



CITY OF ROCKINGHAM

Community Plan Strategy

**DRAFT Cultural Development and the Arts
Strategy**

2025 - 2031

August 2025



rockingham.wa.gov.au

Alternative Formats

This publication is available in alternative formats on request from the City of Rockingham on 9528 0333 or at customer@rockingham.wa.gov.au.

Community Engagement

Admin use only: Please select all special interest groups that may be interested in this strategy. Groups selected will be notified using Rock Port.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☒ First Nations | ☒ New Community Plan Strategies |
| ☒ Arts and Events | ☒ New Infrastructure Projects |
| ☐ Coastal and Marine Environment | ☒ Planning and Development |
| ☒ Community Development | ☐ Roads and Footpaths |
| ☒ Community Safety | ☐ Safety Bay / Shoalwater Foreshore Revitalisation Masterplan |
| ☒ Disability Access and Inclusion | ☒ Seniors Facilities and Activities |
| ☒ Economic Development | ☐ Sporting Clubs and Facilities |
| ☐ Emergency Management | ☒ Strategic Community Planning |
| ☐ Environmental Interests | ☒ Tenders and Quotations |
| ☒ Grants | ☒ Tourism |
| ☒ Heritage | ☒ Volunteering |
| ☐ Karnup District Structure Plan | ☐ Waste and Recycling |
| ☒ Libraries and Education | ☒ Youth |
| ☐ Local Planning Strategy | |

Disability Access and Inclusion

The Seven Outcome Areas of the DAIP	Will the Key Element be impacted by this strategy? "Y" or "N"	If "Y", please explain how the actions under this element will be impacted by this strategy
1. <i>Access to City services and events</i>	Y	All services and events will be made accessible through appropriate venue and communication channel choices.
2. <i>Access to City buildings and facilities (including outdoor spaces)</i>	Y	All facilities will be assessed for their accessibility features.
3. <i>Access to information</i>	Y	A range of communication tools and channels will be utilised.
4. <i>Access to quality service from City staff</i>	Y	All City staff undergo professional development and awareness raising opportunities to be best placed to provide quality service.
5. <i>Access to equal complaints procedures</i>	N	
6. <i>Access to participation in public consultation</i>	Y	All consultation opportunities will be widely communicated and promoted.
7. <i>Access to City employment opportunities</i>	N	

Acknowledgement of Country

Rockingham, ngala kaaditj moondang-ak kaaradjiny nidja boodja, Binjareb wer Whadjuk Nyoongar moort, wer baalabang kalyogool dandjoo boodja, kep wer moort.

The City of Rockingham acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Binjareb and Whadjuk Nyoongar peoples and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.

The City acknowledges that it sits on the boundary of the Whadjuk and Binjareb Nyoongar peoples territories. Given the many plentiful resources in the area particularly around the lakes system, the land and water has sustained many people over many thousands of years.

Consultant Acknowledgement

The City would like to acknowledge Ms Sonia Nolan of Sonia Nolan Communications for her work on the research and community engagement components of the Strategy Development Process.

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DRAFT

1. Executive Summary

One of the key aspirations of the City of Rockingham Strategic Community Plan (2023-2033) is to create a family-friendly, safe and connected community. Cultural Development and Arts pursuits greatly assist to achieve this, by bringing people together to celebrate the local community, participate in cultural and arts activities, stimulate mental health and wellbeing, and to learn about the history and heritage of the local area.

Another aspiration within the Community Plan is a vibrant economy creating opportunities - including promoting the City as a place to visit. Arts and cultural events and activities again prove valuable in achieving this goal. They highlight a range of creative spaces and places within Rockingham and include large-scale events that bring people from, and to, the City to celebrate throughout the year.

Following successful delivery of actions contained within the previous Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy 2018 – 2022, the City has worked with internal and external stakeholders to produce a new strategy which reflects local feedback and interests, and which sets the strategic direction for the future of arts and culture in Rockingham for the next six years.

Some key themes and topics from the consultation process, which informed the new Strategy, included the following:

- Redefining Rockingham's identity and public image – desire to counter negative stereotypes and promote a distinctive narrative grounded in local heritage, diversity, and community strengths.
- First Nations representation – support for greater inclusion of First Nations culture through representation in events, programs, public art and other City initiatives.
- Geographic equity in arts access – interest in expanding cultural programming beyond coastal areas to inland suburbs such as Baldivis and Karnup.
- Reactivation and use of underutilised spaces – enthusiasm towards activating existing community halls, libraries, and other facilities for cultural purposes.
- Infrastructure suitability and accessibility – need to ensure venues support cultural activities, including improvements to accessibility features, flooring, acoustics, storage, and transport connections.
- Performing arts infrastructure – strong advocacy for a multifunctional performing arts centre in Rockingham.
- Integration of sport and culture – support for shared-use infrastructure models that combine sporting, recreational, and cultural functions.
- Creative precinct and cultural clustering – endorsement for establishing a creative precinct in Kent Street – including through activation of Rockingham Arts Centre's outdoor area.
- Barriers to participation – concerns about cost, transport, and the concentration of activities in specific locations limiting broader community participation.

- Digital engagement and hybrid access – interest in digitising and showcasing public and moveable art collections, and in combining digital and in-person programming to improve access and engagement.

Addressing these key themes and topics, and also aligning with key research findings, the new Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy 2025 – 2031 focuses on four key elements:

1. **Celebrate our identity:** Strengthen Rockingham's identity and civic pride through events, local storytelling, public art, community celebrations, and place-based cultural expression.
2. **Arts and culture for all:** Support inclusive access to arts and culture for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and communities.
3. **Arts and culture everywhere:** Extend arts and cultural experiences across all suburbs through local partnerships, activating existing venues, seasonal events, and accessible, city-wide programming.
4. **Cultivate creativity:** Foster creative growth by supporting artists, activating spaces, facilitating development opportunities, and embedding creative needs in long-term infrastructure planning

These Key Elements align closely with the Australian Government's National Cultural Policy – Revive, as follows:

- Celebrate our identity - reflects the emphasis on place-based storytelling
- Arts and culture for all - supports inclusive access and participation
- Arts and culture everywhere - promotes cultural reach and community connection
- Cultivate creativity - aligns with priorities around workforce development and sustainable creative infrastructure.

They also align with Creative WA's 10-Year Vision, with shared goals to celebrate local stories, increase participation by reducing barriers, and strengthen the creative sector through investment in artists, spaces, and innovation.

2. Strategic Objective

The strategic objective of the Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy 2025-2031 is:

To strengthen Rockingham's unique cultural identity, increase access to arts and cultural experiences, and activate diverse spaces and stories through inclusive, innovative, and collaborative cultural and arts development.

The Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy 2025-2031 aims to deliver the following aspirations of the City's Strategic Community Plan (2023-2033):

Aspiration 1: Social - A family-friendly, safe and connected community

- Connected community: Provide opportunities for community engagement and participation
- Community Health and Wellbeing: Strengthen community health and wellbeing
- Community Health and Wellbeing: Provide healthy lifestyle opportunities
- Inclusive community: Build connectivity with our diverse community

Aspiration 3: Built Environment - A built environment carefully planned for today and tomorrow

- Built infrastructure meets current and future community needs: Plan, build and maintain current and future assets
- Plan for sustainable growth: Create safe community places to live, recreate and work
- Accessible and connected: Plan and advocate for transport solutions

Aspiration 4: Economic – A vibrant economy creating opportunities

- A visitor destination: Promote the City as a place to visit

Aspiration 5: Leadership - Transparent and accountable leadership and governance

- Quality leadership: Promote the City as a place for the future
- Quality leadership: Provide community communication and facilitate engagement opportunities
- Sustainable local government: Optimise City resources

3. Background

3.1. Defining Cultural Development and the Arts

Cultural development refers to the City's strategic role in enabling cultural expression, creative industries, heritage, and the arts to support identity, inclusion, wellbeing, and economic vitality across the community. It involves more than simply delivering arts programs. It focuses on shaping a culturally rich, connected, and vibrant Rockingham through long-term planning, investment, partnerships, and place-based initiatives.

