



City of
STONNINGTON

OCTOBER 2025 – OCTOBER 2027

Reconciliation Action Plan



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE



The artwork for this document was created by Ky-ya Nicholson Ward, Wurundjeri, Dja Dja Wurrung, Ngurai illum Wurrung, German and Irish woman. She is based in Naarm (Melbourne). Ky-ya is a passionate First Nations artist who tells the stories of her ancestors, family and Country.

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Mayor and CEO's message

As a city, we are proud to take the next step in our reconciliation journey with the launch of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2025–27. This plan builds on the strong foundations laid by our previous RAPs and reflects the voices of our community, Traditional Owners, and First Peoples partners.

Our vision is for a united, equitable and culturally rich Stonnington, where history is acknowledged, culture is celebrated, and relationships are built on respect and trust. Through this plan, we will strengthen connections with Traditional Owners, create culturally safe places, embed truth-telling, and provide more opportunities for participation, learning and self-determination.

The themes of relationships, respect, opportunities and good governance underpin this RAP. These commitments align with our Council Plan, Community Vision 2040 and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, ensuring reconciliation remains at the heart of all we do.

I thank the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples for their guidance and partnership, and I acknowledge all community members, staff and stakeholders who have contributed to this important work. Together, we will continue to walk the path towards meaningful and lasting reconciliation.

Cr Melina Sehr

Mayor, City of Stonnington



In developing our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2025–27 we asked our community and our staff what a reconciled Australia looks like. Whilst the feedback was diverse, there was agreement that this would be an inclusive and harmonious country.

Consistent themes included an Australia where the wrongs of the past are recognised; First Peoples rich cultures, histories and contributions are recognised and celebrated; equity exists in all areas of life including health, housing, education, justice and employment; cultural safety exists and there are opportunities to learn from Australia's First Peoples. Most importantly, Traditional Owner Elders asked that we 'walk together' to achieve real change.

In our reconciliation journey, Council will continue to respectfully engage with and build relationships with First Peoples; acknowledge, celebrate, and raise awareness of First Peoples cultures and histories; ensure our services and places are culturally safe; include the voices and perspectives of First Peoples in the planning and delivery of our services, provide opportunities for truth telling; take pride in our heritage; support self-determination; and call out racism. This will be supported by continuing to build the knowledge and awareness of our workforce and elected representatives.

Dale Dickson PSM

Chief Executive Officer



Statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia

—
Reconciliation Australia commends City of Stonnington on the formal endorsement of its fourth 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 Stonnington 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 Stonnington will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to City of Stonnington 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 Stonnington 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 Stonnington will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

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

Congratulations City of Stonnington on your fourth Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

—
Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Wurundjeri Elders statement

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) is a Registered Aboriginal Party since 2008, as legislated under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. We are the Traditional Owners and knowledge holders of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural heritage, a heritage that is part of the oldest continuous living culture in the world.

We take our name from the Woi-wurrung word 'wurun' meaning the Manna Gum that is common along the Birrarung (Yarra River), and 'djeri' – the grub that is found in and around the tree. Our Country, which includes Melbourne CBD (Narrm) and surrounds, comprises an area of over 7,000 square kilometres and covers 29 local government areas.

We, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of Melbourne (Narrm) and most of its' surrounding country. Our land extends all the way from the north to the mountains of the Great Dividing Range, east to Mount Baw Baw, south to Mordialloc Creek and west to the Werribee River.

Wurundjeri would like to express our appreciation to the City of Stonnington for the opportunity to provide a statement for the council's new RAP.

Wurundjeri value the opportunity to walk together in unity with the City of Stonnington and the Stonnington community to deliver RAP outcomes that meaningfully support core reconciliation principles such as self-determination, representation, empowerment and cultural exchange. Wurundjeri believe that when we all come together and unite in the spirit of reconciliation, everybody in society benefits. We believe that by uplifting and empowering Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people in the community, we uplift and enhance the entire community.

Wurundjeri recognise that community-led actions in support of reconciliation are a powerful tool for bringing people together and increasing our mutual understanding, connection, and appreciation of each other. We believe that actions and activities in this vein are for the betterment of all of our

future generations, and have the potential to facilitate ongoing employment and educational opportunities for Wurundjeri and other Aboriginal people.

Wurundjeri recognise that well-implemented RAPs are essential vehicles for the maintenance and development of strong and long-lasting relationships between local councils, Traditional Owners, and the broader community, as they provide a centralised process for the progression and expansion of collaboration and engagement opportunities between us. RAPs are also an important driver of the improvement of cultural safety at local councils and represent a key gateway for improved connection and engagement across the various units and departments of council.

