

## 1. PURPOSE

To inform the naming of geographic roads, features and localities within the Horsham Rural City Council (Council). The major emphasis of this policy is to maintain a standardised, consistent approach to geographic naming, to ensure public safety, manage the delivery of goods and services, preserve the municipality's identity and heritage and to recognise cultural diversity and gender equity.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The policy is developed in accordance with the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) and the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities - 2022* (the *Naming Rules*) issued by the Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) formerly known as Office of Geographic Names (OGN).

Under the Act, Council is a naming authority and is therefore required to resolve all geographic names in the Municipality with the exception of geographic places of state or national significance.

The Act defines places as “any place or building that is, or likely to be, of public or historical interest and includes, but is not restricted to:

- a) Township, area, park, garden, reserve of land, suburb or locality;
- b) Topographical feature, including undersea feature; and
- c) Street, road, transport station, government school, hospital and government nursing home”.

The *Naming Rules* are the statutory guidelines provided for under Section 5 of the Act and reflect step-by-step information on naming, renaming or changing the boundaries of roads, features and localities in Victoria.

Council is required to abide by the *Naming Rules* and notify the Registrar of Geographic Names of all new or altered names for inclusion in the Register for official mapping data and other purposes.

The *Naming Rules* reference several of the resolutions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic names, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework.

Council, subject to provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989 Schedule Ten* and the *Road Management Act 2004* is a road authority. The provisions of these acts state that road authorities must act in accordance of the *Naming Rules*.

## 3. SCOPE

The policy applies to all publicly owned roads, features and localities within the municipality for which Council is the naming authority as specified in *The Act* and where the *Naming Rules* apply. Council is not responsible for naming freeways or geographical places of regional, state and national significance.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

### 4.1 Council's naming priorities

Horsham Rural City Council is committed to addressing inequity and through naming opportunities seek to recognise the cultural diversity and heritage of the municipality. Council will consider naming proposals based on the following priorities identified from the Naming Principles as follows: (flexibility will be applied to respond to situations where broader considerations may be needed)

#### 4.1.1 Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages

To ensure the preservation of Traditional Owner place names and languages across Horsham Rural City Council, consultation will occur with the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party or Traditional Owner Group and there is agreement to the proposed name when proposed name is of Traditional Owner origin.

#### 4.1.2 Gender Equality

Council supports and encourages the use of more female names in addressing gender equality by recognising more women in commemorative naming across the municipality as part of its duty to promote equality under the Gender Equality Act 2020. First names are permitted, allowing for more names and for easier recognition of female names.

#### 4.1.3 Diversity

Names associated with diversity, equity, social justice or community leadership within our community (people with disability, LGBTQIA+ or leader for diversity, equity, social justice or disadvantage) to reflect Council's strong commitment to diversity, equity and social justice.

#### 4.1.4 Heritage

Names reflecting the settlement and heritage of Horsham Rural City Council for example historical land use, cultural history and ANZAC commemorative names.

### 4.2 Naming Themes

In addition to meeting the principles of the *Naming Rules*, Council will preserve the heritage and identity of its localities and where possible will link the name to the place through the use of:

4.2.1 Names derived from Traditional Owner heritage and language

4.2.2 Cultural diversity

4.2.3 Location

4.2.4 Local flora and fauna

4.2.5 Social and historical events of the local area

4.2.6 Commemorative (notable residents who are deceased, all genders)

4.2.7 Former Veteran personnel (who are deceased, all genders)

4.2.8 ANZAC commemorative names

4.2.9 Historical explorations and uses of the land and the people associated with it

## 4.3 Council's Approved Street Naming list

Council has an approved names register which is available on Council's website. The register lists names that have been approved by Council for future use within the Municipality.

**4.3.1** Any applicant requesting to have a new name placed on Council's Approved Street Naming list must submit an application to Council for approval with substantiating information to support their request.

**4.3.2** For guidance, examples of name substantiation to recognise a person include:

4.3.2.1 Significant contributions to the local municipality

4.3.2.2 Linkages to the history of the municipality

4.3.2.3 Significant/notable achievements

## 4.4 Naming Rules

**4.4.1** The *Naming Rules* provide a solid base for consistent and clear naming procedures across the state of Victoria and are based on national standards and policies.

**4.4.2** The *Naming Rules* uphold the guidelines in the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*. They are mandatory for naming authorities in Victoria including Horsham Rural City Council.