The term cultural development is intentionally used, instead of just arts, or arts and culture, as it reflects the broader outcome the City is working towards - the ongoing growth and expression of community identity, shared stories, and creative participation. In this framing, arts are a key activity - a vital tool - but cultural development is the purpose. Staff working in this space are not only delivering arts events or programs, but enabling long-term cultural growth through a range of strategic cultural development and arts initiatives.

This work is distinct from multicultural or diversity-focused roles, which primarily focus on equitable access to services and civic participation. Cultural development and arts, by contrast, is about creative expression and connection - enabling diverse communities, including First Nations people, to tell their stories and celebrate identity. While these areas may intersect, (E.g. events that support both cultural expression and inclusion), they represent different but complementary objectives.

Within this cultural development context, arts and culture refers to the diverse forms of creative expression, cultural practice, and storytelling that reflect, shape, and connect Rockingham's people and places. This includes things like visual and performing arts, public art, literature, music, festivals, events, design, craft, digital media, and heritage activities, as well as cultural traditions and celebrations.

For the City of Rockingham, cultural development and the arts can:

- Strengthen local identity through civic storytelling, public art, and celebration of heritage.
- Promote inclusion by ensuring access to cultural expression for all residents, including First Nations communities, young people, people with disability, and culturally diverse groups.
- Activate underused spaces through place-based programming and events.
- Support artists and creative practitioners with grants, exhibitions, residencies, and professional development opportunities.
- Shape public perception by using arts and culture to foster civic pride and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Build community connection and wellbeing by embedding culture into infrastructure planning and delivering city-wide, accessible cultural programming.

For the City of Rockingham, cultural development and the arts are a means to build a vibrant and inclusive community, while also positioning the City as a creative, connected, and culturally distinctive place.

3.2. International Context

The World Health Organisation (WHO)

The 2019 WHO report, *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being?* synthesises findings from over 3,000 global studies, demonstrating the strong positive impact of the arts on both mental and physical health. Artistic engagement has been shown to reduce depression, anxiety, and chronic pain, while improving emotional well-being, life satisfaction, and social cohesion. Benefits are particularly evident for groups such as children with behavioural challenges, older adults, and people with chronic illnesses.

The report also highlights the value of culturally diverse and accessible arts programs, especially for marginalised communities. The arts play a key role in helping people process trauma, communicate across cultural divides, and increase social capital. The report calls for the integration of arts into health and social care strategies, supported by cross-sector partnerships and shared funding models. While challenges such as access and funding persist, the report identifies enablers including community-led initiatives, strong public support, and collaboration between health, social care, and arts sectors.

UNESCO

In September 2022, UNESCO convened the World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT 2022) in Mexico City, bringing together representatives from a diverse range of nations to discuss global cultural policies and their role in sustainable development. The conference culminated with 150 states unanimously adopting a landmark Declaration for Culture, affirming culture as a "global public good" and advocating for its inclusion as a standalone objective in future United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Some key highlights of the Declaration include:

- **Cultural Protection and Promotion:** emphasising the need to safeguard and promote cultural diversity, recognising its essential role in fostering mutual understanding and peace.
- **Combating Illicit Trafficking:** Calling for intensified international cooperation to fight the illicit trafficking of cultural property, urging art market operators to ensure the provenance of items before sale.
- **Digital Transformation:** Addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by digital technologies, advocating for policies that bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to cultural content online.
- **Support for Artists and Cultural Professionals:** Reiterating the importance of improving the status of artists, enhancing social protection measures, and ensuring freedom of artistic expression.

3.3. National Context

Statistics

Research published by the Bureau of Communications, Arts and Regional Research (BCARR) in December 2024 reported that Australia's creative and cultural industries contributed \$63.7 billion to the economy in 2022–23, equivalent to 2.5% of GDP—a 61.9% increase over 15 years. The sector employed approximately 282,000 people (2.4% of the national workforce) and comprised more than 95,700 businesses (3.7% of all Australian businesses).

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021–22 Cultural and Creative Activities survey shows that cultural participation and attendance vary significantly by age and gender. In that year, 39% of women and 25% of men participated in cultural activities, with the highest rate (41%) among people aged 15–24. Among children aged 5–14, 94% engaged in cultural activities, particularly arts and crafts (39%) and music (19%).

The same ABS survey also found that adult attendance at cultural venues and events declined from 82% in 2017–18 to 64% in 2021–22, though attendance remained higher among women (66%) and young people (e.g. 83% of girls aged 15–17). Children's attendance remained strong, with 80% visiting at least one cultural venue. 67% attended the cinema, 33% went to a library, and 31% visited a museum.

National Arts Participation Survey

Creating Value, a 2022 *National Arts Participation Survey* by Creative Australia explored how Australians engage with arts and culture, the impact on their lives, and shifts in participation following COVID-19 disruptions. It applies a broader definition of arts and culture – to include activities like reading or listening to music - finding that nearly all Australians engaged with the arts in some form. While overall attendance returned to pre-pandemic levels, people attended less frequently, shifting from weekly to every few months. Cost and location remained key barriers, with nearly half of Australians wanting to attend more often but being limited by these factors.

- 97% of Australians engaged with the arts
- 91 % listened to recorded music
- 69% read books
- 88% engaged digitally
- 44% creatively participated in the arts
- 28% attended First Nations arts events or activities
- 32% engaged with or created arts reflecting their cultural background
- 68% attended live events / activities (E.g. theatre, music, festivals, dance)

Online engagement with the arts rose, with many appreciating the convenience of digital access to creative content. However, a large portion of respondents noted missing the atmosphere of live events and experiences, suggesting this digital

engagement may have been influenced by the pandemic and could change again over time.

National Cultural Policy

In early 2023, the Australian Government introduced its National Cultural Policy - *Revive: A Place for Every Story, a Story for Every Place*. Officially launched on January 30, 2023, this five-year strategy aims to embed arts and culture into the fabric of Australian society, recognising their intrinsic value while highlighting their role in fostering social cohesion and driving economic growth. The policy is structured around five interconnected pillars:

1. **First Nations First:** Prioritising the support and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, fostering sustainable career pathways for young First Nations creatives, and expanding opportunities to engage First Nations audiences.
2. **A Place for Every Story:** Enhancing access to diverse cultural experiences across Australia, ensuring that all communities can participate in and contribute to the nation's cultural narrative.
3. **A Story for Every Place:** Celebrating Australia's rich history and diverse cultures through storytelling, supporting initiatives that highlight local stories and regional identities.
4. **Creative People:** Investing in the creative workforce by providing fair remuneration, safe working conditions, and professional development opportunities for artists and arts workers.
5. **Sustainable Arts and Culture:** Ensuring a resilient and innovative arts sector through strategic investments, infrastructure support, and policies that promote long-term sustainability.

To implement *Revive*, the Australian Government has committed \$286 million over four years, with this investment supporting the establishment of new bodies under Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts), including Music Australia, Creative Workplaces, First Nations Arts, and Writing Australia - each focusing on specific aspects of the National Cultural Policy.

