



Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

2022 – 2024



WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples should be aware that this document contains images, and names of people who have passed away.

Cover photo: Teana Fonua, 2022, 11 Years old

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Remembering Our Elders

Wagga Wagga City Council extends its respect to all First Nation Elders and community members who have passed. We recognise the importance to First Nations people their kinship ties within their families and how impactful the passing of any First Nations person is within each family and within the wider community.

Wagga Wagga City Council acknowledges every time there is Sorry Business that the family and the community are all affected deeply. That the First Nations community has strong cultural obligations within their kinship system and that these obligations are an important part of their cultural beliefs.

Remembering Aunty Val Weldon

Aunty Val Weldon was born at 'Frog Hollow' Griffith, NSW, before the "Three Ways" was established. She was then raised in Darlington Point and lived most of her life throughout the southern area of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Country.

Aunty Val was a proud, strong Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri mother of six children and was a grandmother and great-grandmother of many.

Throughout Aunty Val's life she had extensive experience in Aboriginal Affairs and was a strong believer and advocate for self-determination for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations people. She demonstrated her dedication and commitment to community by being elected to National, State, Regional, and Local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal committees.

Aunty Val was the first Aboriginal grandmother to graduate with a Diploma in Teaching and was one of the founding members of the "Wiradjuri Aboriginal Child Care Centre" in Docker Street in Wagga Wagga.

When Aunty Val completed her Diploma, she left a lucrative career in Sydney to return to Wagga Wagga and establish the Child Care Centre within her traditional country and worked as a volunteer for the Centre for 18 months before funding was approved. Prior to receiving the funding and moving to Docker Street, Aunty Val operated the playgroup in her own backyard.

Aunty Val was the first Aboriginal Teacher/Director to be employed in the Riverina Region from 1984 to 1994 and was instrumental in writing up the policies and curriculum for the early childhood program catering to 32 children daily, five days a week, in the age group of 0-5 years. This group of children had an intake of 70% Aboriginal children and 30% non-Aboriginal children.

Some examples of the many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations that Aunty Val was involved in include:

- State Member of the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) in the specialist area of Early Childhood
- Member of local and state AECG
- Represented Australia as a Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) Delegate at the International Child Abuse and Neglect Conference in Rio De Janeiro in 1988 and delivered a speech at the Indigenous Forum relating to Aboriginal people and the Stolen Generations

Aunty Val was inducted into the NSW Aboriginal Health Hall of Fame in 2004. She was a board member of the Greater Murray Area Health Service (GMAHS) since its inception in 1996. Aunty Val was also a chairperson and founding member of the Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation (RIVMED). Aunty Val worked tirelessly to improve the outcomes for Aboriginal people in the area of health while being involved on various committees, including:

- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation; and
- NSW Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council.

Aunty Val was instrumental in the creation of a lot of the local Aboriginal organisations that helped service the needs of the Aboriginal people in Wagga Wagga and through her positions on various committees and boards she had to work closely with the wider community as well as the Aboriginal community to achieve the best possible outcomes for the Aboriginal community. Her hard work and achievements paved the way for all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Wagga Wagga community to keep working together to achieve the best outcomes for the Aboriginal community – one of the important goals of Reconciliation.

*Approval from Aunty Val Weldon's family has been given for this information to be published.



Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri man Luke Whighton.
Photo by Matt Beaver.

Acknowledgement of Country

**Wagga Wagga City Council yali gulbali-yanhi
ngurambang Wiradyuri.**

Walumaldhaany-galang bala mayiny Wiradyuri.

**Yindyamali-yanhi mudyiganggalang-bu
balumbambal-bu balugirbam-bu.**

**Yindyamali-yanhi bagaraygan ngurambang-guwal-i
yandu murun.wigi Wagga Wagga-dha.**

**Ngianhi gulbali-bu yindyamali-bu guwiinyguliyalagu
buyaa-bu giilaang-galam-bu.**

**Ngianhi gulbali-bu yindyamali-bu guwiinyguliyalagu
dhaagun-bu bila-galang-bu nganha Wiradyuri-giyalang
bala burrambin-bu nurrnurra-bu.**

**Gulbali-yanhi Wiradyuri mayiny bagaraygan-guwal-bu
bala yarruwala-bu waluwin-bu walanbam-bu dhirrangan-bu.**

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Wagga Wagga City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri people, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future and extends our respect to all First Nations Peoples in Wagga Wagga.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the land and rivers.

We also recognise the resilience, strength and pride of the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations communities.

Messages from Local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders

Aunty Cheryl Penrith

“We need to be respectful of everybody and think about how we all have a part to play. We need to think about our young people and the world we are leaving for them.”



Aunty Cheryl Penrith is a proud Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder who has lived in Wagga Wagga for over 20 years. Aunty Cheryl commenced her schooling in Brungle and moved to Tumut in 2nd class. She still travels back to Brungle and Tumut often to visit family and friends, and because she still maintains a strong connection to the area. Many people follow Aunty Cheryl on social media to keep informed on her latest fashion posts or her latest op shop finds. Aunty Cheryl is a widely respected Elder who practices Yindyamarra in all the work she does within the community and is seen by many as an Aunty with strong cultural knowledge with expertise in cultural practices, language matters, and cultural identity, among other things.

When asked about reconciliation, Aunty Cheryl says “We need to be respectful of everybody and think about how we all have a part to play. We need to think about our young people and the world we are leaving for them.” This is evident with the way Aunty Cheryl conducts business as an Elder, showing Yindyamarra to all she works with. By working passionately, but respectfully, Aunty Cheryl has made an impact on the Wagga Wagga community. She says “We have come a long way. But it is because of the hard work that people have been doing, not just now but in the past too”. Aunty Cheryl stressed in our conversation the importance that we always acknowledge our Elders and Old Ones who have worked hard for the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri People, and all First Nations people, in creating pathways for mob and always pushing forward for mob.

Aunty Cheryl loves living in Wagga Wagga and her vision is for everyone to feel the same way she does about living in Wagga Wagga. To feel like they belong to the community and are valued members of the community. Aunty Cheryl also works at the Wagga Wagga City Council’s Art Gallery where she helps the Art Gallery in their Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations projects and exhibitions.

Some of the projects that Aunty Cheryl has worked on with Wagga Wagga City Council (WWCC) and within Wagga Wagga include: Consulting with Wagga Wagga City Council (WWCC) on the Pomingalarna, Riverside, and River Life upgrades, consulting with the Museum of the Riverina, consulting with the Civic Theatre, was the chairperson for the Marramorra Consultative Committee, is a co-chairperson for Mawang Gaway (a Wiradjuri / Wiradyuri and First Nations Elders and community consultative committee), a member of the WWCC Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) committee, member of the Pomingalarna Women’s Group, a member of the Indigenous advisory to Eastern Riverina Arts, and often attends meetings to consult on issues ranging from WWCC Cultural Plan, Wagga’s upcoming expansions to the North and South, consultations with WWCC Executives, the Marrambyda Wetlands Master Plan, Stolen Generations Redress Schemes, and the Gregadoo Waste Management Plan.

Aunty Cheryl feels it's important for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations to be sitting at the table making decisions for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations people. That building strong relationships with WWCC and other organisations through reconciliation and working together, we as a people are stronger. That we build up public profiles for not just ourselves, but for all our people, language, culture, and heritage, that shows that we belong within the community.

*Approval has been given by Aunty Cheryl Penrith for this information to be published.

