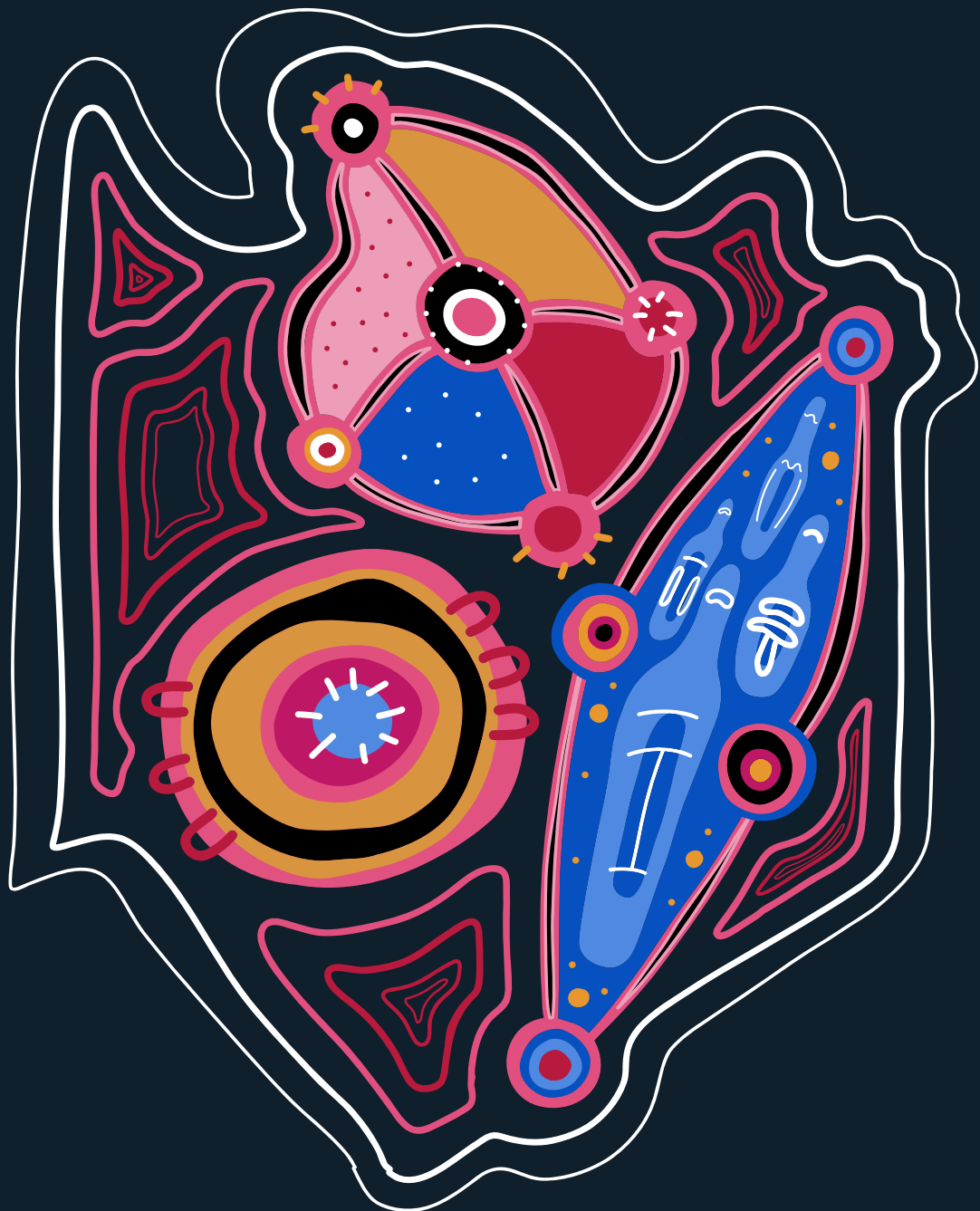


# Koort Karnadjil Mya

Heart Truth Voice  
First Nations Strategy



### Acknowledgement of Whadjuk Noongar Peoples

The City of Belmont acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of these lands and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We further acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs, connection and relationship with this land which continues today.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within the City of Belmont.