Wurundjeri value the opportunity to collaborate with council and community to deliver actions and activities that increase cultural respect, connection, and understanding and foster transparent and trusting relationships. We also acknowledge the value of RAPs in providing direction to councils on how they should engage appropriately with Traditional Owners like Wurundjeri, and their leading role in familiarising councils with Traditional Owners' strategic objectives

With the Victorian Treaty process now in progress, there has never been a better time for us to come together to design and deliver projects and outcomes that appropriately reflect the significance of this pivotal moment for the Victorian Aboriginal community.

We look forward to partnering with the City of Stonnington and the broader community on the implementation and delivery of the outcomes and activities embedded in this Plan.



Bunurong Elders statement

All of our Country is highly significant, every square inch, every rock, every leaf, every dune and every artefact. If we could attribute the cause of this blanket high significance rating of our Country to any one thing, it would be that in Melbourne especially, so much has been destroyed and lost as the city grew, and so quickly. If you lose enough of something, what little you have left becomes so much more important.

Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) represents the rights and obligations of Bunurong peoples. For our Ancestors and our community, we work together to care for the skies, landscapes and waterways of Bunurong Country and to preserve our places, cultural stories and practices for the generations to come.

As a Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), we also have statutory responsibilities to manage and protect the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural values of Bunurong Country.

Part of the City of Stonnington is located within BLCAC's RAP area and Bunurong peoples have lived here and cared for this Country for thousands of years and hundreds of generations. Today, this part of Bunurong Country may be small, but it is connected to the expansive cultural landscapes of Bunurong Country that continue to hold significance for Bunurong peoples today.

Archaeology tells us that Bunurong peoples have lived on Country for the last 35,000 years.

During this time, our Ancestors experienced many spectacular things. They walked across Country now underneath the waters of Naarm, right up to the Heads where a spectacular and misty waterfall fell into the deeper waters of Bass Strait. They shared shellfish meals on the sandy beaches and watched, over generations, as the saltwaters slowly rose to fill the bay. While crossing the open plains in eastern Bunurong Country, our Ancestors also tracked a meteorite as it arced through the sky and crashed into earth, exploding into a thousand smaller fragments.

Today, Bunurong peoples continue to care for Country, including the open expanses of Laak and deep waters of Warranh. We are obliged to care for the people, the plants and the animals, and the wider cultural landscape which is still alive with our stories.

Tread lightly as you walk on Bunurong Country; as you care for Country, Country will care for you.

Boonwurrung words used in this statement:

Laak – Sky Country

Naarm – Port Phillip Bay

Warranh – Sea Country



Introduction

Our Innovate RAP (2025–2027) will provide leadership for our organisation and community as we continue our reconciliation journey. We have listened to the ambitions of our community and the aspirations of Traditional Owners, internal stakeholders and the lessons of our experience.

We will walk together with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, continuing to advocate for a city in which connections are forged and maintained; cultural awareness is raised; history is respected, and contributions are honoured. This Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan is built on the achievements of our previous plans and will be delivered between September 2025 and September 2027.

Whilst our RAP provides the foundation for reconciliation, not all actions are reflected in this Plan. Our aim is to embed reconciliation in all that we do. Therefore, supporting actions will be incorporated in other relevant plans and strategies for example the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, land use, environment, and sustainability plans.



Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is a united, equitable community where First Peoples voices, experiences and ideas are heard and respected; and where there is deep understanding of the wrongs of the past and their impact.

In the context of City of Stonnington, this represents a healthy and cohesive community with equal opportunities to participate in community life and to access services and programs. Ours will be a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive city where Truth-telling strengthens relationships between First Peoples and all our other community members. As a workplace, the City of Stonnington is inclusive, culturally safe, diverse and vibrant.

Through our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, we will share a mutually beneficial pathway that will lead to a meaningful reconciliation journey with Australia's First Peoples and Traditional Owners. We endeavour to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation and its mutually beneficial outcomes for all people living in and associated with the City of Stonnington.



Statement of Commitment

—

The City of Stonnington acknowledges that the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations are the Traditional Owners of this land who have strived to retain their identity and cultures through more than two hundred years of dispossession and colonisation.

We recognise and accept our responsibility to learn from and promote the intrinsic value of Australia's First Peoples cultures, heritage and contemporary aspirations to the wider community; understanding that this enriches Australia's heritage and our community.

We acknowledge the right of Australia's First Peoples to live according to their own values and customs. We respect the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Peoples' special relationship to the land and recognise First Peoples sacred sites and significant places.

We extend that respect to all First Peoples, and we acknowledge their living connection to Country; relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.