Creative Australia (Formerly Australia Council for the Arts)

As part of a broader reform to align with the National Cultural Policy, Australia Council for the Arts - the peak body for arts in Australia - was restructured into Creative Australia in 2023. Its key functions include:

- **Support for the Arts and Creative Industries:** strategic support and investment in a wide range of creative industries, including music, visual arts, performing arts, and literature.
- **Promoting Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensuring cultural diversity and inclusion. It aims to make the arts more accessible to all Australians, particularly marginalised groups, including First Nations communities.

- International Engagement: Elevating Australia's arts presence on the global stage - supporting international touring, collaborations, and cultural exchanges.
- Policy and Strategic Oversight: Policy direction for the arts and creative industries, aligning with the National Cultural Policy.

In addition, Creative Australia now encompasses:

- Music Australia: dedicated to supporting the Australian contemporary music industry.
- Creative Workplaces: focused on enhancing the work environments and conditions for those in the arts and entertainment sectors.
- First Nations Arts: providing First Nations communities with dedicated support for arts and cultural initiatives, ensuring that Indigenous voices are heard and represented.
- Writing Australia: Launching in July 2025, is expected to support Australian writers and the literature sector.

Aligned with Pillar One of the National Cultural Policy, a First Nations Board now advises and guides First Nations arts investment within Creative Australia. The Board is responsible for determining funding priorities and supporting the creation and production of major First Nations works. It is also leading the development of a First Nations Creative Workforce Development Strategy and promoting best practice in cultural protocols, self-determination, and cultural safety across the arts sector.

3.4. State Context

WA Arts participation

The 2024 Arts and Culture (annual survey) by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries provides some insight to the value of arts and culture to the Western Australian community. Below is a snapshot of some key findings:

- Support for Investment in Arts and Culture:
 - 83% of respondents agree that the WA Government should invest in arts and culture.
 - 55% believe the current allocation of \$2.44 per person per week (reported in the survey) for arts is too low.
 - 40% are willing to pay \$2 to \$10 more per week for expanded arts access.
- Importance of Arts in Child Development
 - 93% agree that access to arts activities is important for children's education.
 - 91% agree that arts activities outside of school are crucial for child development.
- Personal Value of Arts, Culture, and Creativity
 - 60% rate arts and culture as highly valuable in their lives.
 - The personal value score has been increasing by 1 index point each year for three years, and is currently at a 10-year high.

- Arts, Culture, and Wellbeing
 - 84% agree that arts and culture make them feel good.
 - 80% say arts activities positively impact mental health.
 - 73% report arts activities improving their sense of belonging.
 - 81% say arts foster understanding and respect for different cultures.
- Giving Back to the Arts
 - 40% of respondents engaged with the arts sector in the past 12 months, contributing through donations, volunteering, or unpaid work.
- Event Attendance and Preferences
 - When asked about their attendance at specific types of arts and cultural events, 82% of respondents said that they had attended at least one event in the past year, with top events including:
 - Movies/films (50%)
 - Live music (41%)
 - Exhibitions (32%)
- Creative Expression Preferences
 - 62% of respondents engaged in creative activities, with art and craft (28%) and photography (23%) being the most popular.
 - Dance (15%), musical instruments (14%), and visual arts (11%) followed in popularity.
- Online Engagement with Arts
 - 47% engaged in online arts experiences in the past year, including activities like:
 - Video games (15%)
 - Library e-resources (8%)
 - Live streamed performances (8%)
 - Young people (16–24) were the most active in online arts engagement, with 61% participation.
- Engagement with First Nations Activities
 - 35% of respondents engaged with First Nations experiences, including:
 - Art galleries/exhibitions (13%)
 - Ceremonies (13%)
 - Film or television (11%)
 - Performances (11%)
 - Engagement was highest among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (70%) and young people (47%).

Chamber of Arts and Culture WA

The Chamber of Arts and Culture WA is a key advocacy body for the arts and cultural sector in Western Australia. It works to strengthen the sector through:

- Advocating for Policy and Investment – Engaging with government, industry, and stakeholders to influence policies and secure funding for arts and cultural development.

- pSector Leadership and Collaboration – Bringing together artists, organisations, and industry leaders to foster collaboration and strategic growth.
- Research and Public Engagement – Conducting research, publishing reports, and promoting the value of arts and culture to the public and policymakers.
- Support and Capacity Building – Providing resources, networking opportunities, and professional development to support artists and cultural organisations.

The Chamber plays a crucial role in ensuring that arts and culture are recognised as vital to WA's social, economic, and community well-being.

Community Arts Network (CAN) WA

Community Arts Network (CAN) is a Western Australian organisation committed to creating positive social change through the arts. For more than 30 years, it has partnered with diverse communities to share underrepresented stories, foster inclusion, and build mutual understanding. CAN acknowledges that the arts are a powerful tool for transforming communities, and operates with values that encompass First Nations leadership, respect, social equity, and creativity.

Major projects include *Beautiful Smiles*, a collaboration with Child and Adolescent Health Services that produced a multilingual lullaby and children's book to promote dental health and cultural diversity; *Place Names*, which revives Noongar language and history through storytelling and research; and *High VisAbility*, which creates pathways into the arts for people with disability. CAN also supports the sector through initiatives like *Making Time*, an annual conference for artists and community practitioners, and a membership program offering networking, events, and professional development - reinforcing its vision of a just, inclusive Australia through creative expression.

Department of Creative Industries Tourism and Sport (CITS)

(Formerly Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries)

CITS plays a key role in developing and supporting arts and culture in Western Australia. It focuses on cultural infrastructure development, such as identifying creative spaces through the Western Australian Cultural Infrastructure Map. CITS administers and supports Lotterywest grants to support artists, community organisations, festivals, and regional arts, contributing to economic growth. It also leads policy development to recognise arts as vital to the state's social and economic well-being, and supports aboriginal culture through actively funding and developing First Nations-led programs. Additionally, DLGSC promotes public engagement with the arts, aiming to increase access and participation.

Creative WA – 10 year Vision

CITS also recently developed *Creative WA: A 10-Year Vision to Grow and Sustain Our Creative Ecosystem (2024)* in collaboration with stakeholders, including industry, government, and the creative community. Based on extensive consultation, it aligns the state's creative sector with broader economic and social goals, focusing on three priority areas:

1. Strengthen the Creative Sector - Focus on investing in creative development, increasing the visibility and growth of WA's arts, and supporting career pathways and sustainability for creative organisations.
2. Share Stories and Celebrate Place - sharing WA's unique stories, including First Nations culture, both locally and globally, by supporting creative spaces and increasing participation in tourism, events, and trade.
3. Increase Access and Participation - Reduce barriers to arts participation, improve accessibility to creative offerings across communities, grow support for First Nations arts, and promote the well-being benefits of arts engagement.

3.5. City of Rockingham Context

City provision

The City of Rockingham plays an important role in fostering arts and cultural development through a range of initiatives. While many are delivered through the dedicated Cultural Development and the Arts portfolio, others are led by different departments and portfolio areas, while still incorporating cultural or artistic components. Some key City programs and initiatives include:

Rockingham Arts Centre

In January 2022, the Rockingham Arts Centre (RAC) underwent significant refurbishment to improve its flexibility and function. Key upgrades included enhanced lighting, newly painted internal walls, a new hanging system, a wash-out sink and improved storage. The venue includes a B-category boutique gallery, a multi-use room for workshops and exhibitions, and a studio space for short-term artist hires and residencies. Further works are being planned for the courtyard space in front of the RAC in 2026/27, to complete the Centre's enhancements and create a small and vibrant arts hub.

