



**Burwood** <sup>Inc.1874</sup>

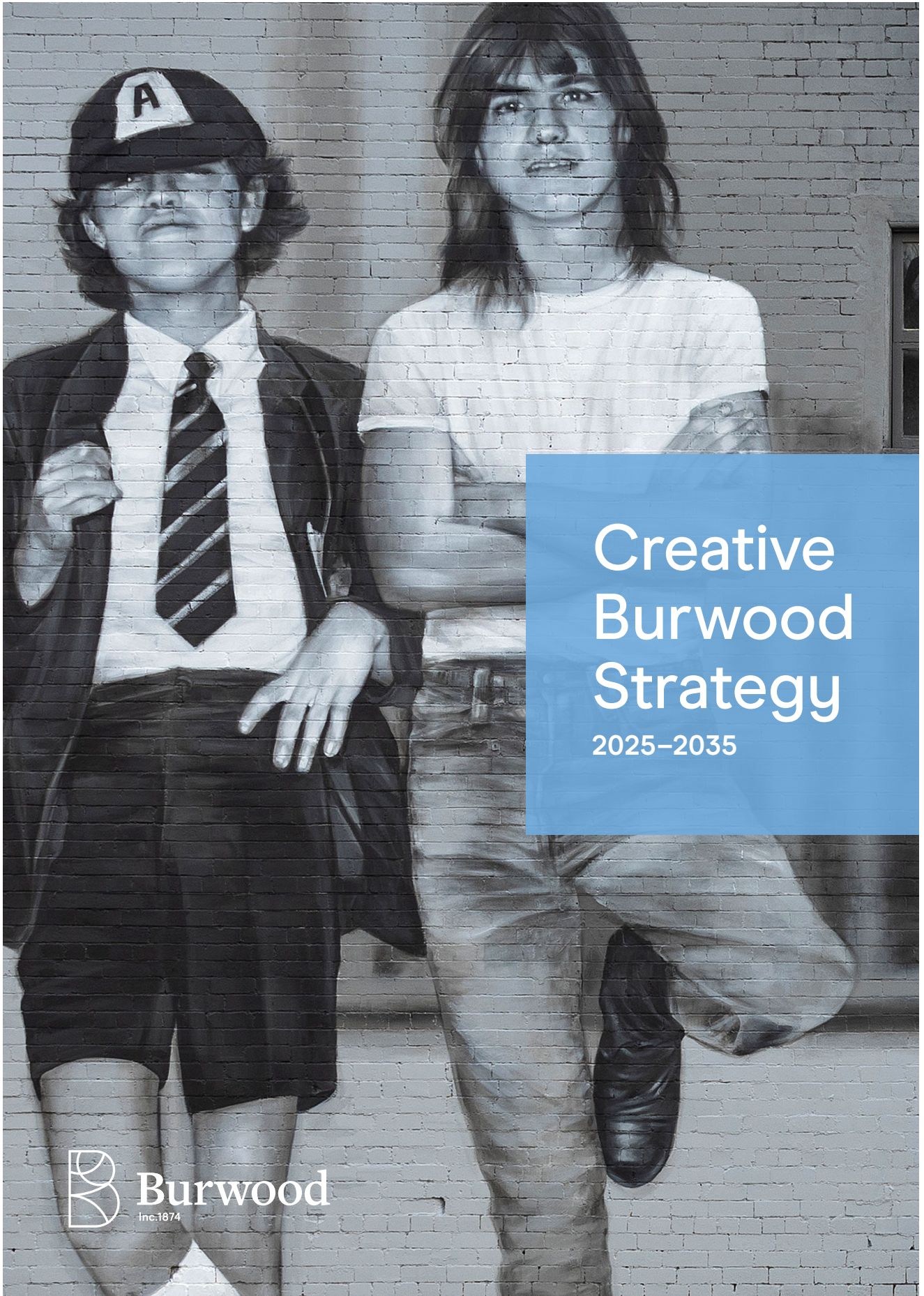
Burwood . Burwood Heights . Croydon . Croydon Park . Enfield . Strathfield

**Attachments Paper**  
**Burwood Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday 25 March 2025**  
**6:00 PM**

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Creative  
Burwood  
Strategy  
2025-2035



## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wangal Peoples, the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which the Burwood Local Government Area is located.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live, work and visit here.



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GRAPHIC DESIGN: Michelle Tran

COVER: Claire Foxton, *Back In Black* AC/DC Mural

# Message from the Mayor



Welcome to Burwood – Sydney’s Cultural Playground, a place where creativity is unleashed, curiosity ignites, and arts and culture is a catalyst for meaningful connection.