Aunty Mary Atkinson

“True reconciliation will occur when we all are equally able to be educated and given the same opportunities as each other”



Aunty Mary Atkinson is a proud Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri/ Ngunnawal woman who has lived in Wagga Wagga for over 40 years. She grew up in Yass, with her family moving around the Riverina for fruit picking. Aunty Mary embodies Yindyamarra, and this can be felt by her loving and caring nature, and her passion and commitment for working with children and youth to guide them in learning their culture through art, music, and dance.

Aunty Mary has worked in the Catholic Education system for over 20 years and her commitment to Aboriginal Education is evident when asked about reconciliation she says, “True reconciliation will occur when we all are equally able to be educated and given the same opportunities as each other”.

Aunty Mary sees the importance of education for all, and that a true history of Australia told through the lens of First Nations People needs to be taught to all. That we need to incorporate truth telling from First Nations People because you don’t get to be the oldest living culture without being knowledgeable. But reconciliation is a two-way street – the wider community needs to turn up and listen!

Aunty Mary finds Wagga Wagga to be a great place to live. When they moved here 40 years ago as part of the Resettlement Program it was to find better housing options, better healthcare services, and better employment opportunities. Aunty Mary says that she has got all of that since moving to Wagga Wagga, plus so much more. Life can be a struggle but always moving forward and seizing opportunities is how you are able to find the good in life. Aunty Mary acknowledges that the past Elders and Old Ones fighting for mob and leading the way has created a lot of those opportunities for herself, her family, and for mob.

Family is a huge part of Aunty Mary’s life – she enjoys spending as much time as she can with her children and grandchildren. This love for the next generations can be seen in her passion for working within the education system but even when asked about reconciliation Aunty Mary focuses on the younger generations and the future. Her vision for Wagga Wagga is “for the younger people and for the next generations who follow to keep going forward and to keep prospering. So that what we leave behind now is continued to be built upon, and that First Nations people always leave it better for our next generations who follow us”.

Aunty Mary keeps looking for opportunities to help the First Nations community with some examples of the work she does within the community being: Being a co-chairperson of Mawang Gaway (a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations Elders and community consultative committee), consulting with WWCC on Pomingalarna, Riverside, and River Life upgrades, consultations with the Museum of the Riverina, a member of WWCC’s RAP committee, and often attends meetings to consult on issues ranging from WWCC’s upcoming expansions to the North and South, consultations with WWCC Executives, the Marrambidya Wetlands Master Plan, Stolen Generations Redress Schemes, and the Gregadoo Waste Management Plan.

Aunty Mary feels it is important First Nations people work together and continue to work hard for our community. To continue having the hard conversations so that we can force the wider community to face the true history of Australia so we are able to have true reconciliation in Australia.

*Approval has been given by Aunty Mary Atkinson for this information to be published.

Uncle James Ingram

**“to reach true reconciliation
we can’t do it alone
– we need all the friends
we can get!”**



Uncle James Ingram is a proud Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri man who grew up in Leeton. He and his family are local knowledge holders and can relay the stories of many of the waterways and many other Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri sites throughout Wagga Wagga. Uncle James has lived in Wagga Wagga for 40 years and after years working as a Cultural expert for Local Land Services, he now runs his own business Bidyamarra that provides cultural tours of significant sites in Wagga Wagga.

Uncle James says that to reach true reconciliation we can’t do it alone – we need all the friends we can get! We all need to walk down the reconciliation road together to get towards a more inclusive, and representative, community. The Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri people can help guide this with Truth Telling about our culture, history, and language but we need all our friends to listen to us and work with us to make the future more inclusive.

Uncle James enjoys living in Wagga Wagga and sees it as a major city where Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations people can find great employment and educational opportunities so that they can have a better quality of life. With organisations in Wagga Wagga like Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation (RIVMED), the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS), and so many schools from pre-school through to Charles Sturt University teaching Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language and culture, the First Nations people of Wagga Wagga have so many opportunities available to them.

Uncle James’s vision for Wagga Wagga is for it to become a more inclusive society. That continues to pay respect to Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language and culture – past, present,

and into the future. That through reconciliation we have a much more understanding community. He also hopes to see another Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri representative be elected to Wagga Wagga City Council and for a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri keeping place to be built.

Uncle James hopes by continuing to work together with WWCC that there will be more cultural places in Wagga Wagga to help put Wagga Wagga on the map. So that National events can be held in Wagga Wagga such as the National NAIDOC awards that will enhance Wagga Wagga’s reputation as a place for people to come together to celebrate and dance.

Uncle James works quite closely with WWCC on many projects. These include consultations with the Museum of the Riverina, on Riverside, on River Life sculptures, on the Special Activation Precinct, Rail Infrastructure, the Marrambidya Wetlands, Gregadoo Waste Management Plan, Flowerdale Lagoon, Environmental Impact Permits, and the future development of the North and South sides of Wagga Wagga.

Uncle James also sits on the WWCC Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Group and assists WWCC with Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Cultural Awareness Training. He works closely with Bush Heritage and the Riverina Fire Service on their Cultural Burning training. He also works closely with archaeologists to conduct Aboriginal Site Surveys to protect artefacts and culture, gives guided tours of culturally significant sites to all levels of schools, and organisations such as the Primary Health Network, around Wagga Wagga, and performs a Welcome to Country at events. Uncle James sees the work he does as showcasing Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture while he continues to work to preserve and strengthen culture and heritage every day.

*Approval has been given by Uncle James Ingram for this information to be published.





Mayor Dallas Tout with Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri
Elder Aunty Mary Atkinson

Message from the Mayor

As Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations community Elders, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members and Council staff for their invaluable ongoing contributions to Wagga Wagga City Council's (WWCC) Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We are now ready to take the next step in our reconciliation journey by endorsing our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. I would also like to thank Reconciliation Australia for their guidance and support in ensuring this plan reflects the intent of RAPs across our country, in government agencies, businesses and other services.

Reconciliation is such an important process and essential when we look back and consider the atrocities of our country's past. The loss of culture, family and language, and the impact of government resettlements and forcible removal policies on Aboriginal communities and families has been profound. The results of these policies and actions continue to affect Aboriginal peoples and their families today. As Mayor, I believe that Council has a responsibility to address some of these inequities in line with the Council of Australian Government agreements, and to work alongside our colleagues in State and Federal government to "Close the Gap". The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) clearly demonstrates WWCC's commitment to working with our Aboriginal community members towards a better, brighter, and stronger future. It outlines how Council will play its part in recognising and valuing Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture and heritage, how we will work to increase employment and business opportunities for all First Nations peoples, and how we will ensure we build relationships based on respect and transparency with our community.

You may also notice the spelling of Wiradjuri with a Y. As part of our commitment to reconciliation, we are ensuring we acknowledge Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language wherever possible and amend where advice has been offered. The Budyaan Trust, with endorsement from Uncle Stan Grant Senior, advised WWCC of this change in spelling because the sound of the letter 'J' does not exist in the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language, instead the sound of the letter 'Y' is phonetically more accurate. Upon this advice and due to our commitment to protecting important language such as this, WWCC will incorporate the updated spelling. As the change will take some time to implement, you may still see both spellings from time to time.

Lastly, it is my hope that through this revised RAP, we will strengthen our City where all community members value and respect our First Nations people and our local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture and heritage. The development of this document is a small but important step in addressing the inequities of the past.