Council recognises the valuable contributions to Victoria made by all the people of the East Kulin Nations and all First Peoples and will work together towards a future of mutual respect and harmony.

Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement

Verbal

Council's Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement is read at all Council meetings, Citizenship ceremonies, Mayoral and Civic receptions, and official occasions and is modified according to the location of the event i.e. Wurundjeri or Bunurong Country.

We acknowledge we are meeting on the Traditional Lands of the *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung* (or *Bunurong*) peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

We extend that respect to all First Peoples. We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.

Written

The Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement is also inserted at the front of Council plans, policies and strategies such as the Council Plan, Annual Report, Health and Wellbeing Plan etc., as follows:

We acknowledge we are situated on the Traditional Lands of the *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung* and *Bunurong* peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

We extend that respect to all First Peoples. We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.

Our Business

As a local government, the City of Stonnington has a broad sphere of influence both as an employer and as the provider of a diverse range of services.

The City of Stonnington owns and operates three primary sites (Stonnington City Centre, Malvern Town Hall and Tooronga Depot) and over forty community facilities including aquatic centres, childcare centres, community centres, kindergartens, libraries and maternal child health centres.

In November 2024, there were 1,086 employees within the organisation with one staff member identifying as a First People person.

The City of Stonnington operates under the *Local Government Act 2020* and legislation and regulations related to our functions including the *Road Management Act 2004*, *Climate Change Act 2010*, *Emergency Management Act 2013* and *Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*; and delivers a broad range of programs and services to support the health and wellbeing of everyone who lives, works or visits Stonnington including:

- » services supporting people of all ages, abilities, cultures; economic backgrounds and orientations
- » management and maintenance of community infrastructure including libraries, pools, parks, gardens, sporting facilities, roads, drains, street lighting, civic, arts and cultural spaces
- » general services such as waste collection, street cleaning and animal management
- » development and enforcement of local laws – building, planning, health and wellbeing
- » development and implementation of policies and strategies
- » economic development and place making activities
- » community festivals and events
- » land management including the preservation of natural features such as the Yarra River, parks, reserves and urban canopy.

Our vision is for Stonnington to be a modern, sustainable and interconnected community that supports the good health and wellbeing of all. Our community is a safe, accessible and creative city that celebrates and embraces all cultures including First Nations peoples past and present.

The Stonnington Community Vision 2040 articulates the community's aspirations for the future and recognises and pays respect to the influence of Australia's First Peoples. Together with the Draft Council Plan, the Vision guides Council's strategic directions:

- » Liveable City
- » Vibrant destination
- » Thriving community
- » Sustainable environment
- » Well-governed organisation

Council's Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2025–29) sets out how we will improve the health and wellbeing of our community over the next four years. It acknowledges that First Peoples experience systemic barriers to health and wellbeing, including the ongoing impacts of colonisation, racism, and intergenerational trauma. Strong cultural identity and connection to Country are key strengths. Supporting self-determination and partnering with Traditional Owners are essential to improving health outcomes and creating culturally safe spaces. The Draft Strategy focuses on three priority areas – Community Safety and all forms of violence; Social connection and inclusion; and Active and sustainable living.

Council Plan 2025–29

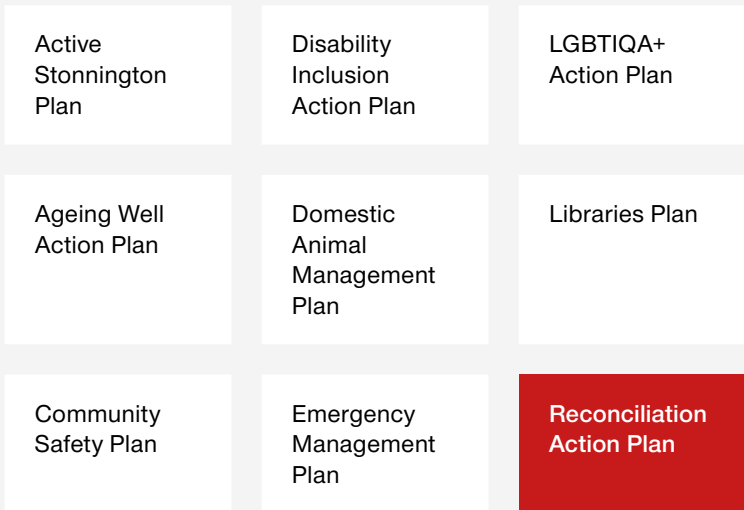
The Council Plan outlines five strategic directions that guide our work across the city. This strategy directly supports those directions, particularly Direction 3: Thriving Community.



