

Reconciliation Action Plan May 2025 – May 2027





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City of Port Phillip

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Wominjeka

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their legacy and spiritual connection to the land and waterways across the City of Port Phillip and pay our heartfelt respect to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.



Cover:

Tommy Day III, *Karrween Weereeng Marr – Dance of the Spirit People*, The Vaults on Jacka Boulevard, 2024, aerosol and acrylic. Photo by Yoshi Travel Films.

About the artist and artwork:

Tommy Day III (Jirri Jirri) is a Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba man and multi-disciplined artist based in Shepparton, Victoria.



Through his artistic practice, Tommy paints the world as seen with an Aboriginal perspective. By seamlessly melding traditional and contemporary art forms, he provides a visual voice to acknowledge where the First Peoples of this land came from and moving towards a bright future.


Speaking about his recently completed mural titled 'Karrween Weereeng Marr – Dance of the Spirit People' located along the Vaults wall on Jacka Blvd that artist states:

"The artwork presents a visual narrative of the harmonious convergence of the Weereeng Marr (Spirit People), whose ethereal presence dances across the landscape, shaping the very essence of our country and weaving intricate song lines carried by the wind. Forever timeless, the Weereng Marr observe the world with eternal vigilance."

– Tommy Day III

City of Port Phillip
99a Carlisle Street
St Kilda VIC 3182

 ASSIST 03 9209 6777
 portphillip.vic.gov.au

Contact Person:
First Peoples Lead
 firstpeoples@portphillip.vic.gov.au

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Message from the Mayor

The City of Port Phillip is proud to present our third **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** for the period of May 2025 - May 2027.

I am delighted to share with you a significant milestone in the Council's journey towards reconciliation.

This plan underscores our commitment to nurturing meaningful relationships with all Traditional Owners and communities within Port Phillip.

Prepared in close consultation with First Peoples across Port Phillip, the Reconciliation Action Plan reflects the priorities, aspirations, and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community.

At its core, the Reconciliation Action Plan focuses on relationships and shared understanding.

Through storytelling and continued engagement, we aim to foster respect and unity across our diverse communities.

I invite you to explore the actions outlined in this Reconciliation Action Plan.

In participating in reconciliation initiatives, we will not only strengthen our organisation but also empower our community to create positive change.

We look forward to continuing our journey towards a future where the diversity of First Peoples communities is celebrated, every voice is valued, and we can inspire progress in the lives of all our community.

Cr Louise Crawford
Mayor, City of Port Phillip



Reconciliation Australia endorsement

Reconciliation Australia commends the City of Port Phillip on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. City of Port Phillip continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that City of Port Phillip will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to City of Port Phillip using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for City of Port Phillip to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, City of Port Phillip will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of City of Port Phillip's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations City of Port Phillip on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Terminology

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Refers to Indigenous people of Australia.

Boonwurrung

Name of a Traditional Owner group of the City of Port Phillip.

Bunurong

Name of a Traditional Owner group of the City of Port Phillip.

Cultural Safety

An environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge, and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.¹

First Peoples and First Nations

Refers to Indigenous Australians.

Kulin Nation

Make up five communities of Traditional Owners across south central Victoria.

Naarm

Traditional word for the City of Melbourne which is located on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung land.

Nerm

Traditional word for Port Phillip Bay from the Boonwurrung People who are one group of Traditional Owners of Port Phillip.

Ngargee

Boonwurrung word for 'gathering for celebration'.

Registered Aboriginal Party

Are Traditional Owner Groups legally recognised under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 to provide advice on matters relating to Aboriginal places or Aboriginal objects in their region.

Self Determination

An ongoing process of choice to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to meet social, cultural and economic needs. Essential to the exercise of self-determination is choice, participation and control.

Traditional Owners

Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri refer to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land across the City of Port Phillip. Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people are part of the wider Kulin Nation.

We-Akon Dillinja

Boonwurrung words meaning 'A Mourning Reflection'.

Wominjeka also spelt 'Womindjeka'

Means 'welcome' in the Woi-wurrung language of the Wurundjeri people and Boon Wurrung language of the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung

Name of a Traditional Owner group of the City of Port Phillip.

Yalikut Willam

Traditional word from Kulin group of languages (Boonwurrung, Woi Wurrung and Daung wurrung) meaning 'river dwellers' which is associated with the coastal land of Port Phillip Bay, Werribee River, across to Williamstown, Port Melbourne, St Kilda and Prahran.