Dallas Tout
Mayor of The City of Wagga Wagga



Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Wagga Wagga City Council on the formal endorsement of its second 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. Wagga Wagga City Council continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,200 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 Wagga Wagga City Council will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Wagga Wagga City Council 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 Wagga Wagga City Council 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, Wagga Wagga City Council will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

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

Congratulations Wagga Wagga City Council on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Placement of the Reconciliation Action Plan within the Sustainable Planning Framework

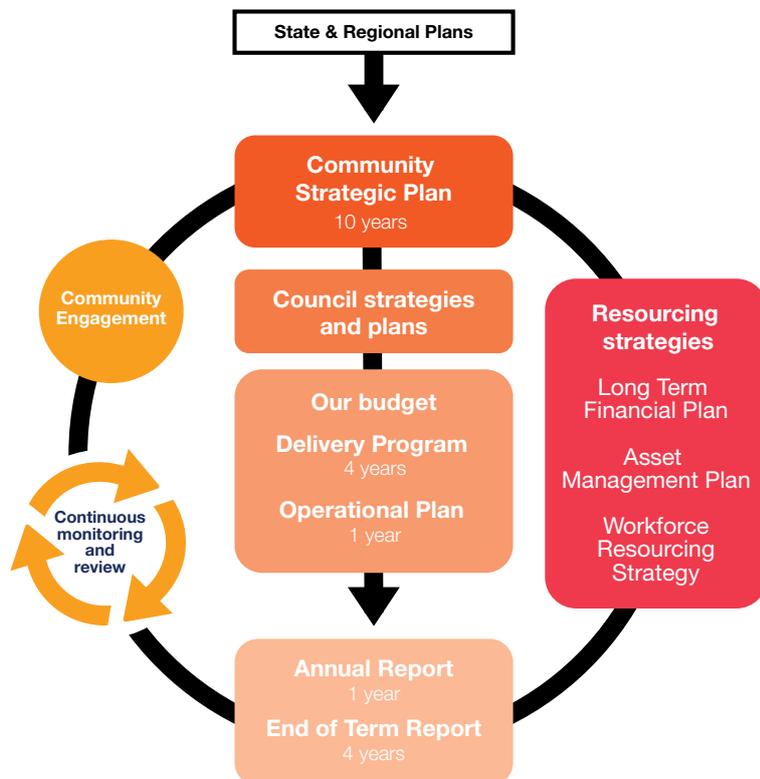
Where the Reconciliation Action Plan sits within the sustainable planning framework

The RAP provides a clear direction to ensure Council is developing a liveable city, which is thriving, connected, innovative and inclusive. The plan has been written to provide a list of actions Council will deliver over the next two years within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area to remove barriers towards reconciliation with the cities First Nations people.

The development of the RAP has occurred using the principles identified in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for Local Government in NSW and developed with guidance from Reconciliation Australia, the lead body for reconciliation in our Nation. The RAP has also sought to integrate with other WWCC strategies to ensure the principle of inclusion and connection is embedded in all planning frameworks.

This strategy is considered a level two document within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework.

Figure 1.1 NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework





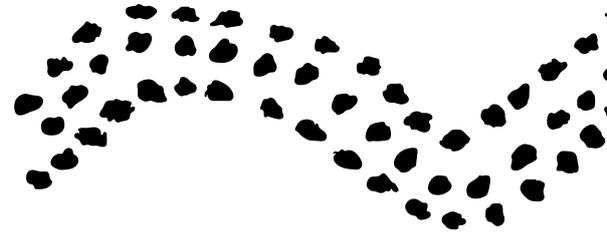
Wagga Wagga City Council – Our Business

Wagga Wagga City Council is a Local Government Authority. Council delivers and maintains a wide range of services, programs and infrastructure required by the community within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area (LGA). These include, but are not limited to, development and building applications, strategic land use planning, public open spaces like parks, playgrounds, gardens, sports grounds and natural areas, cemeteries, road, footpath and active travel path networks. Along with a regional airport and livestock marketing centre, waste management centre, weed and environment management, public health, community/ cultural development, public art and cultural facilities like the Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery & Art Glass Gallery, Library and Civic Theatre.

Council also actively plans and collaborates with other levels of government, business and industry sectors and non-government organisations to address local and regional needs.

Our business

As of 14 June 2022, Council employed 729 staff (snapshot from the current Workforce Plan, full document attached).



Total workforce

*Note: As at 14 June 2022

- Council's total workforce represents 2.3% of the total labour force within the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area.
- Total workforce comprises of 729 employees including:
 - 418 permanent (full time and part time)
 - 245 casual
 - 54 temporary
 - 12 trainees, apprentices, cadets and graduates

Employment Type	Female	Male	Total
Permanent	164	254	418
Casual	183	62	245
Temporary	35	19	54
Trainees/Apprentices/Cadets/Graduates	4	8	12
Total	386	343	729

Council's workforce is also supported by the valuable contributions of our volunteers across multiple service areas.

As of 14 June 2022, 31 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were employed by Council – noting that it is not mandatory for employees to disclose their Aboriginality upon their commencement.



Taniesha Fonua 15 years old,
Tylor Fonua 13 years old,
Teana Fonua 11 years old,
Tevita 9 years old, 2022

Our business

The largest city in inland New South Wales, the Wagga Wagga Local Government Area (LGA) encompasses a total land area of 4826 sq km and is situated about 450 kilometres south-west of Sydney and 460 kilometres north-east of Melbourne, making it highly accessible to travellers and businesses from both metropolitan cities.

Wagga Wagga LGA offers a unique quality of life that is unparalleled in its combination of natural beauty, housing affordability, diverse employment opportunities and wide offering of community and cultural infrastructure, services and lifestyle activities. With a population of approximately 67,609 residents, Wagga Wagga with its supporting rural communities is simultaneously a thriving and cosmopolitan area and a relaxed lifestyle choice that supports a highly diverse and dynamic economy.

Council can demonstrate to the local community better practice when working alongside First Nations people. This can be achieved by continuing, and building upon, its employment of First Nations people, continuing to acknowledge and recognise significant First Nations dates such as Sorry Day, NAIDOC week, and National Reconciliation Week, continuing to work hard on achieving the items set out in its RAP, build upon them and embrace and acknowledge the true history of Australia to allow for real justice and healing to occur within our community. This influence can be asserted through our relationships with other levels of government, local businesses, organisations and schools.

Wagga Wagga City Council has 12 office locations:

- Civic Centre Precinct (inclusive of WWCC Administration Building, Civic Theatre, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery and Art Glass Gallery, Museum of the Riverina (Historic Council Chambers site), Library and Visitor Information Centre)
- Parks and Gardens Depot and Museum of the Riverina located in the Botanic Gardens Precinct
- Cemetery (also includes rural cemeteries)
- Fernleigh Road Depot (includes Administration Building, Workshop)
- Oasis Aquatic Centre
- Gregadoo Waste Management Centre (GWMC)
(WWCC is also responsible for rural landfill sites such as Mangopliah, Humula, Tarcutta, Uranquinty, Galore, Currawarna and Collingullie)
- Livestock Marketing Centre (LMC)
- Glenfield Road Animal Shelter (GRAS)
- Weed Spraying Depot
- Wagga Wagga Airport
- Bomen Industrial Site (RIFL project team working at this site)
- Bob Osborne Training Centre



Wagga Wagga City Council's Vision and Guiding Principles

Our Mission

Contribute to a vibrant growing community by providing excellence in leadership, and delivery of 'best value' infrastructure and services, supporting quality living in an improving sustainable environment.

Our Vision

To be acclaimed by our community for our passion, professionalism, and performance.

Our Values

Council's corporate values are the guiding principles on which Council bases its beliefs and behaviour. They underpin all that Council does as an organisation.