STRATEGIES
(SET DIRECTION)

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

ACTION PLANS
(OUTLINE WHAT WE’LL DELIVER)





Our RAP

The City of Stonnington's Reconciliation Action Plan (the RAP) 2025–2027 provides a focus for our organisation and entire community. It advocates for a city in which connections are forged and maintained with First Peoples, cultural awareness is raised, histories are respected, and contributions are honoured.

In developing our RAP, we aim to walk together to strengthen relationships, enhance our services and build a stronger, more connected and respectful community.

The Stonnington RAP is championed by the CEO and Director of Community and Wellbeing.

Stonnington has supported the RAP development and implementation of the previous RAP through the RAP Advisory Committee, and an internal working group known as the Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG).

During the 2022–2024 term, the Stonnington RAP Advisory Committee (SRAC) was chaired by a Councillor. Staff representatives included the CEO, Director of Community and Wellbeing, Manager People and Culture, Manager of Aged, Diversity and Community Planning, Aboriginal Liaison Officer and Coordinator Community Planning. External members included representatives from Registered Aboriginal Parties, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation; and local group, Reconciliation Stonnington.

The Terms of Reference are focused on the provision of guidance and advocacy for the RAP objectives and implementation within Council, with community members, and relevant stakeholders such as the Victorian Government, neighbouring Councils, and peak bodies.

During 2022–24, the Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG) provided internal oversight for the implementation of RAP commitments. The AIRG is comprised of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer; Cultural Diversity Planner; Community and Health Planner; Middle Years Team Leader; Early Years Coordinator; Youth Services Team Leader; Coordinator Community Support; Social Support Team Leader; Visual Arts Officer, Coordinator Festivals and Events; Coordinator Customer Operations; Advocacy and Support; Talent Acquisition Advisor; Senior Sport and Active Spaces Planner; Transport Behaviour Change Officer; Coordinator Transport Planning; Manager City Growth; Public Health and Immunisation Coordinator; Coordinator Strategic Planning; Economic Development Advisor; Community Services Planner; Social Planner and Strategic Communications Advisor. There is one First Peoples staff member in the reference group, the Aboriginal Liaison Officer.

Issues raised at the internal working group that require advice or endorsement by Traditional Custodians are presented to the RAP Advisory Committee for consideration. Recommendations from the RAP Advisory Committee (2022–2024) were shared with staff through the Access and Inclusion Reference Group.





Our RAP Journey

In March 2024, Council commenced community engagement to inform the development of the RAP 2025–27.

The project was promoted via Council's Connect Stonnington community engagement website in March 2024 posing questions to gauge the community's awareness of Stonnington's Traditional Custodians, existence of Council's RAP and activities designed to raise awareness and celebrate First Peoples cultures. Community views were sought about how Council could advance reconciliation.

In person consultation commenced at 'Pets in the Park' a community event at Central Park where attendees were informed that Council was embarking on the development of a new RAP; and invited to share their ideas to advance reconciliation.

Consultation was also undertaken with Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, RAP Advisory Committee, Reconciliation Stonnington and Alfred Health.

Internally, consultation was undertaken with Community Services; Events Arts and Culture; Aged, Diversity and Community Planning; Parks and Open Space; Environment; City Strategy, City Futures; Customer and Transformation; and Economic and Place Development, and members of the internal working group.

Feedback gathered from the community engagement informed the development of the draft RAP; and review by Reconciliation Australia has further refined and enhanced the RAP 2025–27.

Our RAP 2022–2024 Achievements

This Reconciliation Action Plan is built on the achievements of the RAP 2022–24, Council's fourth RAP, as summarised below:

- » Developed and endorsed the Place Naming Policy incorporating principles for the recognition and use of Traditional Owner language and dual names.
- » Launched the Reconciliation Protocol including guidelines relating to:
 - When and how to use Council's Acknowledgement of Country statement
 - The cultural significance and importance of Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies
 - Traditional Owner boundaries and how to contact Traditional Owners to organise ceremonies and gain cultural advice
 - A Reconciliation calendar outlining key dates on the First Peoples calendar and their importance
 - Information relating to Men's and Women's business which provides readers with a broader perspective into First Peoples cultures
 - Terminology relating to First Peoples cultures; allows staff members to gain more confidence and understanding in the First Peoples space strengthening their levels of cultural awareness.
- » Delivered a presentation on 'Closing the Gap' to staff in March 2024 which helped those in attendance to understand inequities still being faced today by First Peoples.
- » Displayed Acknowledgement of Country posters in staff areas of Council buildings.
- » Finalised, redesigned and relaunched the *Stonnington Indigenous History teacher and student curriculum materials* at the NAIDOC Week Flag Raising ceremony in July 2023. The curriculum resources for schools, suitable for grades 3–10, were updated by First Nations Curriculum writer Thara Brown in consultation with Traditional Owners to help teachers, students, and families learn about the area's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and stories.

