



CITY OF PORT PHILLIP



# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

2012 - 2015

## MAYOR'S FOREWORD

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*'I am very proud to present the inaugural City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan (2012-2015). This will be Council's guiding policy document on Indigenous Australian issues which has been developed in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens of the area, the Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation, and the broader community. The plan seeks to realise Council's vision for strengthening its diverse and inclusive community.*

*We are committed to delivering the City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan and working with the community and other stakeholders towards reconciliation.*

*Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which the City of Port Phillip is built.*

*The City of Port Phillip has a long history of acknowledging the dispossession suffered by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and in 1997 it was one of 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.*

*We respect the contribution of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to Australian society.*

*We celebrate the exploits of the First Australians on the sporting field, in the boardroom, in the classroom, and in the political arena.*

*We stand in awe at some of the oldest representations of human activity on this planet through age-old rock art.*

*We are moved by the sound of ancient languages being spoken, and dance ceremonies, passed down generation by generation.*

*We want the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of Port Phillip be made to feel welcome in a culturally safe environment.*

*Council is committed to contributing to a national reconciliation movement, and the national campaign to 'close the gap' in relation to the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the rest of Australia.*

*The Reconciliation Action Plan will focus on good relationships, respecting the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australia, and working together to ensure they have the same life opportunities as other Australians.*

*The City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan 2012-2015 provides Council with an opportunity to work for true reconciliation.*

MAYOR  
CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

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*'The Council of the City of Port Phillip acknowledges that Indigenous Australians were the first people of this land and have survived European settlement for more than two centuries.*

*The City of Port Phillip values its diverse and multicultural community and encourages tolerance and respect for all.*

*The arrival of Europeans brought massive change to the land and to its Indigenous peoples.*

*For its part, Port Phillip City Council acknowledges and grieves for the loss by the Indigenous people of their land, their children, their health and their lives.*

*We acknowledge the right of Indigenous Australians to live according to their own values and customs and we commit ourselves to respecting Aboriginal sacred sites and significant places.*

*The Council recognises the valuable contribution to the Port Phillip region made by Indigenous people and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony.*

*The Council supports the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Australia working together for the development of a formal instrument of reconciliation.'*

## OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

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*The Reconciliation Action Plan (2012-2015) is a commitment to build on the existing working relationship the City of Port Phillip has with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.*

*Our vision is for a Council that supports citizens, business and community organisations in the Port Phillip area working together for the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.*

*Council promotes the need for consideration of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in all of Council's planning and service delivery activities across physical, strategic, cultural, recreational and economic policy frameworks.*

*Our vision is to actively advocate and lobby to other levels of government and the community sector for the needs of the whole Port Phillip community, with a special focus on sectors of the community, such as the Indigenous community, who historically have had a limited voice to express their needs.*

*Council is committed to social justice principles and acknowledges social and cultural differences that impact on an individual's and community's ability to share on an equitable basis the resources that provide basic human rights such as: food, shelter, material goods, education, health and wellbeing, and access to information.*

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

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*The City of Port Phillip is located on the northern shore of Port Phillip Bay, south of Melbourne city centre.*

*The Council area is in the inner city of Melbourne, located between 2- 8kms south of the Central Business District.*

*It has an estimated population of more than 97,000 people.*

*The Council, one of 79 local councils in Victoria, is the local government authority for the suburbs of South Melbourne, Port Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park, East St Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea, Elwood, St Kilda and St Kilda West.*

*The area, particularly St Kilda and Emerald Hill (South Melbourne) is historically a meeting place for sections of the Melbourne Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, as well as visitors from interstate.*

*The area also draws many Indigenous artists who find the area conducive to successfully producing their work.*

*As a local government body, the City of Port Phillip provides for the peace, order and good government of the municipality.*

*The Council administers various laws for its citizens such as land use planning, environment protections, public health, traffic and parking and animal management.*

*The Council maintains community infrastructure such as roads, bridges, drains, town halls, libraries, recreation facilities, parks and gardens.*

*The City of Port Phillip contains a large amount of foreshore area on Port Phillip Bay, and is a popular*

*recreational destination, attracting approximately 8 million visitors each year.*

*Proximity to the Melbourne CBD ensures that Port Phillip is an area in high demand. Historically, while many areas of the municipality have had a predominantly working-class background, higher socio-economic groups now dominate, following decades of gentrification. Low income earners now make up approximately 20% of households.*

*The total identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Port Phillip is 236 people (2006 ABS Census), with many living in St Kilda, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne.*

