

Geographic Naming Policy 2023

1. PURPOSE

The Geographic Naming Policy (policy) has been developed to support the principles and procedures outlined in the [Naming rules for places in Victoria](#) (the naming rules). The naming rules are based on national standards and policies. They provide a strong basis for standardised and clear naming procedures across Victoria.

The policy aims to provide a consistent approach to geographic naming requests within the municipality of Wyndham and to ensure that all Wyndham features, localities and roads are appropriately named. Appropriate naming is essential to identify locations for managing emergencies and delivering goods and services.

The policy identifies the key considerations for Council when deliberating on geographic naming requests.

2. SCOPE

As a naming authority, Council is required to adhere to the requirements of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and the naming rules.

The policy relates to all publicly owned features, roads and localities located in Wyndham for which Council is determined to be a naming authority. Victorian Government authorities such as VicRoads, Parks Victoria and the Department of Education are determined to be the naming authority for public features or roads that they own or maintain.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The policy has been prepared to support the requirements of the Act and the naming rules.

As a naming authority, Council is required to adhere to the following naming principles, noting that all naming principles are considered to be equally important.

- Principle 2 (A) Ensuring public safety
- Principle 2 (B) Recognising public interest
- Principle 2 (C) Linking the name to a place
- Principle 2 (D) Ensuring names are not duplicated
- Principle 2 (E) Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages
- Principle 2 (F) Names must not discriminate or be offensive
- Principle 2 (G) Gender equality

- Principle 2 (H) Dual names
- Principle 2 (I) Using commemorative names
- Principle 2 (J) Using commercial and business names
- Principle 2 (K) Language
- Principle 2 (L) Directional names to be avoided
- Principle 2 (M) Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality

New or changed names must be submitted to Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) for official registration and mapping purposes.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the policy are to ensure that in the naming process, Council:

- maintains a consistent approach to geographic naming requests within the municipality and that all Wyndham features, localities and roads are appropriately named and officially registered
- preserves the heritage, culture and identity of Wyndham City
- undertakes appropriate public and stakeholder consultation when selecting proposed names and seeks community feedback on naming proposals.

5. POLICY

The policy must comply with the requirements of the Act and the naming rules.

5.1 Naming Themes

Council will consider naming proposals based on the following four themes identified from the naming principles as follows:

5.1.1 Principle C - Linking the name to a place

Names should have a link to place to ensure the preservation of Wyndham's cultural heritage. Place names should be relevant to the local area. Names that link the name to the place could relate to Traditional Owner culture, local flora and fauna, Australian war contributions, past 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.

5.1.2 Principle E – Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages

Traditional Owner languages are often based on location; languages are deeply rooted to the land and offer an ideal opportunity to connect a name to a place. The use of Traditional Owner languages enables the wider community to be educated about Traditional Owner history and shared culture.

The use of Traditional Owner languages in the naming of roads, features and localities is subject to agreement from the relevant Traditional Owner group(s).

5.1.3 Principle G – Gender equality

Council will recognise the diversity of our community and ensure we are inclusive of all communities regardless of gender or race.

When developing a naming proposal consideration should be given to gender equality. Gender equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities.

As required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* the naming rules and this policy support commemorative naming of places after women.

5.1.4 Principle I – Using commemorative names

Naming often commemorates an event, person or place.

If named after a person, that person should be or have been held in strong regard by the community. When deciding on the assignment of a commemorative name, Council should consider:

- the person's achievements
- relevant history and association to the area
- the significance of the family/person to the area/land.

For example, a family that has been associated with an area for at least 25 years.

The names of people who are still alive must be avoided because community attitudes and opinions can change over time.

Commemorative names of a deceased person should be applied no less than two years posthumously. If Council wishes to name within two years, it is required to seek an exemption from the Registrar.

5.2 Naming Consultation Hierarchy

Council recognises the importance of community consultation in naming its assets and will adhere to the following consultation hierarchy as detailed below.