- » Included an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners in all Council community facing policies and plans, including the Council Plan, Annual Report and Planning Scheme Review.
- » Engaged First Nations consultant, Kat Rodwell from Balert Mura Consultancy, to undertake four co-design workshops with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Traditional Owners regarding aspirations for Chapel Street to inform the Chapel Street Transformation project.
- » Renamed children's rooms at Princes Close Childcare Centre with Woi-wurrung words in consultation with Wurundjeri Elder, Aunty Diane Kerr and held a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony to celebrate the occasion.
- » Incorporated Welcome to Country Ceremonies in community events including Sunset Sounds concerts, citizenship ceremonies, Volunteer Awards, National Reconciliation Week, Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week, Healing Ceremony, and staff events including IDAHOBIT Day (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia).
- » Distributed special edition of *Just CoS* (internal newsletter) in recognition of National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week 2023.
- » Installed a third flagpole at Malvern Town Hall to enable the Torres Strait Islander flag to be flown year-round with the Aboriginal and Australian flags.
- » Established a fortnightly First Peoples Yarning Circle to provide an informal network for First Peoples staff (three employees during the term of the RAP 2022–24).
- » Provided advice and information to local schools, businesses, not for profits, service groups and residents regarding Traditional Owner boundaries, appropriate delivery of an Acknowledgement of Country, and other resources.
- » Reviewed cultural awareness training packages ahead of roll out in financial year 2024.
- » Developed draft First Nations Anti-discrimination guideline for delivery in 2024.
- » Held events in recognition of NAIDOC Week including Flag Raising ceremonies, children's events at Prahran Square and Malvern Gardens, Youth Services Wayapa workshop, Heritage walks and staff First Peoples Quiz and performance.
- » Held a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony with the Bunurong to launch the Chapel Street Transformation Project in Windsor.
- » Conducted three RAP Advisory Committee meetings a year to engage with and seek the guidance of Traditional Owners; and five Access and Inclusion Reference Group meetings to provide oversight of the implementation of the RAP.
- » Conducted Healing Ceremony at Malvern Cricket Ground on 26 January 2023 and 2024 incorporating Traditional Owner Welcome to Country, Smoking Ceremony, First Peoples dance, musical performances and BBQ lunch.
- » Acknowledged National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week 2023 with song and storytelling by Kutcha Edwards, member of the Stolen Generations, attended by community and staff.
- » Engaged local Elders to deliver dot painting and damper making workshops at The Hub and Mount Street activation.
- » Became a signatory to the '*Racism, it stops with me*' campaign.
- » Engaged Elders, First People performers, caterers, designers and consultants for a variety of projects, events and activities.
- » Displayed Council's First Peoples Contemporary Art Collection at Council facilities including the newly opened *Study@Greville* library and endorsed the Arts Acquisition Policy to include updated criteria with a preference for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong artists.
- » Delivered a First Peoples mural by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung artist Simone Thomson as part of the upgrade of Sir Zelman Cowan Reserve helping to increase cultural awareness and education for young people who use the playground facilities on site.

Actions not fully achieved during implementation of the RAP 2022–24 include:

- » Implementing a cultural learning strategy for the organisation. Delivery of a cultural learning strategy during the term of the RAP (2022–24) was delayed due to staff and financial constraints. However, a cultural awareness program is currently in development for delivery in 2025.
- » Attending an external NAIDOC Week event as a representative group of the RAP Advisory Committee. This action was not achieved during the 2022–2024 period, but opportunities have been identified for pursual in 2025.
- » Undertaking a review of *An Indigenous History of Stonnington – A report to the City of Stonnington (2006) by Dr Ian Clark and Laura Kostanski*. Funds to support review of the document was a barrier to achieving this deliverable. Given the cost barrier, alternative ways to document and showcase First Peoples histories will be explored during the term of the RAP 2025–27.
- » Increasing the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workplace. Despite liaising with First Peoples and mainstream recruitment agencies, employment levels did not increase during 2022–24. Council will continue to explore opportunities and strategies to increase First Peoples employment.
- » Undertaking a cultural safety survey to identify barriers to a safe and culturally appropriate workplace. Internal resourcing and personnel changes delayed the cultural safety survey. This action will be progressed during 2025–27.
- » Developing and communicating opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses focused on hospitality, entertainment, artistic and cultural businesses. Broader opportunities will be explored during 2025–2027.
- » Registering our intention to commence the development of our next RAP six months prior to the Plan expiring was an oversight.