*The demographic of Indigenous peoples reflects the wider makeup of Port Phillip which is a mix of middle and low income residents.*

*For several years, Council has had service agreements for Indigenous community activities organised by Inner South Community Health Service, Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation, and the Boon Wurrung Foundation.*

*In 1997, Council was one of the first local government areas in Australia to apologise to members of the Stolen Generations for the continuing impact of their loss.*

*It has employed an Indigenous Arts Officer since the mid-1990s, and held the first Indigenous arts festival in Port Phillip in 2002.*

*Council has also engaged with the local ATSI community through a series of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) (1998), (2002), and (2008).*

*In 2010, the Council employed an Indigenous Policy Officer to develop and implement its first Reconciliation Action Plan.*

*The development and implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan (2012-2014) is guided by the City of Port Phillip Council Plan (2009-2013), the City of Port Phillip Social Justice Charter (2011), and the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006).*

*It also operates under frameworks created by the United Nations International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), and Reconciliation Australia.*

### ***Yalukit Willam Ngargee: People Place Gathering Festival***

*The Yalukit Willam Ngargee (YWN) festival provides a platform for contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers and artists to showcase their works to a diverse audience.*

*Hosted by the City of Port Phillip, the YWN is the opening festival event of the world-renowned 9-day St Kilda Festival.*

*The YWN attracts crowds between 7000 to 10,000 people whilst satellite programs throughout the week incorporate exhibitions, live performances and film screenings.*

*Held in St Kilda's O'Donnell Gardens, a significant contemporary Indigenous meeting place, the YWN showcases free to the general public emerging and established Indigenous musicians, dancers and performers, market stall holders, and children's activities.*

*The YWN engages and trains local Indigenous community members to marshal the main day and to assist in stage management.*

*The YWN also incorporates a dance program which in recent years has featured a traditional Boonwurrung ceremony being held which hadn't been performed in over 150 years. The sunset ceremony, produced by Idja Indigenous Dance Company, involved over 60 Aboriginal dancers, and ended with large sections of the general public participating in the final dance.*

# OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN JOURNEY

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*The City of Port Phillip's ongoing commitment to the development of a reconciliation process at the local government level is reflected in the Reconciliation Action Plan 2012-2015.*

*In February 2011, a Council Report outlining the process for the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the City of Port Phillip was endorsed.*

*The RAP will detail a set of actions that Council will undertake to achieve reconciliation across a range of departments.*

*Progress against actions will be measured.*

*Actions will be guided by issues identified by the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.*

*A RAP provides the organisation with a framework for the future, detailing steps and priorities to achieve Indigenous equality.*

*The process for developing a RAP was also endorsed by the Urban South Local Indigenous Network, Boon Wurrung Foundation, Inner South Community Health Service, Indigenous service providers, and the Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation.*

*A RAP will be Council's central policy document on working with the local Indigenous community.*

*As part of the development process, a City of Port Phillip Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has been established, made up of City of Port Phillip staff and managers.*

*The Working Group, at key stages of development, will invite Aboriginal community leaders to meetings for endorsement and oversight.*

*This group, which meets quarterly, will facilitate internal discussions over RAP development and its relevant tie-ins with Council organisational structure.*

*This framework focuses on: good relationships; respecting the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australia; and working together to ensure Indigenous peoples have the same life opportunities as other Australians.*

*The development, and implementation, of a Reconciliation Action Plan, is consistent with the Council Plan (see section 3.1.8 – Continue to strengthen our relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and actively support reconciliation.).*

*The RAP will explore employment opportunities for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders; will work with local organisations to build awareness, support and understanding for Indigenous culture; and enhance cultural and economic development for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

## 1. RELATIONSHIPS

Since 1994, when the City of Port Phillip commissioned a report on the needs of its Indigenous community, the Council has been committed to building effective working relationships. The development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan is the next step in the Council's journey of recognising the rich history of the area's Traditional Owners, negotiating with and committing to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through regular engagement.

### FOCUS AREAS

#### Recognition//Negotiation/Commitment/Engagement

Please note: Timelines will feature the following goals. Short term - within 12 mths. Medium term - within 3 years. Long term - greater than 3 years.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
1. RAP Working Group established, made up of ATSI and non-ATSI staff members with Executive Support, to manage the implementation of the RAP	Executive Management Team Community Development	Short term: Working Group will meet quarterly and report annually.	4 meetings per annum to monitor progress
2. Statement of Commitment That the City of Port Phillip embeds its Statement of Commitment into its Indigenous policy framework, following endorsement by Councillors.	Executive Management Group Community Development	Short term	Copies of the Statement of Commitment are sent to all staff, and included in the induction package for new staff.

