



city of
Victor Harbor



DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2022/23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Victor Harbor acknowledges the Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land and surrounding waters where we live and work.

We acknowledge their deep connection to country and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This respect is extended to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.



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THE ARTISTS

Cedric Varcoe is a proud contemporary Ngarrindjeri artist, painting the creation stories of his Ngarrindjeri lands and waters, from the lower River Murray and the Lower Lakes to the Coorong, the South Coast to Kangaroo Island.

Kyla McHughes is an artist, Ngarrindjeri Language teacher and member of Miwi-Inyeri Pelepi-Ambi Aboriginal Corporation (MIPAAC).

Cedric and Kyla speak of weaving as a large part of Ngarrindjeri culture and connection to country. It connects the past to the present and connects people, place and community.

Stitch by stitch, weaving gets bigger, connecting together. Weaving can represent the 'weaving' together of our two cultures working together and walking this reconciliation journey together.





MESSAGE FROM THE CEO AND MAYOR

The City of Victor Harbor has been working towards reconciliation for many years and while a number of achievements have been reached, there is more to be accomplished. Our first Reconciliation Action Plan formalises a whole-of-organisation approach towards sustainably and strategically advancing meaningful reconciliation.

The Plan outlines steps for Council to strengthen relationships with Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations peoples and establish a strong framework to guide reconciliation in the future. As an organisation, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to lead by example and encourage cultural understanding throughout our wider community.

The development of this Plan has been a collaborative project with Council staff members, Elected Members, our community, and local Ramindjeri-Ngarrindjeri peoples. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude to our cultural advisors who have provided expert advice, guidance and insight throughout the development of this Plan.

It is with great honour that we present the City of Victor Harbor's Reconciliation Action Plan.

CEO, Victoria MacKirdy
Mayor, Dr Moira Jenkins



MESSAGE FROM OUR CULTURAL ADVISORS

Miwi-Inyeri Pelepi-Ambi Aboriginal Corporation (MIPAAC) was founded in 2012 by Phyllis Williams and Eileen McHughes to 'keep Ngarrindjeri culture and language alive and strong'.

MIPAAC has been running adult language classes in Victor Harbor and Goolwa since 2013. More recently, these classes have also been held in Murray Bridge.

MIPAAC has published a number of Ngarrindjeri Dictionaries, including a picture dictionary as well as books documenting local Dreaming stories.

The Corporation is a great source of expertise in Ngarrindjeri language and cultural advice in our local community.

MIPAAC has helped many trainees obtain their Certificate 4 in Training and Assessing, that have now gone on to become trainers and are teaching certificate 2 and 3 in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language.

Cedric Varcoe
Mark Koolmatrrie
Kyla McHughes



OUR VISION

The City of Victor Harbor's vision for reconciliation is to foster an environment of inclusion and acceptance for all.

Our intention is to honour our Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri culture and history so that it can become a strength of our organisation and community. This vision is grounded in shared understanding, harmony, justice, acceptance, inclusion and respect.

Achieving this vision will require courage, generosity of spirit, integrity and truth-telling.

We recognise and respect the First Nations peoples of the beautiful land and waters on which we live and work. The challenge is to embed genuine reconciliation into the everyday business of our organisation.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a first step toward building and developing relationships that are equitable, dignified and respectful.

Through this Plan, Council will acknowledge and celebrate the rich cultural heritage in our region and support the strength and resilience of Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples.

2021 NAIDOC Celebrations at
Soldiers Memorial Gardens



Kyla McHughes provides a Welcome to Country during the 2022 Fringe Festival at Warland Reserve



OUR ORGANISATION

Our Community

The City of Victor Harbor is located on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, about 80kms south of Adelaide. It is the largest population centre of the Southern Fleurieu region.

Victor Harbor sits within the traditional lands of the Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples. There are 18 Nations that make up the Ngarrindjeri Nation, covering an area from Victor Harbor and Murray Bridge in the north, to the Coorong, Kingston and Naracoorte in the south.

Ngarrindjeri country is bordered by Kurna and Meru in the north, Ngargad and Bindjali to the east, and Buandig to the south. These are just a few of the 250+ language groups and 800 dialects in Australia.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1.3% of Victor Harbor's population identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Our Business

The Council employs 134 staff. Of those, five staff members identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The City of Victor Harbor and its residents also benefit immeasurably from the work of more than 350 volunteers.

Council activities include community development, environment and infrastructure management, and corporate and customer services.

