

City of Kwinana

Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj – Many Hands Firmly United Going Forward

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan *[December 2018] – [December 2019]*

Introduction

The City of Kwinana (the City) sits within the lands of the Noongar people who are the Traditional Custodians of Kwinana and surrounding areas. The City has a strong, active Aboriginal community, which represents 3.6% of the population. Within the Perth Metropolitan Region, the City of Kwinana has the highest proportion of residents that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

The City of Kwinana acknowledges the Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respects to their Elders past and present.

The City's Conciliation Advisory Group was formed in May 2018. It is co-chaired by Mayor Carol Adams and community member and Chairperson of the Medina Aboriginal Cultural Centre (MACC) Charne Hayden. The Kwinana Conciliation Advisory Group advised the City to use the term "Conciliation" as it is more accurate with respect to the process and journey we are embarking upon i.e. the building of a new, strong, relationship with Kwinana's Aboriginal community.

The City announced its official Conciliation Statement of Intent during National Reconciliation Week in May 2018.

The City of Kwinana is committed to the journey of Conciliation and respects Aboriginal people's Connection to Country as the traditional custodians of the land. The City of Kwinana's vision is to work together with the Kwinana community to build positive relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Throughout this journey the City aims to promote and assist with the development of pathways and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable.

Rather than call this a Reconciliation Action Plan, the Conciliation Advisory Group has decided to use words in Noongar language and names the plan; "Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj" which means "Many hands firmly united going forward".

This plan is adapted from Reconciliation Australia's Reflect template, which is the first level of a Reconciliation Action Plan under their national framework.

Cultural information

Noongar Country is the land in the south-west corner of Western Australia, from the west coast at a point north of Jurien Bay to Esperance on the south coast. There are 14-16 clan groups of people of Indigenous Australian descent within Noongar Country.

Noongar language is a spoken language, not a written language; as such, there are many ways to spell words, depending on the dialect of the clan group. The word “Noongar” may be spelt in different ways including Nyungar, Nyoongar, Nyoongah, Nyungah and Nyugah.

The Aboriginal Flag has the symbolic meaning of:

Black – represents the Aboriginal people of Australia

Yellow circle – represents the sun, the giver of life and protector

Red – represents the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and

Aboriginal peoples’ spiritual relation to the land

The flag is flown daily in front of the City of Kwinana Administration Building.



The Torres Strait Islander Flag represents the Torres Strait Islander people, who are the Indigenous people of the Torres Strait Islands north of Queensland. The green panels at the top and bottom of the flag symbolise the land, while the blue panel in the centre represents the waters of the Torres Strait. The thin black stripes between the green and blue panels signify the Torres Strait Islanders themselves. The white five-pointed star at the centre of the flag represents the five major island groups, and the white dhari (dancer's headdress) around it also symbolises the Torres Strait Islands people. White symbolises peace, while the star is a symbol for navigation.



ABORIGINAL GROUPS OF THE SOUTH WEST OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



History

Please see online timeline for State-wide events and dates of significance: <https://ruminating.org/history/noongar-timeline/>

In terms of Kwinana itself:

- Aboriginal prison on Carnac Island, imprisonment and escape of Yagan.
- The Spectacles - The Spectacles is on the ancient trade route that follows the fresh water lakes system connecting the people of the Murray and Swan Rivers and has cultural significance as a ceremonial, camping and food gathering site.
- Wandí –see Voices of Kwinana <https://voicesofkwinana.org/2018/07/13/the-man-behind-the-suburb-wandi/>
- Simon Gentle - was the first employee for the Kwinana Road Board in 1955 and is recorded to have been living in the area of Kwinana from 1938. He was also employed by the Emmanuel Bros. stock agents operating at Robb Jetty. He is related to the Noongar Jacobs family.
- Implementation of the Native Housing Scheme 1953, which allowed Aboriginal people to apply for State Housing so long as they maintained certain financial, social and domestic standards imposed by the Housing Commission. By 1959, only 20% of the Aboriginal population were seen as meeting these standards. Locally, that meant that Aboriginal BP employees lived at a Camp on Chalk Hill. Thomas Oval was also used for camping and washing.
- During the 1950s, Medina Hill a.k.a McGuigan Park was a significant social meeting place, both for locals and for families travelling through.
- 1966, Aboriginal children from Sister Kate's Children's Cottage Home invited to "holiday for Christmas" with local Medina families.
- September 1968, Medina resident and BP employee Alfons Boschman and his wife attempt to migrate back to Holland with five Aboriginal children. The Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs protests the removal of the children from Australia. The case makes international media and continues for many months, with the government assisting the family to resettle in Medina in December 1969.
- Confirm dates 1980s/90s – Bridging the Gap and Gnulla Mia Casuarina established
- 1993 – Native Title discussions regarding Kwinana Freeway extension through Wellard and naming of Walley Bridge. Displacement of Aboriginal tin hut camp beneath the bridge.
- The first Medina Aboriginal Cultural Group was formed in 197? In Medina before being given the Centre which is now known as the Medina Aboriginal Cultural Centre (MACC)
- 2001 establishment of Wirrpanda Foundation, confirm when Kwinana office opened
- 2010 Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre
- 2016/17 Medina Revitalisation (Medina Hill)

Background of City of Kwinana (the organisation)

Our business

The City of Kwinana (The City) is a unique community, set among extensive native bushland and public open space. Located in Perth's outer southern suburbs, 25 minutes from the Perth CBD, Kwinana is bound by the City of Cockburn in the north, the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale in the east, the City of Rockingham in the south and the Indian Ocean in the west.