3. Community Networks - support the efforts of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to establish both formal and informal social networks through assistance which may include the provision of premises and other meeting spaces, expertise and grants.	Community Development	Short term: review service agreements to Aboriginal community groups annually.	Maintenance and continuance of community network support.
4. Aboriginal Gathering Place - support the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's efforts to establish an Aboriginal gathering place in the area.	Community Development Property Services	Medium term: evaluate possible options and consult with the local Aboriginal community.	Identification of potential Gathering Place.
5. Reconciliation Groups - continue to support the activities of Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation through service agreement, and practical and in-kind support.	Community Development	Short term: Service Agreement reviewed annually.	Annual activity report presented at RAP Working Group meeting.
6. Cultural Promotion - publicise the contributions and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Council publications, newsletters, local and national Indigenous media outlets, and other media.	Governance and Engagement (Communications and Engagement)	Medium term: progress is monitored through reports to the RAP Working Group.	Report annually on the number of stories with Indigenous content that are published in Council publications.

## 2. RESPECT

The Council of the City of Port Phillip acknowledges that Indigenous Australians were the first people of this land and have survived European settlement for more than two centuries. Council recognises the valuable contribution to the Port Phillip region made by indigenous people and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony.

### FOCUS AREAS

#### Consultation/Participation/Protocols/Leadership

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
7. Leadership – build capacity and support opportunities for Indigenous leadership.	Community Development	Medium term	Support the Elders Working Group by providing Council meeting space. Support opportunities to boost Indigenous youth leadership.
8. Aboriginal Cross-Cultural Awareness Training for Council Staff	People and Organisational Development	Medium term	All new and existing staff undertakes training on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness. This commitment is incorporated into HR policy.
9. Cultural Heritage Consultation – Council to consider potential impacts of development or rezoning, including consulting with Aboriginal Traditional Owners.	City Strategy (Strategic Planning)  City Development (Statutory Planning)	Medium term	An annual review for reporting on programs involving Indigenous negotiation or consultation.  An annual review will be prepared on the number of applicants required to prepare an Archaeological Assessment.

<p>10. Flying the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag - that the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag be flown everyday at St Kilda Town Hall except on instances when a special event is taking place or request has been made to fly a different flag and it is granted (where this happens, this will be for a short period of up to a day).</p>	<p>Community and Councillor Support</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Monitor is done of the number of days the flying of the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag at City of Port Phillip town halls.</p>
<p>11. Welcome to Country - involves a Traditional Owner or Indigenous Community leader welcoming people to the land at the beginning of a civic event or ceremony. Council will Commission the services of Aboriginal Traditional Owners to conduct welcomes to country at civic events through annual service agreements. Council will ensure a welcome to country or acknowledgement of country* (see next action) for all major civic events.</p>	<p>Community Development  Community and Councillor Support</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Develop a protocol outlining the processes and language to use for a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country. Communicate this protocol throughout the Council, and evaluate its uptake at RAP Working Group meetings.</p>
<p>12. Acknowledgement of Country - involves either Indigenous people (who are not Traditional Owners) or non-Indigenous people acknowledging and showing respect for the Traditional Owners of the land on which the event is taking place. Council will encourage an acknowledgement of country for all other Council meetings and events.</p>	<p>Governance and Engagement (Communications and Engagement)  Strategic Relationships Advisor  Community and Councillor Support</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Develop a protocol outlining the processes and language to use for a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country. Communicate this protocol throughout the Council, and evaluate its uptake at RAP Working Group meetings.</p>

13. Indigenous Arts Strategy – ensure resources are available for annual Indigenous arts calendar. Input on the Indigenous arts program will be received via local networks such as Local Indigenous Network.	Culture and Leisure (Indigenous Arts Officer)	Medium term	An Indigenous Arts calendar is developed following consultation on its development.
14. Signage – increase the use of signs in public locations that pay respect to the area’s Traditional Owners.	Parks and Open Spaces	Medium term	An annual report is prepared on the number of new signs that are introduced in Parks and Spaces, which acknowledge Aboriginal people and culture.
15. Corporate Identity – Update and revamp the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) content on Council’s website and intranet.	Governance and Engagement (Communications and Engagement)  Community Development	Medium term	That new ATSI content uploaded, management processes developed, and an updated ATSI directory is established.

