

Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan 2020-2023

- Walk together with courage and purpose-

About the plan

The Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan 2020-2023 provides Council with a framework to bring together our reconciliation initiatives, to reflect the various processes Council participates in with its partners, and also to include our responsibilities under the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation's Recognition and Settlement Agreement (Schedule 6).

It captures the reconciliation initiatives we are delivering as well as the aspirational goals of what we would like to deliver, both internally as an organisation and externally with our partners and for our community.

Our vision for this plan is to '*Walk together with courage and purpose*'. This vision has taken shape over time through reflection and discussion with our local Elders. It is a statement that we collectively believe captures the spirit in which we work- In partnership, facing the challenges unique to our own perspective, but always driven by a shared goal.

The Mount Alexander Shire Council Reconciliation Plan is structured around three core themes:

- **Partnership**
- **Recognition**
- **Empowerment**

Underneath these three themes are ten key objectives and thirty-five actions to address them.

Some of the actions included in this plan are initiatives we already have in place. These have been included to ensure we maintain our commitment to delivering them.

For each action, the plan states the Council business unit responsible for delivery and what the implementation status is.

Implementation status refers to whether an action is already being implemented, yet to be implemented and its priority level for implementation (high, medium or low). This prioritisation level is not reflective of importance, rather the proposed order in which actions should be delivered.

The actions that align with a responsibility under the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation's Recognition and Settlement Agreement (Schedule 6) also include the reference to the responsibility, where applicable.

Our Partners

When we talk about our partners in this plan, we are referring to those that we are working with in our reconciliation journey. They are organisations that are referenced in our plan, and we have actions in our plan that relate to them.

There are three main partner organisations referenced throughout the plan. Outlined below is a description of these three organisations and our relationship with them;

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC)

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation is the registered legal entity that represents Dja Dja Wurrung people. DDWCAC was incorporated on 10 September 2004 and was granted RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) status in September 2008 over a large area of Central Victoria that encompasses the Mount Alexander Shire.

In 2013 DDWCAC entered into a historic Native Title settlement with the State of Victoria called a '*Recognition and Settlement Agreement*' which secured a range of rights for Dja Dja Wurrung people, some of which are the responsibility of Local Government to uphold.

Council is responsible for delivering eleven actions under the *Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement 2013, Schedule 6 - Actions for local Government*. These actions have been embedded into actions of this plan. A table has been provided to outline how these actions have been incorporated into our plan (*Appendix 1 - Table of Dja Dja Wurrung Recognition and Settlement Agreement actions*).

We work collaboratively with DDWCAC as the Registered Aboriginal Party covering most of Mount Alexander Shire on cultural heritage, and as the Traditional Owner Group Entity on matters of land management, use of traditional language, enterprise opportunities, the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, cultural protocol and Dja Dja Wurrung rights.

In April 2019, we commenced discussions with DDWCAC to explore the potential for a local level Treaty to be developed as part of their '*Balaki Wurrekang (Mob talking to Mob) Treaty Engagement*' project. The guiding principle of these discussions being an '*Opportunity to enter into a mutual agreement on equal footing*'.

Nalderun Aboriginal Services (Nalderun)

'Nalderun' is a Dja Dja Wurrung word meaning 'all together'.

Nalderun is an Aboriginal-led collective that operates holistic education, health and cultural services for our First Nations people in Mount Alexander Shire.

The work undertaken by Nalderun is Aboriginal designed and led, centred on Aboriginal children and young people, the Aboriginal community and the broader community.

Nalderun is led by an Executive Team made up of local Aboriginal Elders and an Aboriginal Coordinator, including our senior Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson. The Nalderun committee is made up of volunteers and partner organisations, including Mount Alexander Shire Council (*Appendix 2 - Nalderun Upper Loddon Committee Terms of Reference*).

We have enjoyed a meaningful, productive and reciprocal relationship with Nalderun for over 10 years, and prior to the formation of Nalderun, informally with Nalderun members since 2000. Nalderun is both the representative body for our local Elders and also the primary Aboriginal service provider in Mount Alexander. This means we heavily consult with Nalderun on council related matters, and also advocate for and support the vital work that Nalderun does in our Shire. Nalderun Executive and Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson is also the Co-chair of the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable (*Appendix- Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable Terms of Reference*).

Under an arrangement with DDWCAC, we are encouraged to consult directly with our local Dja Dja Wurrung Elders and families through continued engagement with Nalderun on local matters that relate specifically to Mount Alexander Shire.

Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLAWC)

Taungurung Land and Waters Council is the registered legal entity that represents Taungurung people.

Previously known as Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, TLAWC was incorporated in 2003 and was granted RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) status in July 2009. The Taungurung RAP area covers a large section of north central Victoria to the east of the Mount Alexander Shire, including a small portion that overlaps with our shire boundary, encompassing the small township of Barfold.

In October 2018, TLAWC entered into a Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the state which has now been formalised.

