



CITY OF
PORT PHILLIP

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

The Australian Local Government National General Assembly of 1996 resolved to encourage Local governments to adopt a statement of commitment to indigenous Australians.

The City of Port Phillip has implemented this resolution as a measure of its commitment to reconciliation and respect for its indigenous community. The following statement was endorsed by the City of Port Phillip on 27 August 1997.

"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 people.

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, subject to law 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."



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KOORIE PROTOCOL FOR CIVIC FUNCTIONS/EVENTS.

The following statement was a resolution made by the National General Assembly of Local Government, December 1996. The resolution was to include the statement at the commencement of all official Local government civic functions.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation strongly encourages this resolution as an initiative to forward reconciliation in its letter dated 11th December 1996 forwarded to all Local governments.

The protocol was endorsed by Council on 27 August 1997 and was implemented as a measure of Council's commitment to reconciliation and respect for its indigenous community.

The statement is made by the Mayor or Councillor at the commencement of Council civic functions, and reads:

"In the spirit of reconciliation we acknowledge that we are meeting on the country for which the Boonerwung language people and Wurundjeri people and their forbears have been custodians for many centuries and on which Indigenous Australians have performed age old ceremonies."

PART TWO

1. CONTEXT REPORT

CITY OF PORT PHILLIP SERVICE PROVISION.

This information is included to clarify and describe the services Council provides. It also identifies the services targeted by Council's strategies through the Action Plan.

Services Division

- **Environmental services**, eg. waste management, street & beach cleaning
- **Engineering services**, eg. road construction and maintenance, foreshore development and maintenance, capital works
- **Community services**, eg. information, support & referral for crisis needs; aged & disability services including meals provision, home care, access to senior citizens centres; respite care and supported activity programs; child care; maternal & child health; family support; foster care; support for children with disabilities and their carers; youth services coordination; Community Grants; etc.
- **Culture and Recreation**, eg. school holiday programs; Koorie Arts Unit; libraries; festivals and events; information on sporting clubs; access to community centres, programs and Town Halls; and the Cultural Development Fund.

City Development Division

- **Strategic Planning**, includes land use and transport planning and management of housing strategies
- **Building and Statutory Planning**, eg. considers planning and building permit applications.
- **Urban Design and Architecture**
- **Neighbourhood Amenity** including an enforcement and management role for parking, local laws and public health, eg. immunisation and food safety.

Corporate Division

- **Information Management**, eg. information technology, etc.
- **Property and Regulatory**, includes building maintenance of Council properties, valuations, statutory functions, eg. Council meetings, management of Council reports, etc.
- **Quality processes**
- **Records Management**

Organisational Development

- **Human Resources**, eg. staff employment and relations.
- **ASSIST Centre**, includes provision of general advice and information, responds to inquiries from the community and provides reception services at the three Town Halls.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF PORT PHILLIP

City Port Phillip population: 73,092

Source: 1996 ABS Census

The City of Port Phillip includes the following suburbs:
St.Kilda; East St. Kilda; West St. Kilda; Balaclava;
Elwood; part of Ripponlea; South Melbourne; Middle
Park; Albert Park; Port Melbourne; Garden City.

(see attached map).

Citizens of the City of Port Phillip are represented by seven Councillors who are each democratically elected for three year terms. The next Council election is scheduled for March 1999.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY PROFILE

Total identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is:	236
South Melbourne & Port Melbourne population	92
St.Kilda population	144

Source: 1996 ABS Census.

Note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations tend to be under represented in government data. This is generally acknowledged by government departments and Indigenous organisations. (see References) Reluctance to participate in data collection systems is generally attributed to negative experiences associated with the use of government information, eg. removal of children from families.

Household composition:	
Community profile information indicates a predominantly single (never married) Indigenous population aged between 18 years and 44 years of age,	
Total	167
% Total	70%

Comment: This may reflect the homeless and transient population but could also be consistent with anecdotal information from the general Indigenous community that Port Phillip is home to a number of single employed professional people. A tentative conclusion could be also drawn that this sector of the community are more likely to participate in census data collection.

Children (0 - 17 years of age)	
Total	22
% Total	9%
Elders (45 years of age and over)	
Total	36
% Total	15%
<i>Source: 1996 ABS Census.</i>	
Binjirru Employment data for City of Port Phillip: (Source: 1996 ABS Census)	
Employed	133
Unemployed	31
Not in labour market	89
Not stated	6
Total	259
Total % Unemployed	19%
Educational Qualifications	
Total qualified	70 (approx. 30% of identified population)
Total not qualified	135
Not stated	10
Total	215
<i>Source: 1996 ABS Census data.</i>	

Comment: This data is not consistent with general population totals, ie. total population is cited as 236 from the same source, ie. 1996 ABS Census. Employment and educational qualification data could also be consistent though with the anecdotal information and the tentative conclusion that a significant part of the identified population are employed and participate in census data collection.