The City is a rapidly growing residential area, with substantial industrial, rural and rural-residential areas and some commercial areas. The City includes the Kwinana Industrial Area which generates billions of dollars each year for the State's economy and includes oil refineries, a power station, a wastewater treatment plant and quarries. Kwinana encompasses a total land area of nearly 120 square kilometres and it is the second fastest growing local government area in Western Australia with the population predicted to double in the next 20 years.

In the 2016 Census, 3.6% of the City's population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, totalling 1,961 people. This is almost double the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the greater Perth area.

The City's vision for the future is "Rich in spirit, alive with opportunities, surrounded by nature – It's all here." The vision statement succinctly represents the community's aspirations for the future and is derived directly from the community visioning priorities. The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) is directly in line with this vision.

The City's core business comprises delivery of a variety of services to the residents of Kwinana. These include recreation and events, library services, waste collection, youth programs, environmental protection and community development, to name a few. In addition to this, the City is involved in the provision and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure such as roads, parks and community spaces.

The City's workforce includes approximately 260 permanent staff, exclusive of casual staff. Of this number, approximately 3.5% of employees are recorded as being of either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. The City's ambition is to grow the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the organisation, particularly within the City Engagement Directorate where the majority of direct interaction with the community occurs.

The City of Kwinana has staff based at eight locations throughout the City, including:

- City of Kwinana Administration building;
- Works Depot;
- Darius Wells Library and Resource Centre;
- John Wellard Community Centre;
- William Bertram Community Centre;
- Kwinana Recquatic;
- Zone Youth Space; and

- Bright Futures Family Daycare.

Our RAP

The City has developed strong relationships with Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who live and work in and around Kwinana.

The Aboriginal community has expressed a need for increased awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures among the wider community, while developing a strong sense of pride in young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and children.

In April 2017, the City held a series of “Aboriginal Community Planning Meetings” to seek community aspirations for reconciliation. Facilitated by Codeswitch Consultancy, these meetings were attended by a variety of stakeholders and community members. Codeswitch produced a report summarising participant recommendations in relation to the three pillars of reconciliation – relationships, respect and opportunities. This information has informed the development of the Reflect RAP.

The key community aspirations for reconciliation were:

- The need to build stronger relationships and rapport with the community in relation to developing strategies involving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community; and
- The need to have more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples working internally at the City of Kwinana and externally within the City of Kwinana.

The City recognises that a Reflect RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) will enable the organisation to spend time developing these relationships while together deciding on the future vision for reconciliation between the organisation and the community.

The City has made a commitment to build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This has resulted in community consultation on a number of projects where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives have been incorporated in a respectful and meaningful way. Key projects are outlined below, however this is not a comprehensive list.

In 2015 an ANZAC exhibition, Answering the Call, documented Aboriginal Diggers, acknowledging their contribution not only to ANZAC but to Australia’s national identity. The exhibition won a Local Government award.

In 2016 the City of Kwinana, together with community members and community organisations organised a variety of events celebrating NAIDOC week. These included the inaugural Little Peeps Ball, the Official NAIDOC Opening, “Nightfields” sporting program, The Spectacles Tour and documentary film screenings at the local art centre. In August of the same year, the City of Kwinana also held the official opening of the Harry McGuigan Park in Medina, a historically significant meeting place for Aboriginal people living in Kwinana.

In 2016, The City of Kwinana unveiled a landmark facility, The Adventure Park Kwinana. This state of the art facility has recently won State and

National Awards including the State award for the Best Community Art Project. For this project, fifteen young Aboriginal people worked under the supervision of Elders and professional artists in the creation of site specific sculptural seats for the playground. A similar approach was used in one of the newest facilities in the City, the Edge Skate Park, where young people including Aboriginal youth were involved in the creation of site specific artworks.

The 2017 NAIDOC event resulted in continuous engagement with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and service providers, to develop an incredible program of events inclusive of all community members, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal, all age groups and delivered through a variety of means including sporting and cultural events. The “Voices in our Communities” series, from The Film and Television Institute, screened at Koorliny Arts Centre, was a compelling series of stories depicting individual histories of members of the Stolen Generation.

