1. **Purpose**

   The plan provides a cohesive and sustainable framework for the delivery of arts services and activities that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

2. **Definitions**

   **Art**
   
   the creative expression of a community or culture and a vital tool for communication and/or transmission of ideas.

   **Council**
   
   means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989

   **Councillors**
   
   means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council

   **Council officer**
   
   means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.

3. **Scope**

   This plan focuses on a whole of Council approach to arts development in relation to the provision of a broad range of arts activities and opportunities for residents and the support and development of artists and art businesses of all disciplines within the municipality.

   It is complementary to the Arts Facilities Plan which provides direction and vision to the physical infrastructure necessary to underpin sustainable, broad and quality arts outcomes within Casey.
4. **Context**

Council is committed to building a great city in partnership with residents, businesses and the broader community and providing for, supporting and having access to the arts is an integral part of this.

Art can be many different things to different people. In Casey, we embrace and want to capitalise on the idea that the arts positively contribute to creating vibrant, connected and healthy communities and that participation in arts practice has personal health and wellbeing benefits. Council reflect this desire through its Council Plan. There are also a number of strategic policies that compliment and support the planning and delivery of art programs such as the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Community Facilities Strategy.

Involvement and interest in the arts has a long history in Casey and residents are keen arts attenders and participants. In 2010 Council undertook a research initiative, the Casey Arts Participation Initiative (CAPI) which was supported and funded by VicHealth through its Locations Enhancing Arts Participation program. The purpose of the initiative was to improve access to the arts and opportunities for participation for people throughout the municipality, including those in more isolated areas and areas not well-linked to the city's central facilities over a three-year period (2010-2013).

Through CAPI, Council has worked in partnership with local and state organisations to focus on development of the arts and increasing arts participation. The development of the Arts Development Plan and its companion document, the Arts Facility Plan, are outcomes of that process which has been overseen by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the CAPI Advisory Committee.

Extensive research into the trends in arts development and facilities was undertaken prior to the development of this Plan. Community consultations included surveys, forums for artists and arts groups and ‘creative consultations’. The consultation process gathered information about:

- level of participation in arts activities
- attendance at, and level of satisfaction with, Council arts and cultural programs, events and facilities
- future ideas and priorities for arts in Casey.

The consultation and research confirmed that the arts are an important component of people’s lifestyle however participation levels are below state average and some gaps in provision and opportunities for further development were identified.

**What the consultation and research told us.**

People stated they participate in a wide range of arts activities however a lot of their activity takes place outside of Casey due to lack of opportunities to participate in their art form or better facilities elsewhere. Other barriers to participation include: proximity to facility/program, ease of access, knowledge of area, convenience, area where teacher/class available, lack of suitable facilities, social or cultural connections elsewhere or lack of information about what’s available.

Those that participated in the research highly rated the benefits that the arts bring to the city on both a personal and a community or civic level. They are interested in an increase in the level of arts activities and events that are available to them, capacity building activities and arts resourcing including supporting/finding more arts events.
Additionally, they have also confirmed that it would be beneficial to have access to more facilities and the development of some specialist, high quality and iconic facilities.

The results from the surveys, together with the results of the creative consultations and forums for artists and arts groups and other research can be found in the CAPI Arts Research, Mapping and Needs Analysis Report 2012.

5. Plan

Art can be many different things to different people. The City of Casey embraces the arts and wants to capitalise on the knowledge that the arts positively contribute to creating vibrant, connected and healthy communities.

Council’s aim is for Casey to become a ‘location of choice’ for creative individuals, businesses and organisations. The arts build community health and wellbeing and are an integral part of life and lifestyle. Arts are important in strengthening and building community connections and fostering a place that residents are proud of and a place that people want to come to. Council strives to support, encourage and celebrate arts participation and practice and encourages the community to embrace this as part of their lifestyle.

Council see the arts as playing a major part in enriching the lives of our growing community ensuring that the arts are part of the range of options that people have access to in a modern, thriving city. These services will be delivered from a range of arts facilities and spaces that meet the needs of and facilitate arts activities, services, events and experiences in Casey.

5.1 Principles

The future planning development and management of the arts will be guided by the following principles:

- **Community strengthening**: Arts participation activities can make powerful contribution to exploration of issues and challenges in the community.

  *We will use the arts as a tool for fostering recognition, understanding and inclusion, to enhance community cohesion, sense of identity, place and ownership, and to respond to the needs and expectations of the community as they change and evolve.*

- **Valuing diversity**: Many aspects of diversity represented in the City are a basis for building and nurturing strong social capital.

  *We will undertake arts programming that reflects the diverse local community. Indigenous, migrant and refugees communities will be engaged to celebrate, positively promote and share their cultural heritage, and their unique arts and cultural practices.*
• **Accessible arts for people with a disability**: The artistic aspirations and achievements of people with a disability are valued.