Detail of Jupp Lane mural by Shane Yondee Hansen

## Contents

Mayor’s Message	2
Codesign group’s message	3
About the Strategy	4
Strategic alignment	5
City of Belmont profile	6
The journey to a strategy	8
Consultation and development	9
Priority areas and strategies	11
Priority Area 1: Respecting and celebrating	11
Priority Area 2: Empowerment, advocacy, and partnerships	12
Priority Area 3: Capacity building	12
Priority Area 4: Cultural safety	12
Delivering on the Strategy and measuring success	13

Artwork Acknowledgment:

Koort Karnadjil Mya  
(Heart Truth Voice)  
Front cover digital artwork  
by Jarni McGuire

Visually represents the journey and core principles of the Koort, Karnadjil Mya Strategy. It depicts our people and emphasises the vital importance of First Nations Voices. The heart shape, formed by journey lines, symbolises the enduring resilience of our people and our continued path forward together in the City of Belmont.

### Alternative Formats

This document is available on the City of Belmont website and can be requested in alternative formats including electronic format by email and in standard print.



## Mayor's Message

The Koort Karnadjil Mya First Nations Strategy is a meaningful step in celebrating and supporting the rich heritage, culture, and contributions of First Nations people in our City of Belmont community.

'Koort Karnadjil Mya' translates to 'Heart, Truth, Voice' in Noongar. This name reflects the spirit of collaboration and respect that has guided the development of this Strategy.

I want to acknowledge and sincerely thank the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-design group, for their invaluable insights, as well as the ongoing contributions of the City of Belmont Aboriginal Advisory Group.

Their support and guidance ensure the Strategy reflects the aspirations and priorities of the First Nations community.

This Strategy reinforces our commitment to honouring First Nations heritage, building strong partnerships, advocating for meaningful change, and fostering cultural safety across our city.

It encourages us to learn from and work with First Nations people, creating stronger connections and delivering meaningful outcomes with our community.

**Robert Rossi**  
Mayor



## Codesign group's message



The codesign group members were engaged to codesign the City of Belmont Koort Karnadjil Mya (Heart Truth Voice) First Nations Strategy. The forum provided an opportunity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members, organisations or businesses to inform, support and codesign a strategy with the City. It is important to note that this group has been engaged for this specific project but does not replace the City's Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG).

We have developed an authentically codesigned First Nations Strategy, to capture the community's current needs, priorities and future aspirations. For six weeks we worked to brainstorm and share information on community needs and aspirations for First Nations people in the City of Belmont, resulting in 4 key priority areas for actioning.

As representatives of and direct community members with a diversity of voices, we have undertaken this work following the principles of sharing culture, collaboration, accountability, and partnership. We use our voice to advocate and lobby for change, build relationships together, and develop inclusive and transparent initiatives.

We thank the Council for affording this empowering opportunity and demonstrating national leadership in their codesign approach.

**First Nations Strategy  
Codesign Group**





# About the Strategy

The City of Belmont Koort Karnadjil Mya First Nations Strategy (the Strategy) reflects the City of Belmont’s journey to this point and our learnings with the City’s First Nations community.

It outlines the City’s commitment to create an inclusive environment in which First Nations cultures are key focus areas. It aims to ensure First Nations people remain at the heart of conversations in all relevant initiatives and programs and that their aspirations, needs, and stories are heard, acknowledged, and prioritised.

This Strategy captures what First Nations people have told the City during engagement activities, whilst also incorporating the extensive community feedback and information captured in the ‘National Agreement on Closing The Gap 2020’, the WA State Government’s ‘A Path Forward’, the ‘Uluru Statement from the Heart’, Reconciliation Australia’s ‘Reconciliation Action Plan’ (RAP) core pillars and the City’s overarching 2020-2040 Strategic Community Plan. The information from these rich bodies of work and the feedback that informed them has been collected and formulated into four Priority Areas.

The Priority Areas and associated Strategies are elevated at a strategic level to provide a broad focus to developing actions to achieve them, through further consultation with community and stakeholders, particularly First Nations people. This allows us to be flexible in determining specific actions and their timing to best respond to dynamic community opportunities, resourcing, and collaboration potential. City strategies have associated Implementation Plans that capture these dynamic priority actions and are regularly reviewed, informing our annual Corporate Business Plan and Budget.