Each year RAC features a range of exhibitions, as well as workshops and programs for local arts enthusiasts. In addition, the Centre is utilised by a range of arts and creative community groups, including a writers group, various arts and crafts groups, and the Friends of the Rockingham Arts Community (FoRAC) group.

Art Competitions / Events

The City of Rockingham currently delivers two prominent art competitions and events each year:

1. Castaways:

Castaways celebrates environmental awareness through artistic innovation. Running during October and November each year, the event showcases sculptures made from recycled or repurposed materials. Artists of all skill levels are invited to submit entries for the Main Exhibition, Maquette and Small Sculpture Exhibition, and Schools Exhibition. Castaways provides a platform for artists to display their work along the Rockingham Foreshore and offers local school students an opportunity to showcase their talents.

The prize pool totals \$27,250 (2025) (non-acquisitive), including a \$10,000 Major Award, and additional prizes for sustainability, innovation, and local residents. There are also awards for Maquette and Small Sculpture, as well as Secondary and Primary School Awards. An Awards ceremony is held at the Gary Holland Community Centre at the end of the exhibition period each year.

2. Rockingham Art Prize:

The annual City of Rockingham Art Prize provides opportunity for Western Australian artists to compete for a prize pool of \$20,000 (2025). As of 2025 the competition will have been running for seven years, and features a professionally-curated exhibition at the Rockingham Arts Centre during June and July. The first prize offers \$10,000 in cash, and there are additional awards for small sculpture, emerging artists, First Nations artists, and local residents. Entry is free, and artists can submit works in any medium except installations and video. All selected are available for sale, with finalists chosen by a professional selection panel. The event provides a significant platform for artists at all career stages to showcase their talent and gain exposure in the local arts community.

Major Events

The City of Rockingham's Summer Events season is an annual celebration that brings the community together through a vibrant program of cultural and entertainment events. Held across the holiday season and into the new-year, it features popular events including:

- New Year's Eve – Held at the Rockingham Foreshore, this event includes family-friendly entertainment, live music, a headline act, food vendors, and fireworks.
- Christmas Lights Launch – Also at the Foreshore, featuring live and roaming entertainment, market and food stalls, and a visit from Santa.
- Celebrate Australia Day – Celebrated at the Foreshore with live music, cultural performances, amusement rides, face painting, arts and crafts, and fireworks.
- Symphony on the Green – Hosted at the Village Green, this event showcases a live symphony orchestra, pre-show entertainment, and food stalls.

The City delivers major events to foster community connection and celebrate local identity through inclusive arts, culture, and entertainment experiences. These events also support Aspiration 4 of the City's Strategic Community Plan by generating tourism and economic development benefits - drawing large crowds, encouraging out-of-region visitation, and supporting local businesses and performers.

They align strategically with the Tourism Destination Strategy 2024–2029 and Economic Development Strategy, enhancing Rockingham's profile as a cultural destination and stimulating the local economy through increased foot traffic, hospitality spend, and overnight stays. As such, the City's Economic Development and Tourism Team now plays a leading role in delivering the City's major events

Public Art

The City of Rockingham has established a vibrant and diverse approach to public art, recognising it as an essential element of place-making that fosters community identity and pride. Public art in Rockingham serves not only as a reflection of the area's history and community but also as a medium for shaping its future. The City's public art initiatives have contributed to urban renewal, cultural development, and tourism, making them a key part of overall design and growth.

While the City maintains an active public art program that includes commissioning and purchasing works to enhance public spaces such as parks, reserves, civic buildings, and cultural venues, there are opportunities to further strengthen this approach. Community feedback has highlighted the need for more diverse and contemporary expressions, increased representation of First Nations stories and perspectives, and consistent maintenance to preserve the quality and impact of existing works.

The City's Art Collection Policy guides the growth and management of these cultural assets and provides a valuable framework for future development. Building on this foundation, there is scope to review and refine the City's vision and policies for public art to ensure they remain relevant, responsive, and aligned with community aspirations. By addressing these areas, public art can continue to evolve as an integral part of creating an engaging, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all residents and visitors.

Art Collection

The City of Rockingham continues to add to and maintain a diverse collection of artworks sourced from local and state-wide artists. The collection celebrates the varied approaches to Western Australian art making, with works featured by artists at all stages of their careers, styles, subject matter, and media.

The City actively acquires both two and three dimensional artworks for the collection, that provide an insight into the artistic heritage of Rockingham, and greater Western Australia. The artworks are displayed across City buildings, offices and venues on a rotational basis to allow the works to undergo maintenance such as resting, conservation and reframing.

Disability Access and Inclusion

Work in this area often integrates arts and culture through initiatives such as tactile tours of the Castaways exhibition, support for microenterprises selling handmade artworks during International Day of People with Disability activities, and grant funding to inclusive creative groups like Mixed Palette. Social stories for major City events also ensure accessible engagement with the arts for neurodivergent community members.

Seniors programs

The City's Seniors programs offer multiple avenues for cultural connection and artistic expression. Events such as the Seniors and Carers Expo and Seniors Week feature creative workshops, live performances, and hands-on activities spanning poetry, craft, dance, and sustainable art-making. Initiatives like *Stories for the Ages*, *Purple Road*, *World Elder Abuse Awareness Day*, and *Mind the Change: Story Time* further support

creative storytelling, dementia awareness, and positive ageing through artistic means. Ongoing promotion of local creative groups via newsletters and resource lists also supports participation in cultural life by older residents. The City has a dedicated Community Development Officers (Seniors).

First Nations engagement

Cultural performances and workshops are integrated into citizenship ceremonies, major events, and community celebrations. Annual NAIDOC Week programs feature art exhibitions and public workshops that elevate Aboriginal voices and cultural expression within the Rockingham community. The City also has a dedicated Reconciliation Action Plan, which includes components aligned with arts and culture. In 2026 the City will commence planning for a New Reconciliation Action Strategy 2026 – 2031. The City has a Community Development Officer (Reconciliation) and a Community Development Officer (First Nations Engagement).

Community Grants Program Funding

The City provides an extensive community grants program, with general grants up to \$3,000 available year-round, and major / events grants available through two funding rounds per year – offering up to \$20,000 per project (depending on grant category). Eligible local arts and cultural groups are able to apply for funding to assist with delivering local programs and events.

Iconic Event Sponsorship

The City of Rockingham's Iconic Event Sponsorship Program provides funding for large-scale events that generate significant economic and tourism benefits for the region. Events must attract high attendance, increase out-of-region visitation, and align with the City's tourism brand. Funding can cover up to 50% of event costs and must support activities like marketing, infrastructure, and professional delivery. Applicants must meet strict eligibility criteria, demonstrate local economic impact, and submit a post-event evaluation. Applications are open year-round and require early engagement with the City.

Youth programs

The City offers a range of initiatives that support young people to engage in artistic and cultural expression. These initiatives foster creativity, inclusion, cultural identity, and community connection. Events such as GLOW (delivered during Pride Month), and the Youth Beach Party provide platforms for self-expression, social inclusion, and peer engagement in safe, youth-focused environments.

The Breakthrough Music competition previously provided a platform for young local performers to showcase their talents, with many progressing to paid gigs and local event invitations. While the program ceased in 2025, the City continues to explore alternative opportunities for young musicians to perform and develop their skills through other City event platforms. For example, previous Breakthrough winners often perform at the City's major events.

The Mooriboordap Djoowak program was developed to support First Nations young people aged 12–18, providing opportunities to explore and strengthen cultural identity, build community connections, and foster civic and cultural pride. In 2025, the Youth

Development team also introduced sessions exploring Māori culture, which were positively received.