¹ Williams, R (2008) Cultural safety: what does it mean for our work practice?

Our vision for reconciliation

Our Vision for reconciliation is a City of Port Phillip that prioritises the voice of First Peoples, enables self-determination, and ensures equity, cultural inclusiveness, and culturally safety.



Our business

The City of Port Phillip is a local government area of Melbourne nestled between Port Phillip Bay and the City of Melbourne. It has an area of 20.7 km² and serves a population of 109,515² residents.

Under the [Victorian Local Government Act 2020](#), the role of council is to provide good governance for the benefit and well-being of its community. [Our Council Plan](#) defines our key organisational priorities. At the heart of this plan, we strive to build a community with strong social connections – where everyone can feel safe and welcome.

This includes engaging communities in planning and decision-making. We work in partnership with all levels of government, the private sector, not-for-profit entities and our local communities.

Our organisation employs around 1000 people, including 4 identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander roles. We currently employ 3 staff who have identified to us as being a First Nations person.

We deliver more than 100 programs and services to our residents, businesses and visitors. These range from early childhood education and care services and libraries to the management of parks and maintenance of public spaces.

Services are delivered across multiple sites including:

- Town halls (St Kilda, South Melbourne, and Port Melbourne).
- Libraries (St Kilda, Middle Park, Albert Park, South Melbourne, and Port Melbourne).
- Family and Children's Services (St Kilda, Port Melbourne, Middle Park, Elwood, Southbank).
- South Melbourne Market, Resource Recovery Centre and more.

Through delivery of services to community, either directly or through our service partners, Council is often well placed to see and address the intersectionality of issues and challenges faced by individuals and our communities.

At the core of our work with First Peoples is regular engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations.

This is to ensure the development of strategies and services delivered are culturally safe and improve conditions for local communities.

2 Source: [Home | City of Port Phillip | Community profile \(id.com.au\)](#)

Our city

With 11 km of foreshore, the City of Port Phillip is in many ways defined by its proximity to Nerm (Port Phillip Bay). This sacred place is part of the Kulin Nation – a large region spanning from the southernmost point of Victoria up into the Great Dividing Range.

The area we now call our city has been home to Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people for over 55,000 years. First Peoples have and continue to care for Country in our council area for generations.

Attracting almost three million visitors a year, Port Phillip is one of the most visited places in Melbourne (Naarm). The local area has changed vastly since European occupation, but it was once akin to a 'temperate Kakadu' type of environment, surrounded by sea, river, creeks, lakes and lagoons. Between the sea and the river was a score of wetlands surrounded by dunes, heath, woodlands, salt marsh and beach.

Our municipality is one of the oldest European settlements in Naarm. It provides a juxtaposition of unique urban villages and heritage buildings, cultural diversity and arts, as well as the foreshore and open spaces.

Several sites of interest in Port Phillip are significant to First Peoples. In St Kilda, the Ngargee Tree, a River Red Gum, located in the southeast corner of Albert Park, between Albert Park Lake and Fitzroy Street at St Kilda Junction. It is Port Phillip's longest living resident, with an estimated age of 300–500 years. The tree marks a junction of pre-European walking trails, where tracks connected to southern, northern, and eastern districts. St Kilda Town Hall sits on a natural spring that was once frequented by Boonwurrung people. Also in St Kilda was Euro-Yroke, which means the 'grinding stone place'.

The Esplanade, where our weekend markets take place, was once a stone quarry. Stone axes were a highly valued tool, used by Boonwurrung men to cut bark for housing, canoes, and containers. Emerald Hill, now the site of South Melbourne Town Hall, was a significant site to engage in ceremonies and trade.

With its proximity to the city centre, Port Phillip is an area in high demand. The physical environment is continuing to change as the area experiences significant residential growth and development.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is recorded at 514³, with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in St Kilda, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

We have developed a Reconciliation Action Plan because we strongly support First Peoples' inherent right to self-determination and are deeply committed to the actions in this Reconciliation Action Plan. We will implement these actions in ways that are consistent with the expertise and ambitions of First Peoples.

