fundamental place that indigenous culture holds in the Australian story and the deep responsibility that is borne by our national to nurture and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s cultural expression.

More recently, the Federal Government’s arts funding and advocacy body – the Australia Council for the Arts – launched *A Culturally Ambitious Nation*, its Strategic Plan for 2014–2019. The Plan acknowledges that “music, books, theatre, film, paintings, sculpture, dance and a myriad of other art forms are central to our lives”. It embraces the arts in everyday life while also presenting artists as taking their place amongst the nation’s heroes. Of especial relevance to Maroondah’s strategic directions are Goal Two: Australia is known for its great art and artists; Goal Three: The arts enrich everyday life; and Goal Four: Australians’cherish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures.

### What is around the corner for arts and cultural development in Maroondah?

There are many exciting developments around the corner for Maroondah. As a designated Metropolitan Activity Area, Ringwood is the focus of significant public and private investment, employment growth and renewal. Creating ‘*a* *vibrant and contemporary town centre’* for Ringwood is part of the vision for the redevelopment of the area. The range of redevelopment and renewal activities include Realm, a new Ringwood Library Learning and Cultural Centre. This state-of-the-art facility will integrate arts and cultural facilities and programming including curated visual arts and performance spaces and areas for participation and creation of work together with library, customer service functions, and meeting and learning spaces.

Planning is underway for a Ringwood arts and cultural web including Realm but also extending to a range of networked facilities and sites in adjoining public and commercial spaces. This Ringwood arts web will have the opportunity to develop a range of innovative ways to connect the community to a range of contemporary cultural experiences.

An Access Gallery will be developed in the current Gallery at Maroondah Federation Estate, thus enhancing the wide range of activities and connections facilitated at this important cultural site.

At the same time as our facilities are shifting and developing, the community will continue to experience demographic change. Maroondah’s population is increasing, and the major re-developments, including improvements to transport infrastructure, will attract further growth. Our community is ageing in common with most Western nations. Families are shrinking and lone households are increasing. Maroondah is also welcoming people from more diverse backgrounds than ever before, with growing communities from China, India, Germany, Netherlands and Sri Lanka, amongst others. As a Refugee Welcome council, Maroondah is also experiencing growth in terms of refugee communities. A relatively large Burmese community is now calling Maroondah home, as well as a small but significant community of people from Sudan.

Our municipality will grow and change outside the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre. The Maroondah Arts Trail is a municipal-wide community initiative supported by Council. It brings the hospitality industry and artists together, by supporting local emerging and professional artists through the creation of exhibition space within local cafes and restaurants. Council is also making significant investments in our public spaces, opening up new opportunities for arts and culture to co-mingle with one of the municipalities most treasured features – our green, open spaces.

We foresee a dynamic, creative and exciting four years ahead for arts and cultural development in Maroondah. Our key themes and strategies are detailed in the next section of this document.

### What are Maroondah City Council’s key directions for arts and cultural development for the next four years?

Through the consultations and research undertaken in this strategy development, four key themes have emerged for the focus of work over the next four years. These are:

* A Creative and Prosperous City
* A Culturally Active and Engaged Community
* Diversity and Celebration
* Vibrant Places and Spaces

In the following pages, the key directions and strategies for each theme are set out, along with the timeframe for the work. The Arts and Cultural Development team will lead the overarching implementation of this strategy. Much of the work will be undertaken with internal partners, and some work will also include external partners, such as arts and community organisations.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

Council recognises the importance of transparency and accountability. Implementation of the Arts and Cultural Development Strategy will be carefully monitored and reported on annually through service delivery plans. The Arts and Cultural Development team will work with Integrated Planning to develop a range of quantitative and qualitative indicators to assist in monitoring and evaluating the work. This will ensure that the monitoring and evaluation aligns with Council’s broader monitoring systems. Monitoring and evaluation activity will also be informed by the work of the Cultural Development Network on arts indicators for local government and their framework for measuring the contribution of the arts in a local government context.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Maroondah Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2014 -2018

Vision and Key Strategic Directions

**VISION STATEMENT**

Maroondah is a vibrant cosmopolitan community recognised for its creativity and innovation, and for its celebration and promotion of arts and culture. Participation and engagement in contemporary and traditional forms of cultural expression contribute to Maroondah as a healthy, prosperous and thriving community.