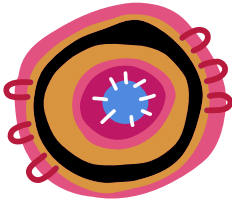
Strategy Title – Koort Karnadjil Mya (Heart Truth Voice)

In the initial workshops the codesign group identified that it was important for them that the First Nations Strategy had a title that was dual-named with the Noongar language and reflected a vision for a way forward with the City and First Nations peoples.

**Koort** is the Noongar word for Heart and it represents healing and recovery for First Nations peoples. It is used here to acknowledge the collective trauma experienced by the First Nations community alongside the will to build authentic and inclusive relationships that empower this community through self-determination.

**Karnadjil** is the Noongar word for Truth and it represents the community working with the City to move forward in a genuine manner to create tangible change based on the concerns and cultural knowledge of First Nations peoples.

**Mya** is the Noongar word for Voice representing the desire for local First Nations people to work with the City to strengthen and empower the First Nations people of Belmont to be further included and represented.



We commit to meaningful two-way listening and partnerships with Local First Nations people and Allies, to inform the Implementation Plan and detailed project planning and collaborative delivery where possible.



# Strategic alignment

Koort Karnadjil Mya – Heart Truth Voice – First Nations Strategy aligns to the City’s Strategic Community Plan 2020–2040.



## People

**Strategy: 1.2** - Facilitate community health and wellbeing.

**Strategy: 2.1** - Respect, protect and celebrate our shared living histories, heritage and cultural diversity.

**Strategy: 2.2** - Increase recognition and respect for local First Nations peoples, places and stories.

## Prosperity

**Strategy: 9.3** - Enhance corporate social responsibility and promote the benefits this brings to both the business sector, the environment and the wider community.

**Strategy: 9.4** - Facilitate access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

## Performance

**Strategy: 10.1** - Deliver effective, fair and transparent leadership and governance.

**Strategy: 10.4** - Support collaboration and partnerships to deliver key outcomes for our City.

**Strategy: 11.1** - Effectively inform and engage the community about local services, events and City matters.

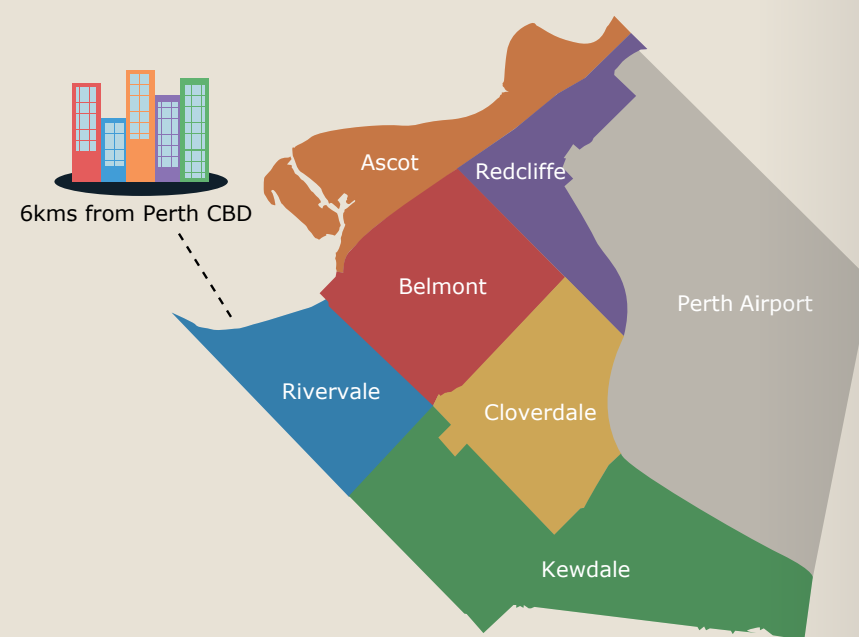
**Strategy: 11.2** - Deliver the best possible customer service and experiences.



## City of Belmont profile

The City of Belmont is a metropolitan Local Government Area situated six kilometers from the Perth CBD. It comprises six suburbs including Ascot, Belmont, Cloverdale, Kewdale, Rivervale, Redcliffe plus the Perth Airport precinct.

