

Title	Place Naming Policy
Description	A policy to guide the naming of roads, features and localities within the City of Yarra.
Category	Assets
Type	Policy
Approval authority	Council
Responsible officer	Senior Governance Advisor
Approval date	16 July 2019
Review cycle	Every four years
Review date	16 July 2023
Document Reference (Trim)	D19/153529
Human Rights compatibility	This policy has been assessed and is compatible with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

1. Purpose

A policy to guide Council in exercising its powers as a naming authority under the Local Government Act 1989 and the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 to name or rename roads, features and localities within the City of Yarra in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016.

2. Definitions

In this policy:

feature	means a unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape (including a park, open space, watercourse or sports ground).
locality	means a geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics (commonly known as a 'suburb').
Naming Rules	means the document titled "Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016" which is published in accordance with the Geographic Place Names Act 1998, and any subsequent updates of that document.
proactive naming	means a naming proposal that is triggered by Council seeking to recognise a particular theme or to apply a particular name to a place.
responsive naming	means a naming proposal that is triggered by the identification of an unnamed place that requires a name, or a named place that requires renaming.
road	means a public road as defined in the Road Management Act 2004.
street naming stakeholders	means all local historical societies, people who have subscribed to Council's place naming mailing list and anyone who has made a submission in relation to a particular street naming proposal.
Wurundjeri	means the Wurundjeri Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council Aboriginal Corporation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all requests to name or rename roads, features or localities for which Council is the naming authority and where the *Naming Rules* apply. Council facilities (such as buildings, meeting rooms, scoreboards and playgrounds) are not subject to the *Naming Rules*, and therefore can be named directly by Council without referral to the Registrar for Geographic Names as appointed by the Minister under the Geographic Place Names Act 1998. In these situations, the principles in this policy shall be used as a guide only, subject to any modifications deemed necessary.

4. Policy

The importance of place names

Place names are an important part of Yarra's cultural, historical and geographic environment. The naming of new places and the preservation of existing ones contributes to a sense of belonging and reflects the cultural values of communities both of today and of Yarra's rich past. Place names are therefore of major social importance. Council must bear the responsibility for taking care of the place name heritage and making sure that place name planning is conducted in a way that preserves our cultural heritage while responding and developing with our ever-evolving municipality.

Place names also serve an important practical purpose, providing property addresses for deliveries and visitors, aiding emergency services in time critical responses, and guiding motorists and other users of our road network.

Preserving our history

Places in Yarra were first known by many names to the Wurundjeri-willam people of the Kulin Nation, who mainly spoke the Woi wurrung language, but also spoke other languages of their nation. Perhaps the most significant of these was *Birrarung*, a place we know today as the Yarra River and from which Council gets its name. It is important that traditional place names and their meanings are preserved for posterity as part of the public domain we all share.

Yarra's first streets as we know them today were Brunswick and Gertrude Streets which date from the first subdivision that followed the sale late in 1839 of large rural allotments outside Hoddle's grid. As Newtown and subsequent suburbs were developed, their streets were named after British and colonial public figures including municipal councillors. While new streets are rarely constructed in Yarra now, the established street network provides many opportunities for street naming, with more than two-thirds of Yarra's public roads remaining unnamed to this day.

These opportunities mean that as a general rule it is neither necessary nor desirable to rename existing places merely to 'update' or 'revise' our naming. While it is acknowledged that contemporary views of many historical events has evolved over time, this alone should not be a reason to rename places named in recognition of persons, places or events that arguably would not warrant such an honour today.

Except in extraordinary circumstances, it is Council's policy to preserve and protect existing place names as they are an integral part of Yarra's history.

Selecting new names

In selecting names for places, Council will consult the community both locally and more broadly, as well as reach out to key stakeholders and interested persons as appropriate. Council will seek wherever possible to connect place names to the places they will come to represent.