With sincere empathy, we acknowledge the harmful impacts of colonisation upon First Peoples. We recognise the reverberating, multifaceted impacts that First Peoples face and understand that these harms can be far-reaching and intergenerational, as a result of past laws, policies, systems and structures. This systemic and structural racism has normalised the exclusion and disempowerment of First Peoples and ultimately denied their human right to self-determination.

Since adopting the Statement of Commitment in 1997, the City of Port Phillip has worked to embed reconciliation within the organisation. Our first Reconciliation Action Plan was adopted in 2012, and our second ran from 2017-2019.

We have come a long way on our reconciliation journey which has included the following key milestones:

- 1994** Engagement of Indigenous Arts Officer to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic and cultural practice.
- 1997** The first local government areas in Australia to offer an apology to members of the Stolen Generation for pain and loss suffered from the child removal policies of various governments.

Council adopted a Statement of Commitment that acknowledges the impact of settlement and Council's part in this and recognises and respects the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 1998** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Memorandum of Understanding (revisions in 2002 and 2008).
- 2010** Engagement of an Indigenous Policy Officer.
- 2012** Reaffirmed Council's Statement of Commitment.
Launch of Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan.
- 2014** Launch of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Strategy.
- 2017** Council's second Reconciliation Action Plan.
- 2018** Engagement of Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker.
- 2019** Commitment to continue actions of Council's second Reconciliation Action Plan through Covid and recovery.
- 2023** Engagement of Council's (inaugural) Gathering Place Advisor.

Some of our reconciliation actions implemented through Council's second Reconciliation Action Plan have included:

- **Recognition activities**
For example, place naming and Acknowledging Country.
- **Creating cultural expression and gathering opportunities**
For example, First Peoples events, activities, commissioning, cultural teaching, and community gatherings.
- **Delivering coordinated support services**
For example, aged care and housing and homelessness outreach.
- **Providing youth services**
For example, sponsoring early childhood services and school programs.

A number of these actions are provided as case studies through this plan.

Council has further developed a Gathering Place Report, and conducted extensive community consultation, through the Attitudes to Reconciliation Barometer Survey 2019.

CASE STUDY 1

We-Akon Dilingja 'mourning reflection'



We-Akon Dilingja ('mourning reflection' in Boonwurrung language) first hosted in 2020, is now in its fifth year. It recognises the journey and experience of First Peoples and is part of our commitment to reconciliation.

Delivered in partnership with the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council, the sunrise ceremony overlooking Nerm – the bay, acknowledges the complexities surrounding the date of 26 January. It brings community together to remember, reflect and recognise we are all part of the story.

CASE STUDY 2

Spirit Network

Established during the Covid lockdowns of 2020 and convened fortnightly by the Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker, the 'Spirit Network' includes representatives from First Peoples' service providers in Port Phillip. It devises strategies for early intervention, prevention and connection – delivering actions to alleviate social isolation and maintain community connections.

While no longer formalised, these relationships have persisted, with organisations continuing to collaborate closely, share resources, and ensure essential services are provided to the First Peoples in our community.

CASE STUDY 3

National Sorry Day, Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation

"The community lunch to commemorate National Sorry Day, 26 May, hosted by Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation each year brings together First Nations people with local service organisations, high school students, early learning educators, members of faith groups, the general public...guests learn about the significance of paying respects to the Stolen generations and their survivors including anecdotes and poems from the group's Indigenous Co-Chair Dennis Fisher".

Rosemary Rule, Co-Chair, Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation

CASE STUDY 4

Libraries for Aboriginal People

Port Phillip participates in *Libraries for Aboriginal People* a statewide partnership project with the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria.

The project aims to identify and initiate ways libraries can work with community to redesign our services, spaces, and collections to be more relevant, safe, and culturally appropriate for First Nations community members.

Learnings and change

We believe it is important to consider the learnings that came from our previous Reconciliation Action Plan (2017–2019) and to embed these learnings into actions to give us a better opportunity to realise our vision for reconciliation.