Additionally, youth programs delivered during both school terms and holidays regularly incorporate creative workshops, including craft activities and First Nations learning experiences (e.g. NAIDOC Week), ensuring access to diverse and inclusive cultural content for all young people.

Rockingham Youth Centre

The Rockingham Youth Centre, located at 20 MacKinnon Street, is a dedicated facility for young people aged 12 to 24, providing a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment. Opened in 2021, the centre offers access to a wide range of programs, services, and supports that promote personal development, wellbeing and community connection. The modern, award-winning building includes counselling rooms, multipurpose activity areas, a kitchen, hot-desks, and accessible amenities.

In the context of the City's Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy, the Rockingham Youth Centre plays an important role in fostering cultural engagement, creative expression, and social connection among young people aged 12 to 24. As a dedicated, purpose-built facility, RYC provides a safe, inclusive space where youth can access a wide range of programs that support their creative development and participation in arts and cultural activities. These include opportunities to explore visual arts, performance, music, digital media, and cultural identity, alongside broader recreational, educational, and leadership programs.

The Centre also supports young people to connect with local artists, cultural practitioners, and peers, helping build confidence, skills, and a sense of belonging. Through youth-led initiatives, targeted workshops, and culturally inclusive programming, RYC contributes to the growth of a vibrant, youth-informed creative culture in Rockingham. Its role in offering free, accessible, and diverse programming positions it as a key space for developing the next generation of artists, cultural contributors, and creative leaders within the community.

Intersections with other City of Rockingham Strategies

Arts and culture intersect with other City of Rockingham strategic priority areas, and can be seen as both a community development experience and an economic / tourism stimulus. For example, some other City Strategies and Plans which intersect with the Strategy for Cultural Development and the Arts include:

- Tourism Destination Strategy 2024-2029 - by enhancing the city's appeal as a vibrant visitor destination through cultural programming, public art, and signature events, which can positively impact the local business economy.
- Economic Development Strategy – in relation to the local economic and tourism impacts of arts and cultural activities, including major events. Arts and culture is an important component to enhance City Centre vibrancy and place activation.
- Sustainability Strategy – in terms of encouraging and promoting sustainable practices through arts and events, such as Castaways.

- Library and Information Services Strategy - recognising libraries as cultural hubs and welcoming spaces for arts, literature, and cultural expression.
- Strategy for Early Years, Children and Young People - acknowledging the significance of young people in Rockingham constituting over one-third of the population. Arts and cultural expression for young people can shape future strategies, addressing social isolation and mental health issues.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy - shared focus on social connection, mental wellbeing, and community inclusion, emphasising the importance of place-based approaches, and equitable access to programs that support individual and collective wellbeing. Arts and culture contribute to these goals by reducing isolation, fostering identity and belonging, and activating public spaces through creative expression.
- Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) – recognising Rockingham's Aboriginal heritage, promoting local Aboriginal culture, language, and representation in community spaces. The City's RAP fosters the building of strong and authentic relationships, respect for culture and the development of opportunities aimed at optimising the way the City works with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.
- Community Infrastructure Plan (CIP) – in terms of understanding current and future plans for capital development, potentially including art and culture infrastructure.
- Community Safety and Support Services Strategy 2022-2027- Provides a focus on creating safe and vibrant places and spaces, partnerships for collective action and advocacy along with safe and connected communities. The Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy complements this strategy with the shared focus of connecting communities to facilitate events, and activities in public spaces, facilitating partnerships with artists for community murals in locations to improve perceptions of safety by removing graffiti and activating underutilised facilities.
- Rockingham Strategic Centre Precinct Structure Plan – sets the framework for transforming the City Centre into a vibrant, mixed-use hub. It identifies Kent Street as a key location for civic, community, and cultural activity, with opportunities for creative enterprises and activated public spaces. The Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy complements this by expanding cultural programming, embedding creative infrastructure, and supporting place activation along Kent Street and the wider precinct, reinforcing Rockingham's identity as a connected, culturally distinctive destination.
- Rockingham Beach Foreshore Master Plan - provides a revitalised, accessible waterfront precinct designed to attract visitors and activate public spaces. The Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy builds on this by delivering events, public art, and cultural programs that bring the foreshore to life year-round, strengthening civic identity and supporting tourism.

3.6. Community Consultation Findings

In late 2023 and early 2024, the City undertook community consultation and engagement with a range of external stakeholders including service providers, community groups, state government agencies, other local governments, and community members. The process included:

- An online survey attracting 146 responses.
- 3 community focus group sessions (including representation from cultural and arts groups)
- 23 one-on-one interviews (including members from cultural and arts group)

The City also used feedback from previous community consultation processes for:

- The City's Strategic Community Plan 2023 – 2033.
- Other Community Plan Strategies (E.g. Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Strategy for Early Years, Children and Young People).

Key feedback is summarised below, grouped into common themes / topics:

Rockingham's distinct identity

- Negative stereotypes and perceptions persist, despite efforts in past strategies and some recent progress.
- There is strong interest in further development and vibrant activation of the City – to encourage visitation and position Rockingham as a tourism destination.
- Derelict buildings in the Foreshore area detract from its role as the City's main tourist destination.
- Residents feel there is more opportunity for coordinated storytelling and publicity to promote Rockingham's positive attributes.
- Public art was supported as a way to celebrate Rockingham's identity, attract visitors, and create engaging public spaces.
- Community members valued the repair and upgrading of existing artworks and expressed enthusiasm for developing public art trails and walks.
- Rockingham's historical identity as a working port is underrepresented in its current beach-centric image.
- Stakeholders highlighted the need to preserve and promote early industries such as sailing, timber, and maritime trade.
- Rockingham is heavily marketed as a relaxed, beachside destination, which suits coastal suburbs, however this overlooks inland areas like Baldivis and Karnup.
- Events and facilities are often concentrated on the Foreshore. There is interest in expanding activation across all suburbs.
- Mandurah is often cited as a benchmark. Some community members support replicating its model, while others stress the importance of Rockingham forging its own identity that reflects its distinct demographics and character.
- Rockingham's geographical position outside the Peel Region may limit access to regional funding and tourism benefits.

Diverse Cultural Expression

- Rockingham's diversity includes First Nations, English, and Scottish heritage, as well as significant portion of young people.
- Stakeholders want to see more recognition and inclusion of multicultural communities.
- Current Australia Day celebrations, especially fireworks, were questioned, with some expressing desire for more inclusive and culturally respectful programming.
- There is support for a dedicated Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Centre to enable cultural practice, teaching, and connection.
- Additional proposals included Aboriginal walking trails, murals, native landscaping, and Noongar place naming.

Creative Precinct on Kent Street

- Community feedback consistently identified Kent Street as a priority location for cultural revitalisation, with strong support for a dedicated creative precinct, improved public realm, and strategies to attract and cluster cultural activity.
- The Gary Holland Community Centre (GHCC) was seen as under-used and in need of acoustic upgrades and greater community access. Concerns were raised about potential over-commercialisation.

Community Spaces and Facility Use

- Many community centres are underutilised. An audit is needed to identify activation opportunities, particularly for arts.
- Groups require facilities with better accessibility, appropriate flooring, secure storage.
- There is a lack of facilities that enable current groups to grow, and for new groups to form.
- Notable accessibility issues affect sometimes impact older participants (E.g. stairs-only access or inadequate storage facilities at some venues).
- Calls to reimagine community halls for arts activation, referencing Cockburn's Side Splitter Festival as an example.
- There was some concern that sports infrastructure (E.g. Baldivis District Sporting Complex) is often prioritised over arts. Claremont's dual-purpose model was cited as a suitable balance.
- There was support for arts programming beyond infrastructure (E.g. art walks, digital scavenger events and augmented reality activities).