Council is committed to recognising the past and ongoing custodianship of land in the municipality by the Wurundjeri people and this policy gives primacy to the recognition of places through the use of names in the Woi wurrung language. Requests to use Woi wurrung words shall be subject to consultation with the Wurundjeri – the Registered Aboriginal Party operating in the City of Yarra, and no Woi wurrung naming request shall be supported without their approval.

In addition to its commitment to recognising Yarra's traditional owners through place naming, Council has identified the opportunity to use place naming as a way of furthering its policy objectives in a range of areas. These policies include, but are not limited to:

- **Council Plan 2017-2021**, which describes Yarra's history, diversity and heritage and commits Council to engaging with communities in decisions that affect them.
- **Gender Equity Strategy 2016-2019**, which includes a commitment to investigate opportunities for naming new streets and other places in Yarra after prominent Yarra female leaders.
- **Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2015-2018**, which includes a strategy to link in with local historical societies to explore opportunities to highlight the multicultural heritage of Yarra (*Note: While this policy is currently under review, it is expected the new policy will include a similar objective*).

Council will have a preference for place names which reflect these policy ambitions.

4.1. Responsive naming (roads and features)

The *Naming Rules* provide that anyone (including the Council itself) may submit a place naming request to Council. The City of Yarra will consider requests from the community in relation to the names of roads or features, including requests for the changes to existing names.

The process for naming or renaming places under the responsive place naming program is as follows:

Process	Responsibility	Next step
1 Naming Request	Anyone may submit a request for a place to be named.	Go to 2
2 Assessment	A Council officer determines whether the place warrants naming using the criteria set out below.	Yes , go to 3 No , process ends
3 Woi wurrung naming	A Council officer contacts the Wurundjeri Tribe to see if they can suggest a suitable Woi wurrung name.	Yes , go to 6 No , go to 4
4 Community naming	A Council officer commences community consultation to see if the community can suggest a suitable name.	Go to 5
5 Proposed name	A Council officer consults with Councillors on community, Councillor and officer suggestions and selects a proposed name (or alternative names) for formal exhibition.	Go to 6
6 Exhibition	A Council officer undertakes targeted consultation with affected owners and occupiers and with street naming stakeholders on the proposed name(s).	Go to 7
7 Submissions	A Council officer receives submissions from the public on the proposed name, prepares a Council report and invites all submitters to the relevant meeting.	Go to 8
8 Decision	Council receives public submissions, considers the report and makes a final decision about the street name.	Council process ends

Assessment of naming requests (streets)

Before Council names a street, it first needs to be determined whether it warrants naming. In most circumstances, naming processes are triggered when a subdivision occurs and new properties will use an unnamed street as their exclusive access. In these cases, it can be beneficial for properties to be properly addressed as this assists with mail, deliveries, emergency services and visitors.

The City of Yarra contains approximately 2,350 unnamed streets, ranging in size from no more than a short pedestrian pathway, right through to a well-used vehicle thoroughfare with traffic signage and provision for parking. In determining which ones to name, Council will consider a range of factors. Council will not ordinarily support the naming of unnamed streets that continue to serve their original purpose of providing access to the side and rear of properties.

Council officers have the authority to determine whether a naming request shall be supported. In determining whether to support a naming request submitted by a member of the public, Council officers will have regard to the factors set out below.

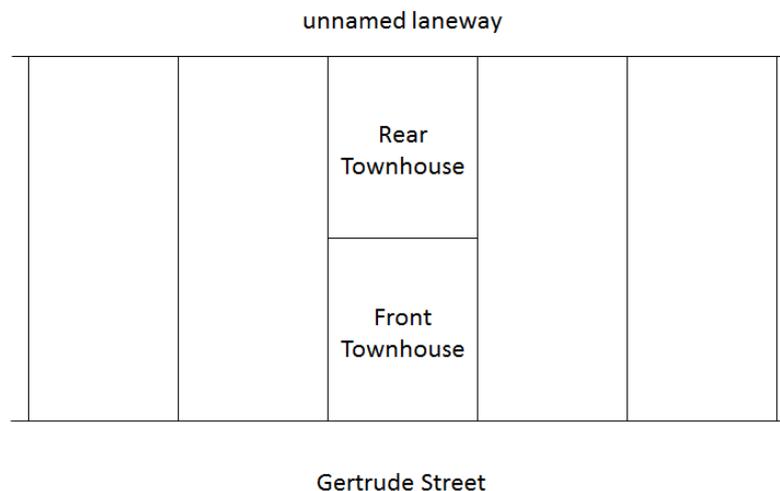
Nothing in this policy limits the ability of Council, by resolution, to determine to support a place naming request.