Key outcomes of City of Port Phillip's Reconciliation Action Plan 2017–19 include:

Economic and Employment

Through the delivery of its second Reconciliation Action Plan, the City of Port Phillip advanced its commitment to First Peoples through:

- Supporting ethical practices for the sale of retail Aboriginal Cultural Products at South Melbourne Market and St Kilda Esplanade Market.
- A review of procurement practices to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

- Introduction and recruitment of the Indigenous Community Broker in response to high percentage of First Peoples experiencing homelessness within the city.
- Recognition of Aboriginal histories in planning for Fishermans Bend and support for the Boon Wurrung Land and Sea Council in the development of a "Thematic Environmental History of the City of Port Phillip".
- Opportunities for cultural celebration ceremony and naming in partnership with Traditional Owner groups, including the naming of Kirrip Park in the Boon Wurrung language, facilitation of the return of artifacts to members of the Yalukut Weelam Clan and the inaugural We Akon Dilinja morning of mourning ceremony on January 26 (annually on Australia Day).

Council's second Reconciliation Action Plan identified Partnerships, Gathering, and Cultural awareness and engagement as key focus areas for reconciliation.

Partnerships:

- The importance of maintaining an organisation wide Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to support planning, cultural development, and communication.
- The ongoing need for dialogue to advance progressive partnerships with all Traditional Owner groups.

Social gathering:

- The continuing need to strengthen Council's ability to work alongside First Nations communities in relation to maximising the benefits of gathering.

Cultural awareness and engagement:

- The value of an ongoing commitment for cultural awareness training for all staff.
- The need for a review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols.
- The need to invest in strategies that support indigenous employment across the organisation.
 - The value of an ongoing commitment for cultural awareness training for all staff.

Developing our Reconciliation Action Plan

Through early 2024 the development of the third Reconciliation Action Plan has been premised on meetings, engagements and establishing priorities with First Peoples across local communities.

The Reconciliation Action Plan Champions include Officers from the Partnerships – Housing, Safety and Reconciliation Team at Council. In particular, the Coordinator of Housing, Safety and Reconciliation, the First Peoples Lead (Officer) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker (Officer), supported by the General Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion.

The Reconciliation Action Plan development included various consultations with Traditional Owners, the two Registered Aboriginal Parties, the Bunurong Land Council and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, and the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council. Working sessions were conducted with First Nations Community Service Providers and Stakeholders, including Access Health, Sacred Heart Mission, Launch Housing, Victoria Police, Policy and Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) and Port Phillip

Citizens for Reconciliation, in addition to less formal conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the communities and Elders, facilitated through gatherings conducted by local service providers with input received through Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker.

Key issues and actions raised through these discussions are reflected in the plan, the development of which was overseen and supported by Council's Executive Group and informed by our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group. Council's Working Group consists of a broad and engaged team across Council and includes two officers presently in identified roles including the Program Lead First Peoples and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker.

Representation is further provided from the following people:

Manager of Community Building and Inclusion

Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety

Engagement Advisor

Procurement Contracts Management Best Practice Lead

Head of Sustainability and Climate Change

Coordinator Local Laws and Animal Management

Head of City Policy

Head of Urban Design

Coordinator Maternal and Child Health

Coordinator Family Services

Head of Communications and Brand

Team Leader Councillor and Executive Support

Child Safety Compliance Officer

Head of Aged Access and Inclusion

Coordinator Open Space and Recreation Portfolio

Head of Children's Services

Head of Governance

Head of Arts

Festivals and Events

Head of Organisational Development

The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has met twice in the 6-month development of this plan.

Groups will meet quarterly to progress delivery of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

The General Manager of Community Wellbeing and Inclusion will continue to play a central role and will continue to champion the Reconciliation Action Plan.

There are no external organisations represented on Council's internal Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, however actions in our Reconciliation Action Plan include strengthening relationships, building flexible models for consultations and fostering connections through our 'Spirit Network', and individual meetings with the three Traditional Owner Groups, comprising of the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council, to inform and direct our ongoing Reconciliation Action Plan delivery.

Community Engagement on the Draft Reconciliation Action Plan

Through May 2024 Council asked the community for their feedback on the Draft Reconciliation Action Plan.

Feedback has been provided through:

Five individual meetings with Traditional Owners Bunurong Land Council and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, and Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council.

First Peoples Community Online Survey.

Workshop with local First Peoples Service Providers.

Have Your Say Online Survey (49 responses).

Community Broker Face to Face Community Chats (47 points of contact).

Attendance at 4 Neighbourhood Engagement Pop-ups (65 in attendance).

Feedback provided has been considered and changes have been incorporated into the final version of the plan.

“There’s an opportunity to build more solid grassroots connection with community”.

First Peoples Community BBQ Chats, April 2024.