| **THEMES** |  |
| --- | --- |
| Theme 1 | A Creative and Prosperous City |
|  | Creativity and the arts will be valued, acknowledged and promoted for their contributions to a prosperous and innovative city. |
| Theme 2 | A Culturally Active and Engaged Community |
|  | Participation in the arts and cultural activity will promote individual wellbeing and a healthy and connected community |
| Theme 3 | Diversity and Celebration |
|  | Maroondah’s diverse traditions and communities will be celebrated and promoted through the arts. |
| Theme 4 | Vibrant Places and Spaces |
|  | The arts will be integral to Maroondah’s urban vitality, enhancing and adding value to the built and natural environment. |

Theme 1 A Creative and Prosperous City

Creativity and the arts will be valued, acknowledged and promoted for their contributions to a prosperous and innovative city.

| Key Direction | Strategies | Time Frame | | | | Lead and Partners | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 |
| Encourage growth of creative industries in Maroondah | Explore the place of creative industries within an industry strategy for Maroondah |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Business & Development |
| Explore options to promote Maroondah’s arts businesses and creative industries to the community: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Business & Development |
| * Explore options |  |  |  |  |
| * Identify two most effective options and develop action plans for implementation |  |  |  |  |
| Develop and promote Maroondah as a creative environment in which to live, work and visit | Strengthen arts marketing strategies for Council’s facilities and programs  Develop a dynamic on-line and digital presence for Maroondah Arts |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Marketing & Communications  Karralyka |
| Promote the range and diversity of professional arts and creative practice in Maroondah through online and digital platforms |  |  |  |  |
| Review Council’s MSS and planning scheme to ensure that they support a creative Maroondah including encouraging:   * Affordable spaces for artists to create their work * Cultural precincts which support creative and cultural activity * Acknowledgement and celebration of Maroondah’s built and cultural heritage |  |  |  |  | Integrated Planning | Major Projects  Arts & Cultural Development  Statutory Planning |
| Monitor the MSS and planning to ensure that they support a creative Maroondah |  |  |  |  |
| Encourage and develop community-business-government partnerships that support local artists and leading arts practice | Continue to work in partnership with local businesses and organisations to develop and strengthen innovative arts marketing initiatives such as the Maroondah Art Trail |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Present innovative and engaging arts practice which establishes Maroondah as a leader in the arts | Develop an Exhibitions Policy for Council facilities which highlights and promotes innovative and engaging arts practice |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Develop a Collections Policy for the Maroondah Art Collection which celebrates the City’s cultural heritage, Indigenous heritage, and leading contemporary arts practice |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Utilise emerging technologies and online mediums to promote emerging and established artists and arts practice |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Support, create and promote the presentation of innovative theatre by key local theatre practitioners and groups |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development within the Ringwood arts web  Youth Services  Karralyka |
| Produce and present innovative and excellent work across a range of art forms including visual arts |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Youth Services |
| Broker partnerships and relationships to better connect local artists and the broader community | Encourage and support the establishment of local forums and networks to develop the capacity and profile of local artists and arts groups |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Integrate the arts into Maroondah’s lifelong learning agenda | Further develop arts and cultural participation within Libraries across Maroondah through arts partnerships  Develop at least one significant arts-library partnership per year |  |  |  |  | Eastern Regional Libraries | Arts & Cultural Development |
| Position Maroondah’s libraries as cultural institutions as well as educational institutions through:   * Promoting reading and other library activities as cultural activities * Linking libraries with external arts and cultural programming |  |  |  |  | Eastern Regional Libraries | Arts & Cultural Development |
| Strengthen Council’s role in advocating the benefits of the arts | Develop a collaborative approach across Council departments to encourage staff participation and appreciation of the arts |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Karralyka  Youth Services  Community Planning & Development  Leisure  Marketing & Communications |
| Promote the value of the arts in fostering creativity, empathy, safety, social inclusion and mental health and wellbeing |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Karralyka  Marketing & Communications  Youth Services  Community Planning & Development, Leisure |