Our four corporate values are:

- Trust
- Respect
- Innovation
- Teamwork

Wagga Wagga Local Government Area - Our Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations History

Wagga Wagga City Council values that Australia is home to the oldest continuing living culture in the world and acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for their knowledge and cultural practices.

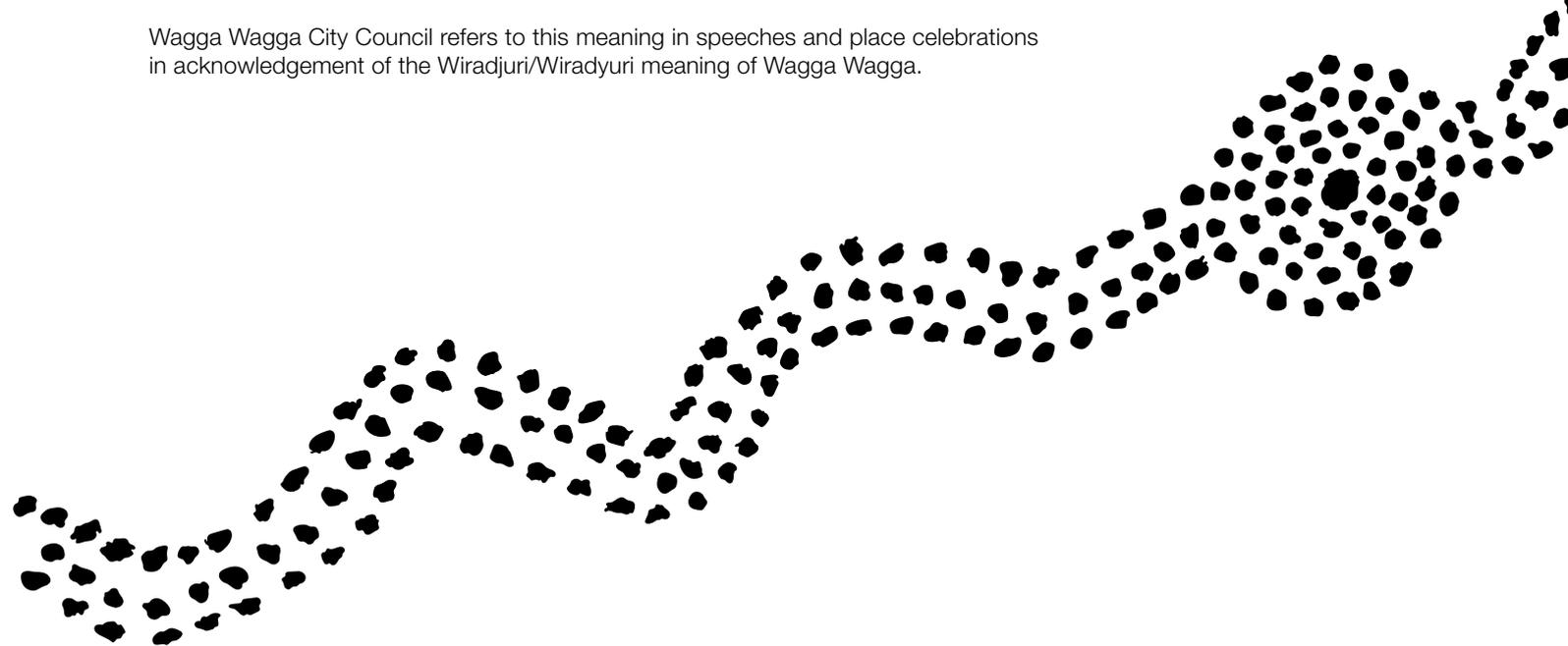
‘Australia’s first people—known as Aboriginal Australians—have lived on the continent for over 60,000 years. Today, there are 250 distinct language groups spread throughout Australia. Aboriginal Australians are split into two groups: Aboriginal peoples, who are related to those who already inhabited Australia when Britain began colonising the island in 1788, and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who descend from residents of the Torres Strait Islands, a group of islands that is part of modern-day Queensland, Australia.’

Source: www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/aboriginal-australians

In recognition and respect for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the land and rivers, Wagga Wagga City Council looks for guidance from Elders and cultural knowledge holders for the history and language of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri land.

In 2019, in the city’s first Reconciliation Action Plan, Wagga Wagga City Council acknowledged the cultural direction received from local Senior Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder and author of the first Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri dictionary, Uncle Stan Grant Senior, that the words ‘Wagga Wagga’ translate to mean ‘Many Dances or Place of Celebrations’.

Wagga Wagga City Council refers to this meaning in speeches and place celebrations in acknowledgement of the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri meaning of Wagga Wagga.



Wagga Wagga Local Government Area - Our Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations History

Please note that this content was written in consultation with our local Wiradjuri Elders. We do want to acknowledge that the content although an important historical piece for our city, includes sensitive information and storytelling and may be triggering.

Wagga as a resettlement area

In the 1970s, the Federal Labor Governments, as part of Gough Whitlam's electoral campaign, undertook a plan to properly house all Aboriginal families within a ten-year period. The aim of this program was to improve the living standards of all Aboriginal people – by improving their housing the hope was to achieve other goals such as improved health outcomes. After the election, the Federal Government provided funding to the State Governments to manage and administer the new policy. In NSW, this led to the Aboriginal Voluntary Resettlement Scheme being commenced.

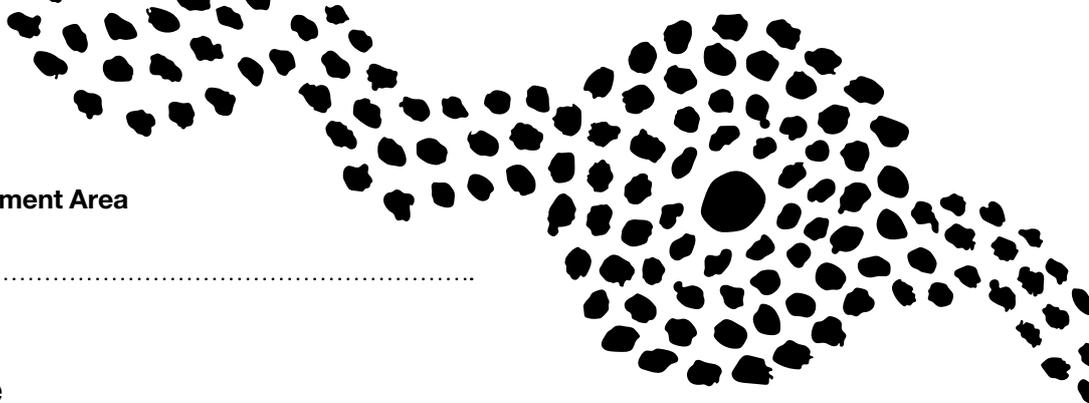
The Aboriginal Voluntary Resettlement Scheme offered incentives to Aboriginal people to move from areas and reserves that were outside of town centres to designated rural centres, such as Wagga Wagga. Other locations were Bathurst, Newcastle, Orange, and Albury. This resulted in a huge increase in the Aboriginal people living in Wagga Wagga. From approximately 17 families in 1974 the community grew to more than 500 Aboriginal people by 1982. These Aboriginal people resettled here from mainly the far west and included Aboriginal people from the Yorta Yorta, Barkindji, and Kamilaroi nations.