**4.4.3** Where Council is the naming authority, it will apply the [Naming Rules](#).

## 4.5 Naming Principles

**4.5.1** The Naming Principles ensure names are enduring and there is no ambiguity, confusion, error or discrimination caused by the naming, renaming or locality boundary change process.

**4.5.2** All principles are equally important, further details can be found: [Section 2 Naming Principles](#).

## 4.6 Developers

**4.6.1** New road names for plans of subdivision are the responsibility of the developer and will be considered as part of the planning process.

**4.6.2** Prior to council certification, developers should consult Council when preparing plans of subdivision. This consultation may incorporate discussion of possible names for roads in the area and whether Council might suggest suitable themes (such as Traditional Owner heritage, ANZAC-related or other local historical events or figures) for the developer to consider.

**4.6.3** Developers must ensure that road names included on plans of subdivision, for the purposes of certification, conform to the *Naming Rules* and this policy. Failure to comply with the statutory requirements may result in a name needing to be changed either prior to or after registration of the subdivision.

**4.6.4** In the case of using names connected to traditional owner language and heritage (Principle E of the *Naming Rules*) developers are expected to seek written approval from the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party or Traditional Owner Group.

- 4.6.5** In the case of commemorative naming (Principle I of the *Naming Rules*) developers are expected to have sought written approval prior from family member/s of the person being commemorated.
- 4.6.6** Community consultation is not required for naming proposals within new subdivisions
- 4.6.7** New road names in new residential or commercial subdivisions are entered using Surveying and Planning through Electronic Applications and Referrals (SPEAR). The system allows registered users to process planning permits and subdivision applications online, including the submission of associated road names and addresses.
- 4.6.8** Names are checked by Council for compliance, however subdivisions may still be subject to a compliance audit by the Registrar of Geographic Names.

## **4.7 Naming features in new residential or commercial subdivisions**

- 4.7.1** The naming of features (e.g. playgrounds, parks and reserves) on plans of residential or commercial subdivisions can be fast tracked by lodging plans via Vicmap editing service (VES). Road naming for subdivisions as per section 4.6 of this policy.

## **4.8 Naming Places**

- 4.8.1** Any feature, locality or road (whether public or private) can be named, renamed or have its boundary changed.
- 4.8.2** Any person, community group, organisation, government department or naming authority can propose a new name, change to an existing name or boundary change.
- 4.8.3** Naming applications received from the public are assessed against pre-determined criteria outlined in the *Naming Rules* and Councils approved Street Name list.
- 4.8.4** Dual names can only be assigned to geographic features. Dual naming may be assigned where it is appropriate to give recognition to names drawn from different cultural backgrounds. It is also the preferred method as a transitional step toward the adoption of Traditional Owner names.
- 4.8.5** The *Local Government Act 2020* imparts no community consultation obligations on Council when considering the naming of places, however in accordance with this and other policies when a naming proposal is received community engagement principles are adhered to and consultation is undertaken with relevant parties as determined by Council.
- Prior to undertaking consultation, a report will be presented to Council at a Scheduled Council Meeting requesting authorisation of the consultation process (with the exception of subdivisions).
  - Public consultation may include public notices, notice on Council Website, social media and written correspondence to affected and abutting property owners/residents.

- Consultation on proposed names with immediate and/or extended community should only occur once Council is certain the proposed name conforms with the naming rules.
- If Council is uncertain a proposed name confirms to the *Naming Rules*, Council will contact GNV for further advice or consider lodging an in-principle support request using VES.
- Any submissions of support or objection to a proposal must be received by Council during Council's public consultation period as outlined in the public notice.
- In accordance with the *Naming Rules*, the minimum consultation period will be no less than 30 days.
- Naming proposals will commence as early as possible to enable all relevant stakeholders to be consulted and to accommodate any third party approval processes.

#### **4.8.6** Any new road, public facility, feature or place name will:

4.8.6.1 Not conflict with existing names registered in Council's road register or elsewhere.

4.8.6.2 Comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines.

#### **4.8.7** Council has no obligation to accept any name proposed by any group, entity, developer or individual.

#### **4.8.8** Following a Council resolution in support of a name, the proposal will be submitted to the Registrar.

#### **4.8.9** Council's administrative and notification process will be in accordance with the *Naming Rules*.

### **4.9 Objections and Submissions**

#### **4.9.1** Any submissions for support or objections must be received by Council during Council's public consultation period. All submissions will be considered by Council and included in an assessment report which includes the assessment and response to submissions.

#### **4.9.2** Council will advise submitters of its decision in writing and in accordance with Section 8 of the *Naming Rules*. Objectors have 30 days within which to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Geographic Names.