“First Nations to be included in planning development discussions. Better use of land for benefit of all in changing climate... especially around development of nature reserves”

Have Your Say Survey respondent, May 2024.

The Plan

The themes emerging from our evaluation and reflections of our second plan provide the basis for this plan.

Our actions follow the structure of the Reconciliation Action Plan Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan requirements and is aligned with the [Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2021–2023](#) and [Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021 – 2026](#).

We believe that reconciliation should be embedded in everyday business at the City of Port Phillip. Our third Reconciliation Action Plan sets out the steps we will take to advance those things we do well and, improve our services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

We continue to prioritise achieving better outcomes with First Peoples living in Port Phillip by following the lead, expertise and solutions of First Peoples. By respecting the expertise of First Peoples and working together in good faith, we hope to foster strong relationships and contribute to the self-determination of First Peoples.

Underpinning our actions in our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan are:

- Improving the accessibility, cultural safety, and responsiveness of Council services for First Peoples living in the City of Port Phillip.
- Putting the voices of First Peoples at the heart of our future service design and performance, and embedding lived experiences and expertise in our work.
- Deepening our understanding of self-determination and embedding it in our everyday practice – a process that will be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members.

Meaningful relationships, mutual respect and collaborative opportunities underpin the actions in our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. This means:



Relationships

Fostering relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations, engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and making space for youth voices. We will maintain and build partnerships, while promoting reconciliation through our organisation, community and networks.

Building trust is at the core of strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations. These relationships are vital to our position of supporting self-determination for First Peoples.

We seek to continue to strengthen our relationship with Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri people, and be led by their perspectives on appropriate service delivery and policy priorities impacting communities. We endeavour to expand the breadth of our relationships, including those with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to support a more holistic service delivery model for First Peoples in our city.



Respect

Maintaining cultural protocols and celebrating and protecting cultural heritage. We will strengthen our cultural understanding and awareness by participating in and observing days of significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We will ensure our services continue to support communities.

The foundations of respect will be built and maintained through education around cultural safety, focusing on the richness and diversity of Bunurong, Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights.

Council holds a responsibility to improve the cultural safety and responsiveness of our workplaces and the services we deliver. This will require a review of our Cultural Learning Strategy, to strengthen engagement and learning opportunities and develop a suite of resources that build the cultural capacity of our staff.



Opportunities

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander well-being by providing opportunities for cultural gathering. We will seek opportunities to improve economic outcomes through employment, the arts and our service procurement and supply chain.

Increasing employment opportunities for First Peoples will enable Council to benefit from the unique views of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander individuals as well as supporting self-determination. We will endeavour to increase our First Peoples workforce.



Governance

Ensure we deliver on the actions outlined in our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan and provide opportunities for meaningful review, advice and voice from First Peoples on our reconciliation journey.



Relationships

Respectful relationships, established through regular connection and communication with First Peoples in our community and organisation, will be vital to build trust and advance positive outcomes through our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Action 1

Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.1 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	May 2025	First Peoples Lead / Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
1.2 Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2025	Head of Stakeholder Engagement / First Peoples Lead
1.3 Strengthen relationships with Traditional Owner Groups (including Registered Aboriginal Parties, the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation) and the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council by inviting opportunities for collaboration through regular meetings.	May 2025; May 2026	First Peoples Lead / Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
1.4 Engage with all Traditional Owners and Registered Aboriginal Parties to review Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies and procedures.	August 2025	First Peoples Lead / Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
1.5 Explore how a Voice to Council can embed meaningful participation from First Peoples in a local government setting.	August 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Governance
1.6 Continue to support relationship building between the community, Traditional Owners, Council, and other government organisations by facilitating the Spirit Network forum.	November 2025	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker



Relationships

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.7 Continue to develop a flexible model of consultation and engagement with our community that prioritises connections with Elders and the underserved communities.	November 2025	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker
1.8 Through established youth services programs, facilitate a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth voice and participation to develop a better understanding of their needs and aspirations.	March 2026	Coordinator Middle Years and Youth Services / Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander Community Broker
1.9 Refresh the Statement of Commitment to ensure it is relevant and reflects the changing landscape of Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owner groups in the Port Phillip.	January 2026	First Peoples Lead