Factors in favour of street naming

- The existence of any new properties that will rely on the street for addressing purposes.
- In the case of situations where properties will be required to change an existing address, the support of at least 80% of affected property owners and occupiers.
- Any identified risk with emergency services access.
- An anomaly within the street network in the area (such as if all other local lanes are named).
- The need to ensure connect the named street network is contiguous (a request to name one street may trigger the need to name another street to ensure it is connected).
- The desirability of recognising the historical significance of a particular location.

Example

The redevelopment of a parcel of land on Gertrude Street will result in two new dwellings on the land formerly occupied by a single house. One of the dwellings is accessed solely from Gertrude Street, and the other is accessed solely from what was the rear laneway. The property is located 50 metres from the nearest side street. There are currently no other properties facing the rear lane.



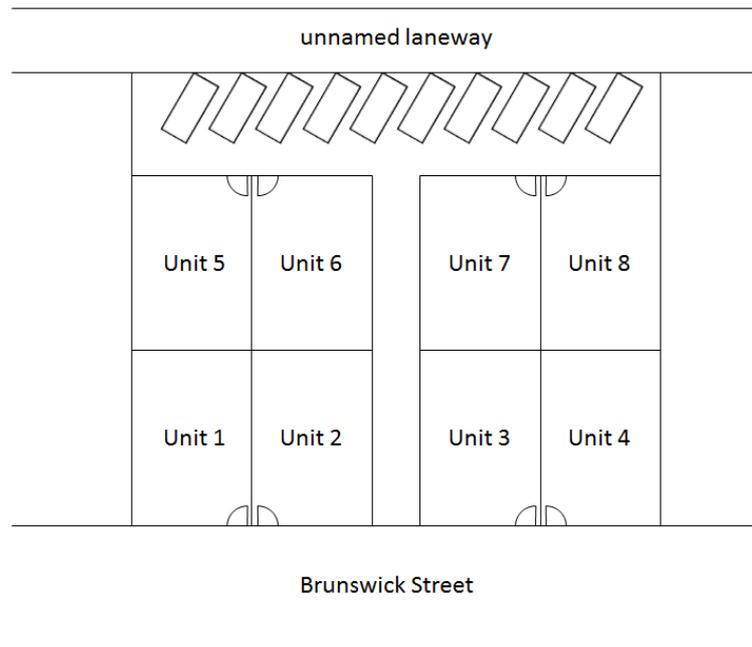
Council officers determine to assign a name to the laneway in order to provide a street address to the new property.

Factors against street naming

- Whether the installation of directional signage could effectively address issues raised.
- Whether naming the street is likely to increase vehicle traffic beyond capacity.
- Whether naming the street will encourage car parking in a street unsuitable for that purpose.
- In the case of situations where properties will be required to change an existing address, the support of less than 80% of affected property owners and occupiers.
- The costs involved in undertaking the naming process.
- If the street proposed for naming is not a road as defined by the Road Management Act.

Example

An eight unit development is proposed on Brunswick Street. Four of the units are accessed directly from Brunswick Street, and the other four are accessed via pedestrian walkway that runs through the centre of the site. Car parking for all units is accessed from the rear laneway.



Council officers determine that the street does not warrant naming, as each of the residences will be assigned a Brunswick Street address, and it can be expected that visitors, emergency services and deliveries will access the rear units via the pedestrian walkway.