Initially the first 13 families of Aboriginal people being resettled in Wagga Wagga were placed in the newly created suburb of Ashmont. This was then extended as more families were resettled into the existing suburb of Koorungal and a newly created suburb of Tolland. No thoughts were given to where people were placed and people from different Nations were placed near each other. This caused some conflicts due to the cultural and language differences. While these conflicts were occurring, the wider community were not happy with the resettled Aboriginal people with some signs going up around Ashmont saying things such as "You are now entering Coon County" and "Vegemite Village".

The incentives that encouraged people to move included the promise of improved employment, health care, education, and housing. However, the reality of the situation was completely different with many of the people moved experiencing isolation from the mainstream services offered. This outcome highlighted that, even with the best of intentions, schemes of this nature tend to not work because they don't always consider the needs of the people they are aimed to help.



Tylor Fonua, 2022
13 years old



Aboriginal Legal Service

The Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) was founded in 1977. Initially, the ALS was run out of Aunty Dot and Uncle Hewitt Whyman's house with Uncle Hewitt being a field officer based in Wagga Wagga however notably at that time with no vehicle. Aunty Dot assisted Uncle Hewitt as a voluntary secretary. Eventually, when funds were available, they were able to open an office in Fitzmaurice Street. Then, the Aboriginal Redevelopment Centre from Canberra assisted with the purchasing of a building in Docker Street. With the two-story building acquired in Docker Street in 1982, Aunty Dot's mother – Aunty Val Weldon, was able to move her Aboriginal playgroup into the downstairs section. Also, working from the Docker Street building were Aboriginal Children Services, a Youth Worker, and a Community Support Worker.

The Aboriginal Legal Service assisted the community in more ways than just with legal issues. With their large network of contacts, local Aboriginal people were able to come in with almost any problem and the ALS were able to refer them to the correct organisation or agency.

The ALS was an important organisation in Wagga Wagga for supporting Aboriginal people against such issues like when young men were being transported here to be placed in Juvenile Justice and they would be marched from the Railway station down to the Police station in handcuffs along Baylis Street.

First Nations Soldiers

Aunty Fay Clayton is a member of the Stolen Generations and her father served in World War II. This was a shock to the family since her father had returned from four years of service during World War II as a war hero. He was one of the Rats of Tobruk with the 2/13th battalion. This battalion had the nickname of the "Devil's Own" because there were more Aboriginal soldiers than non-Aboriginal soldiers in the battalion. The only unit to see out the 241-day siege of Tobruk, during 1941, and the last to return to Australia at the end of the war.

Uncle Hewitt Whyman is the Elder-in-residence at Kapooka and has served in the defence forces for many years. He credits joining the defence forces for teaching him discipline and community service that he used to benefit the Aboriginal community around Wagga Wagga as the founding member for RIVMED as well as the ALS. In recognition of Aboriginal soldiers serving in past wars, the Aboriginal Flag was in the front of the 2022 ANZAC Parade in Wagga Wagga.

Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation (RIVMED)

One highlighted area from the scheme was the ongoing poor health outcomes for Aboriginal People. By 1982, the burden placed on the Aboriginal Legal Service continued growing. Even though this service only had a solicitor and a field officer, it found it was increasingly acting on social welfare issues on behalf of the Aboriginal people of the area.

Thus, in 1982 a public meeting was called by the community and held at the Ashmont Baptist Church. Representatives from government departments including the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Health attended.

One of the outcomes of this, and the subsequent work and commitment of all people involved, was the purchase by the Aboriginal Land Council of the premises at 159 Docker Street Wagga Wagga. The premises were rented to RIVMED for a nominal amount. In 1988 RIVMED became an incorporated body. The Federal and NSW Governments over the coming years would fund the medical and dental services as well as the family health services, drug and alcohol services, and other primary health care services. It would not be until 1998 that RIVMED had its first General Practitioner Registrar, Dr Elizabeth Tooth.

Also noted in 1988, when RIVMED were attempting to open a dental clinic for Aboriginal people, a Councillor of that time, Councillor Eldridge, opposed the opening of the clinic being quoted by the Daily Advertiser as saying, “it was an example of apartheid because it was planned for the exclusive use of Aborigines”. Councillor Mary Kidson is quoted as opposing him on the issue, and although Councillor Eldridge stated that his view was the same as the “vast majority of people in this city”, Councillor Kidson’s act of opposing this helped allow the dental clinic to be created and it is still open to this day.

RIVMED then moved to its current location in Trail Street in 1999. In 2000, it received a Wagga Wagga City Council Heritage Grant that enabled the service to undertake minor renovations to make it reflect the role it had in providing culturally appropriate primary health care services to the Aboriginal people of the area.

Uncle Stan and Budyaaan Trust

Uncle Stan Grant Sr has worked on bringing the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language back into common usage after previous Government policies that restricted Aboriginal people from speaking their language or practicing their culture. He has been working on the Wiradjuri Language Reclamation Project for over 20 years and with the assistance of Dr John Rudder, who joined the project in 1997, they created A New Wiradjuri Dictionary and A Grammar of Wiradjuri Language. Uncle Stan is also instrumental in the Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Language, Culture, and Heritage that is taught at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. Since the courses beginnings in 2013 they have taught Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language, culture, and heritage to hundreds of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations people, and allies, helping to achieve Uncle Stan’s dream of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language becoming a living language.

Graduates have gone on to do many things with Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language such as: writing books containing Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language from children’s books through to novels, created animations, board games, and the teaching of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language in preschools, primary and secondary schools, and TAFE NSW.



Key Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations Data and Statistics for Wagga Wagga Local Government Area

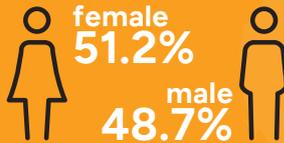
Wagga population

67,609

(ABS, 2021 Census)

First Nations population

4,471



First Nations youth 0-24 years

2,527

56.5%

Median age in Wagga Wagga

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders

31yrs old

Non-Indigenous

36yrs old

7 significant sites registered in the Wagga Wagga LGA

Wollundry Lagoon

Tony Ireland Park

Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Reserve

Gobba Beach

Bomen Lagoon

Bomen Axe Quarry

Flowerdale Lagoon



**Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri
Language, Culture,
and Heritage course
at Charles Sturt
University**

200
Students
graduated



**Were attending
an educational
institution in 2021**

41.2%

21.8%
Finished Year 12

10.5%
Enrolled in
secondary

**Aboriginal Medical
Service, RIVMED**

3,700
Active clients

**People who owned
their home outright**

First Nations

4.5%



Non-Indigenous

10.5%



**People currently
paying a mortgage**

First Nations

13.8%

Non-Indigenous

11.6%



Wagga Wagga City Council's Vision for Reconciliation and Progress

A connected community that thrives on positive relationships and cultural diversity, and provides equitable opportunities for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations community members.

Wagga Wagga City Council RAP Achievements 2019 – 2021 – Our Reconciliation Journey

Wagga Wagga City Council (WWCC) was able to achieve 73.6% of the actions set out in the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Some actions are continuous and will be included in this RAP 2022 - 2024 and some actions are currently in progress. Once the in progress actions are completed WWCC will have achieved 94.5% of the actions set out in the RAP. The remaining 5.5% actions were heavily impacted by COVID and were unable to be delivered.

These achievements made in the previous RAP 2017 - 2021 are acknowledged by WWCC with many Elders and community members noting the progress made by WWCC toward reconciliation and working with the First Nations community.