Community Assets and Local Talent

- There was preference to prioritise local artists, especially among older groups, though some saw this as limiting.
- The City's Artist in Residence program could benefit from review. There were calls to consider alternative venues and include more local artists.
- Specific youth-driven programming interests were identified, including cosplay, costume-making, murals, and digital creation, requiring targeted investment.

Events and Public Programming

- The community broadly supports the City's current event offerings, particularly signature events such as Castaways, New Year's Eve, and Symphony on the Green.
- There were also suggestions to diversify event programming by extending it beyond the summer period, incorporating more contemporary entertainment (E.g. younger music acts), and distributing events more evenly across suburbs.
- State-level arts organisations expressed interest in partnering with the City to deliver programs, projects, and capacity-building initiatives that align with their outreach goals and expand cultural opportunities for the Rockingham community.
- Concerns were raised about transport and parking access at the foreshore during major events.
- There was interest in exploring drone or light shows as innovative alternatives to traditional fireworks.
- A potential collaboration with a puppet theatre company was identified as a valuable opportunity to engage younger audiences in cultural activity.
- Community members were pleased to hear the City is reviewing and upgrading its Public Art Collection, and are looking forward to this enabling future initiatives like public art trails and self-guided art walks to activate spaces and attract visitors.

Cultural and Arts Infrastructure

- Some feel a lack of large performance venues forces school and community events to be held outside Rockingham (e.g. Mandurah Performing Arts Centre).
- Stakeholders emphasised the strategic value of investing in premier cultural infrastructure to meet population growth and civic expectations.
- A multifunctional Performing Arts Centre was frequently proposed to accommodate large-scale local performances and elevate the City's cultural profile, reflecting long-standing community advocacy.
- Some stakeholders questioned whether a traditional Performing Arts Centre was still the right model, given changing creative arts trends and youth preferences.
- There was broad recognition that new infrastructure should support diverse cultural needs - including digital, visual, and community arts - not just stage-based performance.
- Suggestions included flexible spaces for exhibitions, studios, digital creation, participatory programming, and broader community connection beyond conventional theatre use.

Capacity Building and promotion

- It is important for the City to define what arts-based capacity building entails - such as skills development, leadership or sustainability - and ensure it directly supports its broader cultural development priorities
- There is an ongoing need to educate the community about the meaning of cultural development and arts in a local government context, and the role local government can play
- Longstanding local groups support wellbeing and cohesion but face sustainability issues due to ageing demographics.

- Promotion and attraction methods need to adapt and evolve to attract younger members.
- Grassroots initiatives like “Rockingham Creative – Social Group” show potential for informal capacity building aligned with City goals.
- Communication barriers exist for community arts groups, including limited promotion options.
- Many stakeholders suggest a dedicated City-run arts and culture social media page.

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4. The Way Forward

Key Element 1: Celebrate our identity

Strengthen Rockingham's identity and civic pride through events, local storytelling, public art, community celebrations, and place-based cultural expression

What the research told us

- WHO research shows that engagement with the arts fosters emotional wellbeing, social cohesion, and civic identity
- UNESCO declared culture a “global public good,” reinforcing the role of cultural identity in building understanding and peace.
- The *Revive* national policy supports place-based storytelling and cultural identity as drivers of community pride.
- Creative Australia and national participation data reflect high public value placed on arts, particularly live events and localised engagement, despite attendance declining in recent years.
- WA survey data indicates 84% believe arts make them feel good, 80% report mental health benefits, and 73% feel increased belonging - confirming the role of cultural activity in civic connection.
- WA's personal value index for arts and culture is at a 10-year high, reflecting growing public alignment between identity and creative expression.

What the local community and stakeholders told us

- The community supports the City's current events, especially signature events like Castaways, New Year's Eve, and Symphony on the Green.
- Residents see more opportunity for coordinated storytelling and promotion of Rockingham's positive features.
- Public art was seen as a way to celebrate identity, attract visitors, and create engaging public spaces.
- Community members valued repairing and upgrading artworks and were enthusiastic about developing public art trails and walks.
- Stakeholders noted Rockingham's history as a working port is underrepresented in its beach-focused image.
- There was strong support for more recognition and inclusion of multicultural communities and First Nations heritage.
- People were interested in new ways to share stories of place, like interpretive signs, Aboriginal walking trails, murals, native plants, and place naming.
- Concerns were raised about limited promotion options and communication barriers for community arts groups.
- Some people saw Mandurah as a benchmark, while others felt Rockingham should build its own distinct identity.

What the City will do

- Deliver and evaluate an annual New Year's Eve event.
- Deliver and evaluate an annual Australia Day event.

- Deliver and evaluate an annual Christmas Lights Launch event.
- Deliver and evaluate an annual Christmas Lights display.
- Deliver and evaluate Symphony on the Green
- Review the City's vision and direction for Public Art, and conduct a review of policies and procedures for the City's moveable and public art collections.
- Develop, maintain and promote the City's public art, and art collections.
- Engage a public art consultant to guide and oversee annual management of the City's public art (including developing a comprehensive maintenance schedule, reviewing and providing feedback on all Developer and Community Infrastructure Percent for Art applications, serving on assessment panels for City commissioned works and offering expert advice on artwork restoration).
- Develop and implement coordinated strategic marketing campaigns to promote City Arts and Cultural events and activities.
- Develop contemporary place-based storytelling initiatives using interpretive signage, QR codes, and Augmented Reality to celebrate Rockingham's history and cultural identity.
- Deliver relevant actions from the City's Tourist Destination Strategy 2024–2029 that contribute to place-based storytelling, cultural tourism, and the promotion of Rockingham's identity as a vibrant cultural destination

Note: The City acknowledges that feedback was received during the consultation phase relating to the City's Australia Day event. At the Ordinary Council meeting of September 2024, Council approved the conduct of Australia Day celebrations and citizenship ceremonies being held on the 26 January, and *Council Policy – Functions Hosted by Council* was updated accordingly. The date of Australia Day celebrations adheres to Council Policy.

Key Element 2: Arts and culture for all

Support inclusive access to arts and culture for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and communities

What the research told us

- WHO and *Revive* both stress the role of arts in improving wellbeing for marginalised and diverse communities, with clear links between inclusive programming and social health.
- In 2022, 97% of Australians engaged with the arts in some form - most commonly through music, reading, or digital platforms - yet many attended live events less frequently than before, with cost and location continuing to limit participation despite strong public interest
- Creative WA promotes reducing participation barriers and expanding access to arts experiences for all communities, particularly underrepresented groups.
- UNESCO supports protection and promotion of cultural diversity as essential to sustainable development.
- *Revive*'s "First Nations First" pillar calls for cultural safety, self-determination, and investment in first nations-led initiatives.
- WA survey data shows 70% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents engage with First Nations arts.

What the local community and stakeholders told us

- There was strong support for more recognition and inclusion of multicultural communities and First Nations heritage.
- Stakeholders want to see more culturally respectful and inclusive programming, including rethinking Australia Day celebrations.
- There is a significant portion of young people in Rockingham, and interest in more youth-focused creative programs like cosplay, murals, costume-making, and digital creation.
- Community feedback emphasised the need for arts and cultural programs that are inclusive and accessible to people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- There was support for a dedicated Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Centre for cultural practice, teaching, and connection.
- There was support for initiatives such as Aboriginal walking trails, murals, native landscaping, and dual place naming to share First Nations stories.
- The Mooriboordap Advisory Group was identified as an important partner in ensuring cultural initiatives reflect First Nations perspectives.
- There was interest in more diverse events, including family-friendly and contemporary entertainment, as well as programming beyond the summer period.