Through our role as a Local Government Authority, the City identifies the needs of our diverse community by working in partnership with First Nations people to achieve their full potential through advocacy, building and strengthening partnerships, facilitating culturally appropriate initiatives and ongoing engagement.



**The City of Belmont's First Nations local history has been summarised by respected Noongar Elder, Dr Noel Nannup:**

### Nganya Kallep – My land Goorgyp

Goorgyp is the Whadjuk Noongar word for the Belmont area where the river runs through the land. The name may be derived from goorgeeba, the reeds on the riverbed, or koordjikotji, the reed warbler birds that live in them.

This area was part of a territory held by a family group of Noongar people known as the Beeloo. In 1829, at the time of colonisation, the family was headed by Munday. He is remembered locally through the naming of Munday Swamp, an ancient turtle fishing ground at the edge of Perth Airport.

The Swan River and local waterways such as Tomato Lake were ideal for hunting and fishing. The Wargyl, the creation serpent, was said to have formed the Swan River as he moved towards the sea. The deep part of the river where the banks dropped off sharply was said to be patrolled by the Wargyl, and swimming in that area was forbidden. The original route of Great Eastern Highway was based on traditional Aboriginal Dreaming trails, leading Noongar communities to the coast and the hills.

First Nations people continue to live and work in the City making a valuable contribution to its economy and culture.

At the 2021 Census, there were 42,257 residents living in the City, with 2.7% of the community (1,129 people) living in 549 households identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, higher than the Greater Perth Metropolitan average of 2.0%.

The median age of First Nations community members is 27 years of age with the highest proportion of the community aged 0-24 years (45.7%) and 6.6% of the population being over the age of 65.

Celebrating and respecting the significant First Nations cultures, histories and ongoing contributions to the community of Belmont will remain an ongoing focus for the City.

Analysis of 2021 Census data shows that in the City of Belmont, 46% of First Nations households earned \$999 or less per week in comparison to 36% of First Nations people earning this amount in the rest of WA.

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is an index that scores relative disadvantage for local government areas. Belmont's 2021 SEIFA score of 987 (greater Perth metro average is 1,040) is the third lowest score amongst all other Perth metropolitan local government areas, with pockets of greater disadvantage in some suburbs.

In line with research including that captured in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, First Nations people remain overrepresented in indicators of wellbeing disadvantage including life expectancy, health, education and housing security, and ongoing activity to support efforts to Close the Gap will remain a priority for the City.

Particularly with regard to employment and enterprise, economic empowerment will be a key focus for the City. With a strong business sector with 4,240 local businesses providing 52,692 local jobs, the highest proportion of First Nations people are employed as Professionals at 17.3%, which is greater than the WA average of 13.9%. Clerical and Administrative Workers (16.1% Belmont vs 11.4% WA), Machinery Operators

and Drivers (15.1% Belmont vs 13.6% WA), Technicians and Trades Workers (13.6% Belmont vs 14.7% WA) and Community and Personal Service Workers (11.9% Belmont vs 15.3% WA) are the next highest proportion of First Nations employment types. The industry in which the highest proportion of First Nations community members work is Iron Ore Mining at 9.9% (WA 9.2%).

There are a small number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and other First Nations focused service providers within Belmont, though those that are based here are very active and valued.

Understanding of employment, training, and other economic data, along with ongoing engagement and research, will inform future priority economic actions focused on First Nations people. With a strong business sector in Belmont and potential for further growth, there is opportunity to attract more ACCOs and First Nations businesses and to broadly advance local First Nations peoples' economic opportunities and empowerment.