Theme 2 A Culturally Active and Engaged Community

Participation in the arts and cultural activity will promote individual wellbeing and a healthy and connected community

| Key Direction | Strategies | Time Frame | | | | Lead and Partners | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 |
| Promote a range of opportunities for all ages to participate in the arts | Present and promote opportunities for participation in:   * intergenerational arts activities * arts activities for and with CALD community members * arts activities for and with Indigenous community members * arts activities designed for people in the middle years (25 – 60) who are likely to be active with families and working * arts activities that provide more options and encourage young people and children to become actively involved in the arts. * arts activities for the whole of community that are responsive to issues of social change |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Community Planning & Development  Youth Services  Children’s Services |
| Encourage a love of lifelong art engagement and learning as part of everyday life | Facilitate better connections between arts opportunities and local schools and tertiary institutions |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Ringwood arts web | Youth Services  Local schools  Swinburne, Croydon  Box Hill TAFE  Karralyka |
| Recognise and promote the achievements of young emerging artists in Maroondah including through   * Maroondah Youth Awards in recognition of young people’s participation in the arts * Supported exhibition and performance opportunities for young emerging artists |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Karralyka  Youth Services  Marketing and Communications |
| Provide targeted arts activities and programming to provide opportunities for vulnerable groups within the community to increase their social connectedness and wellbeing | Act as a resource and facilitate local partnerships to promote accessible local activities and facilities which:   * Improves access to the arts for all abilities * Promotes the creativity and achievements of people of all abilities |  |  |  |  |  | Community Planning & Development  Karralyka  Arts & Cultural Development |
| HostaregionalplanningforumwithArtsAccess |  |  |  |  |
| Developpriorityactionsinpartnershipwithlocalcommunityandartspartners |  |  |  |  |
| Provide targeted support to local groups, artists and organisations in line with Council’s strategic priorities | Undertake a review of Council’s community funding programs including arts grants for local groups, projects and initiatives to ensure that these reflect the priorities of the Arts and Cultural Development Strategy |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| Implement review recommendations |  |  |  |  |
| Ensure affordable and accessible opportunities to a range of arts and cultural experiences | Ensure pricing policies promote access and participation  Provide a mix of free and user-pays experiences |  |  |  |  |  | Karralyka  Arts & Cultural Development  Maroondah Federation Estate  Community Planning & Development  Youth Services |

Theme 3 Diversity and Celebration

Maroondah’s diverse traditions and communities will be celebrated and promoted through the arts

| Key Direction | Strategies | Time Frame | | | | Lead and Partners | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 |
| Continue to support and promote Maroondah’s traditional arts and forms of cultural expressions | Provide affordable opportunities for arts and cultural groups to display and present their work through Council’s events and facilities |  |  |  |  |  | Major Leisure  Arts & Cultural Development  Leisure  Karralyka |
| Finalise Wyreena Program Framework including a focus on traditional arts and crafts |  |  |  |  | Wyreena |  |
| Implement the Wyreena Program Franework |  |  |  |  | Wyreena |  |
| Evaluate and Review |  |  |  |  | Wyreena |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support and promote the arts and cultural expression of emerging communities in Maroondah | Incorporate culturally diverse arts into key celebrations such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week as well as Maroondah Festival |  |  |  |  |  | Community Planning & Development  Arts & Cultural Development  Leisure |
| Improve access and opportunities for diverse local communities to pass on their cultural traditions within their own communities |  |  |  |  | Leisure  Maroondah Leisure  Karralyka |
| Support culturally diverse groups to develop their own projects and programs which promote awareness of their cultures to the broader Maroondah community |  |  |  |  | Wyreena  Youth Services  Arts & Cultural Development |
| Investigate the reasons for comparatively low levels of access by culturally diverse groups to Council’s facilities for rehearsing and presenting their arts and cultural expressions  Address barriers to culturally diverse groups accessing Council facilities |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Community Planning & Development  Leisure |
| Promote, acknowledge and celebrate Maroondah’s indigenous culture through a diverse range of arts expression | Develop an Indigenous arts action plan in partnership with local Indigenous community as part of Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Integrated Planning |
| Promote, acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous culture: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Leisure |
| * as part of Reconciliation Week |  |  |  |  |
| * in Maroondah Art Collection |  |  |  |  |
| * through exhibitions, performances and displays |  |  |  |  |
| Celebrate and promote Maroondah’s cultural heritage through innovative arts programs and projects | Develop projects and exhibitions which bring Maroondah’s stories to life for the whole community to enjoy working in partnership with local heritage and community groups  At least one project per year |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Eastern Regional Libraries |
| Present festivals and events that celebrate local arts and cultural diversity and produce | Ensure that local arts activities and performances are a feature of the Maroondah Festival, and other key community and cultural events presented by Council |  |  |  |  |  | Leisure  Arts & Cultural Development  Karralyka  Community Planning & Development  Youth Services |