As Burwood undergoes dynamic transformation, with our population set to almost double by 2041, we embrace the central role of arts and culture in shaping our evolving city. We recognise the importance of proactively strengthening our cultural life and understand that purposeful investment in arts and culture unlocks countless benefits – bringing people together, driving economic growth, and enriching our city’s identity.

We acknowledge the transformative power of arts and culture to inspire and unite our community. We also see arts and culture at the heart of Burwood’s social, cultural, and economic identity, fostering a deep sense of belonging and shared experience. By nurturing creativity, we set out to cultivate a city that is vibrant, inclusive and full of possibility – where everyone has the opportunity to participate and contribute.

Burwood is a place where innovation and tradition meet, as we embrace global trends while preserving our rich history. Already known for its cultural diversity, Burwood is increasingly energised by its emerging creative economy. Crucial to this evolution is the development of the Burwood Culture House, our new home for arts and culture in Burwood. This distinctive cultural destination will provide dedicated spaces for artistic expression, collaboration and creative experiences, attracting diverse audiences from both the local community and around the world.

At this pivotal moment, our city calls for a bold, forward-thinking approach to sustain momentum, ensure long-term viability, and encourage universal participation in arts and culture. It is with excitement that I present our arts and cultural strategy, **Creative Burwood 2025 - 2035**, which outlines our vision for the next decade and our commitment to positioning Burwood as a leading destination for arts and culture. It focuses on three key areas:

- **Cultural Infrastructure:**  
Ensuring our city has the necessary spaces and facilities to support diverse artistic and cultural activities.
- **Creative Economy and Practice:**  
Supporting artists, cultural workers, and creative industries to thrive and contribute to our economic and social life.
- **Creative Experiences and Stories:**  
Enriching our community by sharing our stories, celebrating our diverse cultural narratives and providing opportunities for participation in the arts.

This strategy is the result of extensive research, community engagement, and a thoughtful examination of emerging trends and opportunities. It is a roadmap for embracing the transformative power of arts and culture, ensuring Burwood remains an energetic, inclusive, and a forward-thinking city for generations to come.

I look forward to collaborating with our community, artists, and cultural partners to bring this vision to life. Together, we will shape an inspiring future for Burwood through the power of creativity.

**Cr John Faker**  
Mayor of Burwood



# Introduction

“ Creativity takes courage

Henri Matisse ”

Burwood is a city where culture and creativity thrive. As Sydney’s Cultural Playground, Burwood is more than just a place - it is an experience. It is where artistic expression, cultural heritage, and contemporary creativity intersect, making Burwood an inspiring destination for everyone to engage with arts and culture.

As our city prepares for rapid growth and change, we are committed to unlocking the full potential of arts and culture. *Creative Burwood 2025 – 2035*, sets out our vision for the next decade, ensuring that creativity remains a driving force in shaping Burwood’s identity. With our population set to grow significantly, we recognise the importance

of investing in cultural infrastructure, fostering creative industries, and expanding opportunities for meaningful artistic expression and participation. By doing so, we aim to strengthen social connections, drive economic growth, and create a city that is vibrant, inclusive, and full of possibility.

Grounded in extensive research and community engagement, *Creative Burwood 2025 – 2035* is our roadmap for the next ten years. It is our commitment to sustaining Burwood’s evolution as a dynamic cultural destination - one where creativity is embraced, and everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and participate in the arts.



## Arts and culture in Burwood

Arts and culture are integral to Burwood's identity, community connection, economic prosperity, and long-term growth. Arts and culture help shape a lively, inclusive, and forward-thinking community that benefits everyone.

We have adopted a broad definition of arts and culture in Burwood to reflect the diversity of perspectives in our community and the unique cultural ecosystem of Burwood.

### When we talk about 'arts and culture' in Burwood we mean...

- A diverse range of creative expressions, traditions and community activities that celebrate the identity and vibrancy of Burwood
- Traditional art forms e.g. visual arts, music, performance, literature, events and festivals, public art, heritage and collections
- Our unique food culture, creative businesses, places and spaces, and cultural programs that create shared experiences that reflect the rich multicultural makeup of the area.





## How we support arts and culture

Council supports arts and culture in a number of ways:

### Community spaces

Community facilities, parks and public spaces are available for hire and use by community groups and practitioners, supporting arts and cultural activities that bring people together to create, learn, and celebrate.