General comment:

Community agencies, particularly in the St.Kilda area, are aware of a significant Indigenous population who require additional social support services and who are probably not represented in the ABS data because they may be transient or homeless or in private hotel accommodation.

PROTECTED SITES OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

- **Cleve Gardens** corner of Fitzroy Street, Jacka Boulevard and Beaconsfield Parade, St.Kilda (significant contemporary meeting place)
- **Corroboree Tree** (Albert Park lake environs - responsibility of Parks Victoria)
- **Point Ormond**, Esplanade, Elwood

* Information provided by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) Cultural Heritage Branch, 1996

RECORD OF CITY OF PORT PHILLIP INITIATIVES

- Council's initiatives form a foundation from which to consolidate the provision of equitable access to Local Government services, and to further the progress towards Reconciliation.
- Commissioning of the "Special Needs Report - Koorie Community" Julie Peers, Sep 1994.
- Council endorsement of the recommendations of the "Special Needs Report" leading to:
 - *Establishment of the joint ATSIC & City of Port Phillip Koorie Working Party.*
 - *Employment of a full-time Indigenous Policy Officer jointly funded for two years by City of Port Phillip and DEETYA.*
 - *The redevelopment of Cleve Gardens project, led by the Koorie Working Party, to celebrate its Indigenous identity and its significance as a meeting place. The gardens incorporate a memorial marker, a cultural marker and purpose built space for Indigenous art and craft markets.*
 - *Increased resources to the area that expanded Aboriginal community services and improved access to accommodation and other support services.*
- Acknowledgment in Council's Municipal Strategic Statement and Planning Scheme of the need for protection of culturally significant sites.
- Establishment of the Koorie Arts Unit at the City of Port Phillip and employment of a permanent Koorie Arts Officer.
- Raising and flying of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags during Reconciliation week, NAIDOC week and other significant events every year.
- Programmed events promoting Reconciliation and NAIDOC every year.
- Endorsement by Council on 27/8/97 of a protocol acknowledging the traditional owners and custodians



to be stated by the Mayor or Councillors at civic functions. (see appendix at Part One)

- Endorsed Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation by Council on 27/8/97 (see appendix Part One) which is a principle of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Public apology by the Mayor for the "stolen generation" at a large Reconciliation event attended by approximately 500 people in October 1997 and the calling on the Prime Minister to make a formal apology.
- Formal welcomes to the land extended by representatives of traditional custodians and owners performed regularly at significant public events.
- Annual attendance by Indigenous Council officers to ALGA General Assembly (assisted by National Office of Local Government and ATSIC).
- Participation in the MAV Local Government Indigenous Network
- Four staff traineeships in the recreation and cultural department since 1995.
- Housing options extended through Council's Housing Strategy:
 - *Public housing - flexible eligibility criteria that acknowledges Indigenous links and consideration of age differences in Council's nomination rights agreement with the Office of Housing for access to older persons housing.*
 - *Social housing - consideration of the same eligibility criteria for St.Kilda Housing Association managed community housing.*
- Commencement from 14/2/99 of regular Koorie art and craft markets at Cleve Gardens.
- Inclusion of City of Port Phillip as an example of good practice in the MAV *Wurreker Local Government Indigenous Partnerships Resource Guide*.
- Recognition of City of Port Phillip's redevelopment of Cleve Gardens as one of five good practice examples nationally in the ALGA Town Camps guide, 1997.



Council Policies and Plans that relate to and support the aims of the Memorandum of Understanding:

- Corporate Plan 1997/98 - 2000 and the seven Key Result Areas:
 1. *Diversity & Community Development*
 2. *Planning and City Development*
 3. *Infrastructure*
 4. *Service Delivery*
 5. *Long Term Financial Viability*
 6. *Leadership and Innovation*
 7. *Environment*

 - Policies and Strategies, in particular:
 - *Human Services Review and Strategy*
 - *Housing Strategy*
 - *Cultural Plan*
 - *Multicultural Plan*
 - *Sport and Recreation Strategy*
 - *Open Space Strategy*
 - *Municipal Strategic Statement and Planning Scheme*
 - *Interim Foreshore Management Plan*
 - *Sustainable Development Strategy*

 - Other key policies or plans currently being developed:
 - *Municipal Public Health Promotion Plan*
 - *Building Healthy Environments Plan*
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