Some actions included in Council's previous RAPs are embedded in our practices and have become business as usual. These include:

- » Booking Welcome to Country Ceremonies for community events including Citizenship ceremonies, community, and First Peoples events.
- » Reading the Acknowledgement of Country Statement at the start of all Council meetings, Citizenship ceremonies, Mayoral and Civic receptions, openings of buildings and all official occasions.
- » Reading the Acknowledgement of Country Statement at the start of staff meetings, internal events and meetings facilitated by Council officers and attended by external parties.
- » Incorporating the Acknowledgement of Country Statement in corporate documents such as the Council Plan, Annual Report, public policies, reports and action plans; and in print and electronic publications such as Stonnington News and electronic newsletters.
- » Appending the Acknowledgement of Country Statement to all emails to external addresses.
- » Using the Children's Acknowledgement of Country at Stonnington childcare centres, story time at the libraries and children's events.
- » Displaying Acknowledgement of Country signage and First Peoples artwork at Council owned facilities.
- » Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags year-round at the Malvern Town Hall forecourt.
- » Acknowledging significant dates such as the Anniversary of the Stolen Generations, Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week, and NAIDOC Week by replacing the Stonnington flag with the Aboriginal Flag on the northern tower of the Malvern Town Hall.
- » Delivering community and staff events to acknowledge National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

- » Hosting an annual Healing Ceremony on 26 January to provide our community and staff the opportunity to learn more about First Peoples cultures, histories and what the day means to Australia's First Peoples.
 - » Providing staff the option to work on 26 January and take another day off in lieu.
 - » Conducting an annual 'Welcome to Country for Bubup' children's event during NAIDOC Week.
 - » Raising awareness of cultural protocols supported by the Reconciliation Protocol.
 - » Establishing Yarning Circle for First Peoples staff.
 - » Providing one day paid Cultural and Ceremonial leave for First People staff.
 - » Acquiring, commissioning, or exhibiting First Peoples artwork and programming as part of Council's annual Visual Arts program.
 - » Reporting RAP achievements quarterly to Council and annually to the community via Council's Annual Report.
- To avoid duplication, some recurrent actions have not been repeated in the actions below.





Relationships

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The City of Stonnington recognises we can do more to build greater respectful connections with First Peoples within our community including community members, Traditional Owners, community-controlled organisations, and local agencies. This will create opportunities for mutually beneficial relationships, strength, growth, and opportunity for all. We will strengthen these relationships through providing access and participation to council services, programs, events, and Council decision-making.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Focus area: An inclusive and healthy community			
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	» Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	September 2025	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Review and implement current engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.		
	» Investigate establishing MOUs with Traditional Owners to formalise and enhance opportunities for engagement on Council policies, strategies and action plans (for example Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, Open Space, Sustainability, etc.) and events.		
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	» Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2026 & 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» RAP Working Group (RWG) members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2026 and 2027	
	» Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.		
	» Organise at least one NRW event each year.		
	» Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website: reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week	May 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer





Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Focus area: An inclusive and healthy community			
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	» Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	September 2025	Manager People and Culture
	» Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.		Manager Customer Operations and Communications
	» Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.		Manager Customer Operations and Communications Manager Connected Communities
	» Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	August 2026	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Incorporate an introduction to the RAP and Council's Reconciliation Protocols as part of Council's in-person Staff Induction Program.	June 2026	Manager People and Culture Aboriginal Liaison Officer
	» Liaise with Traditional Owners annually to plan events of significance for First Peoples.	July 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Monitor developments in the Victorian Yoorook Justice Commission and Victorian Treaty process.	June 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Review and update Council's reconciliation website to include links to other levels of government and organisations such as Reconciliation Australia, Reconciliation Victoria and the Yoorook Justice Commission; and maintain Council's content on the Maggolee website.	May 2026	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Manager Customer Operations and Communications
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	» Conduct a review of the Anti-discrimination and Recruitment policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	June 2026	Manager People and Culture
	» Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	June 2026	
	» Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	March 2026	
	» Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	July 2027	



Respect

Council believes that respecting the histories, cultures, land, environment, and all people who make up our community will lead to greater empowerment, equity and participation in achieving our vision for reconciliation. Through respect we will build trust and awareness and augment our ability as a community to understand our shared histories. Through a committed approach to building knowledge and understanding we will address inequality and remove barriers for First Peoples to participate in Council services. Our actions through the RAP aim to demonstrate respect without cleansing histories, by amplifying Truth-telling and supporting self-determination of First Peoples.