In June of 2019, we participated in the TLAWC 'Permanent Council's Forum'. The forum aimed to start the conversations with the Local Governments under the TLAWC RAP area and further develop partnerships.

In addition to these members*, we also work in partnership with a range of other stakeholder organisations through their membership on the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable. These include:

- ♦ Department of Education & Training
- ♦ ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Recognition)
- ♦ Castlemaine Secondary College
- ♦ Castlemaine Health

- ♦ Castlemaine District Community Health
- ♦ Castlemaine Police

- ♦ Castlemaine Community House

*Taungurung Land and Waters Council have also been extended an invitation to join the core membership of the Indigenous Roundtable (*Appendix 3 - Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable Terms of Reference*).

Undesigned version

Vision: Walk together with courage and purpose.

Theme 1: Partnership

Aim: Develop and maintain strong partnerships that foster a collaborative approach to reconciliation

Objectives

- Demonstrate our commitment
- Invest in our partnerships
- Be a strong and unified partner

	Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation
1.1	Demonstrate our commitment Ensure effective mechanisms and supports are in place to enable success	1.1.1 Indigenous Roundtable Host the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work collaboratively with our partners and other relevant stakeholders to address the needs of the local First Nations community. - Progress Council initiatives that recognise and celebrate first Nations people, culture and history within the Mount Alexander Shire. 	Chief Executive Officer	Ongoing
		1.1.2 Local Government Reconciliation Network Co-coordinate the delivery of Central Victorian Local Government Reconciliation Network to inform the delivery of best practice activities that support reconciliation.	Community Partnerships	Ongoing
		1.2.3 Governance and reporting structure Develop a framework for the Reconciliation Plan that provides a structure for implementation, reporting, monitor and review of the plan.	Community Partnerships	High priority
1.2	Invest in our partnerships	1.2.1 Nalderun Aboriginal Services - Maintain representation on the Nalderun Upper Loddon Committee	Community Partnerships	Ongoing

	Work with our partners in a way that is flexible and responsive to their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to provide Nalderun a position on the Mount Alexander Shire Indigenous Roundtable as a core member. - Continue to consult with Nalderun on Council related business. - Continue to advocate for and support the programs of Nalderun Aboriginal Services. 		
		<p>1.2.2 Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to meet our responsibilities under the DDWCAC Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2013) in relation to initiatives and works undertaken within DDWCAC's prescribed Recognition and Settlement Agreement area. - Continue to explore the development of a localised Treaty between Council and DDWCAC. 	Chief Executive Officer	Implemented Ongoing
		<p>1.2.3 Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLAWC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake activities as outlined under the TLAWC Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2018) in relation to initiatives and works undertaken within TLAWC's prescribed Recognition and Settlement Agreement area. - Participate in TLAWC Permanent Councils Forum. 	Chief Executive Officer	Implemented Ongoing
1.3	<p>Be a strong and unified partner</p> <p>Inform, educate and build the cultural competency of the whole organisation.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Consultation process</p> <p>Develop a formal process for consultation with our local Aboriginal community, Senior Traditional Custodians, Nalderun Upper Loddon Committee, DDWCAC and TLAWC for consultation on Council related business, including our responsibilities under the DDWCAC and TLAWC Recognition and Settlement Agreements.</p>	Community Partnerships	Medium priority
		<p>1.3.2 Acknowledgement of Country</p> <p>Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol resource for Welcomes to Country and Acknowledgements of Country (RSA – G)</p>	Community Partnerships	High priority
		<p>1.3.3 Cultural awareness training</p> <p>Develop and deliver an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy for all Council staff and Councillors.</p>	People and Culture	Medium priority

Theme 2: Recognition

Aim: Acknowledge our history and celebrate our local Indigenous culture, past and present.

Objectives

- Acknowledge our history and enable truth telling
- Celebrate culture
- Protect our history
- Value and utilise knowledge

	Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation
2.1	Acknowledge our history and enable truth telling Explore our shared history and its lasting impacts to further healing, justice and reconciliation.	2.1.1 National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day In partnership with Nalderun Aboriginal Services continue to deliver the Mount Alexander Shire National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day program.	Community Partnerships	Ongoing
		2.1.1 Survival Day Partner with Nalderun Aboriginal Services to shape the inclusion of Survival Day in Councils dual named Australia Day – Survival Day event each year.	Communications and Customer Services	Ongoing
2.2	Celebrate culture Recognise our Traditional Custodians, celebrate their culture and ensure our stories of place are captured. (RSA- I & J)	2.2.1 Signage Continue to support the development of Shire entry signage and explore opportunities for funding to implement this initiative.	Community Partnerships	High priority
		2.2.2 Aboriginal flags Explore opportunities to increase the number of Aboriginal flags on permanent display in the Mount Alexander Shire (RSA- F)	Community Partnerships	Medium priority
		2.2.3 Indigenous Mud Map	Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	Medium priority