In May 2018, the City of Kwinana held an event to commemorate National Reconciliation Week. The event featured sharing of local Aboriginal stories (recordings) and bush tucker style food provided by an Aboriginal business. Over 50 community members attended the event. At the event the City officially announced the organisation’s Conciliation Statement of Intent:

“The City of Kwinana is committed to the journey of conciliation and respects Aboriginal people’s connection to country as the traditional custodians of the land. The City of Kwinana’s vision is to work together with the Kwinana community to build positive relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Through this journey the City aims to promote and assist with the development of pathways and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable.”

As an organisation the City believes the journey has just started. The City acknowledges there is more the City can do to create meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable strategies to influence change. Through the development of a RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) the City will continue to build strong relationships with the community and service providers allowing the City, together with the community, to continue this journey, ensuring the momentum created over the past years continues.

The development of a Reflect RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) is championed throughout the City of Kwinana.

Members of the Executive Team encourage and support Officers at the community level. They also champion the RAP through presentation and discussion on important local issues with Councillors of the City of Kwinana.

• ***Who was involved in the development of your RAP?***

- Participants of the Aboriginal Community Planning Workshops including community services stakeholders and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- Kwinana Conciliation Advisory Group
- Codeswitch Consultancy Pty Ltd
- City of Kwinana representatives including Community Development Officers, Executive Team and Councillors.

- Reconciliation Australia

Our partnerships/current activities

- ***Community partnerships***

- The City of Kwinana Mayor was, until recently, a member of the board of Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre
- The City of Kwinana works and meets with Medina Aboriginal Cultural Centre (MACC) on a regular basis
- The Kwinana Conciliation Advisory Group includes Aboriginal community members, Councillors, City of Kwinana staff and representatives of relevant community stakeholder groups.

- ***Internal activities/initiatives***

- Two new 50D positions created at the Zone Youth Space at the City of Kwinana.
- Annual NAIDOC week celebrations held in collaboration with the community.
- Active exploration of opportunities to present art exhibitions, focussing on local talent, or cultural/heritage exhibitions highlighting local stories/experiences.
- Flying of the Aboriginal flag at the front of the City of Kwinana Administration Building.
- Acknowledgement of Country at small events and Council meetings and Welcome to Country at large events.

Action Plan

The actions are listed under the three headings of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities in order of priority as prioritised by the Conciliation Advisory Group.

Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish, resource and maintain a Conciliation Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a Conciliation Advisory Group to support the implementation of the City's RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj), comprised of Councillors of the City of Kwinana, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, representatives of relevant community stakeholder groups and staff from across the organisation. Ensure the Conciliation Advisory Group monitors the development and implementation of the RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj). 		
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within the Kwinana local area or sphere of influence who we can connect and work with on our reconciliation journey. Develop a list of RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) organisations and other like-minded organisations that we can connect and work with on our reconciliation journey. Develop a mechanism for sharing information with the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Kwinana – such as a newsletter, through social media or webpage. 		
3. Promote events which foster conciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold an event to celebrate the launch of the RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj). Develop a calendar of events, including but not limited to, NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week. Promote this calendar internally and externally. Hold a Council afternoon tea hosted by the Mayor inviting Aboriginal community members to engage with Councillors and staff. 		
4. Raise awareness of the RAP (internally and externally)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all Councillors and staff across the organisation about our RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) commitments. Publish and promote our RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) to the wider community and welcome feedback on the RAP (Boola Maar Baldja 		

	Koorlinj) actions.		
5. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage City staff to attend a NRW event. • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to City staff. • Ensure the Conciliation Advisory Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 		

Respect			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols, work with the internal Marketing Team to have them included in all civic and community events and speeches. 		
2. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the potential to deliver cultural awareness training to all Councillors and staff within the City of Kwinana. Aim for an immersion program delivered by local people. • Investigate the potential for cultural awareness training to be delivered to local small businesses and community groups. 		
3. Display of flags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display three flags at the Council Administration Building and relevant civic and community events (Australian flag, Aboriginal flag, and Torres Strait Islander flag). 		

4. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness and share information amongst City staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.• Introduce City staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.• Ensure the Conciliation Advisory Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.		
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Opportunities			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a cultural immersion program, including elements to be delivered by local people. 		
2. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities within the City's workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment targets. 		
3. Early childhood and youth services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to convene the Youth Diversion Network meetings to develop strategies in partnership with early childhood and youth services, and other relevant agencies to support families and combat anti-social behaviour. 		

Governance and Tracking Progress			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) development and implementation. Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities. 		
2. Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Submit this new draft RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) to Reconciliation Australia for review. Submit this new draft RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement. 		
3. Report on the progress of our RAP internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conciliation Advisory Group to report activities and outcomes in a written report to Council, and to be distributed internally to City of Kwinana staff. Conciliation Advisory Group to share activities and outcomes of the RAP (Boola Maar Baldja Koorlinj) with the community. Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 		

Contact details *Include contact details (job title, phone and email) for public enquiries about our RAP.*

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