  *We will develop strategies to address the barriers that prevent people with a disability from accessing and actively participating in and/or being audience for arts and cultural activities and events.*

• **Community participation**: Community involvement in the initiation, planning and delivery of arts activities is important.

  *We will consult with and actively involve community members in creative and diverse ways to plan and implement arts programs, activities and facilities in Casey.*

• **Community Identity**: The arts play a critical role in promoting cultural heritage, local identity and sense of place.

  *We will involve community groups in planning and delivering their own arts and cultural activities. We will support them to develop the skills and confidence they need to do this.*

• **A creative community**: It is recognised that creative expression invigorates the quality of community life in Casey.

  *We will aim to provide and/or facilitate stimulating, enjoyable, relevant, accessible and challenging cultural experiences, objects and places in Casey.*

• **Equitable opportunities for participation**: Arts experiences and activities should be accessible for all in Casey. “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.

  *We will ensure that there are low cost and/or no cost arts and cultural activities and experiences available within Casey.*

• **Arts Spaces**: Provision of spaces to create, view and participate in the arts.

  *We will provide and/or as appropriate, support the provision of a range of arts facilities and spaces to meet the needs of and facilitate arts activities, services, events and experiences in Casey.*

• **A vibrant city for artists**: Places for creative activities to occur and the support to develop and use them are critical to attracting artists and their practice.

  *We will actively plan for the provision of and access to art-making facilities (eg. residencies, studios, access spaces, rehearsal spaces, etc) with a view to Casey becoming a ‘location of choice’ for creative individuals, businesses and organisations.*
- **A vibrant public domain**: It is recognised that there is increasing interest in public art and it makes significant contributions to creating a sense of place, and civic pride.

  *We will continue to build Casey’s public art portfolio. We will aim to increase community participation in commissioning and producing public art to ensure it reflects Casey and its citizens and contributes to the quality of community life.*

- **A collaborative approach**: Collaboration and partnerships are effective ways to leverage resources and create more expansive and sustained outcomes.

  *We will increase partnerships between Casey art organisations and will actively maintain them through regular dialogue. We will aim to maximise cross-promotion, sponsorship and other opportunities and increase the capacity to broker relationships that benefit the community.*

### 5.2 Key Themes for the development of Arts in Casey

The research and consultation identified three themes for the future development of arts in Casey. These are:

- **Place**
- **Participation**
- **Profile**.

#### Theme 1: Developing a great PLACE

Council will develop Casey as a ‘location of choice for the Arts’ by implementing the following strategies:

- Expand the range of differing purpose and quality arts facilities to meet identified gaps and needs.
- Maximise the use of existing facilities for a broad range of arts activities.
- Provide an education and interpretation program for existing artworks.
- Continue to commission and acquire a broad range of public artworks.
- Integrate recognition of the role that the arts play in enhancing health, wellbeing and creating a strong sense of place into strategic planning.
- Support professional arts practice in Casey.
- Support and encourage innovation in arts practice to build Casey’s reputation and profile as an ‘arts destination’ of choice.
- Foster and build professional cultural development partnerships with local community groups and individuals.
Theme 2: Developing great PARTICIPATION

Council will increase opportunities for participation in the Arts in Casey by implementing the following strategies:

- Continue to develop and deliver arts programming and events in Casey that:
  - celebrate and reflect Casey’s diverse community
  - are accessible, equitable and affordable
  - provide opportunities to build skills
  - promote and improve community health and wellbeing
  - Support and encourage arts activity across a range of Council’s service areas as a means of building community capacity, participation, health and wellbeing.

- Support and encourage arts activity across a range of Council’s service areas as a means of building community capacity, participation, health and wellbeing.

- Develop strategic alliances and partnerships to support, facilitate and / or enable programming and events to occur.

- Encourage and support local people and groups to design, develop and deliver their own arts and cultural programs and events.

Theme 3: Developing great PROFILE

Council will strive to improve residents and visitors awareness of the City of Casey as an ‘arts destination’ and the arts participation opportunities available in Casey by implementing the following strategies:

- Build community awareness of, and therefore participation in, Casey’s extensive range of art programs across all generations.

- Develop the profile of Casey as an ‘arts destination’ of choice.

- Ensure that arts, events, facilities, services and programs provided by Council are known about and able to be participated in.

- Support participation in, access to and knowledge about community arts organisations, activities and opportunities.

- Support and promote local artists, arts organisations and arts businesses.

5.3 Implementation – Where to from here?

Building upon the principles and three key themes: Place, Participation and Profile Council will continue to work in partnership with the community to support, encourage and facilitate opportunities to participate in the arts.

The strategies will be achieved through the development and implementation of an annual action plan with outcomes monitored regularly by the Arts and Cultural Advisory Group and reported to Council.

The Arts Facilities Plan will complement this plan ensuring that Council’s arts ad community facilities meet the community’s needs for the arts activities.
6. **Administrative Updates**

   It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

7. **Review**

   The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 June 2018.