Tevita Fonua, 2022
9 years old



Some notable achievements from the current RAP

- Events were held for First Nations Days of Significance both in-person and online. Online videos were created for National Apology Day in 2021 and 2022 due to COVID restrictions. A truth telling panel was held in the E3 Art Space for NAIDOC Week in 2019.
 - Nguluway “Meeting Each Other” was held during Reconciliation Week 2022. This was a weeklong program of events that was organised in partnership between WWCC and the First Nations community. Events held during this week included a documentary screening of Occupation: Native in the WWCC Chambers, a youth event held at a community hub facilitated by members of RAAF, the Army and the Navy, a Truth Telling Panel held at WWCC City Library on the history of First Nations soldiers, and a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Choir in the Victory Memorial Gardens.
 - Sorry Day 2022 was held on 26 May 2022 and had a large turnout of members from the community. This included First Nations community members, non-Indigenous community members, WWCC Councillors and staff, and the state member for Wagga Wagga Dr Joe McGirr MP.
 - WWCC provided ongoing support to Elders and the community group, Mawang Gaway. WWCC staff consistently attend these meetings to share with First Nations community on progress being made regarding events and projects and a place for Council staff to be guided on project and strategic planning processes.
 - WWCC strengthened relations with Riverina Medical and Dental Corporation (RIVMED), Argyle Housing, and the Aboriginal Health Centre via partnerships to deliver NAIDOC week content online. In addition, WWCC provided event support to First Nation groups in the development and delivery of NAIDOC week events that were presented in locations across the City.
 - Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders have been delivering Cultural Awareness Training to all WWCC staff. This has ensured that all staff that work at WWCC have a base and shared understanding of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations culture, and how to work closely with Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations community.
 - WWCC’s Executive team meets with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders at a minimum of four times a year.
 - When acquiring corporate gifts, WWCC has purchased the gifts from Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri artists selling their artwork at council locations.
 - In 2019 Council’s Procurement Policy was updated with the Regional Procurement Preference Policy being adopted by WWCC. WWCC engages a local Indigenous owned and operated catering service for a range of events.
 - In 2020, Civil Construction finalised the recruitment of First Nations Peoples to fill four apprentice positions. In 2022, a First Nations Environmental Health Officer traineeship was established.
- Since the implementation of the Cultural Awareness Training there has been an increase in WWCC staff engagement with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders, or Mawang Gaway. WWCC’s Executive team now meets with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders a minimum of four times a year.**
- Elders and community provided valuable input to the development and adoption of WWCC’s Biodiversity Strategy: Maldhangilanha 2020-2030.
 - The First Nations community endorsed WWCC’s Acknowledgement to Country and Council has sourced from the Budyaan Trust a version in Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language. This Acknowledgement in language is displayed in prominent locations at Council buildings such as the Civic Centre front foyer and at the entrances to WWCC’s cultural facilities.
 - In line with WWCC’s adopted cultural protocols a list of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders is maintained on WWCC’s intranet advising on who is able to perform a Welcome to Country at WWCC events.

Some notable achievements from the current RAP

When purchasing corporate gifts, WWCC has purchased the gifts from Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri artists selling their artwork at council locations. In 2019, Council's procurement policy was updated with the Regional Procurement Preference Policy being adopted by WWCC. Council engages a local Indigenous owned and operated catering service for a range of events.

- To commence each calendar year for Ordinary Council meetings an Elder is engaged to conduct a Welcome to Country. Aunty Isabel Reid performed a Welcome to Country on the 18 January 2021 and Uncle James Ingram performed the Welcome to Country on 10 January 2022.
- WWCC has engaged with and received design input from local Elders and the First Nations Women's group on upgrades to Pomingalarna and Riverside development sites. In addition, signage was designed and approved to be displayed throughout the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri walking track, reflective of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture.
- Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri artwork was developed and displayed for the entrances to the Main City Levee bank. WWCC is actively working to ensure First Nation's People's content is available and visible in public spaces.
- Expansion of meaningful First Nation public programs and exhibitions have been delivered across WWCC Cultural facilities, inclusive of Elder led artistic talks and art gallery engagement programs. Embedding Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language in WWCC public promotional guides and campaigns has been strengthened. WWCC's Visitor Information Centre supports and promotes local led Wiradjuri cultural tours.

These, and other outcomes have been made possible from having an endorsed RAP and have strengthen the relationship between the local First Nations community and WWCC. By building on these outcomes and addressing any gaps and challenges learned over WWCC's first RAP, the relationship between WWCC and the First Nations community will only get stronger.



Tevita Fonua, 2022
9 years old



Our 2022-2024 Reconciliation Action Plan

Wagga Wagga City Council's Reconciliation Action Plan is an integral strategic document. The Action Plan was updated by using Council's learning's from the previous Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan July 2019 to June 2021, through quarterly meetings with the RAP working group along with ongoing engagement and consultation with Elders and community. Our RAP working group is made up of both WWCC staff and Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations Elders and community members. We currently have 14 First Nations people represented.

Some of these learnings included an analysis of what worked well and what barriers we faced when implementing the previous RAP. WWCC has a strong relationship with Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and community, and this can be seen in the ongoing consultations and partnerships that exist between WWCC and the Elders. By building on these relationships, we can plan to work together to deliver more community programs, events, and engagement such as cultural walks, but we can also plan to incorporate First Nations consultations into our plans from the beginning. This allows us to further cement organisation wide better practice to engage with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and community at the beginning stage of planning, which ensures that the relationship will continue being a strong one with local First Nations community in the future planning of Wagga Wagga.

The largest barrier we faced in the implementation of the previous RAP was COVID-19. This made consultations with the local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and First Nations community difficult when face-to-face consultations were not possible. To begin addressing this Council's City Library has been running a program at community centres where local First Nations Seniors can attend and receive training on how to use technology such as smartphones and laptops. Furthermore, while working in partnership with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders, WWCC has been assisting the First Nations community in creating plans and remote options for their Mawang Gaway Elders Community Consultative Committee. Mawang Gaway was established through respected Senior Elder Aunty Isabel Reid with support from WWCC as the local Aboriginal Consultative Committee. It now runs monthly meetings, which sees the first half (1hr) dedicated to community and the remainder (1hr) open to organisations who wish to engage in consultation with the group.

The RAP working group have been instrumental in shaping what should be taken forward with clear deliverables for WWCC to undertake. The RAP working group consisted of a range of members including Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders, Executive staff, senior managers, and operational staff from all areas of the organisation. The RAP working group have remained active across all actions and provided guidance as to how they can embed these actions in their areas of expertise.

The continuing commitment to a RAP is deemed by Council as best practice in acknowledging and working towards meaningful reconciliation and in genuinely respecting Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri country and First Nation peoples of our community.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

First Nations community members

- Aunty Patty Morris
- Aunty Jackie Ingram
- Mark Saddler
- Uncle James Ingram
- Aunty Cheryl Penrith
- Aunty Mary Atkinson
- Aunty Joycelan Williams
- Aunty Colleen Hughes
- Aunty Gail Manderson
- Aunty Judy Johnson
- Aunty Lorraine Tye
- Christine Harris
- John Fernando
- Uncle Greg Packer

Wagga Wagga City Council staff

- Bernard Higgins
(Aboriginal Community Development Officer)
- Sarah Lehman
(Social Planning Coordinator)
- Carly Hood
(Strategic Sustainability Advisor)
- Ashley Clark
(Arboriculturist)
- Madeleine Scully
(Manager Community Services)
- Kori West
(Corporate Governance Officer)
- Silas Darby
(Associate Director Projects)
- Mark Hewson
(Supervisor Contract Services)
- Henry Pavitt
(Manager Parks & Strategic Operations)
- Ben Creighton
(Strategic Asset Planner (Parks and Recreation))
- Mark Gardiner
(Manager Environment & Regulatory Services)
- Carolyn Rodney
(Chief Financial Officer)
- Scott Gray
(Chief Operating Officer)
- Janice Summerhayes
(Director Community)
- Warren Faulkner
(Director Infrastructure Services)



Tylor Fonua, 2022
13 years old

2022 - 2024 Action Plan



Relationships



Respect



Opportunities



Governance

Relationships



It is important to Wagga Wagga City Council to continue to develop positive relationships with our local First Nations community, as this will ensure we work respectfully towards shared goals. WWCC will continue to build these relationships through trust, mutual respect, and the provision of supportive environments.

