



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 5 December

## **CITY AND DJA DJA WURRUNG SIGN UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (trading as DJAARA) and the City of Greater Bendigo (the City) today signed a unique partnership agreement “Yilingga Marna” (“shake hands”), a 12-month Local Area Agreement, which builds on DJAARA’s Recognition and Settlement Agreement with the State of Victoria.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter welcomed the new agreement, which he described as turbocharging DJAARA’s relationship with the City.

“Yilingga Marna builds on existing mutual trust and respect between DJAARA and the City, and takes agreement-making between our organisations to a new level,” Mr Carter said.

“The agreement recognises the unique status and rights of Dja Dja Wurrung People as Traditional Owners and acknowledges the past, when our People were forcibly removed from their homelands and Country was turned upside down in the frenzied grab for gold and grazing land.

“This milestone agreement will create a better outcome for both parties.

“It will streamline procedures, which will enable the City to continue delivering benefits for the community, while supporting the healing of Dja Dja Wurrung Country and Dja Dja Wurrung People.

“We congratulate the City of Greater Bendigo on its commitment and leadership in developing this initiative.”

City CEO Craig Niemann said he was proud of the signed agreement and looked forward to it strengthening the City's productive working relationship with DJAARA.

"As we continue to invest in this relationship, we learn more about the priorities of each organisation and, in turn, are supporting each other to deliver great outcomes," Mr Niemann said.

"We hope this agreement could be a model for Local Government across Australia to support reconciliation with, and self-determination of, Traditional Owners.

"The agreement also delivers on a number of commitments in the City's *Barpangu* Reconciliation Plan to help Dja Dja Wurrung people deliver on their priorities to heal Country."

Included in Yilingga Marna is the creation of a new Partnership Builder role to facilitate the smooth implementation of the agreement and maximise the opportunities that arise from the agreement.