



**Dja Dja Wurrung Clans  
Aboriginal Corporation**

7<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Cr. Marg O'Rourke  
Mayor  
City of Greater Bendigo  
Lyttleton Terrace  
Bendigo, Vic 3550

1/70 Powells Ave, East Bewndigo  
14 Forest Street, Bendigo  
PO Box 1026  
Bendigo Vic 3552  
PH: (03) 5444 2888  
Fax: (03) 5441 6472

Dear Mayor O'Rourke,

**Letter of Support for the City of Greater Bendigo's Application to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in the Category of Gastronomy**

On behalf of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation I am very pleased to support the City's application to join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in the Category of Gastronomy. The Dja Dja Wurrung has worked closely with the City in the development of this application, including having two of our members design the logo that is being used as part of the application and for the ongoing regional gastronomy plan. We are very supportive of how the City has understood the importance of the Dhelkunya Dja (Healing Country) Plan and its implementation through key elements of the application and the four-year implementation plan.

Healing Country creates healthy country, healthy food and healthy people.

Before European colonization, the natural places within Dja Dja Wurrung Country were well known, had a name and song and were celebrated as part of our culture. Our plan for our Country reaffirms our aspirations and describes the future of our people, the Traditional Owners of Dja Dja Wurrung Country. Our Vision is for the health and wellbeing of our people to be strong, and underpinned by our living culture, for our lands and waters to be in good condition and actively managed to protect our values and to promote the laws, culture and rights of all Dja Dja Wurrung.

In our Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan we describe the pathway our community has determined it needs to take to rebuild and prosper. Our Ancestors were the experts who managed this land. They were the first conservationists who respected the environment and had the right management in place. They knew of our Country's plants and animals, cycles and systems. They understood the role that fire plays in regeneration and in promoting the balance of species and ecosystems. This knowledge has been built up over generations of observation and management and passed down.

We are gardeners of the environment. We care for the land and it provides for us. We use lomandra and matt rush to weave baskets. We hunt wallaby, emu and goanna. We eat the eels, mussels, crayfish and yellow belly from our streams. We gather bardi grubs and duck eggs, nardoo and yam daisies and wattle seeds for food and medicine. We use buloke and red gum timber for our tools and



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ceremonies. We need to manage our Country in the right way if we want it to continue to provide for our food and medicinal needs into the future.

Victoria's first Recognition and Settlement Agreement was signed with the Dja Dja Wurrung. We are working across the region to implement our Country Plan including using Dja Dja names for our bush tucker heritage. This is particularly important in the International Year of Indigenous Languages. We are very keen to work with the City and region to ensure that our culture is shared across the UNESCO Creative Cities network and particularly with other cities of gastronomy.

We look forward to the opportunity that membership of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network provides to the City and the Dja Dja Wurrung.

Regards,

Rodney Carter  
Chief Executive Officer  
Dja Dja Wurrung Group