### Library and Community Hub

Burwood Library is one of the only NSW public libraries with a dedicated creative team, delivering arts programs, exhibitions, spaces and innovative cultural experiences. These provide opportunities for our community to engage, connect and be inspired.

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### Events and festivals

Council delivers and supports a dynamic program of award-winning events and festivals that celebrate our diverse community and showcase local talent. These range from major street festivals like Lunar New Year and the Greek Street Fair to music, arts, and intimate cultural experiences.

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### Art prize

The Burwood Art Prize showcases Sydney’s best emerging and established artists through an annual exhibition and creative public programs.

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### Public art and placemaking

Council transforms our public places through placemaking and public art that reflect Burwood’s unique identity.

We also provide opportunities for artists to create works for display in the public domain through artwork on construction site hoardings and our Banner Art Program.

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### Heritage sites

With over 280 heritage sites, 14 memorials and monuments and a local history collection, Council maintains key heritage assets and promotes opportunities to learn more about our local history through walks, talks, exhibits and civic events.

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### Grants and subsidies

Council’s Community Grants and facility subsidy programs support a variety of cultural activities led by local community groups.

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### Business support

Council strengthens Burwood’s creative economy through networking, learning, promotion and event opportunities.

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# Our vision

## By 2035,

Burwood is renowned as Sydney's Cultural Playground - a leading destination for distinct and dynamic arts and cultural experiences with global reach.

We celebrate diverse stories, nurture local talent, and create pathways that fuel our city's cultural life and grow our creative economy.

As we evolve, we remain committed to pushing creative boundaries, fostering meaningful connections, and embracing unconventional opportunities to engage new audiences and ensure everyone can participate.



This Strategy aligns with various Council and other government plans and policies.

**National Cultural Policy**

- Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place (2023-2028)

**State (NSW) Policies and Plans**

- Creative Communities: Arts, Culture and Creative Industries (2024-2033)
- NSW 24-hour Economy Strategy
- NSW Contemporary Music Strategy
- NSW Public Art Toolkit 2023
- Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+
- NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030

**Burwood Council Plans**

- Burwood 2036 (Community Strategic Plan)
- Delivery Program and Operational Plans
- Community Facilities and Open Space Strategy
- Burwood After Dark
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Safer Burwood
- Burwood Youth Action Plan
- Library Strategic Plan
- Multicultural Burwood
- Burwood Reconciliation Action Plan
- Property Strategy

**Burwood Council Policies and Frameworks**

- Public Art Policy
- Hoarding Policy
- Library Collection Development Policy
- Licence to Play Activation Policy
- Planning Agreements Policy
- Public Art Guidelines for Developers
- Contributions Plan
- Development Control Plan
- Local Environment Plan

# Issues and trends



## Our Growing and Changing City:

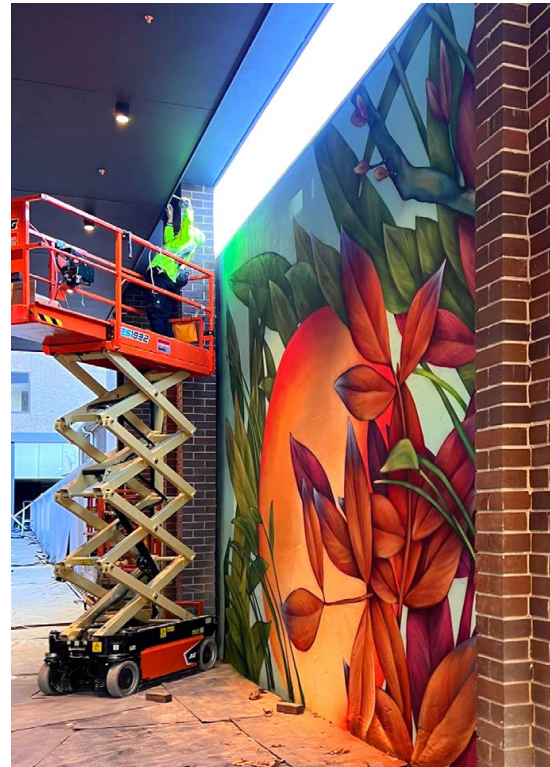
Burwood's population is expected to nearly double by 2041, increasing demand for arts and cultural activities and facilities.

The new Burwood North Metro Station will enhance connectivity, driving more visitors to the area. The Burwood North Masterplan and Croydon Transport-Oriented Development Precinct will also transform these areas, creating new opportunities for public art, creative industries and attracting new audiences.

Our growing young, culturally diverse, highly-educated population will continue to drive demand for innovative arts and cultural activities, creative experiences and need for services and programs into the late evening.