#### **4.9.3** Council will include a report on its decision of a proposal which includes information about how the proposal conforms to the relevant principles and guidelines of the *Naming Rules* and discussion on and responses to any objection/submission received during Council's public consultation period.

### **4.10 Non-compliant names**

#### **4.10.1** If Council determines a risk to public safety due to a place's name or a name is deemed offensive or derogatory, Council will seek to rename it applying the *Naming Rules*.

**4.10.2** If a name is shown not to comply with the naming rules the Registrar can ask Council to change the name. If a public safety risk or offensive, Council has 90 days to act.

## 4.11 Implementation

Only after Council receives notification from the Registrar that an official naming or boundary change has been registered in VICNAMES can it notify the community and any other stakeholders and signage erected.

## 4.12 Signage

All signage for a road, feature or locality must be erected within 30 days of the name being gazetted and registered or within 30 days of being notified by GNV.

The size, font and colour of road signs are determined in AS 1743:2018 Road signs – Specifications, AS1742 Manual of uniform traffic control devices, AS 1744-1975 Forms of letters and numerals for road signs and AS/NZS 4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing and should be applied in all instances of road signage in Victoria.

If a road is under construction 30 days after the name is registered, temporary signs may be erected until the road is open to traffic.

### 4.12.1 New Roads

In the case of a new subdivision the Developer is responsible for provision, cost and installation of signage according to Council specifications and templates. Signage must be after certification and registration of the subdivision plans and within 30 days of commencement of infrastructure work in the event that emergency services may be required to respond to an incident.

### 4.12.2 Private Roads and features

The provision, cost and installation of signage on private roads, complex sites and private features is the responsibility of the property owner or developer. Any signage for private roads/features should include reference to the fact that they are private and not open for the general public's access.

## 5. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council website and staff intranet. Specific training and awareness will be provided to key personnel with responsibilities under this policy. A copy will also be provided to developers as part of the planning process.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITY

**Policy Owner:** Director Corporate Services

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years or earlier as required by changed circumstances including changes to legislation and plans, strategies or policies of HRCC.

## 7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Council	Refers to Horsham Rural City Council
Features	A unique public or private geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape. For example, a feature can be a mountain, watercourse, building, prominent structure, reserve, individual playing surfaces or park.
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	A geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics. In urban areas, a locality is commonly referred to as a 'suburb' and has officially recognised boundaries.
Naming Authorities	Municipal Councils, government departments or authorities and private organisations.
Naming Rules	Naming Rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022
Principles	Principles within the Naming Rules which a naming proposal must be met.
Registrar	Oversees Geographic Names Victoria.
Roads	For the purpose of The Naming Rules a road is considered to be any public or private land-based thoroughfare or course navigable by vehicle or foot. It can be used for assigning addresses or allowing access between points or to a feature. Examples of roads include alleyways, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.
The Naming Rules	Naming Rules for Places in Victoria Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities – 2022.
The Act	Geographic Place Names Act 1998.
VES	Vicmap Editing Service – online facility for submission and tracking of naming proposals to the Registrar of Geographic Names
VICNAMES	Means the Register of Geographic Names established under Section 9 of the Act, which is the official record of place names within Victoria

## 8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

HRCC Documents	Location
<a href="#">Approved Suggested Horsham Rural City Council Street Naming List</a>	Website
<a href="#">Street Name Application Form</a>	Website
<a href="#">Street Name History Summary</a>	Website

<p><b>Legislation (legislation listed not exclusive)</b></p> <p><a href="#"><i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Charter of Human Rights Act 2007</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Gender equality Act 2020</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Local Government Act 1989</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Local Government Act 2020</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Road Management Act 2004</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Subdivision (procedures) Regulations 2011</i></a>  <a href="#"><i>Survey Co-ordination Act 1958</i></a>  <a href="#">United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN) Resolutions (see 1.3.1 of the Naming Rules for the applicable resolutions)</a>  <a href="#">United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</a></p>	<p>Internet</p> <p><i>Note: this list is not exclusive. Legislation, regulations and policies relevant to geographic naming may change over time including before the next review date</i></p>
<p><b>Standards Guidelines and Reports</b></p> <p><a href="#">Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022 (the Naming Rules)</a></p>	<p>Internet</p>

## 9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	5 April 2004	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Policy</li></ul>	
02	24 July 2023	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update relevant legislation and requirements in line with revised Naming Rules</li><li>• Policy template</li></ul>	24 July 2027