### 3. OPPORTUNITIES

Creating opportunities to build the capacity of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to self-determine their future is one of Council’s key directions under the goal of ‘Strengthening our Diverse and Inclusive Community’.

<b>FOCUS AREAS</b>
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#### Inclusion/Employment/Development

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
16. That Council develop, deliver, and monitor an Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy, which includes an Aboriginal Employment Strategy, and capacity to support Indigenous Australians to start their own business.	People and Organisational Development  City Strategy (Economic Development)  Community Development	Medium term	That the Strategy is endorsed. Progress will be reviewed annually. That Council take on at least one Aboriginal or Islander trainee per year. That 2% of total staff by 2020 are Indigenous.

<p>17. Naming – review the process of consultation in relation to place naming of new Council facilities, reserves and open spaces ensuring input from Traditional Owners.</p>	<p>Governance and Engagement  Community Development</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Report annually on the number of new names recognising Aboriginal people and culture.  That a process for consultation with Traditional Owners is in place.</p>
<p>18. Support for the aims of Close the Gap health funding initiatives – Council to provide meeting space to Urban South Close the Gap reference groups and local health service providers. Council will advocate that Port Phillip area receives a proportionate allocation of Close the Gap health funding earmarked for the Southern Metropolitan region. Council will ensure Indigenous issues are considered by local primary care partnerships.</p>	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Close the Gap health initiatives are developed, launched and implemented.  Indigenous issues are acknowledged in the strategic documents of local primary care partnerships</p>
<p>19. Recognition of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates - Council will actively support key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates including Australia (Invasion or Survival) Day, Sorry Day, Mabo Day, NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, and Yalukit Willam Ngargee.</p>	<p>Community Development  Culture and Leisure</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>All significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates be included into the Council calendar of events, and recognised, by 2015.</p>
<p>20. Sustainability – Aboriginal concepts of environmental and social sustainability to be researched and incorporated into Council publications</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Aboriginal sustainability case studies and research to be compiled in a Council document and publicly available by 2015.</p>
<p>21. Funeral Assistance Fund funding to be set up to cater for miscellaneous</p>	<p>Community Development</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Report annually on Council’s history of supporting the local</p>

costs associated with funerals of members of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community			Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community when a death occurs.  Funeral Fund to be established.
22. Food Security – Council will support initiatives which ensure that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Port Phillip have access to sufficient, affordable, and quality sources of food. Council will review and research Aboriginal food security issues in Port Phillip including the need and likely use of an Indigenous-managed Community Garden.	Community Development	Medium term	Research into food security issues faced by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Port Phillip to be completed.  Council will support Aboriginal gatherings around food, such as the Wominjeka BBQ, and Our Rainbow Place BBQ.

#### 4. TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

To ensure the process stays on track and meets Reconciliation Australia guidelines, the Council will measure, and review progress, and update targets, on a regular basis to maintain momentum and maximise outcomes.

<b>FOCUS AREAS</b>
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#### Measure/Review/Update

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURABLE TARGET
23. RAP reporting – Council monitor implementation of the RAP through Working Group meetings and annual reports.	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	Short term	Outline annual progress in implementing the RAP. Reporting will be against each applicable Department.

24. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Survey – Council will gather data on the local community to assist in the development of policy. Council will aim for this to be reported in the first 12 months of the RAP.	Community Development	Short term	Survey analysis completed and available to public.
25. Port Phillip Attitude to Reconciliation Survey – Council will gather data to gauge the attitudes of Port Phillip residents towards Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and to reconciliation. Follow-up surveys will measure whether attitudes change over time.	Community Development	Medium term	Survey analysis completed and available to public.
26. RAP promotion – that the RAP be promoted internally and made available to the public on the Council website and the Reconciliation Australia website.	Governance and Engagement (Communications and Engagement)	Short term	RAP promoted on Council website. RAP to be published on Reconciliation Australia website
27. Annual updating - RAP is reported on and refreshed annually, and reviewed after 3 years in early 2015.	Executive Management Team  Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	Short to medium term	RAP evaluated and reviewed by mid-2015.

May 2012  
 City of Port Phillip  
 Private Bag No 3  
 PO St Kilda, VIC, 3182  
 Phone: (03) 9209 6818  
 TTY # 9209 6713  
[www.portphillip.vic.gov.au](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au)

**For further information on the plan contact:**

Todd Condie  
Indigenous Policy Officer  
Community Development  
City of Port Phillip

(03) 9209 6818

[tcondie@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:tcondie@portphillip.vic.gov.au)

DRAFT