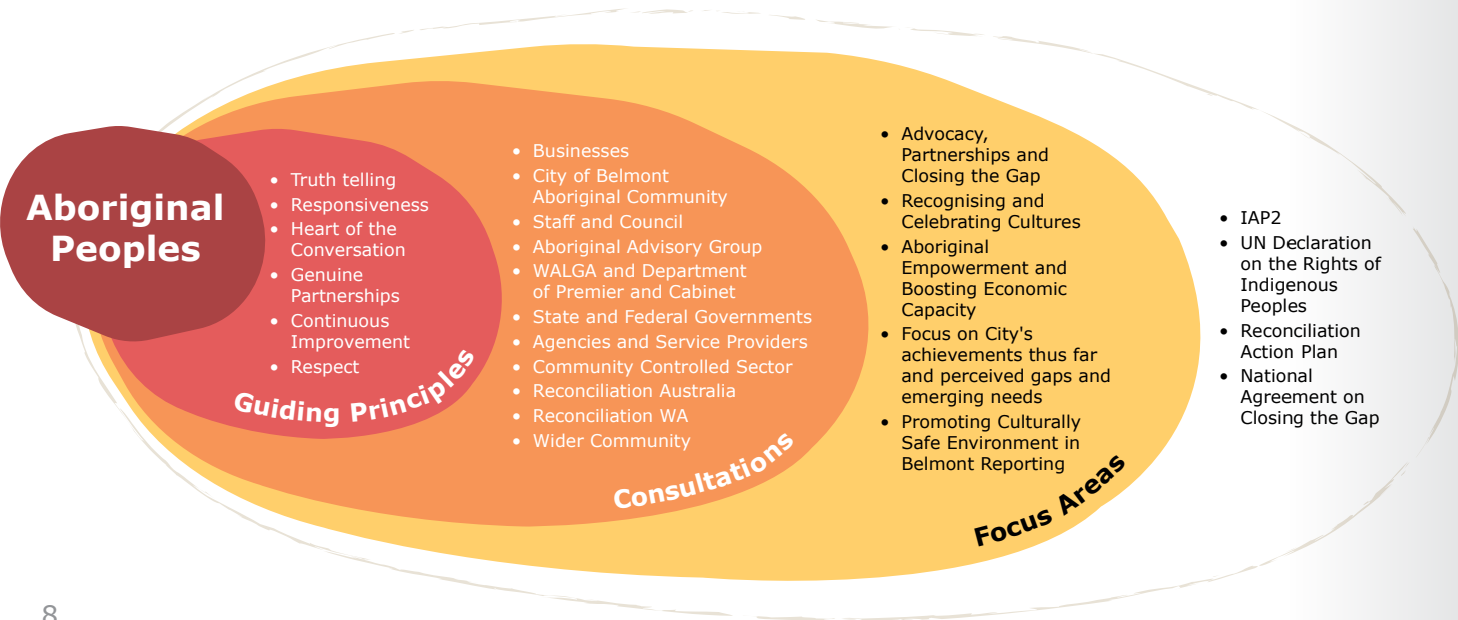


# The journey to a strategy

The City of Belmont has worked for many years with First Nations peoples with early discussions documented in the 2010 ‘Listening – Current Status and Project Scope of Aboriginal Engagement Plan’ report. The City continued to consult with internal and external stakeholders and the community which led to the development of our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2015 – 2017, which was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. We continued to progress our RAP actions beyond 2017, whilst also undergoing a reflection period on our role in supporting and empowering First Nations peoples whilst listening to community feedback to determine our way forward in this area.

The City has achieved a number of key actions over the past six years including the:	
▪ Establishment of an Aboriginal Advisory Group operating since 2014.	
▪ Launch of a First Nations Service Persons memorial plaque permanently displayed on the City’s War Memorial, the first of its kind in WA.	
▪ Recognition of Close the Gap Day, National Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks annually with events growing each year.	
▪ Provision of regular Cultural Awareness Training for both staff and community members.	
▪ Engagement of Noongar Outreach Services to provide advice, support and outreach services to vulnerable and street present First Nations people.	
▪ Welcome To Country and other cultural ceremonies performed at City events including at each Citizenship ceremony.	
▪ Interactive First Nations history displayed at the City’s Museum.	
▪ On-going collaboration with a range of partners to deliver programs and activities with First Nations people.	

Following these achievements, the City undertook a period of reflection that included feedback from the Aboriginal Advisory Group and wider community. Officers also completed a literature review from which the Community and Cultural Respect Plan was developed to inform our next steps and provide the guiding principles, stakeholder mapping, draft focus areas, and research influences for our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples at the heart of the process. The Community and Cultural Respect Plan featured the below diagram to help visualise these relationships and influence centred around First Nations peoples.



# Consultation and development

By 2020, based on these learnings and the changes in the social and political context since the beginning of our reconciliation journey, it was agreed that development of a Strategy should be explored as opposed to a new RAP.

