Memorials, Plaques & Interpretive Signs Policy

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<td>General Manager City Assets &amp; Environment</td>
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Memorials and Plaques Policy
1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent and transparent policy framework to deal sensitively with the placement, installation, construction, alteration, maintenance and removal of a range of memorials, plaques and interpretive signs that commemorate Kingston people, culture and history in the City of Kingston. This includes installations on or in buildings, on roadsides and events on municipal roads and other public land.

This policy applies to all plaques, memorials and interpretive signs installed in Kingston on public land and in some instances on private property. This policy does not cover public art.

2. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to the following categories of plaques, signs and memorials in the City of Kingston, the definitions are provided:

- **Plaques** are a flat tablet which includes text and/or images that are placed on a wall, seat or similar feature or item of furniture, to commemorate a person, organisation, place, and event or provide historical or other information relevant to its location. They have a fixed term life. The provision of an item of infrastructure, such as a bench seat or post, to which the plaque is attached may be included;

- **Interpretive Signs** are information boards which include text and/or images which commemorate an event or a person and/or provide historical context or other information relevant to the location. Interpretive signs may be free standing or attached to another object or building and usually have a fixed term life;

- **Memorials** are permanent objects or structures designed specifically to commemorate an individual, association or event. A plaque on a raised plinth is considered a memorial. Other examples include a park structure or shelter. They are durable and long-lasting. A sculpture or fabricated art work may have a dedication but it is considered under the Public Arts Policy.

- **Commemorative trees** planted in honour or memory of a person or persons, organisations or event;

- **Landscape features** which may include enhancement of specific areas of existing parks;

- **Restoration of an existing feature or memorial** undertaken by or in conjunction with a community group to commemorate a place, organisation, event or person. This may be a suitable alternative to creating a new memorial; and

- **Roadside fatality memorials** are small markers with or without inscription plaques that are provided for the express purpose of commemorating a person or persons that have died in an accident at that site. Specifically refers to memorials on Council roads only and are usually ephemeral.

- **Permanent** memorials are any type of plaque, sign or monument designed and constructed for permanency. They are routinely maintained and refurbished.

- **Fixed term** memorials are any type of plaque, sign, furniture, tree or feature which has a fixed life. It may be maintained but not renewed. Typical life spans are between 5 and 15 years.
• **Ephemeral** memorials are temporary memorials or markers with a life span up to 1 year. Alterations to and replacement of existing memorials are included in the scope of this policy.

The policy **does not** apply to:

• Works of art, the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of which is covered under the Public Art Policy.
• The naming of parks, roads, bridges and public facilities which are covered under the Naming of Streets Policy and the Naming of Reserves, Pavilions and Other Facilities Policy.

3. **Relevant Legislation**

3.1. **Local Government Act 1989**

• The Local Government Act – Schedule 10 Powers of Councils over Roads.

3.2. **Road Management Act**

• The Road Management Act provides Council authority with respect to non-arterial roads.

4. **Supporting Documents**

• Kingston City Council Standard Streetscape Suite.

5. **Policy Statements**

Kingston City Council recognises that plaques and signs are important in celebrating the region, historical events or the contribution of organisations or individuals to the municipality.

Commemorative devices such as signs, plaques or monuments are important in celebrating the achievements of the community and the City of Kingston as well as providing historical context for a particular location to current and future generations.

5.1. **Policy Objectives**

Kingston City Council is committed to achieving the following outcomes:

• Provide an opportunity to celebrate our diversity, culture, environment and heritage as expressed in memorials, signs or plaques;
• Provide an opportunity to recognise individuals or organisations that have made special contribution to the municipality;
• Appropriately honour and commemorate individuals with a connection to Kingston;
• Appropriately recognise particular achievements associated with a location;
• Respect the intended purpose of Kingston’s parks, gardens and open space;
• Provide a framework to effectively manage requests and offer of gifts and to engage with the community; and
• Ensure memorials are well maintained.
5.2. General Guidelines

- Council may initiate the installation of plaques on Council owned buildings or structures to commemorate their opening or a historically significant event. The procedure is described below.