Assessment of naming requests (features)

While the majority of naming requests relate to street naming, members of the public are also able to request the naming of other places where Council is the naming authority, including (but not limited to) parks, open spaces, watercourses and sports grounds. In determining whether these places warrant naming, Council officers shall have regard to the criteria above for street names, insofar as they are applicable to the place suggested for naming.

While Council officers have the authority to determine that a naming request shall not be supported, no proposal can formally commence without a resolution of Council.

4.2. Proactive naming (roads and features)

Council shall, from time to time, undertake a proactive place naming program, where it shall first declare its intention to name a place in recognition of a particular theme, and then subsequently identify a suitable location. Alternatively, it may identify a particular name to be applied, either to an identified location or not. While this process can only be formally commenced by Council resolution, it may arise as a result of an approach by a member of the community or advice from a Council officer.

Depending on Council's initial resolution, there are three different processes for naming places under the proactive program is as follows:

Option One – Council proposes both the name and place.

Process	Responsibility	Next step
1 Naming Proposal	Council determines to name a specific places using specific names.	Go to 2
2 Exhibition	A Council officer undertakes targeted consultation with affected owners and occupiers and with street naming stakeholders on the naming proposals.	Go to 3
3 Submissions	A Council officer receives submissions from the public on the proposed name, prepares a Council report and invites all submitters to the relevant meeting.	Go to 4
4 Decision	Council receives public submissions, considers the report and makes a final decision about the street names.	Council process ends

Option Two – Council proposes the name and seeks suggestions on the place.

Process	Responsibility	Next step
1 Naming Proposal	Council determines to name places using specific names.	Go to 2
2 Place consultation	A Council officer seeks community suggestions on places that could be named using the proposed names.	Go to 3
3 Proposed places	A Council officer consults with Councillors on community, Councillor and officer place suggestions and selects proposed naming proposals for further consultation.	Go to 4
4 Exhibition	A Council officer undertakes targeted consultation with affected owners and occupiers and with street naming stakeholders on the naming proposals.	Go to 5
5 Submissions	A Council officer receives submissions from the public on the proposed name, prepares a Council report and invites all submitters to the relevant meeting.	Go to 6
6 Decision	Council receives public submissions, considers the report and makes a final decision about the street names.	Council process ends

Option Three – Council seeks suggestions first on the name, then on the place.

Process	Responsibility	Next step
1 Naming Proposal	Council determines to name places in recognition of a particular theme.	Go to 2
2 Name consultation	A Council officer seeks community suggestions about specific names that are consistent with that theme.	Go to 3
3 Proposed name	A Council officer consults with Councillors on community, Councillor and officer name suggestions and selects proposed names for further consultation.	Go to 4
4 Place consultation	A Council officer seeks community suggestions on places that could be named using the proposed names.	Go to 5
5 Proposed places	A Council officer consults with Councillors on community, Councillor and officer place suggestions and selects proposed places for further consultation.	Go to 6
6 Exhibition	A Council officer undertakes targeted consultation with affected owners and occupiers and with street naming stakeholders on the naming proposals.	Go to 7
7 Submissions	A Council officer receives submissions from the public on the proposed name, prepares a Council report and invites all submitters to the relevant meeting.	Go to 8
8 Decision	Council receives public submissions, considers the report and makes a final decision about the street names.	Council process ends

Example

As part of its celebration of International Womens' Day, Council determines to name five streets in recognition of women who have made a significant contribution to the the City of Yarra. It resolves to commence the naming process by calling for community suggestions for suitable women.

Council selects five suitable women from among submissions received and its own research, announces the names to be recognised and calls for community suggestions as to suitable locations.

Council receives a number of suggestions and determines a package of five specific streets, together with the proposed street names.

Council officers write to the owners and occupiers of directly affected properties, as well as street naming stakeholders, seeking their views on the naming proposal.

Council receives submissions from affected persons and makes a final decision regarding the street naming.

Example

As part of a celebration of the contribution of community artists to the Yarra community, Council determines that it proposes to find a park in the city to name “Artists Park”. It resolves to commence the naming process by calling for community suggestions as to a suitable park in the municipality.