Relationships

Action 2

Build relationships through National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025; May 2026	Head of Communications and Brand / First Peoples Lead
2.2 Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2025; May 2026	First Peoples Lead
2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2025; May 2026	First Peoples Lead
2.4 Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May 2025; May 2026	First Peoples Program Lead
2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	May 2025; May 2026	First Peoples Lead



Relationships

Action 3

Communicate and promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.1 Continue to support the work and commitment of Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation in advancing reconciliation throughout the city.	Ongoing, June 2025; June 2026	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety / First Peoples Lead
3.2 Develop an internal communications plan to raise awareness of reconciliation to staff, executives and Councillors.	May 2025	Head of Communications and Brand / First Peoples Lead
3.3 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation through Council's broader communications channels to our community and stakeholders. This will include regular updates to websites, social media posts and articles in Councils 'Diversity' publication.	May 2026; May 2027	Head of Communications and Brand / First Peoples Lead
3.4 Collaborate with Reconciliation Action Plan organisations, like-minded organisations, other local councils, and other levels of government to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	May 2026; May 2027	First Peoples Lead
3.5 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	May 2026; May 2027	First Peoples Lead / Head of Advocacy, Economic Development and Partnerships
3.6 Assist to create a setting of cultural learning and awareness, demonstrating Council's commitment to reconciliation and First Peoples – by arranging a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocols at citizenship ceremonies.	May 2026; May 2027	Head of Governance
3.7 Monitor the advancement of Victorian Treaty negotiations to support Councillor awareness, decision making in relation to potential alignment to Council's reconciliation commitment and cultural programming.	May 2026; May 2027	First Peoples Lead



Relationships

Action 4

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4.1 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	September 2025	Head of Workplace Relations and HR
4.2 Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	April 2027	Head of Workplace Relations and HR
4.3 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	April 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Workplace Relations and HR
4.4 Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	April 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Organisational Development
4.5 Embed First Nations reconciliation principles and inclusiveness to ensure integration into Council's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework, to ensure Council's work to address inequality is guided by and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities.	September 2026	Coordinator Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
4.6 Communicate at least annually through the Staff CEO newsletters, our workplace has a culture of respect and does not tolerate discrimination of any type.	January 2026; January 2027	Head of Communications and Brand / First Peoples Lead



Respect

The City of Port Phillip seeks to provide a respectful city and workplace, where First Peoples have the right to make decisions and carry out meaningful expressions of culture in safe settings. We will educate our community, raise awareness and celebrate the achievements of First Peoples.

Action 5

Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2025	First Peoples Lead / Head of Organisational Development
5.2 Consult Traditional Owners and / or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform Council's cultural learning strategy.	August 2025	First Peoples Lead
5.3 Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	October 2025	Head of Organisational Development / First Peoples Lead
5.4 Develop management capability and behaviours for inclusive leadership including Cultural Safety through cultural learning opportunities.	January 2026	Head of Organisational Development / Head of Governance
5.5 Ensure Cultural Awareness Training is available and promoted to all employees including through the onboarding process for new employees and Councillors.	August 2025	Head of Organisational Development / First Peoples Lead / Governance
5.6 Provide opportunities for Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	October 2025	First Peoples Lead
5.7 Support opportunities that respectfully and actively partner with First Peoples to share knowledge of local history and culture with community and Council staff.	October 2025	First Peoples Lead / Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker
5.8 Work with authorised parties and Traditional Owner Groups on protecting, restoring or enhancing Indigenous landscapes and watercourses.	February 2026	Manager Open Space, Recreation and Community Resilience / Head of Sustainability and Climate Change



Respect

Action 6

Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by observing cultural protocols.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6.1 Review, implement and communicate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols Framework including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	October 2025	First Peoples Lead
6.2 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2025	First Peoples Lead
6.3 Acknowledge and honour days of cultural significance by raising the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on Council buildings.	May 2026; May 2027	Head of Governance / First Peoples Lead
6.4 Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	May 2026; May 2027	Head of Governance / First Peoples Lead
6.5 Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	June 2026	Head of Governance / First Peoples Lead
6.6 Support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Sorry Business in honouring the passing of First Peoples who are recognised as having a significant connection to the local area. This may include access to Council managed settings such as Cleve Gardens, assistance in aspects of Ceremony, use of the community flagpole or other processes within the realm of Council's role and function.	May 2026; May 2027	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker / Coordinator Events, Partnerships and Industry Development
6.7 Support the delivery of sustainability initiatives that provide connection and care for Country, using cultural management practices and approaches.	April 2026	Manager Open Space, Recreation and Community Resilience