## Cultural Infrastructure Needs:

As demand on our creative spaces grows, innovative solutions and partnerships between government, private, and creative sectors will be essential to increase access to cultural facilities and more creative floor space. Key challenges include ensuring flexibility, affordability and access. Council is already actively reimagining and enhancing the use of non-traditional spaces, such as laneways, streets, carparks, and parks, for cultural activities and events, with ongoing opportunities to expand this work.



**Emerging Night-Time Economy:**

Burwood is expanding its after-dark identity, with businesses and Council facilities staying open later to meet community demand for extended access to services, spaces and programs. There is increasing recognition of the key role the creative sector can play in driving our visitor and night-time economies. The establishment of a Special Entertainment Precinct in the Burwood Town Centre and development of a thriving live music scene will be central to enhancing the vibrancy of our city.

**Evolving Arts and Cultural Destination:**

Burwood has a growing reputation as Sydney’s ‘Cultural Playground’, offering unique cultural places and experiences. The Burwood Culture House will create our first arts and cultural precinct, and play a pivotal role in shaping and strengthening this identity. Continued investment in public art, innovative placemaking strategies, and new arts and cultural programs will help to draw new audiences.

**Growing Creative Industries:**

The creative economy is one of the fastest growing sectors in Australia, creating new jobs and enhancing our local economy. Burwood is home to many small-to-medium creative and cultural businesses. Supporting and promoting our local creative industries will strengthen their role in driving future economic growth and attracting visitors and investment.

**Supporting our Creative Workforce:**

Financial instability, casual and freelance work, and low-income levels in the arts industry make it difficult for local artists to establish a career in the creative field. More support is needed for career development, skill-building, and ensuring fair pay in the creative sector. There is also increased focus on supporting the next generation of creatives, especially young, multicultural and multidisciplinary artists.

Research demonstrates that arts and cultural policies often prioritise economic development and placemaking to the detriment of local artists and cultural workers’ needs and experiences. Building our local creative sector and prioritising the needs of local artists and cultural workers will be key to ensuring a thriving cultural sector.



**Diverse Storytelling:**

There is a growing focus on ensuring the arts reflect and celebrate everyone’s story. This includes sharing and promoting Aboriginal narratives, local history, diverse cultures and voices that are underrepresented. This approach is in line with state and national cultural policies that emphasise the preservation and promotion of First Nations culture, and diverse storytelling.

**Cultural Participation:**

There is a growing desire for more opportunities to create, not just consume, arts and culture. Arts and cultural activity are increasingly recognised for supporting health, well-being, and social cohesion. Key challenges include ensuring access and inclusion to programs and meeting the needs of diverse audiences.

**Funding Support:**

There is a need for more funding, creative partnerships and continued investment to sustain and expand Burwood’s growing arts and cultural sector. Investment is crucial for the success of new cultural infrastructure, the creation, production and presentation of new work and development of audiences.

**Evolving technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI):**

AI and new technologies are rapidly evolving and changing the way art is created and experienced. Keeping pace with these changes is challenging as we balance supporting innovation with protecting artists’ rights and jobs.

**Audience Development:**

As Burwood’s arts and culture scene grows, attracting and engaging diverse audiences will be essential to sustaining a vibrant arts and cultural sector. With a changing population, targeted strategies are needed to ensure access, inclusivity, and participation across all demographics.

Audience development goes beyond marketing - it requires investment in community engagement and programming that reflects the diverse interests and experiences of our community. Proper resourcing will be critical to fostering long-term participation, growing new audiences, and ensuring Burwood’s cultural offerings remain relevant and accessible to all.

ABOVE: Jackie Streit, *A woman’s work is never done*

# How we developed this strategy

## What we did





## Who we heard from

**1,021**  
contributions



**226**

Arts and Culture Surveys  
(2024)

**75**

Burwood Culture Talks  
(2024)

**25**

Creative Portrait Interviews  
(2024)

**20**

Licence to Play:  
Burwood Event-Ready Streets  
(2024)

**127**

Culture Streets Visitor and  
Business Surveys  
(2024 and 2025)

### *Previous engagement activities:*

**24**

Burwood Arts and  
Cultural Forum  
(2022)

**210**

'Have Your Say'  
on the Proposed  
Burwood Urban Park  
and Cultural Centre  
(2021 and 2022)

**301**

Community Satisfaction Surveys  
(2023)

**13**

Arts and Cultural  
Organisation Survey  
(2022)







































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