Theme 4 Vibrant Places and Spaces

The arts will be integral to Maroondah’s urban vitality, enhancing and adding value to the built and natural environment

| Key Direction | Strategies | Time Frame | | | | Lead and Partners | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 |
| Encourage and develop a range of temporary and permanent public art that celebrates the unique characteristics of Maroondah | Establish a Maroondah public art policy to ensure public art is included and maintained within key Council facilities and open space developments: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Open Space  Major Projects  Engineering  Strategic Planning  Community Planning & Development  Asset Management |
| * Develop policy |  |  |  |  |
| * Implement policy |  |  |  |  |
| Develop a public art strategy for: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Major Projects  Engineering |
| 1. the Ringwood MAC including town square, Realm, railway station, laneways and open spaces |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Croydon Town Square |  |  |  |  |
| Implement Ringwood MAC public art strategy |  |  |  |  |
| Implement Croydon Town Square public art strategy |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Expand and redevelop the Wyreena Community Arts Centre playspace incorporating creative elements that are designed with community input |  |  |  |  | Open Space | Arts & Cultural Development |
| Develop and promote the Ringwood arts web – a network of arts sites, facilities and programming within the central precinct of Ringwood MAC | Ensure that the facilities and resource base within Realm, the Ringwood Library Learning and Cultural Centre are appropriately designed to support the vision for the Ringwood arts web |  |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  Major Projects |
| Develop innovative ways of connecting community to a range of contemporary cultural experiences as well as to other Council services, in order to foster a vibrant and strengthened community |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  as part of the Ringwood arts web | Eastern Regional Libraries  Youth Services  Major Projects |
| Drive partnerships with government, business and community that build social and economic investment and showcase what Maroondah has to offer |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  as part of the Ringwood arts web | Eastern Regional Libraries  Youth Services  Major Projects |
| Support the Ringwood arts web in becoming a site for the exchange and production of knowledge, enhancing education and capacity building outcomes in Maroondah through:   * Activating community engagement through arts programming with a focus on audience participation * Coordinating and hosting cultural events such as music, film, theatre, performance, both in formal spaces and in flexible performance sites throughout the civic realm |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development  as part of the Ringwood arts web | Eastern Regional Libraries  Youth Services  Major Projects |
| Support arts initiatives which enliven and beautify streets and activity centres | Encourage local performers and artists to enliven local activity areas through street performance, exhibitions and activities in traditional and non-traditional spaces |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Local Laws |
| Implement urban design initiatives which support cultural activation | Ensure that arts and cultural development expertise is incorporated into the design and rejuvenation of local places and spaces |  |  |  |  |  | Open Space  Arts & Cultural Development  Major Projects  Engineering  Strategic Planning |
| Provide infrastructure which supports arts and cultural events | Review current range and distribution of event infrastructure |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Leisure  Major Projects |
| Plan, further develop, maintain and promote event infrastructure in line with community needs and cultural development opportunities |  |  |  |  |
| Strengthen the identity and profile of Council’s cultural facilities through effective arts programming and marketing | Strengthen the identity, arts programming and marketing of: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development | Karralyka  Youth Services  Maroondah Federation Estate  Marketing & Communications |
| * The Ringwood arts web – see above |  |  |  |  |
| * Karralyka – as a showcasing venue for engaging entertaining experiences. Karralyka will provide a balanced program which caters to existing audiences while also building new audiences for the arts. It will explore potential for building relationships with diverse communities through niche programming |  |  |  |  |
| * Undertake a master-planning exercise to ensure Karralyka’s facilities meet current and future needs |  |  |  |  |
| * Wyreena – as a friendly and diverse Community Arts Centre with a strong focus on participation in traditional arts and craft practices. Wyreena will build on its existing identity while also developing innovative new programs and projects to attract new audiences and develop stronger links with intergenerational, youth and culturally diverse communities |  |  |  |  |
| Maroondah Federation Estate – as a facility which provides:   * Maroondah Access Gallery as a showcase for emerging artists and community-based arts groups to present and display their work * affordable opportunities for community-based arts and cultural groups to rehearse and develop their work |  |  |  |  |
| Present and support engaging arts and cultural experiences in nontraditional spaces | Present and support engaging arts and cultural experience in: |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |  |
| * Parks and open spaces |  |  |  |  | Open Space  Leisure |
| * Wyreena outdoor environments |  |  |  |  | Wyreena  Maroondah Federation Estate |
| * Railway stations and shopping centres |  |  |  |  | Arts & Cultural Development |
| * Promote and present visual arts, performances and other free arts experiences at Maroondah Leisure Facilities |  |  |  |  | Maroondah Leisure |

1. http://www.culturaldevelopment.net.au/projects/arts-indicators/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)