What the City will do

- Embed inclusive, accessible, and co-designed approaches in City arts and cultural programs to support participation by people of all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.

- Involve young people in developing cultural and arts programs, including but not limited to the Rockingham Youth Reference Group.
- Deliver Harmony Week initiatives in collaboration with community groups.
- Provide planning tools to support accessible community-led events.
- Deliver an annual theatrical style event.
- Implement arts and culture actions included in other City strategies (E.g. seniors, children, young people, DAIP, Tourism Destination)
- Involve the City's Mooriboordap Advisory Group in planning and consultation for relevant cultural development and arts initiatives.
- Include actions in the next Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in relation to:
 - Undertaking a Feasibility Study for a First Nations Cultural Centre
 - Undertaking a Cultural Heritage Study to share stories and promote First Nations heritage
 - Implementing dual names at identified city facilities and spaces

Key Element 3: Arts and culture everywhere

Extend arts and cultural experiences across all suburbs through local partnerships, activating existing venues, seasonal events, and accessible, city-wide programming

What the research told us

- Australia's creative and cultural industries contribute \$63.7 billion to GDP, highlighting the sector's economic importance.
- *Revive* and *Creative WA* policies emphasise the need for infrastructure and policy to keep pace with population growth and geographic spread, including outer suburban and regional areas.
- Online engagement has increased, but the atmosphere and social value of live events are still highly prized by the community.
- WHO and UNESCO both advocate for integration of arts into health, education, and community planning as mechanisms for growth and social cohesion.
- Barriers to participation - like accessibility, transport, location, and cost - must be addressed to maintain engagement levels in expanding urban settings.
- National participation data identifies cost and location as primary barriers to arts engagement.

What the local community and stakeholders told us

- Rockingham's cultural infrastructure and events are concentrated along the coast, with residents in inland suburbs like Baldivis and Karnup sometimes feeling disconnected.
- There is strong local demand for arts and cultural activation across all suburbs to reflect the city's population growth and evolving geographic identity.
- Participants perceive a high investment in sports infrastructure compared to cultural infrastructure.
- Stakeholders advocated for models where sport and arts infrastructure are integrated (E.g. Claremont's dual-use approach).
- Concerns were raised about foreshore access and parking during large events.
- There is interest in using underused spaces like the Gary Holland Community Centre and community halls more actively, which supports the wider goal of giving all areas fair access to cultural activities and helping the community grow in an inclusive way.

What the City will do

- Deliver arts and cultural programs and workshops at various City and community venues, beyond RAC.
- Explore partnerships with major arts festivals, such as Fringe World and Perth Festival, to identify options for presenting festival programming locally.
- Deliver community pop-up style events at parks across outer City suburbs.
- Facilitate additional transport arrangements for major City events.
- Investigate virtual attendance options for City programs and events.
- Digitise and showcase public and movable art collections online.

Key Element 4: Cultivate creativity

Foster creative growth by supporting artists, activating spaces, facilitating development opportunities, and embedding creative needs in long-term infrastructure planning

What the research told us

- *Revive* allocates \$286 million over four years to build sustainable cultural infrastructure, with Creative Australia leading investment in facilities, organisations, and sector-wide capacity.
- The state strategy (*Creative WA*) prioritises infrastructure that strengthens the sector, increases participation, and supports diverse cultural expression.
- WHO recommends embedding arts infrastructure in public health and community development frameworks.
- CITS's WA Cultural Infrastructure Map supports identification of creative spaces and needs across the state.
- WA public support for arts investment is high (83%), and many believe current funding levels are inadequate.
- UNESCO and national policies call for investment in digital cultural infrastructure alongside physical spaces, recognising the role of hybrid models in expanding access and engagement.

What the local community and stakeholders told us

- Stakeholders saw value in developing a multifunctional performing arts facility to accommodate population growth, retain major events locally, and elevate Rockingham's cultural profile.
- The community strongly supported signature arts events like Castaways and Rockingham Art Prize.
- There was interest in more regular exhibitions and displays to celebrate local creativity, share community stories, and build pride in Rockingham's identity.
- Stakeholders called for more inclusive programming that offers workshops, skills development, and opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities to participate.
- There was broad support for enhancing public spaces, such as streetscapes and community facilities, to enable vibrant cultural activity and make creative experiences more visible.
- Feedback noted that some Rockingham Arts Centre spaces are underutilised, with community members interested in a review to consider facility optimisation.
- Community groups stressed the need for sustainable funding, grants, and resources to maintain and grow their cultural and creative activities.
- Stakeholders highlighted the importance of building stronger networks, partnerships, and capacity-building initiatives to support local artists and organisations.
- Groups noted the lack of purpose-built creative infrastructure and the need for functional spaces that are accessible, affordable, and fit for purpose.
- Youth and emerging creatives expressed strong interest in dedicated spaces and resources for digital creation, multimedia projects, and contemporary art forms.

What the City will do

- Undertake a feasibility study for a multifunctional Performing Arts Centre.
- Deliver and evaluate the annual Castaways Sculpture Awards.
- Deliver and evaluate the annual Rockingham Art Prize.
- Conduct an operational review of Rockingham Arts Centre to maximise community and cultural benefits.
- Deliver an annual exhibition program at Rockingham Arts Centre.
- Deliver an annual workshop program at Rockingham Arts Centre.
- Activate the external space at Rockingham Arts Centre to create a vibrant cultural hub that supports live cultural performances and small-scale cultural events, to complement exhibition openings and other RAC activity.
- Provide funding opportunities for local cultural and arts groups through the community grants program.
- Provide networking opportunities to enable local creatives and organisations to build networks and share skills, including but not limited to presentations from peak arts organisations).
- Consider creative infrastructure (E.g. studios, wet areas, washout sinks, storage) within facility upgrades and new facility planning, as appropriate.
- Assess opportunities and avenues for digital creation spaces at appropriate City venues, to support skills development and innovation (E.g. video and audio recording/editing, podcasting, digital media / gaming, music production, graphic design, content creation).

5. Measuring success

The implementation of the actions will be measured utilising a range of methods and platforms, including but not limited to:

- City of Rockingham Health and Wellbeing Profile - annual
- Community Development Measurement Tool / Model - annual
- Usage and attendance records / uptake of programs, services, and events - ongoing
- Budgeted amounts / budget expenditure – through quarterly review and annual reporting
- General surveys and customer feedback - ongoing
- Annual Resident Perception Survey- annual
- Media articles - ongoing
- Rockport – ongoing
- Economic Impact assessments – following major events

Tourism related actions

Actions from the Tourist Destination Strategy 2024-29 (TDS) that align with this Cultural Development and the Arts Strategy will be measured using mechanisms identified in the (TDS), including tracking annual growth in tourism employment, total sales, and visitor numbers, monitoring the average length of stay, assessing website traffic and campaign performance metrics, and evaluating Visitor Centre usage and satisfaction survey results to ensure cultural initiatives contribute to broader tourism outcomes.

6. Risk Management

A review of strategy planning and implementation risks has been conducted in line with the City's Risk Management Framework. Project management and customer service operational risks were either at a low or medium level and will be managed by officers as part of the implementation of the strategy. This is in line with Council report writing risk requirements. No strategic risks were identified.