Respect

Action 7

Celebrate and preserve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and cultures.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7.1 Engage Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the development of a First Peoples Arts Strategy, in recognition of First Peoples' thriving cultures.	March 2026	Head of Arts, Festivals and Events
7.2 Explore opportunities that recognise, honour and commemorate First Peoples in our community in public places and settings.	January 2026	Head of Arts, Festivals and Events
7.3 Explore opportunities with Traditional Owners that demonstrate First Peoples connection to Country through informed design processes that will reflect Aboriginal cultures or Country in urban and public space projects.	May 2026; May 2027	Manager City Planning and Sustainability / Manager Open Space, Recreation and Community Resilience
7.4 Work with Traditional Owners to identify and honour sites with significance (for example, Cleve Gardens) to First Peoples throughout our city.	September 2025	Manager City Planning and Sustainability / Gathering Place Development Advisor
7.5 Work with Traditional Owners to ensure places of cultural significance are protected through the appropriate application of Cultural Heritage Management Plans in support of mindful development and planning.	May 2026; May 2027	Manager City Planning and Sustainability
7.6 Ensure Council meets legislated requirements and responsibilities under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> through the completion of Cultural Heritage Management Plans, including those required for Council works.	November 2025; November 2026	Manager City Planning and Sustainability / Manager City Development First Peoples Lead



Respect

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7.7 In collaboration with Traditional Owners and Elders, incorporate place naming and signage in language to strengthen connections and understanding.	November 2025; November 2026	Head of Governance First Peoples Lead
7.8 In consultation with Traditional Owner Groups – support their delivery of programs and events that share understanding of Country, through Ngargee to Nerm walks and Yallikut Willam bike rides.	March 2026; March 2027	Head of Arts, Festivals and Events
7.9 Support meaningful Truth-telling and storytelling programs led by First Nations people within established gathering programs, agency partnerships and dedicated community engagement opportunities.	May 2025; May 2026	Head of Libraries / First Peoples Lead



Respect

Action 8

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8.1 Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2025; July 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Communications and Brand
8.2 Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	October 2025; October 2026	Head of Organisational Development / First Peoples Lead
8.3 Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2025; July 2026	First Peoples Lead



Respect

Action 9

Commemorate days of cultural significance.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9.1 Develop partnerships and confirm a program of events that celebrate and commemorate culturally significant days throughout the city.	June 2025	First Peoples Lead / First Peoples Program Lead
9.2 Implement inclusive events that provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to actively participate and embrace cultural activities and practices.	June 2025; June 2026	First Peoples Program Lead
9.3 Continue to partner with the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council to deliver reconciliation initiatives including the We-Akon Dilingja Mourning Reflection and Ceremony on the lands of the Yalukit Willam Clan.	26 January 2026; 26 January 2027	Head of Arts Festivals and Events / First Peoples Lead
9.4 List Council's program of cultural events on the Council website to communicate and promote through Council and community networks.	June 2025; June 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Communications and Brand
9.5 Encourage participation of key events identified in our Diversity and Inclusion calendar, including Sorry Day.	May – July 2025; May – July 2026	First Peoples Lead / Head of Communications and Brand



Opportunities

Council is committed to fostering a culturally inclusive city and workplace. We acknowledge the benefits of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for their expertise and perspective. By providing economic opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses, we will contribute to a more equitable future.

Action 10

Ensure Council services respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10.1 Deliver programs that effectively address the needs of at-risk individuals in our community, through our partnerships and outreach services through the following Council programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reconciliation initiatives – Port Philip Zero Initiatives – Gathering opportunities – Amenity and local area response. 	October 2025	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety / Manager Safety and Amenity
10.2 Continue to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers and housing organisations to ensure culturally appropriate, supported social housing and programs are delivered to meet the needs of local communities.	November 2025	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
10.3 Deliver on the Libraries for Aboriginal People program and include a commitment to ensure the Indigenous Australian collection remains vibrant, educational, and current.	November 2025	Head of Libraries First Peoples Lead
10.4 Provide training to ensure services maintain culturally safe environments in which the identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are respected and valued.	November 2025	Head of Organisational Development / Executive Manager Family, Youth and Children Services / First People Lead
10.5 Increase effectiveness of Council's community grants to support programs that progress reconciliation and support local events and cultural expressions.	November 2025	Coordinator Grants and Community Building / First Peoples Lead