- Council will consider requests from private individuals and community groups for the installation of plaques, memorials or signs on roads or Council owned facilities or properties in accordance with procedures described below.

- Design, construction or installation of any memorial on land or road owned or managed by Kingston City Council will require council approval.

- All costs associated with the establishing, fabricating, constructing or installing a memorial shall be borne by the proponents. Council may contribute grant money or services in-kind however the responsibility for ensuring sufficient funds are raised by individual contribution, subscription or grants is the responsibility of the proponent.

- Memorials, signs and plaques promoted by Kingston City Council will be funded by council.

- Council will monitor all memorials for condition and safety. Council will maintain all approved memorials except for roadside fatality memorials.

- The significance of time limited memorials and plaques will be reviewed after 15 years from installation or at the fixed term. A decision on whether the plaque, sign or memorial is retained will be undertaken by council officers and the Ward Councillors. Ephemeral memorials, such as roadside memorials, will be reviewed after 1 year.

- The placement of memorials shall take into account council planning requirements or other regulatory requirements such as the foreshore or road safety requirements.

- New memorials shall not commemorate a person, organisation or event already commemorated elsewhere in the city.

- Memorials for domestic pets and animals are not permitted on public land or public buildings.

- Proposed plaques and memorials etc. will be advertised on council’s website prior to installation, with an exhibition duration of four weeks, with the exception of plaques for buildings and pavilions, so that the community are informed of the proposal.

5.3. Plaques

Proposed plaques should be of durable material and a size commensurate with the object they are to be attached to. Brass, cast bronze and cast aluminium are suitable for public buildings, parks, roads and the foreshore. The method of fixing to existing structures, furniture, and footpaths shall be approved by the relevant asset manager.

5.4. Interpretive Signs

It is important that each sign or interpretive display meets the style, design and construction standards required for that public building, park, public space or streetscape. All designs for interpretive signs must be approved by Council.
5.5. Commemorative Trees

Commemorative trees are a preferred alternative to plaques and seats in parks and will be selected from the suitable species list in Council’s Tree Management Policy. Plaques will not be allowed to be attached to a tree however separate object or item of furniture may be proposed for the installation of a plaque for large scale or special event planting.

5.6. Furniture, Objects and Structures

When an item of furniture, such as a bench seat or park light, is proposed, it shall be selected from the standard suite specified by council for the location.

Siting of furniture, objects or structures shall be subject to council regulatory and planning constraints and be consistent with the master plan of the location. Proposed siting of memorials will also be reviewed, prior to acceptance, with respect to the number and proximity of other memorials or furniture.

5.7. War Memorials

The selection and positioning of new war memorials shall follow the guidelines above with the following additional restrictions for existing memorials:

- All existing war memorials shall be respectfully left intact unless subject to an approved restoration project.
- No other plaques, signs or memorials will be allowed within a reasonable, protected area near existing war memorials.

5.8. Works of Art

Proposed works of art as memorials must demonstrate unique design merit. The management of works of art will be conducted in accordance with the Public Arts Policy and may involve de-accessioning or disposal after 15 years.

5.9. Restoration of Existing Memorials

Proposals to restore or upgrade existing memorials will be considered on a case by case basis and will usually involve public consultation prior to approval by council.

The addition of new plaques to existing memorials will only be considered if there is a clear connection to the original commemoration. For example, commemorating the restoration of a memorial by a local group on the anniversary of an event.

5.10. Roadside Fatality Memorials

Council recognises that some members of the community may wish to mark the location of a fatal crash on the road network and commemorate the death of individuals with a roadside memorial.

Proposals for roadside memorials will be considered sensitively by council but are not encouraged. The views of adjacent residents will be considered.

The type and placement of memorials shall conform to VicRoad’s Roadside Memorials Policy and must generally conform to the following principles:

- The siting of the memorial must not distract drivers and shall not be in a position which increases the risk for people wishing to visit the memorial;
- The memorial must be made of material and installed in such a way as to not cause injury if struck by a vehicle; and
• Council cannot accept responsibility for the maintenance of this type of memorial and cannot guarantee against loss or damage or relocation due to road maintenance works or works by other authorities.