		Support the development and installation of a local Indigenous mud map for Victory Park.		
		2.2.4 Indigenous History Booklet Support the development and publication of a local Indigenous History booklet.	Economy and Culture	Medium priority
		2.2.5 Welcome to Country Installation Continue to work in partnership with local Traditional Owners and the Sharing Stories foundation to scope, secure funding and install a Welcome To Country installation in the Market Building.	Economy and Culture	Medium priority
2.3	Protect our history Protect and preserve Country and culture for our future generations.	2.3.1 Land Management Comply with legislation and agreements in relation to public and private land management including the Land Use Activity Agreement and the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (RSA- A)</i> .	Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	Ongoing
		2.3.2 Strategic Planning Encourage the use of the strategic planning tools and methods to recognise and protect places of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage (<i>RSA- K</i>)	Development Services	Ongoing
		2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Support the ongoing management and protection of cultural heritage sites, and undertake Cultural Heritage Management Plans as required with the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party (<i>RSA- B</i>).	Infrastructure	Ongoing
		2.3.4 Traditional Language Place Naming Explore opportunities to advocate for the naming new sites, and dual naming significant sites within the Mount Alexander Shire to include traditional language place names (<i>RSA- H</i>)	People and Culture	Medium priority
2.4	Value and utilise knowledge	2.4.1 Utilise Cultural Knowledge	Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	Medium priority

	Be guided by cultural knowledge, and recognise its worth.	- Engage with DDWCAC in relation to the management of Council managed parks and reserves and explore opportunities to align with the goals identified in <i>Dhelkunya Dja</i> - the DDWCAC Country Plan. - Engage the DDWCAC to perform natural resources management where appropriate (<i>RSA- C & E</i>)		
	2.4.2 Indigenous Burning Explore opportunities for Indigenous burning practices to be incorporated into our Fire Prevention strategies.		Community Partnerships	Medium priority
	2.4.3 Remuneration Develop guidelines for appropriate compensation for consultation and cultural knowledge acquisition.		Community Partnerships	High priority

Theme 3: Empowerment				
Aim: Build an inclusive and empowered community where our First Nations people thrive.				
Objectives				
- Support self determination - Enhance and increase opportunities - Engage the community in reconciliation				
	Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation
3.1	Support self determination Using inclusive practise, support our First Nations people to freely determine their own economic, social and cultural development.	3.1.1 Employment Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace.	People and Culture	High priority
		3.1.2 Procurement Explore a Procurement Policy that recognises the importance of increasing the economic growth of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Corporate Services	Medium priority

		businesses and commits to ensuring it is an integral part of Council's procurement process (<i>RSA- E</i>).		
		<p>3.1.3 Strategic Planning Develop protocols between Council and our partners that encourage and enable early engagement, and the possible co-design of place-based planning approaches.</p>	Development Services	Medium priority
3.2	<p>Enhance opportunities</p> <p>Enhance opportunities for First Nations children and their families.</p>	<p>3.2.1 The Meeting Place In consultation with Nalderun Aboriginal Services implement initiatives to support The Meeting Place program, including an annual financial contribution subject to annual budget processes.</p>	Community Partnerships	Implemented Ongoing
		<p>3.2.2 Koorie Bus Service Provide in-kind the Koorie Bus service to support engagement in education and attendance at school.</p>	Community Partnerships	Implemented Ongoing
		<p>3.2.3 Maternal and Child Health In partnership with the Department of Education and Training review the cultural safety of the Maternal and Child Health service, and implement recommendations of the review.</p>	Community Partnerships	Medium priority
3.3	<p>Enhance and increase opportunities</p> <p>Enhance and increase opportunities for First Nations people to help guide, and participate in the Arts and Cultural Development program.</p>	<p>3.3.1 First People's First Continue to align strategic planning for the Cultural Development program with the Victorian Government's <i>Creative State</i> principle of 'First Peoples First'.</p>	Economy and Culture	Implemented Ongoing
		<p>3.3.2 Community Vision Work with our First Nations community members to ensure our Cultural Development program directions are influenced by community vision and need.</p>	Economy and Culture	Medium priority

		<p>3.3.3 Opportunities Provide a range of opportunities and platforms for First Nations culture to be recognised and celebrated.</p>	Economy and Culture	High priority
3.4	<p>Engage the community in reconciliation</p> <p>Lead an inclusive and culturally safe community with a shared vision for reconciliation.</p> <p>(RSA- J)</p>	<p>3.4.1 Build Community Capacity Provide and promote opportunities for the wider community to deepen their understanding of local Aboriginal culture and to help to build the communities capacity to address reconciliation.</p>	Community Partnerships	Medium priority
		<p>3.4.2 Showcase our work Explore opportunities to showcase and celebrate our reconciliation journey and share our stories with the broader community.</p>	Community Partnerships	Low priority
		<p>3.4.3 Resource the Community Increase the number of resources available in the Indigenous collection housed in the Castlemaine library with a priority on localised content, and increase awareness of the collection within the community.</p>	Goldfields Library Corporation	Medium priority