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Focus area: An inclusive and healthy community			
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	» Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2027	Manager People and Culture
	» Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	December 2026	
	» Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	March 2027	
	» Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	June 2027	
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	» Increase staff’s understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	May 2026	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Review and update Council’s Reconciliation Protocol (2024).	October 2025	
	» Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	July 2026 and July 2027	Executive Manager Governance and Public Affairs Manager Creative Communities
	» Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Sept 2025– Sept 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	» AIRG to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	July 2026	Manager, People and Culture





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Focus area: An inclusive and healthy community			
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. (continued)	» Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Promote Council’s NAIDOC Event and raise community and staff awareness of the history and significance of the week using website news, social media and electronic newsletters.	July 2026 and 2027	Manager Customer Operations and Communications Aboriginal Liaison Officer
7A. Raise awareness and increase visibility of First Peoples histories, arts and cultures within the City of Stonnington.	» Identify opportunities to include First Peoples imagery in current and new Council-owned developments.	May 2026 and 2027	Manager Creative Communities Manager City Projects
	» Explore opportunities to showcase the achievements, talents and stories of local First Peoples and histories and cultures through signage, events and publications (e.g. feature articles in Stonnington News, cultural walks, performances, art workshops etc.)	July 2026 and 2027	Manager Customer Operations and Communications Manager Creative Communities
	» Explore opportunities to increase engagement of First Peoples artists/artistic directors for major events and festivals.	July 2027	Manager Creative Communities Coordinator Festivals and Events
	» Engage with Traditional Owners on the development of the Open Space Strategy and explore opportunities to communicate the significance of historical places, names, uses and cultural sites.	September 2026	Manager City Growth Manager City Projects
	» Apply Council’s Naming Policy, and process for engaging with Traditional Owners, in the naming (or dual naming) of Council managed assets including roads, features and localities.	July 2026 and 2027	Director Environment and Infrastructure Director Community and Wellbeing



Opportunities

At Stonnington we are working to create opportunities with First Peoples to increase equality and equity in education, economic activities, employment and services linked to our organisation. We are actively building and adapting our internal systems and processes so that cultural safety, increased access and inclusion are also achieved. We respect the rights of First Peoples to self-determination, resulting in the best possible outcomes for individual, family and community life.





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Focus area: A thriving and unique place			
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	» Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2027	Manager People and Culture
	» Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 2026	
	» Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2026	
	» Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	January 2026 to July 2027	
	» Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 2026	
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	» Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	June 2026	Chief Financial Officer
	» Investigate Supply Nation membership.	March 2026	
	» Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	July 2026	
	» Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers.	July 2026	
	» Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2026	
	» Provide opportunities for First People start-ups to access business mentoring services and extend invitations to attend events such as our Start Up Networking events, the careers expo and the Small Business Expo.	August 2026	Manager City Business