Our Strategic Direction

The City of Victor Harbor's Community Plan 2030 expresses the aspirations of what we want Victor Harbor to be like now and in the future. The aim is to be bold and visionary, but at the same time protecting all of the things we love about Victor Harbor.

As outlined in the Community Plan, the aspirations for the City of Victor Harbor are:

- We are a caring, connected and active community
- We have a culture of innovation, collaboration and creativity
- We manage growth and change responsibly
- We protect our environment
- We have services and infrastructure that meet our community needs
- We are a financially sustainable and well-governed organisation.

Cedric Varcoe provides a Smoking Ceremony
at the 2021 WhaleFest in Victor Harbor



Reconciliation Action Plan Community Forum
in the City of Victor Harbor Council Chambers

First Nations place names etched into the Victor Harbor Amphitheatre



A man with a beard, wearing a blue shirt and jeans, sits on the grass playing a didgeridoo. In the foreground, a large, dark, circular metal fire pit contains burning logs. The background shows a crowd of people, including a woman in a white and red patterned shirt and a man in a black shirt with a yellow and red design. The scene is set outdoors on a grassy area with a clear blue sky.

OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

For many years, the City of Victor Harbor has been on an informal reconciliation journey. The process of formalising this journey through a Reconciliation Action Plan has been welcomed by staff as an opportunity to strengthen relationships with Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples and organisations.

Staff enthusiasm and willingness to contribute in the development of this Plan indicates there will be meaningful uptake across the organisation in the future.

Although we have achieved much towards reconciliation over the years, we are yet to cement formal plans and processes into our way of business. There is much work to be done in this space and this Plan will help to embed genuine reconciliation into every aspect of what we do. Building and maintaining relationships is central to our vision.

Actions that are noted in our Plan must be implemented across the organisation, not just by individuals, to create a real impact. This will be achieved by involving a diverse range of staff in the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and filtering cultural learning and relationship building opportunities across the organisation.

Current Projects and Initiatives

The City of Victor Harbor helps to coordinate the Fleurieu Aboriginal and Community Initiatives Network (FACIN), a group of Council staff and community members working in, and passionate about, local First Nations health and wellbeing.

The aim of this network is to plan, support and implement initiatives that cultivate a culture of holistic wellbeing for Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations peoples and communities.

Awareness and learning about Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples and culture and broader First Nations history is encouraged for all City of Victor Harbor staff.

Cultural training is available to all staff via online learning as well as from a number of local and South Australian based training providers.

Many examples of Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri culture can also be seen throughout our community, including in the naming of streets and parks, as well as on signage and artwork.

The City of Victor Harbor has facilitated or been involved in several public art and language projects, including the Victor Harbor Amphitheatre, On-Encounter Civic Centre Mosaic, Heritage Trail, South Australian Whale Centre Kondoli Exhibit, Nakarumi Kondoli Whale Lookout, and Granite Island Causeway.

Another public art project currently underway is the Muwerang Mosaic Project, which will see a 36 metre mosaic displayed on a balustrade. Community members and Ngarrindjeri artists have collaborated to develop the mosaic.

The Coral Street Art Space, an initiative of the City of Victor Harbor, is also recognised for its promotion and exhibitions of First Nations art.

Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri culture is further celebrated through our annual events calendar. The City of Victor Harbor hosts a growing number of events and celebrates the rich and diverse culture, language, art and stories of the Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples through several community events each year.

During Reconciliation Week, events are hosted to provide opportunities for community members to learn about language and culture. These events have included Ngarrindjeri language classes, Ngarrindjeri art workshops, culture teaching and story-telling events, and community BBQs.

Annual NAIDOC Week events are another opportunity for school groups and the community to engage with First Nations culture. NAIDOC events led by Miwi-Inyeri Pelepi-Ambi Aboriginal Corporation have been supported by Council with the provision of grants and logistical assistance.

Community volunteers contributing to the Muwerang Mosaic Project



OUR PLAN

The City of Victor Harbor's 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan is a formal commitment towards scoping and developing relationships with Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations stakeholders, and exploring our sphere of influence. The Plans is designed to last 12 months.

The Plan is separated into four pillars which each have actions and deliverables. The pillars are relationships, respect, opportunities, and tracking and progress reporting.

RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	1.1 Maintain a Reconciliation Action Plan Steering Group with Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri representation.	June 2022	Community Services Manager
	1.2 Continue negotiations to formalise relationships with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation.	June 2023	CEO
	1.3 Establish an internal process for engaging with Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri organisations and individuals.	May 2023	CEO
	1.4 Continue to provide opportunities for cultural learning and relationship building.	September 2022	RAP Working Group
	1.5 Establish and maintain relationships with Reconciliation SA.	June 2022	Community Services Manager
	1.6 Continue communication and strengthen relationships with MIPAAC.	Ongoing	CEO
	1.7 Investigate and set up a process for requests to MIPAAC for translations into Ngarrindjeri.	December 2022	RAP Working Group Chair

Action	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources and materials to our staff.	May 2022	Manager Community Services
	2.2 Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group members to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week event.	27 May – 3 June 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.	27 May – 3 June 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	2.4 Continue to offer Reconciliation Week Events to community and local schools.	27 May – 3 June 2022	Manager Library Festivals and Events Officer
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	3.1 Communicate and promote our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	Ongoing	CEO
	3.2 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	May 2022	RAP Working Group FACIN Chair
	3.3 Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2022	RAP Working Group FACIN Chair
	3.4 Investigate Council support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart.	July 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	4.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	4.2 Conduct a review of People and Culture policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	May 2023	Manager People and Culture

RESPECT

Action	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	December 2022	Manager People and Culture
	5.2 Investigate compulsory cultural competency training for all staff and volunteers.	January 2023	Manager People and Culture
	5.3 Provide opportunities for local Ramindjeri and Ngarrindjeri peoples to provide cultural learning for staff and Elected Members.	February 2023	Manager People and Culture
	5.4 Provide opportunities for staff participation in Ngarrindjeri language classes.	At least two workshops each year	Working Group Chair
6. Demonstrate respect to Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols.	6.1 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	May 2022	RAP Working Group
	6.2 Ensure all Council meetings begin with Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2022	CEO
	6.3 Investigate preferred wording and use of Ngarrindjeri language in Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2022	Working Group Chair
	6.4 Ensure Council documents and promotional material contain Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2023	Communications Officer



Action	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
	6.5 Investigate options to include Ramindjeri/Ngarrindjeri art, language or themes in Council email signatures and documents.	May 2023	Communications Officer
	6.6 Provide opportunities for Traditional Owners to conduct a Welcome to Country at Council Events.	Ongoing	Festival and Events Officer
	6.7 Investigate and design an Acknowledgement of Country in the Foyer of the Civic Centre and/or use of Ngarrindjeri flag.	December 2022	Director Corporate and Customer Service
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	7.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	7.2 Promote NAIDOC Week events among staff and the broader community.	3-10 July 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	7.3 Support local NAIDOC Week events in our community.	3-10 July 2022	Fleurieu Families Officer

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
8. Investigate opportunities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace.	8.1 Develop a business case for Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nations employment within our organisation.	March 2023	Manager People and Culture
	8.2 Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2023	Manager People and Culture
	8.3 Investigate ways to encourage and support Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri or other First Nations peoples to become Elected Members of Council.	May 2023	RAP Working Group Chair
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	9.1 Develop a business case for procurement from Ramindjeri, Ngarrindjeri and other First Nation owned businesses.	February 2023	Procurement Officer
	9.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership and the Aboriginal Employment Register.	January 2023	Manager People and Culture

TRACKING AND PROGRESS REPORTING

	Deliverables	Timelines	Responsibility
10. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	10.1 Define resource needs for Reconciliation Action Plan implementation.	May 2023	RAP Working Group Chair
	10.2 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	June 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	10.3 Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on Plan commitments.	July 2022	Director Corporate and Customer Service
	10.4 Continue to encourage reconciliation agenda item on all team meetings to encourage and monitor uptake of Action Plan actions across Council.	May 2022	Senior Management Team
11. Build accountability and transparency through reporting Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	11.1 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important Reconciliation Action Plan correspondence.	June 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	11.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	11.3 Complete and submit the annual Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia and make available to all staff.	30 September 2022	RAP Working Group Chair
	11.4 Ensure endorsed Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is available to staff and community on our website and at Library.	July 2022	Communications Officer
12. Develop next Reconciliation Action Plan.	12.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to develop next Reconciliation Action Plan.	February 2023	RAP Working Group Chair



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(08) 8551 0500
localgov@victor.sa.gov.au

PO Box 11
Victor Harbor SA 5211

For more information, visit www.victor.sa.gov.au