Opportunities

Action 11

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing through cultural gatherings.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11.1 Maximise the use of Council buildings and places to support cultural gatherings and meetings. This will include conversation and evaluation of options for a culturally safe, standalone facility, incorporating direction from joint report commissioned by Council and the State Government 'the Gathering Place Report (2021)'.	June 2025	Head of Property Operations / First Peoples Lead
11.2 Continue our partnerships with local services to facilitate social gathering programs for First Peoples.	July 2025; June 2026	First Peoples Lead / Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker



Opportunities

Action 12

Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12.1 Review Council's Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2013 and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	April 2026	First Peoples Lead Head of Recruitment, Workforce Systems and Experience
12.2 Continue to build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	April 2026	Head of Organisational Development
12.3 Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and participation in the Council workplace. Ensure consistent and fair selection processes for career development opportunities (For example, secondments, higher duties, development programs, pathways to employment and work placement opportunities).	April 2026	Head of Recruitment, Workforce Systems and Experience
12.4 Ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are provided opportunities to meet with cultural leaders.	January 2026; January 2027	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
12.5 Explore opportunities to create conversations with relevant service partners to maximising employment opportunities for young First Peoples.	May 2025; May 2026	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Broker / Coordinator Middle Years and Youth Services
12.6 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June 2025; June 2026	Head of Recruitment. Workforce systems and Experience First Peoples Lead



Opportunities

Action 13

Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13.1 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2027	Head of Procurement Contracts and Fleet / First Peoples Lead
13.2 Continue to develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2027	Head of Procurement Contracts and Fleet / First Peoples Lead
13.3 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy, building on Council's established social procurement policy and procedures.	March 2027	Head of Procurement Contracts and Fleet / First Peoples Lead
13.4 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	May 2025; May 2026	Head of Communications and Brand / First Peoples Lead
13.5 Investigate Kinaway Chamber of Commerce membership.	May 2027	Head of Procurement, Contracts and Fleet / First Peoples Lead



Governance

It is important to track our progress, be transparent and report on our success throughout our reconciliation journey to achieve the best outcomes.

Action 14

Establish and maintain an effective Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to drive governance of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14.1 Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.	May 2026; May 2027	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
14.2 Review the established Terms of Reference for the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.	May 2025	First Peoples Lead / Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
14.3 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor Reconciliation Action Plan implementation.	Annually in February, May, August, and November	First Peoples Lead



Governance

Action 15

Provide appropriate support for the effective implementation of our reconciliation commitments.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15.1 Define resource needs for effective Reconciliation Action Plan implementation.	June 2025; June 2026	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety / Manager Community Wellbeing, and Inclusion
15.2 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	May 2025; May 2026	Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion / Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
15.3 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	June 2025	First Peoples Lead
15.4 Appoint and maintain an internal Reconciliation Action Plan champion from the senior management team.	June 2025	General Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion



Governance

Action 16

Build accountability and transparency through reporting our achievements, challenges and learnings, both internally and externally.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16.1 Publish progress and actions delivered by Council on our Reconciliation Action Plan and enhance public accountability and visibility.	July 2027	First Peoples Lead
16.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Survey.	August 2025; August 2026	First Peoples Lead
16.3 Complete and submit the annual Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Survey to Reconciliation Australia	30 September 2025; 30 September 2026	First Peoples Lead
16.4 Report Reconciliation Action Plan progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly, through established Council reporting systems.	May 2026; May 2027	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
16.5 Publicly report our Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges, and learnings annually.	May 2026; May 2027	Coordinator Partnerships – Housing, Reconciliation and Community Safety
16.6 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace Reconciliation Action Plan Barometer.	February 2026	Head of Organisational Development / First Peoples Lead
16.7 Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this Reconciliation Action Plan.	May 2027	First Peoples Lead



Governance

Action 17

Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next Reconciliation Action Plan.

Deliverable		Timeline	Responsibility
17.1	Utilise the provided Reconciliation Action Plan templates to develop the next Reconciliation Action Plan and ensure it is registered via Reconciliation Australia's website.	November 2026	First Peoples Lead