5.2.1 Local Parks

- Local parks shall be named by describing the feature and the road name the land is addressed to. i.e. the park at 2 Smith Road will be named Smith Road Park.
- In the event that this naming convention is not possible (i.e. it creates a duplicate), the park shall be named by describing the feature and another abutting road name.
- An alternate name that is deemed appropriate and complies with the principles within the naming rules i.e. historical name that links to place, may also be considered if suggested by a community member or stakeholder. In the event this occurs, the naming decision will be referred to Council for a decision.
- Public consultation in accordance with the naming rules is required.
- The Executive Manager Corporate Affairs has delegated authority to approve local park names. These naming proposals may be referred to Council as necessary.


5.2 Roads

5.2.1 Road re-naming

- Names for roads that are required to be re-named will be developed by taking into consideration current naming themes/subject matter in the area, or to provide location clarity.
- An internal referral process with relevant Council departments (i.e. libraries, environment team, strategic planning, city life) will be undertaken to gather naming options in accordance with the principles contained within the naming rules.
- Name consideration and endorsement by Council resolution is required.
- Public consultation to gather feedback on the proposed name in accordance with the naming rules is required.

5.2.2 New roads

Council will work collaboratively with developers to create compliant road names for new subdivisions. However, it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the features and roads in a subdivision are named in accordance with the principles set out in the naming rules. Approval of new road names on plans of subdivision will be administered by the Planning and Building Department to ensure that proposed names comply with the naming rules. Themes used by developers to name roads in subdivisions can be outside of the themes outlined in this policy, however Council can suggest these themes for the developer to consider. The Planning and Building Department maintains a database of all road names for reference by Council, including those that are proposed or awaiting approval.



The naming rules for places in Victoria provide that private roads and features in subdivisions or on private land need to be assessed against the rules and recorded in VICNAMES. It is the responsibility of the owner to name any private roads and features and to forward the names to the Geographic Names Victoria to be recorded, but Council may need to assist the owner with this process.

When plans of subdivision are lodged for registration with Land Use Victoria, an audit of the road names may be undertaken by GNV. If GNV determines that the road names on a lodged plan do not conform to the naming rules, GNV will send a request to the subdivision approval and certification body for the non-conforming name to be changed.

It should be noted that the definition of a “road” also included alleyways, bridges, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.

5.3 Significant Features/Prominent Infrastructure and Active Open Space

- Where confusion would be caused by not including the feature's location within the name, the location will be included in the proposed name. i.e. Hoppers Crossing Library.
- If the feature's location does not need to be incorporated in the name, Council will undertake a **two-step public consultation process** (noting that community consultation will still occur in the above circumstance to comply with the naming rules).
- In the first instance Council will seek community feedback on a preferred naming theme as contained in the naming rules and set out in this policy, including inviting community suggestions for names.
- All naming suggestions that are received will be reviewed by Council officers and GNV to ensure compliance with the naming rules.
- Following the first round consultation to identify a preferred naming theme and receiving community naming suggestions, shortlisted names will be submitted to Council for consideration and endorsement by Council resolution.
- If the community consultation on the naming themes results in an indigenous name being the preferred option, Council will then consult with the relevant traditional owner group prior to any public consultation on the proposed name/s.
- The second part of the community consultation process will involve seeking community feedback on the proposed name or names (based on the preferred naming theme).
- Council will then be required to consider all feedback received and resolve to formally proceed with giving public notice of a preferred name.
- Where there is a compelling rationale for one theme to be recommended at the exclusion of others, the matter will be tabled for Council consideration prior to community consultation occurring.

- The final step in the consultation process will be to give public notice of the final proposed name in accordance with the naming rules, prior to formal adoption of the name by Council resolution.

5.4 Locality Names

Wyndham's locality names (commonly known as suburbs) are formally assigned and registered with Land Use Victoria (or VICNAMES). They are named according to a historical link to the respective area.

Alteration to a locality name shall be rare. To preserve the heritage and identity of Wyndham's localities, alterations to existing names shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is total community support for a locality name change and the name change is needed under extraordinary circumstances.

Council will not consider new locality or boundary changes for reasons of improving real estate valuations or lowering insurance premiums. Excision of an area of land within a locality for reassignment of a new locality name shall also not be permitted.

Should an area within a locality need to be named for identity and emergency services purposes, it is to be assigned as a locality name, subject to the following criteria being met:

- The area to be named has become an identified destination of state or national tourism significance.
- Major development in a suburb has severely changed the characteristic of the suburb to the extent that there is confusion in identifying the locality by emergency services and the general public.
- The merits of the naming proposal warrant the assignment of a locality name.