7. Implementation Plan

7.1. Key Element 1: Celebrate our identity

Strengthen Rockingham's identity and civic pride through events, local storytelling, public art, community celebrations, and place-based cultural expression

No	Task	Type	Annual cost	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	Team
1.1	Deliver and evaluate a New Years Eve event	Ongoing	\$497,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EDT
1.2	Deliver and evaluate an Australia Day event	Ongoing	\$322,500	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EDT
1.3	Deliver and evaluate a Christmas Lights display	Ongoing	\$323,500	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
1.4	Deliver and evaluate a Christmas Lights Launch event	Ongoing	\$272,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EDT
1.5	Deliver and evaluate Symphony on the Green	Ongoing	\$330,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
1.6	Conduct a review of City policies and procedures for its moveable and public art collections	New	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB SAM
1.7	Develop, maintain and promote the City's public art, and art collections	Ongoing	\$100,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB SAM SMC TS

1.8	Engage a public art consultant to guide and oversee annual management of the City's public art	New	\$50,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
1.9	Develop and implement coordinated strategic marketing campaigns to promote City Arts and Cultural events and activities	Ongoing	\$250,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB SMC EDT
1.10	Deliver contemporary place-based storytelling initiatives using QR codes and/or Augmented Reality	New	\$60,000		✓		✓		CCB EDT SMC

7.2. Key Element 2: Arts and culture for all

Support inclusive access to arts and culture for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and communities

No	Task	Type	Annual cost	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	Team
2.1	Embed inclusive, accessible, and co-designed approaches in City arts and cultural programs to support participation by people of all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB CSSS
2.2	Involve young people in the development of arts and cultural programs	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
2.3	Deliver Harmony Week initiatives in collaboration with community groups	Ongoing	\$40,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CSSS LS
2.4	Provide event planning guides to support the community to deliver events	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HS CCB CSSS
2.5	Deliver an annual theatrical style event (Performance in the Park, or similar)	Ongoing	\$145,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
2.6	Implement arts and culture actions from other strategies (E.g. seniors,	Ongoing	As per other strategies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	All

	children, young people, DAIP, TDS)								
2.7	Involve the City's Mooriboordap Advisory Group in planning and consultation for relevant initiatives.	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
2.8	Include the following in the new Reconciliation Action Strategy (RAS) approach: ○ Undertaking a Feasibility Study for a First Nations Cultural Centre ○ Undertaking a Cultural Heritage Study to share stories and promote First Nations heritage ○ Implementing dual names at identified city facilities and spaces	New	Officer time – costs TBA in the RAS	✓					Various

7.3. Key Element 3: Arts and culture everywhere

Extend arts and cultural experiences across all suburbs through local partnerships, activating existing venues, seasonal events, and accessible, city-wide programming

No	Task	Type	Annual cost	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	Team
3.1	Deliver arts and cultural programs and workshops at venues beyond RAC	New	\$40,000		✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB LS CaLF
3.2	Explore partnerships with major arts festivals, such as Fringe World and Perth Festival	Ongoing	Officer time		✓				EDT CCB
3.3	Deliver a series of Community pop-up events in outer suburbs	New	\$70,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
3.4	Facilitate additional transport arrangements for major City events	Ongoing	\$20,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	EDT
3.5	Investigate virtual attendance options for City programs and events	New	Officer time		✓				EDT CCB
3.6	Digitise and showcase public and movable art collections online	new	\$50,000			✓			CCB BS

7.4. Key Element 4: Cultivate creativity

Foster creative growth by supporting artists, activating spaces, facilitating development opportunities, and embedding creative needs in long-term infrastructure planning

No	Task	Type	Annual cost	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	Team
4.1	Undertake a feasibility study for a multifunctional Performing Arts Centre	New	\$200,000		✓				CCB CIP
4.2	Deliver and evaluate Castaways	Ongoing	\$365,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.3	Deliver and evaluate the Rockingham Art Prize	Ongoing	\$165,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.4	Undertake an operational review of Rockingham Arts Centre	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓				CCB
4.5	Deliver an annual exhibition program at Rockingham Arts Centre	Ongoing	\$180,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.6	Deliver an annual workshop program at Rockingham Arts Centre	Ongoing	\$60,000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.7	Activate the outdoor area at Rockingham Arts	New	\$20,000		✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.8	Provide funding opportunities for local cultural and arts groups through the Community Grants Program	Ongoing	As per CGP budget	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB
4.9	Provide opportunities for local cultural and arts practitioners and	Ongoing	Officer time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CCB

	organisations to build networks and share skills								
4.10	Consider creative infrastructure (E.g. studios, wet areas, washout sinks, storage) within facility upgrades and new facility planning	Ongoing	Project specific	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	CIP IPD CCB
4.11	Assess opportunities and avenues for further digital creation spaces at appropriate City venues (E.g. video and audio recording/editing, podcasting, digital media / gaming, music production, graphic design, content creation).	New	Officer time		✓	✓			CCB LS

8. Stakeholder Engagement

8.1 Internal Stakeholders

Acronym	Stakeholder
BHS	Building and Health Services
CaLF	Community and Leisure Facilities
CCB	Community Capacity Building
CIP	Community Infrastructure Planning
CSSS	Community Safety and Support Services
EDT	Economic Development and Tourism
IPD	Infrastructure Project Delivery
IT	Information Technology
LS	Library Services
SAM	Strategic Asset Management
SMC	Strategy, Marketing and Communications
TS	Technical Services

8.2 Key Stakeholders invited to participate

Key Stakeholders consulted	Contributed? (Yes/No)	Engagement method used
Internal		
City of Rockingham staff – various teams	Yes	Various
City of Rockingham Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Yes	Meeting attendance
City of Rockingham Cultural Development and Arts Advisory Committee	Yes	Meeting attendance
City of Rockingham Seniors Advisory Committee	Yes	Survey and community workshop
City of Rockingham Youth Centre	Yes	Workshop
External		
2023 City of Rockingham Art Prize Finalists	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
2023 City of Rockingham Castaways Sculpture Awards Finalists	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Age-friendly Rockingham Network	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Artist in Residence	Yes	Interview
ArtSource	Yes	Interview
City of Cockburn	Yes	Interview
City of Joondalup	Yes	Interview
City of Kwinana	No	
City of Mandurah	Yes	Interview
City of Melville	Yes	Interview
Community Artist Carol Clitheroe	No	
Community Artists	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Community Arts Network	Yes	Interview
Community members	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
DADAA	Yes	Interview
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	Yes	Interview
Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Emerging Artist Jayda Brown	No	
Event Providers	Yes	Focus Group
FORM	Yes	Interview
Friends of the Rockingham Arts Centre (Ceramics and Writers)	Yes	Focus Group
FRINGE	Yes	Interview
Global Friendship Advisory Committee	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Lotterywest	Yes	Interview
Mixed Palette	Yes	Focus Group
MKRain (access and inclusion network)	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Perth Festival	Yes	Interview
Professional Artist	Yes	Interview

Professional Artist Irene Osborne	No	
Professional Artist Michael Doherty	No	
Professional Artists	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Rock the Boat Film Festival	Yes	Interview
Rockingham Creative Crafts	Yes	Focus Group
Rockingham Kwinana Chamber of Commerce	Yes	Interview
Rockingham Museum	Yes	Interview
Rockingham Reconciliation Network	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Rockingham Regional Arts	Yes	Focus Group
Rockingham Theatre Company	Yes	Interview
Rockingham Visual Arts	Yes	Focus Group
Rockingham Watercolour Society	Yes	Focus Group
Rotary Club of Palm Beach	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Seniors – Autumn Centre	Yes	Focus Group
Service providers	Yes	Survey and Community Workshop
Spare Parts Puppet Theatre	Yes	Interview
Town Teams	Yes	Interview
WASO	Yes	Interview
Writing WA	Yes	Interview

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