Council receives a number of suggestions and selects a specific park to be named “Artists Park”.

Council officers write to the owners and occupiers of directly affected properties, as well as street naming stakeholders, seeking their views on the naming proposal.

Council receives submissions from affected persons and makes a final decision regarding the street naming.

Example

Council determines that it proposes to name an identified street as “Wurundjeri Lane”.

Council officers write to the owners and occupiers of directly affected properties, as well as street naming stakeholders, seeking their views on the naming proposal.

Council receives submissions from affected persons and makes a final decision regarding the street naming.

4.3. Locality naming

In general, Council will not support a request to establish a new locality name, or to alter the boundaries of existing localities within the municipality.

Any request by a member of the community to alter locality names should be submitted to Council together with evidence of support of a significant number of the affected persons. This evidence might include a petition, letters of support, results of a community survey or similar. While achieving support from a majority of affected persons is not necessary at this stage, Council officers will need to be satisfied that such support may be possible before any request will be taken to Council for consideration.

A proposal to alter locality names can only be instigated by Council resolution, and must be conducted in accordance with the process set out in the *Naming Rules*. As these processes are rare, a tailored consultation plan is to be developed and endorsed by Council for each proposal, and will likely include direct mail to affected persons, public advertising, a public survey or poll and, where the locality extends into a neighbouring municipality, consultation with the relevant Council.

All decisions regarding locality naming must be made by resolution of Council.

5. Implementation

5.1. Administrative arrangements

Place naming website

A page on Council's website will be published to provide information about Council's place naming program. The page will include:

- information about the place naming program
- a list of current naming proposals and their status.
- a link to recently named streets, including information about their history.
- a copy of this policy.
- instructions on how to subscribe to the place naming mailing list.

Place naming mailing list

The Governance Support Unit will maintain an email list of interested persons who would like to be notified of place naming proposals and will ensure that any public communications or invitations to participate in a naming process are sent to that list.

Mapping services

Following the naming of a road, Council officers shall be responsible for submitting the new name to external mapping services, such as Apple Maps and Google Maps. Because these services are not controlled by Council and rely on community-based submissions, temporary signage shall be erected following the naming of each street to encourage the members of the public to also submit the new names to the mapping services.

5.2. Signage

Newly named streets

Upon the gazettal of new street names, street signs showing the new street name shall be installed as soon as practicable and within 30 days. These new signs will include the following information:

Sign Detail	Where it will appear
Street name	On all signs
Street type	On all signs
Property numbers for one block in one or both directions	Where the street crosses a major through street and it is deemed necessary to assist in navigation.
"NO THROUGH ROAD"	Where a cul de sac may be readily mistaken for a through street.
A simplified translation of the street name	Where the street name includes a word in the Woi wurrung language (on one sign only).
Brief biographical information about the subject of a street name (which where possible, has been agreed with the subject's descendants)	Where the street is named in recognition of a specific person (on one sign only).

The overall design, size, colours, font, and any abbreviations on any street sign shall be in accordance with the applicable Australian Standards.

Previously named streets

Where an existing street is named in recognition of a specific person, but no biographical information has been included on the sign, Council will replace the street sign to include such information following a request from a member of the public if:

- the subject of the eponymous street name can be accurately confirmed.
- accurate biographical information is provided and can be readily confirmed.
- the inclusion of biographical information will not be offensive or controversial.
- the inclusion of biographical information will not increase the risk of sign theft or vandalism.
- the member of the public agrees to meet the cost of the sign replacement (calculated on a cost recovery basis).

Following the replacement of a street sign in these circumstances, the sign is the property of Council, which has ongoing responsibility for maintenance and cyclical replacement.

Other places

Where other places are named under this policy, the design of appropriate signage will be considered in accordance with the design standards appropriate to that location. Where Woi wurrung words or a person's names are used, appropriate explanatory information shall be included where appropriate.

6. Related Documents

- Geographic Place Names Act 1998
- Road Management Act 2004
- Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016