



Naming of Places Policy

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1 Document Information

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2 Purpose

The purpose of the Naming of Places Policy (this Policy) is to provide a framework to ensure Council follows a consistent, fair and equitable process when investigating and determining naming proposals for features and localities within the City of Kingston.

Further this Policy will enhance Council's decision-making process by providing guiding principles for Council to consider in addition to the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2016 (the Naming Rules).

3 Definitions

Features	Unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape (mountains, watercourses, buildings, structures, parks and reserves).
Geographic Names Victoria	Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) oversees the naming and registration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• roads• features, and• localities in Victoria. by administering the <u>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</u> .
Naming Authority	Municipal Councils, government departments or authorities and private organisations.
Locality	Where there are officially recognised boundaries including suburbs, towns, cities and regions.
Geographic Place	Defined by law to cover features, localities and roads.
Council	Means the City of Kingston Council.

4 Scope

This Policy applies to the City of Kingston Council (the Council) in its capacity as a naming authority pursuant to the Naming Rules and the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) for the consideration of and decision-making regarding naming or renaming all publicly owned features and localities within the municipality.

This policy applies to all features, and localities across the municipality for which Council is determined to be a naming authority as defined in the Naming Rules.

This Policy applies to members of the public seeking to propose a new name or change to an existing name of a feature or locality within the City of Kingston.

The Guiding Principles in this Policy will apply to naming processes for internal facilities within Council owned or maintained buildings, venues and meeting spaces.

5 Policy Details

Council, as a Naming Authority under the Naming Rules, is responsible for geographic place names in the municipal district, with the exception of geographic places of regional, state or national significance, and waterways.

In the consideration of naming requests, Council is required to abide by the principles and processes outlined in the Naming Rules. In addition, Council can apply principles to reflect its priorities and strategic direction and these principles have been outlined in this Policy to guide Council's decision making.

This Policy outlines the process of making a naming proposal, Naming Rules principles, additional guiding principles for Council, community consultation and the outcome of naming proposals.

5.1 Naming Proposals

In accordance with the Naming Rules, a naming proposal can be initiated by members of the public or community groups, emergency management or other public service providers, Council and Government Departments or Authorities.

Applicants should follow the Naming Rules to ensure all relevant information pertaining to the proposal to name a road, feature or locality is provided. This includes:

- the proposed name
- the location of the road or feature, including a map (and, if relevant, its current name)
- background information on why the naming authority should consider naming or changing the name or boundary, e.g. why the proposed name is considered appropriate (include any history or local relevance)
- the reason for the proposal (why the current name is not considered appropriate or any other relevant information)
- contact details of the proposer(s) and information on public consultation that has occurred and/or support and non-support that has been gathered from community members or groups
- a statement saying that the proposed name conforms to the relevant principles and requirements in the naming rules

As a naming authority, Council may initiate its own naming proposals and such proposals should align strongly with the guiding principles contained in clause 5.3 of this Policy. Further, Council must be able to demonstrate that the proposal is being made in the best interests of the community.

5.2 Naming Rules General Principles

When considering a naming proposal, Council must apply the Naming Rules General Principles in conjunction with the relevant statutory requirements in the Naming Rules relating to features and localities. Application of the General Principles ensures there is no ambiguity, confusion, errors or discrimination caused by the naming, renaming or boundary change process. All general principles are equally important.

The General Principles are:

- Ensuring public safety: Must not risk public and operational safety for emergency response, or cause confusion for transport, communication and mail services.
- Recognising the public interest: Long term benefits to the community.
- Linking the name to the place: Place names should be relevant to the local area, with preference given to unofficial names used by the local community.
- Ensuring names are not duplicated: Place names must not be duplicated or have similar spelling or pronunciation.
- Names must not be discriminatory: Place names must not cause offence on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality or gender.
- Recognition and use of Aboriginal languages in naming: Agreement from relevant Traditional Owner group(s).
- Dual names: Cannot be adopted for localities, towns or rural districts; or roads, highways, bridges, communication towers. Can be used for topographical features such as islands, mountains, mountain ranges and rivers.
- Using commemorative names: Naming often commemorates an event, person or place. The names of people who are still alive should be avoided, and it is preferred that only the surname is used.
- Using commercial and business names: Naming authorities should not name places after commercial businesses, trade names, and non-profit organisation.
- Language: Standard English or a recognised Australian Indigenous language local to the area of the feature. Easy to pronounce, spell and write.
- Directional names to be avoided: Cardinal directions (north, south, east and west) must be avoided.
- Assigning extent to a feature, locality or road: When a proposal to name a feature, locality or road is being developed the naming authority must clearly define the area and/or extent to which the name will apply.