Governance

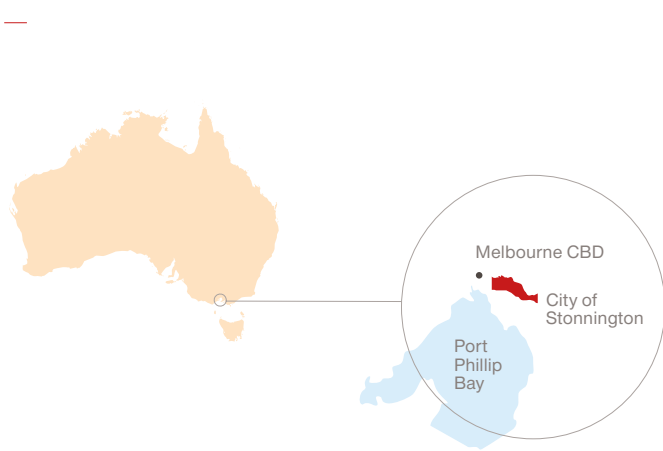
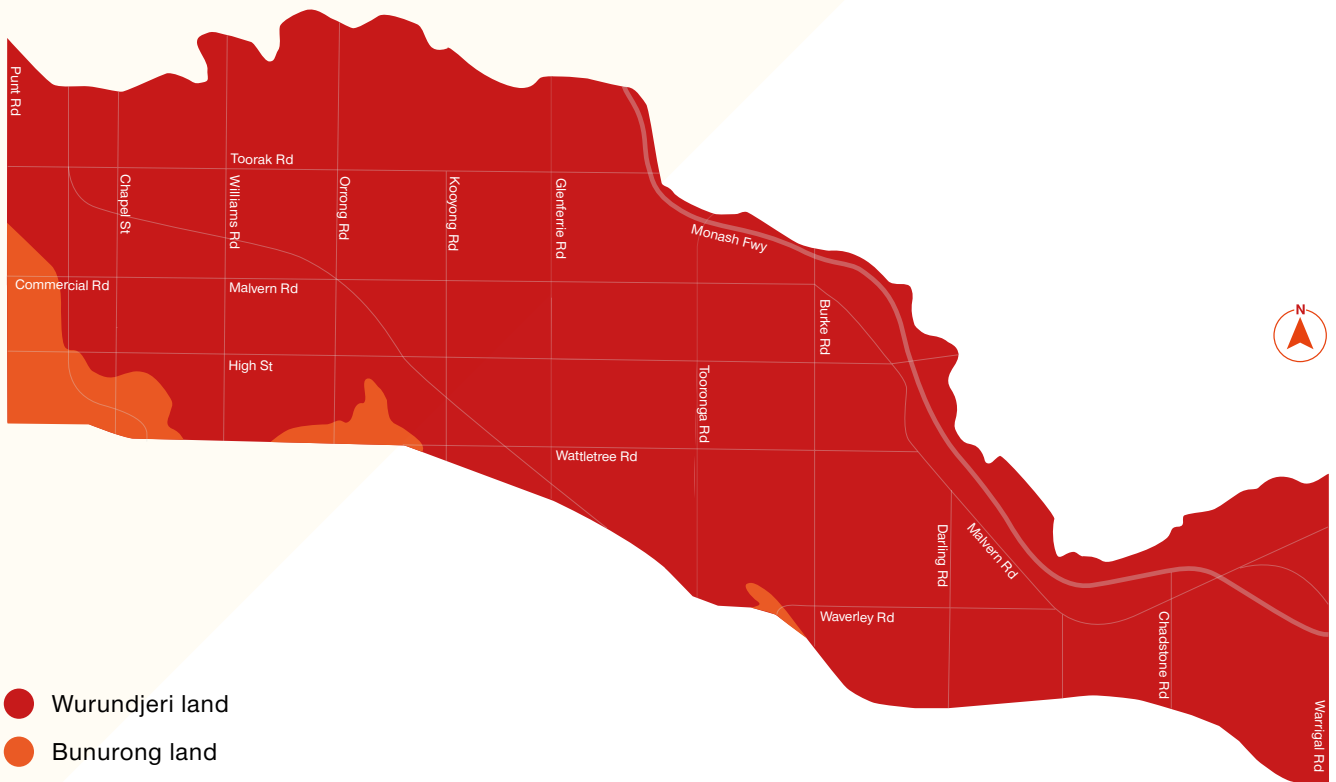
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	» Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Nov 2025 Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2026 Feb, May and Aug 2027	Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development Aboriginal Liaison Officer
	» Review and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG*.	October 2025	Manager Connected Communities
	» Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Nov 2025 Feb, May, Aug and Nov 2026 Feb, May and Aug 2027	Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	» Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	May 2026	
	» Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September 2025	
	» Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	September 2025	Chief Executive Officer Director Community and Wellbeing

* The term 'RAP Working Group' (RWG) refers to the governance structure established to oversee implementation of the RAP as outlined in the Reconciliation Australia Innovate RAP template used above.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	» 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 RAP correspondence.	June 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer
	» Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	August 2026	
	» Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September annually	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	July 2026 and 2027	Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	August 2026 and 2027	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	February 2026	Manager People and Culture
	» Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	September 2027	Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	» Review RAP framework models to inform format post 2027.	December 2026	Manager Connected Communities Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development
	» Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP: rap.reconciliation.org.au/s/registration	December 2026	Aboriginal Liaison Officer Coordinator Social Policy and Community Development

Traditional Owner Boundaries



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Acknowledgements

Pages 6 & 18:

Smoking Ceremony
Healing Ceremony 2025,
Image: Joe Vittorio

Page 7:

Kiernan Ironfield, Yidaki player,
Healing Ceremony 2025,
Image: Joe Vittorio

Page 19:

John Wayne Parsons and his Band,
Healing Ceremony 2025,
Image: Joe Vittorio

Page 21:

Aunty Diana 'Titta' Secombe,
Boomerang Painting Workshop,
Horace Petty Estate, 2025
Image: Edward Valent

Artwork Acknowledgements

Inside front cover:

Where We Walk, Kent Morris, 2025
South Yarra Siding Reserve

Page 12:

The Rain Callers, Uncle Leslie Stanley, 2025
T.H King Oval, Glen Iris
Image: James Henry

Page 17:

Murrup Bilk (Spirit Country),
Aunty Kim Wandin and Chris Joy, 2025
South Yarra Siding

Page 18–27:

Untitled, Simone Thomson, 2024
Sir Zelman Cowen Park, Kooyong
Image: Timothy Burgess

RAP Artwork:

(see opening page for artist information)



City of
STONNINGTON