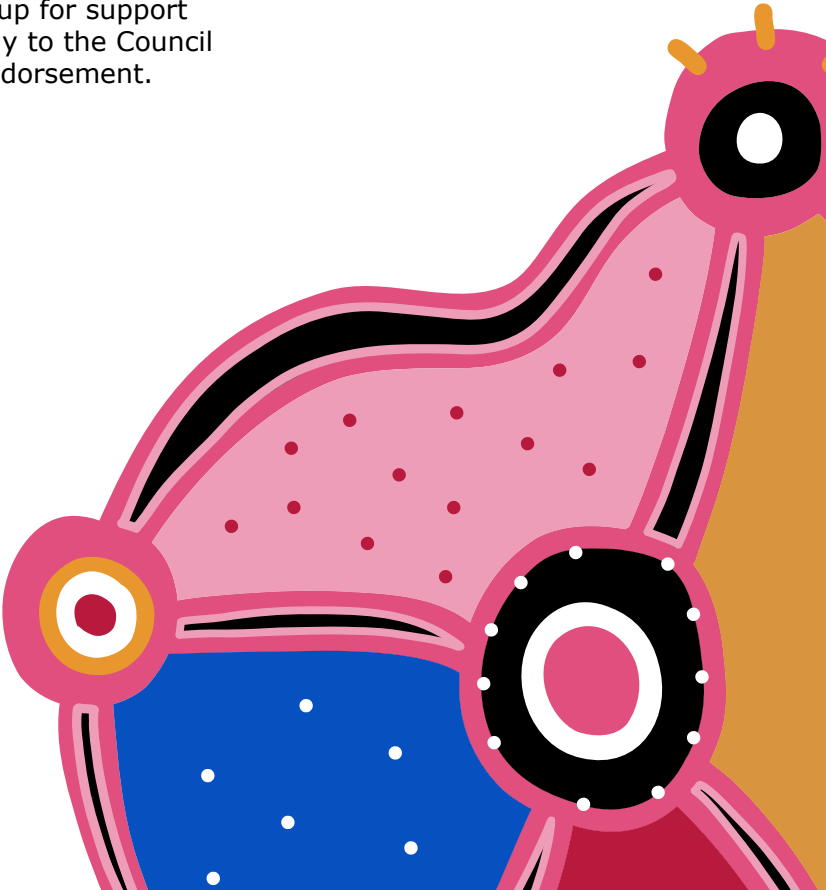
This was consistent with our other community-based strategies, and also allows us to extend our First Nations roles and objectives outside of the organization, whereas a RAP framework principally looks inward on an organisation’s internal Reconciliation efforts. Local government has a strong outward facing community leadership role that is considered to be better captured in a Strategy. We will continue to explore how the RAP framework might be aligned as part of implementation planning.

It was important to the City that best practice methods of engagement were used when developing the strategy, and that the document is codesigned with Traditional Owners and local First Nations community members.

The Aboriginal Advisory Group was informed of the City’s intentions and formed a working group to establish ideas and identify categories, develop the Strategy survey, and agree on a codesign process.

A codesign process meant that instead of consulting with First Nations people and then City officers interpreting feedback and identifying themes and strategies, First Nations People participate in meetings to work alongside officers to consider the consultation feedback together, agree on common themes together, identify priority strategies together, and even contribute to some of the format and text of the Strategy. The City refined the document to align to our templates for Strategies, and included relevant references to research and process, and incorporate input from senior management before a final draft went back to the codesign group for support and ultimately to the Council for formal endorsement.

From these early discussions with the working group, a conceptual ‘Priority Wheel’ reflecting the Noongar Six Seasons was developed and used within the survey to prompt thematic discussion. This survey was the first of its kind for the City and relied more on pictorial cues rather than the written word reflective of feedback received from the Aboriginal Advisory Group and broader community.





The City then engaged and consulted with First Nations community members, wider community, stakeholders, businesses and staff through online and written surveys. The consultation took place during Advisory Group meetings, pop-up consultation booths, City events, one-on-one interviews, and consultation workshops.

An Expression of Interest process was undertaken to seek members of a Codesign Group as well as a culturally appropriate consultant appointed through a tender process to facilitate the workshops. The codesign workshops took place over six weeks and consisted of eleven members including Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners, First Nations community members, and service providers.