5.5 General

- This policy will operate independently of Council's Plaques and Memorial Policy.
- This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Sports Facility User Guide 2020-25, and the Wyndham Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-25.
- Council will not promote the process of a competition for the purposes of undertaking naming of any road, feature or locality within the municipality.

6. NAMING DECISIONS

The naming rules allow for naming to occur by delegation of authority to a relevant Council officer, rather than by Council resolution. Authority for naming decisions under this policy are as follows:

- the naming of localities, significant public features, major roads and proposals of renaming are required to be resolved by Council at a Council Meeting.
- the Manager Planning, Building and Health has delegated authority to approve new names on plans of subdivision on behalf of Council.
- the Executive Manager Corporate Affairs has delegated authority to approve the names for local parks on behalf of Council. These naming proposals may be referred to Council as necessary.

7. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- A naming request may originate from the wider community, councillors or Council officers.
- Naming requests initiated by individuals or organisations must be in writing and if the proposal is for a commemorative naming, evidence that the person being commemorated has had a direct and long-term association with the feature or has made a significant contribution to the area.
- Unless the naming decision can be made under officer delegation, a report recommending the naming (or renaming) of a feature, locality or road, is to be referred to the Council for consideration.
- Appropriate consultation regarding a proposed name should be undertaken in accordance with the consultation hierarchy outlined in this policy and the requirements of the naming rules.
- It is recommended that all naming proposals commence as early as possible to enable all relevant stakeholders to be consulted and to accommodate any third party approval processes.
- Where applicable Council will seek advice from a third party translation service to ensure that proposed names do not translate negatively and/or impact other cultures.
- Council will submit the naming proposal to GNV for formal acceptance and registration of the name.
- Once a final decision has been made, Council will notify all relevant internal and external stakeholders of the Council's decision.
- GNV will notify all relevant public authorities of the new or amended name, including emergency services, postal services and government departments.
- Arrangements will be made to erect appropriate signage.

- Naming a road (including rights of way) does not infer any obligation on the Council to improve, upgrade or maintain the road beyond the level of service that preceded the naming of the road.

8. DEFINITIONS

Act	<i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i>
Feature	includes mountains, watercourses, buildings, structures, parks and reserves
Gender equality	means equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes between persons of different genders
Geographic Place	defined by law to cover features, localities and roads
GNV	Geographic Names Victoria
Localities	where there are officially recognised boundaries including suburbs, towns, cities and regions
Naming Authority	municipal Councils, government departments, or authorities, private organisations
Naming Rules	Naming Rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022
Policy	Geographic Naming Policy
Principles	naming principles within the Naming Rules that must be complied with.
Prominent Infrastructure	significant structures considered to be of public interest including community centres, sports stadiums and pavilions, concert halls, major reserves and bridges
Registrar	oversees the Office of Geographic Names Victoria
Road	includes alleyways, bridges, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike path, and walking tracks
VES	Vicmap Editing Service – online facility for submission and tracking of naming proposals to the Registrar of Geographic Names

9. BREACH OF POLICY

If a name of a road, feature or locality is approved and entered into VICNAMES but is later shown to not comply with the naming rules, the Registrar may ask Council to change the name. The change should be undertaken collaboratively between Council and GNV.

If it can be shown that the name as it is registered will cause an issue for emergency or other service providers or is determined to be offensive or derogatory, the name must be changed when requested by the Registrar. The Registrar will offer advice on how to amend the name in compliance with the naming rules. Council must change the name to a compliant alternative name within 90 days of receiving the Registrar's request / advice, or outline to the Registrar Council's intended action to respond to the Registrar's direction.

GNV is not responsible for any costs associated with naming, changing or amending names.

REFERENCES

External reference material:

- *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*
- Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022
- *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 206 and Schedule 10)
- *Planning & Environment Act 1987*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*

Wyndham City Council reference material:

- Community Engagement Policy 2021-2025
- Geographic Naming Policy 2017
- Sports Facility User Guide 2020-25
- Wyndham Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-25
- Wyndham 2040 Community Plan
- Wyndham Planning Scheme

VERSION HISTORY

ID	DATE	AUTHOR	REVISION REASON / KEY CHANGES	REVIEW DATE
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