Roadside memorials are ephemeral and may be left in place for a maximum of 12 months.

5.11. Changes to Memorials

Council reserves the right to relocate memorials in the event of other works at the site. Care will be taken to ensure that individuals and groups are advised in advance of the relocation or temporary removal of any memorial.

6. Application Processes

6.1. Initial Requests from the Community

Initial proposals for plaques, memorials and signs from individuals and groups shall be in writing and addressed to:

Plaques and Memorials Committee
Kingston City Council
PO Box 1000
MENTONE, VIC, 3194

Proposals should address the following key points:

• The details of the proponents of the plaque, memorial or sign. If more than one group is involved then include letters of support from these organisations;

• The type of memorial proposed;

• The reason for the memorial and the connection with Kingston City Council and the specific location proposed (see extended comments below);

• The proposed siting of the memorial and the reason for choosing the site; and

• The approximate cost of the memorial if known and the funding arrangements.

The Plaques and Memorials Committee will normally consider the initial proposal before referring the application directly to other relevant council officers and, in some cases the City of Kingston Historian, or to another committee such as the Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee.

Written community input relevant to the subject of the Plaque and/or memorial will be sought with external organisations appropriate to the subject of the plaque, e.g. RSLs, historical societies.

The core members of the Plaques and Memorials Committee are:

• Manager, Library & Educational Services

• Manager, Parks & Recreation

• Arts & Culture Development Coordinator
• Team Leader, Strategic Planning

Plus, as required, officers who are representing the asset owners:
• Team Leader, Property Services (Council Properties)
• Public Place Projects Urban Designer (Parks and Foreshore)
• Team Leader, Roads and Drains (Roads and Footpaths)

The Committee will undertake initial consultation with the individuals or groups and may involve the Mayor and/or Ward Councillors at this time.

6.2. Historical or Heritage related Plaques, Signs and Memorials

Plaques, signs and memorials in this category will normally be installed by Council in conjunction with other organisations. War memorials are included in this category.

As the purpose of this category is to provide historical information about important historical sites, the proposed location must have a specific connection to the person, group or event.

Sites for memorials in this category should meet the following criteria:
• Be recognized for cultural, social or heritage significance to the City of Kingston over a period of time
• Be a site for which a heritage marker would provide information not otherwise evident at the site
• Not already identified by another plaque or historical sign
• Have sufficient referenced historical information available
• Be publicly accessible
• Contribute to an even distribution of heritage marking across the city
• Be consistent with Council’s master-plan or strategic development framework for the site

The final format and wording will be submitted to the internal steering committee before approval by the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, and will normally include the following:
• Brief heading outlining historical event/place
• A maximum of 100 words describing the historical significance of the site
• Additional details about the site to be placed on the City of Kingston website, such as a text of up to 500 words, photographs, maps, references to further sources of information
• Maximum of 2 photographs (may be exceeded with approval)
• City of Kingston logo. Note, only the City of Kingston logo is to appear. No other logo to appear except:
  • Insignia of the Commonwealth or State of Victoria
  • Insignia of the Australian Defence Forces
• Acknowledgement of external organization (where applicable) by line entry only.
All signs will be of the approved design and colour scheme to ensure consistency throughout the municipality.

- Plaques to be attached to private buildings will require the written consent of the property owner.
- Plaques to be placed in the footpath will need the written consent of the Manager Infrastructure.
- Plaques to be placed on poles or other structures, such as bridges, will need the written consent of the Manager Infrastructure.

The method of affixing the plaque or memorial will be specified by Council.

It may be appropriate in some instances to only include a small plaque on a park sign advising the historic background/explanation for the building/identity name of a particular Council open space or building.

6.3. Memorial Plaques on Seats and other urban Infrastructure

Members of the community may request that plaques and/or community infrastructure be installed in Council parks and gardens for personal commemoration where the requestor has paid for the relevant furniture, plaques and cost of installation.