5.3 Additional Guiding Principles

In addition to applying the Naming Rules General Principles referred to in clause 5.2, Council will consider and apply the additional Guiding Principles in its decision-making process. The Guiding Principles reflect Council's priorities and strategic direction. The additional Guiding Principles are supplementary and are intended to enhance and guide Council's decision making.

The Guiding Principles are:

5.3.1 Gender Equality

Council is committed to promoting and achieving gender equality and the naming of features will prioritise this commitment. When considering a naming proposal for a feature, Council will review the totality of feature names across the municipality with a gender lens to ensure that there is balanced gender representation in named features.

Priority will be given to naming proposals which meet the General Principles and seek to redress any imbalance in the recognition and contribution of particular social groups.

5.3.2 Aboriginal Names

Council is committed to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and acknowledges that Aboriginal people have a rich and continuous connection to the area that is the City of Kingston.

The use of traditional Aboriginal names is encouraged and preferred, in line with State Government policy, which encourages the greater use of Indigenous names in Victoria through place naming. The widespread use of Indigenous names provides a strong connection to our Indigenous heritage and acknowledges Indigenous culture.

As such, Council will prioritise naming proposals which request the use of Aboriginal names. This process will be undertaken in consultation with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC).

Council will consult with the BLCAC prior to any use of the Bunurong language or place naming within Bunurong country and timeframes for determining such naming proposals will be extended to accommodate for the BLCAC's process.

Council will only endorse a naming proposal if the BLCAC decides in favour of the proposal.

5.3.3 Enduring relevance

Names in long usage, which commemorate or preserve the historical record, events and people as part of the pattern of settlement and development of the landscape, are preferred.

Council will prioritise names where relevance is enduring to ensure that a name will stand the test of time and continue to be relevant for years to come.

Applicants should consider whether a naming proposal meets the enduring relevance principle prior to submitting their proposal.

5.3.4 Connection to place

The Naming Rules specify that place names should have a strong connection to place. Council will therefore favourably consider applications which clearly show a connection to place. To achieve connection to place, names should be relevant to the local area with preference given to unofficial names used by the local community. If named after a person that person should be or have been held in strong regard by the community.

Names that link the name to the place could relate to Aboriginal culture and occupation of the land, local flora and fauna, Australian war contributions, European exploration and settlement, local geography and geology, significant events, the cultural diversity of past and current inhabitants, or patterns of land usage and industrial/mineral/agricultural production.

5.4 Consultation

Consultation is a key component in the process of naming and renaming features and localities. Where Council is a naming authority, it is required to consult in accordance with the Naming Rules.

Consultation will generally take the form of advising all abutting property owners, providing information on Council's website and a public notice in a local newspaper advising of Council's proposal and seeking comments. The consultation time is defined in the Naming Rules as a 30-day period.

5.5 Outcome of a Naming Proposal

5.5.1 Officer Report

All naming proposals will be considered by the Governance Department at the City of Kingston, who will assess the naming proposal against the General Principles and the Guiding Principles.

Based on this assessment, a report will be presented to Council making a recommendation regarding the naming or re-naming of a locality or feature.

5.5.2 Council Decision

A Council decision in relation to a naming proposal should be made subject to the following criteria:

- a consultation process that ensured effective input from the public and all interested parties
- Appropriate decision making that is in the public interest
- Following appropriate policies on naming standardisation
- Preventing an unnecessary duplication of specific names.

Naming decisions are to be communicated to the Registrar of Geographic Names for endorsement, gazettal and inclusion in the Register of Geographic Names (VICNAMES). The Registrar has the authority under the Act, to reject any proposal, if it does not satisfy the Naming Rules.

5.5.3 Notification of Decision

Once a final decision has been made:

- Council will notify the applicant, all abutting property owners and residents of the Council's decision.
- An internal memo will be sent to relevant Council departments, advising of the new or amended name.
- Arrangements will be made to erect appropriate signage.
- The Council will notify the relevant public authorities of the new or amended name.

6 Delegation Authority and Decision Guidelines

Council is the naming authority pursuant to the Naming Rules.

6.1 Human Rights Charter

This policy has been reviewed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

7 Related Documents and Resources

- Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities features and localities 2016
- BLCAC Language Information Sheet
- BLCAC Final Language Request Process

Legislation

- *Geographic Places Names Act 1998 (Vic)*

City of Kingston Documents

- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Gender Equality Action Plan