## Priority areas and strategies

The below Priority Areas and associated Strategies were determined from the codesign process:



### Priority Area 1: Respecting and celebrating

The City acknowledges the ongoing significance of Whadjuk Noongar and other First Nations peoples' cultures and the importance of increasing the awareness, sustainability and celebration of heritage, language and cultural expression. We recognise and respect that First Nations people are best placed to provide expertise in decision making that affects them.

#### Strategies:

- 1.1.** Acknowledge the expertise of First Nations people in their own lives, needs, families, communities and cultures, and that their unique worldviews and voices should be at the heart of decision making that directly affects them.
- 1.2.** Establish engagement practices that appropriately facilitate and elevate First Nations voices in City decision making and provide timely and relevant information.
- 1.3.** Promote & celebrate local First Nations people's achievements, contributions, cultures and heritage.
- 1.4.** Investigate opportunities for the development of cultural spaces.
- 1.5.** Research and document local First Nations peoples' cultures, heritage, connection to land and histories.



Priority Area 2:  
Empowerment,  
advocacy, and  
partnerships

The City will support advocacy efforts and the empowerment of First Nations peoples to lead and self-manage actions in their own interests with an emphasis on collaboration.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Facilitate partnerships with and between relevant ACCOs that seek to increase opportunities for self-determination and empowerment within the First Nations community, providing leadership and governance support where appropriate.
- 2.2 Foster and participate in partnerships with ACCOs, community groups, agencies and other stakeholders to advance collaboration in actioning the Strategy.
- 2.3 Support First Nations peoples’ capacity and efforts to advocate in their own interests, and where appropriate consider requests to the City to act as strong advocates alongside them.

Priority Area 3:  
Capacity building

The City will pursue opportunities to support building the capacity of individuals and groups to help address persistent and emerging needs, particularly those within the Closing the Gap - Priority Areas and Targets.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Work with relevant ACCOs, agencies and other stakeholders to develop initiatives to meet Closing the Gap - Priority Areas and Targets.
- 3.2 Develop capacity building pathways that specifically target the areas of education, employment and training, leveraging the City’s business connections to increase the participation of First Nations peoples in economic development.
- 3.3 Seek to improve access to essential services within the City.

Priority Area 4:  
Cultural safety

The City will strengthen cultural safety within our organisation and promote its benefits throughout the community through effective protocols, training and leadership.

Strategies:

- 4.1 Enhance cultural awareness training programs for Council, staff and the community.
- 4.2 Adopt First Nations Cultural Protocols and relevant policies to improve culturally safe practices.
- 4.3 Ensure an inclusive and culturally safe working environment.
- 4.4 Actively promote cultural safety and racial justice in the community.

Delivering on the Strategy and measuring success



The City of Belmont Koort Karnadjil Mya First Nations Strategy will guide the City into the future, however we understand that there may be changes in community needs and priorities. To ensure we can respond to these changes, a dynamic rolling three-year Implementation Plan is used to detail actions on the strategies whilst allowing flexibility to adapt as required.

This Implementation Plan will also record the alignment of all actions to Reconciliation Australia’s RAP pillars, and we will explore future opportunities to liaise with Reconciliation Australia on how the Implementation Plan might formalise as a RAP. This dynamic plan then translates to endorsed annual actions through the City’s Corporate Business Planning process, where management and Council endorse annual actions and budget.

Reporting back to community on progress against the Strategy and the Implementation Plan will be critical, and we commit to establishing a reporting framework and being open and transparent in recording and communicating outcomes and progress to the community.





City of  
**Belmont**

215 Wright Street, Cloverdale WA 6105  
Locked Bag 379, Cloverdale WA 6985  
Open 8:30am - 4:45pm, Monday - Friday  
☎ PH: (08) 9477 7222  
☎ A/H: (08) 9477 7224

✉ [belmont@belmont.wa.gov.au](mailto:belmont@belmont.wa.gov.au)  
🌐 [belmont.wa.gov.au](http://belmont.wa.gov.au)  
f📷 BelmontCouncilWA  
in City-of-Belmont-WA  
📺 CityofBelmontWA