Application for these plaques and infrastructure should be made to the internal steering committee addressing the following criteria:

- Be consistent with Council’s parks and gardens master plans or other strategic development frameworks for the site.
- Be of the standard design for streets or activity centres.
- Be considered in the context of the number of existing furniture, plaques, memorials, public artworks, fountains and other objects in the vicinity
- Commemorate a person or group who has made a significant contribution to the Kingston community
- Not commemorate a person, event, or occasion already identified by another plaque or marker

The selection of appropriate infrastructure, including materials, is to be at the sole discretion of Council through the internal steering committee, with final approval by the Chief Executive Officer. Consultation will be undertaken with the donor to assess preferred siting, however, the siting of infrastructure is to be at the discretion of Council, after giving consideration to master plans, site management plans, traffic and pedestrian mobility and public safety.

Note that opportunity to place more park or street infrastructure, such as bench seats, is limited in some areas and there is no guarantee that Council will be able to accept the donation in the preferred location.

Post installation, if considered necessary for any of the above reasons because of changes in conditions/circumstances of the selected site, the donated infrastructure may be re-located in the immediate area by Council. The care and management of donated infrastructure shall be the responsibility of Council. Donations are to cover the full cost of supply and installation of the infrastructure.
The maximum size of the plaque is to be typically 150mm x 100mm, however, exceptions can be considered by the internal steering committee in certain circumstances where approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Ward Councillor. In such instances, wording should be appropriate to the size of the plaque and for a seat would normally be about 20 words. Draft wording will be reviewed by the internal steering committee prior to ordering and must be congruent with current Council values and philosophy.

The plaque may record who the asset is in memory of, by whom, when, and the City of Kingston logo. The City of Kingston logo is the only logo to appear on the plaque. A typical caption would read:

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DONATED IN MEMORY OF

..............................................................

By ...........................................................

On ......................................................
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The plaque will be constructed of durable material chosen at the discretion of the internal steering committee in consultation with the asset manager and the donator.

The City of Kingston does not guarantee to retain the plaque in perpetuity and would normally retain the plaque at its location for a period of not less than five years from the time of installation with the following exceptions:

- The area in which the plaque is located is being redeveloped
- The structure or support on which the item is located is to be removed or permanently altered
- The use of the area in which the memorial is placed changes significantly in character and the memorial is not deemed suitable for the site.

6.4. Trees and Landscape Works

A tree may be a more appropriate way to commemorate an individual and there are often opportunities for more trees than street or park furniture. All trees are to be selected from the suitable tree list found in the Tree Policy.

Applications for a commemorative tree or landscape improvement should be addressed to the Plaques and Memorials Committee, addressing the following criteria:

- Consistent with Council’s parks and gardens master plans or other strategic development frameworks for the site.
- Be from the preferred tree list.
- Commemorate a person or group who has made a significant contribution to the Kingston community
- Not commemorate a person, event, or occasion already identified by another plaque or marker

6.5. Plaques installed by Council to commemorate an opening or other event.

Plaques may be installed by Council to commemorate the opening of a new or refurbished facility or to celebrate an event which may be of historical significance now or in the future.

Requests for plaques in this category shall be made by the steering committee for approval by the Chief Executive Officer following consultation with the Mayor. The cost of these plaques should normally be funded as part of the relevant project.

The final format and wording will be submitted to the Co-ordinator of the internal steering committee for consideration by the internal steering committee before approval by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor and will normally include the following:

- Identification of Council facility or event
- Date (day, month, year) of opening or date of event
- Who opened it
- City of Kingston logo
- Funding recognition (if applicable)
- Mayor
- Councillors (last name & first name in alphabetic order by last name including any post-nominals i.e. OAM)
- Where the ward Councillor has played a significant role, the ward Councillor’s name will be listed first (after the Mayor’s name) followed by text
- This text may vary at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor, depending on the particular circumstances and placement of the plaque where size may be limited.

7. Requests to Vary the Policy and Standards

Requests to vary this policy and associated standards should be made to the General Manager, City Assets and Environment.

8. Transition provisions

This policy supersedes the following council policies:

- Installation of Plaques and Signs Policy (2008)
- Seating Policy (2008)
- Roadside Fatality Memorials Policy (2008)