Focus area: Community Strategic Plan 2040

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	1.1 Meet with local First Nations Elders to ensure appropriate level of guidance is obtained around future engagement and community needs. For example, quarterly Elder and Executive meetings	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	1.2 Strengthen relationship between Council and key organisations in the areas of health, education, and safety. For example: Mount Austin Clontarf Academy, Girls at the Centre Program at Mount Austin High School, and Riverina Medical and Dental Corporation	December 2023	Manager Community Services
	1.3 Engage with community and youth through the community hubs	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	1.4 Regularly engage and consult with First Nations stakeholders and organisations on Council plans, strategies or community programming	December 2024	Manager Community Services and Communications & Engagement Coordinator
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	December 2023 & December 2024	Communications & Engagement Coordinator
	2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week event	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	2.4 Assist local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations community members and groups to deliver at least one National Reconciliation Week event each year and at least one Council-led event	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	3.1 Continue to implement workforce learning and engagement opportunities that raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	3.2 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, for example on days of Aboriginal significance	December 2023	Communications & Engagement Coordinator
	3.3 Engage a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder to do a Cultural Walking Tour around Wollundry Lagoon and/or Wagga Beach area	December 2023 & December 2023	People & Safety Executive
	3.4 Engage with local schools regarding Naraagunnawali: Reconciliation in schools	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	3.5 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	3.6 Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	4.1 Review existing People and Culture policies and procedures to identify any updates required to be made to existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	4.2 Continue to communicate anti-discrimination related Council policies to all staff	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	4.3 Engage with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors to consult on culturally sensitive additions and/or amendments to policy and processes	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	4.4 Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive

Respect



Wagga Wagga City Council aims to increase understanding, appreciation, pride, and respect of First Nations Peoples cultures in order to create diverse, strong, and resilient communities.

Focus area: Community Strategic Plan 2040

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	5.1 Continue the implementation of Cultural Awareness Training	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	5.2 Engage in continuous quality improvement processes involving First Nations advisors when reviewing cultural learning needs within our organisation and modify the Cultural Awareness Training if needed	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	5.3 Include a Cultural Immersion element to the Cultural Awareness Training	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	5.4 Review and update a cultural protocol document for our staff	December 2024	Manager Community Services & People and Safety Executive
6. Recognise First Nations dates of significance and cultural events.	6.1 Include First Nations dates of significance in Council's calendars for internal use	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	6.2 Invite staff to attend Council run events of First Nations significance. For example: art exhibitions, guest speakers, and sporting events	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	6.3 Provide opportunities to showcase First Nations cultures at Council organised events such as Fusion, Fresh, etc	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	6.4 Promote Council and community led cultural events to the wider community via existing council databases and Council's online platforms	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	6.5 Acknowledge the inequities of the past and the First Nation's strength and survival in formal speeches in Australia Day and Sorry Day celebrations	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services



Respect

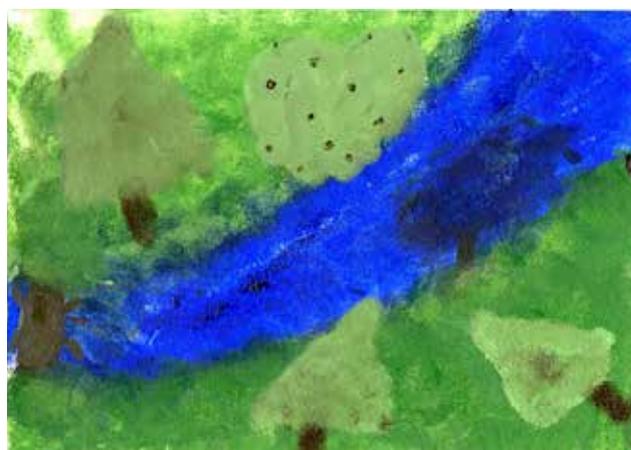
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Demonstrate respect to First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols.	7.1 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	7.2 Include a copy of the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations Community Cultural Protocols booklet, which includes protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, in all new staff induction packages	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	7.3 Update the Acknowledgement of Country, in Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and English, in Council offices, in the Civic Centre foyer, and on the external façade of the Civic Centre building where required	December 2023	Manager Plant, Fleet & Buildings
	7.4 Refresh the artwork that surrounds the Acknowledgement of Country throughout Council premises with the commissioned artwork that is created for each new RAP document	December 2024	Manager Community Services
	7.5 Invite a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder to perform a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	7.6 Invite a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder to perform a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at the first Council Meeting of the year and any Council Meeting that takes place during a First Nations date of significance	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Governance & Risk
	7.7 Develop and maintain a list on the Intranet of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders who can perform a Welcome to Country for Council reference	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	7.8 Engage with Uncle Stan Grant, Sr. to record an oral Acknowledgement of Country in Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language for Council's website and displays. Include information to assist in understanding the meaning and significance of Acknowledgement of Country's	December 2023	Manager Community Services
	7.9 Engage with local families to assist in the oral recording of their Family stories	December 2024	Manager Community Services
	7.10 Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all meetings	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	7.11 Print an Acknowledgement of Country in the Business Paper and in Council Meeting minutes	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Governance & Risk

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Preserve our region's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and history.	8.1 Investigate opportunities to create site specific public art opportunities that share Aboriginal stories with the Wagga Wagga community	December 2024	Manager Community Services
	8.2 Include information about Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri people and history in visitor attraction publications	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	8.3 Follow the Management Plan in place for each Significant Site in the Wagga Wagga LGA to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to maintaining the Significant Sites	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Environment & Regulatory Services
	8.4 Include Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and community in the consultation and planning for future developments such as at Pominalarna and Riverside	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	8.5 Include Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and community in the creation and implementation of the Marrambidya Wetlands Masterplan	December 2023	Manager Environment & Regulatory Services
	8.6 Include Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders and community in the planning of open spaces and recreational spaces	December 2023 & December 2024	Strategic Asset Planner (Parks & Recreation)
	8.7 Facilitate a History Program where twice a year Elders can present information sessions on Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture and history	December 2024	Manager Community Services
	8.8 Promote local Aboriginal culture in Council buildings by displaying culturally significant assets such as artworks, artefacts, books, and documents	December 2024	Manager Community Services
	8.9 Undertake programs to record Aboriginal People's oral histories at the Museum of the Riverina and Wagga Wagga City Library	December 2024	Manager Community Services
9. Strengthen the relationship between the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri community and the broader community by increasing knowledge about local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture and history.	9.1 Identify appropriate sites for re-naming/naming of parks and significant places in Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri language in consultation with the Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri community. This is to reflect the history of the local area and the importance of Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri culture	December 2023 & December 2024	Strategic Asset Planner (Parks & Recreation) Manager Development Assessment & Building Certification
	9.2 Collaborate with key agencies to implement the Management Plan for recognised Aboriginal Nominated Places (November 2016) within the LGA	December 2024	Manager Environment & Regulatory Services
	9.3 Work with NSW Local Land Services and Office of Environment and Heritage to investigate further declarations of Aboriginal Places in the Wagga Wagga LGA	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Environment & Regulatory Services
	9.4 Update the Wagga Wagga City Council webpages to better represent the Significant sites within the Wagga Wagga LGA	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	10.1 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	10.2 Continue HR additional leave provision for Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri and First Nations staff to participate in NAIDOC Week	December 2023 & December 2024	People and Safety Executive
	10.3 Support the NAIDOC committee with their NAIDOC week events through financial contribution and city-wide promotion of suite of events and programming	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	10.4 Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff	December 2023 & December 2024	Communications & Engagement Coordinator
	10.5 Add First Nations dates of significance to all internal calendar to promote the dates to the wider community	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer



Teana Fonua, 2022
11 years old

Opportunities



Wagga Wagga City Council will aim to establish, and better support, employment, procurement, and professional development opportunities for First Nations Peoples, groups, and organisations for a diverse and inclusive community.

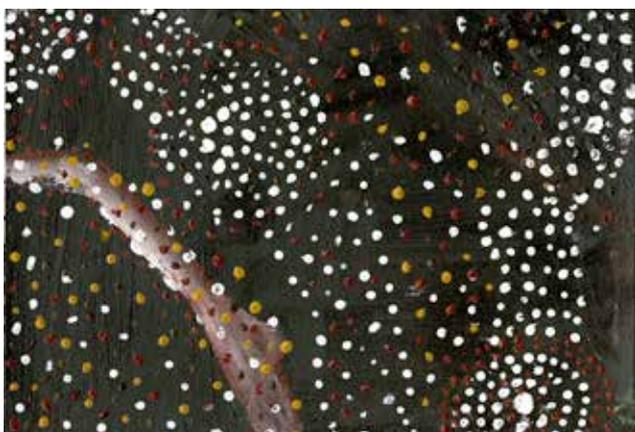
Focus area: Community Strategic Plan 2040

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention, and professional development.	11.1 Develop and implement a First Nations Peoples Employment & Retention Strategy. The strategy is to also assist in reviewing existing recruitment procedures and policies and remove identified barriers to First Nations participation in our workplace	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.2 Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.3 Engage with First Nations staff to consult on our First Nations Peoples Employment & Retention Strategy	December 2023	People & Safety Executive
	11.4 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach First Nations stakeholders, for example, through the use of First Nations media	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.5 Create a minimum of 1 other Identified First Nations position within Council	December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.6 Continue cadetships, traineeships and apprenticeship opportunities in Council for First Nations People's. Create pathways for these positions to transition into full-time positions	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.7 Include a Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elder and/or senior community representative on recruitment and selection panels for Identified position	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	11.8 Host a stall at local Aboriginal employment expos to highlight career opportunities within Council	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
12. Encourage staff to actively participate in First Nations programs, projects, and events.	12.1 Promote volunteering opportunities for Council staff to volunteer with First Nations organisations, programs, events, and activities	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	12.2 Identify available volunteering opportunities with local First Nations organisations	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Support First Nations youth to develop their skills both culturally and for future employment.	13.1 Develop and promote work experience opportunities at Council for First Nations school students	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
	13.2 Engage with First Nations youth at local job and employment expo's	December 2023 & December 2024	People & Safety Executive
14. Value First Nations consultation on Council programs and projects.	14.1 The Executive team to meet quarterly with the local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders to review current and proposed Council programs and projects	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	14.2 Develop and publish on the intranet a registered list of First Nations groups to be consulted with about Council projects and programs	December 2023	Manager Community Services
	14.3 Include First Nations elements (interpretive signage, use of traditional names, native plants, etc) in Council projects such as playgrounds, landscaping, gardens, and buildings	December 2023 & December 2024	Strategic Asset Planner (Parks & Recreation)
	14.4 Consult with First Nations youth in relevant policy development and decision making	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
15. Integrate First Nations objectives into Council strategic plans and policies.	15.1 Recognise the importance of and promote cultural practices in urban spaces around Wagga Wagga through our strategic plans and management plans	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	15.2 Provide onsite interpretive signage outlining the cultural significance and history of significant Aboriginal places within the Wagga Wagga LGA	December 2023 & December 2024	Strategic Asset Planner (Parks & Recreation)

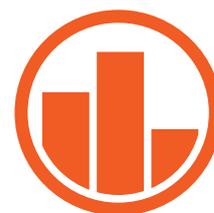


Taniesha Fonua, 2022
15 years old

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	16.1 Promote the sourcing of corporate gifts from local First Nations businesses	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.2 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from First Nations businesses to staff	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.3 Deliver a community education program yearly for First Nations businesses to inform business owners how they can become suppliers to Council	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.4 Assist First Nations businesses to better understand how to provide quotations and bid for Council tenders by providing advice and support on the process	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.5 Promote opportunities to First Nations creatives to sell their art and cultural objects at the Wagga Wagga Visitor Information Centre and other Council outlets	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	16.6 Incorporate First Nations businesses and/or businesses which employ a high percentage of First Nations employees into Council's electronic procurement system. Include with requests in vendor management systems the expression of interest process	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.7 Advocate for local government policy and legislative reform to local government authorities, Indigenous business, Economic Policy Branch, NSW Policy and Reform Aboriginal Affairs, to allow direct purchase agreements to First Nations owned businesses and/or businesses which employ a high percentage of First Nations employees, where value for money is evident	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.8 Develop and communicate to staff a regularly updated list of First Nations businesses that can be used to procure goods and services	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	16.9 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from First Nations businesses	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer

Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
17. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	17.1 Maintain First Nations representation on the RWG	2023 & 2024 (March, June, September, December)	Manager Community Services
	17.2 RWG to meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation	2023 & 2024 (March, June, September, December)	Manager Community Services
18. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	18.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	18.2 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	18.3 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	December 2023 & December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
	18.4 Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from Executive/senior management. Nominate another RAP champion from within Council and two RAP champions from within the community. The RAP champions will meet monthly with the Aboriginal Community Development Officer	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
19. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	19.1 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	19.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	August 2023, August 2024	Manager Community Services
	19.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	30 September – 2023 & 2024	Manager Community Services
	19.4 Report RAP progress at quarterly RAP Working Group meetings	December 2023 & December 2024	Manager Community Services
	19.5 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually	December 2023 & December 2024	Corporate Strategy Coordinator
	19.6 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer	May 2024	People & Safety Executive
20. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	20.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	December 2024	Manager Community Services

Acknowledgement of RAP Artwork

In the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan, Wagga Wagga City Council put out an expression of interest to locally based Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri artists. On advice from Elders and Mawang Gaway, the preference was to offer the opportunity to First Nations young people who applied. The panel included Wagga Wagga City Council's Social Planning Coordinator, Aboriginal Community Development Officer, Cultural Officer, Communications and Engagement Coordinator, along with two Senior Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri Elders. The successful applicants included a family of four local Wiradjuri/Wiradyuri young people. We had a number of other submissions and want to acknowledge the amazing local talent.



Teana Fonua, 2022
11 Years old

If you have any questions regarding Wagga Wagga City Council's Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024, please contact

Wagga Wagga City Council Social Planning Team

Name: Bernard Higgins
Position: Aboriginal Community Development Officer
Phone: 0437 691 812
Email: higgins.bernard@wagga.nsw.gov.au

