



Place and Road Naming Guidelines

DRAFT

Owner	Planning and Building
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1 Introduction

The City of Melbourne is the Responsible Authority for naming roads, features and localities, and is guided by the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and the Registrar of Geographic names (VICNAMES).

Under the Guidelines, anyone (individuals, community groups, organisations, government departments or authorities) can propose a new road name. Members of the public and other stakeholders can be involved in the naming process in three ways:

- propose a name or boundary for a road, feature or locality to the responsible naming authority.
- alert a naming authority and the Registrar of Geographic Names to an issue with an existing name or boundary for a road, feature or locality and request that the matter be investigated.
- comment on whether a naming or boundary change proposal conforms with the naming rules.

Naming authorities are responsible for submitting naming proposals that comply with these naming rules to the Registrar.

Appropriate naming is essential for identifying locations when managing emergencies and delivering goods and services in Victoria.

Any proposed name must comply with the Naming rules for places in Victoria, Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities - 2022 (the Naming Rules), and the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

These naming rules are the statutory guidelines provided for under section 5 of the [Geographic Place Names Act 1998](#); they are therefore mandatory for all naming authorities in Victoria – councils, government departments and other authorities – and include all government-owned or administered roads, features (natural or otherwise) and localities.

2 Background

The City of Melbourne is the Responsible Authority for the naming of roads, features and localities within the municipality. When roads, features and localities are named they can recognise and reflect culture, heritage and landscape, and add value to Victoria's identity. Importantly, it is essential to appropriately name and identify locations to ensure that the management and access for emergency services, and delivering goods and services in Victoria are easily and uniquely identifiable.

Geographic Names Victoria released the *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022 - Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities* (the naming rules) in February 2022. The new guidelines have been developed after a review which is required under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* section 6 and requires a review of the 'guidelines' once every five years. The engagement process for this review took place via Engage Victoria in 2021.

The naming rules provide processes and procedures for naming roads, features and localities across Victoria. This ensures that naming throughout Victoria is unambiguous, the names are enduring and preserve Victoria's cultural identity through strong links to place.

As the Responsible Authority for place naming, the City of Melbourne receives requests from community members, land holders and developers to name a place, feature, road or locality. The City of Melbourne will also propose naming of these aspects as well as Council buildings and infrastructure. The openness of the guidelines around who can name a place has resulted in the need to create 'operational guidelines' to ensure the management of naming is consistent and that names that would be more appropriate yet not proposed can be considered and used as part of the formal consultation process.

Why the need for guidelines to ensure consistent naming across the municipality?

- To ensure one entity does not 'impose' a name on a community.
- To ensure an appropriate process to follow when implementing the new naming rules.
- That road and placing naming is consistent with Council's vision.
- To ensure that the use of name reflects the City of Melbourne's history, diversity and focus on Aboriginal and female naming.
- To involve the local community including indigenous groups and historical and heritage societies in identifying appropriate Feature names.

The intent of the operational guidelines will do things such as:

- Modify approach to be community-led rather than proponent / developer-led.
- Modify engagement practices (including methods of engagement and approach that will seek earlier feedback on names including the taking of formal polls from the community).
- Document the preference for Aboriginal names and the names of women who have contributed to Melbourne's historical development.
- Provide opportunity for enhancement of relationships with local Traditional Owner groups and heritage societies.
- Compile a register over time of suitable names and justification that can be drawn upon (particularly at precinct level).

- Proactively engage with landowners / proponents in precincts ahead of subdivisions and road naming proposals.

3 Legislation, Policy and Regulations

Primarily the naming of geographic places is governed by the following legislation:

- Geographic Place Names Act 1998
- Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022

Other legislation, regulations and policies relevant to geographic place and road naming are:

- AS/NZs4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Local Government Act 2020
- Road Management Act 2004
- Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2011
- Survey Co-ordination Act 1958
- City of Melbourne Reconciliation Plan 2021
- City of Melbourne's Creating Communities of Equality and Respect: Women's Safety and Empowerment Action Plan 2021-2024
- City of Melbourne's Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-2032
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN) Resolutions (see 1.3.1 of the Naming Rules for the applicable resolutions)
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4 Scope

The City of Melbourne is the naming authority for places, features, roads and localities within the municipality. These operational guidelines outline the process for naming any feature, locality or road (whether public or private) which is the responsibility of Council.

A need for operational guidelines was deemed necessary as a result of the new naming rules providing greater guidance when road, place and feature naming is proposed.

These operational guidelines represent a summary of the key principles and steps of the Naming rules and has been produced to assist Council Officers at The City of Melbourne to ensure that any naming proposals are proposed and considered on a consistent basis, appropriate consultation is undertaken and to ensure all names that meet the guidelines are considered.

The City of Melbourne is not responsible for naming arterial roads, freeways or geographical places of regional, state and national significance. 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.

5 The Process

5.1 What can be named and the Principles

Any public or private road, feature or locality within Victoria can be named or have its boundary changed, using the naming rules. In the City of Melbourne, the most common naming requests are in relation to existing unnamed lanes and new lanes or through links approved via a development permit. With the renewal of areas such as Arden, Macaulay and Fishermans Bend, separate naming strategies may be developed for these areas, however the principles outlined in this document will be applied to these areas.

The Principles to be considered when naming a place:

Principle A	Ensuring public safety
Principle B	Recognising the public interest
Principle C	Linking the name to place
Principle D	Ensuring names are not duplicated
Principle E	Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages
Principle F	Names must not discriminate or be offensive
Principle G	Gender equality
Principle H	Dual names
Principle I	Using commemorative names
Principle J	Using commercial and business names
Principle K	Language
Principle L	Directional names to be avoided
Principle M	Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality

5.2 Naming Priorities and Improvements

New road names should relate to the historical and cultural connections of the locality and comply with the state's current Guidelines for Geographic Names that are established under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*. Copies of the guidelines are available from [VicNames](#).

The guidelines state that any proposed name should not cause confusion or errors, and be easy to pronounce. Road names must not be duplicated or similar sounding within proximity or named after a business or living person.

City of Melbourne encourages and supports names that act as a reminder of local history, culture and citizens with an emphasis on the following themes:

- **Aboriginal Naming:** City of Melbourne encourages opportunities to recognise and preserve the valuable contribution made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the use of Aboriginal languages for names in accordance with the Naming Rules. Should you wish to consider the use of the Aboriginal language for naming, it is highly recommended that consultation with Traditional owners and our [Aboriginal Melbourne Team](#) is taken prior to lodgement.
- **Women in history:** City of Melbourne teamed up with the [Victorian Women's Trust](#) to feature more Victorian women when naming places and lanes, providing an opportunity to celebrate women who have influenced and inspired our community. The result of this research was a short booklet 'Women in the Life of the City' with a curated list of women, each deserving of wider recognition. It is by no means exhaustive but it goes some way to highlight the influence women have had throughout the decades.
- **City of Melbourne's diverse community:** Where the above priorities cannot be met due to non-compliance with the Naming Rules or when developing a precinct level strategy, names reflecting the history and heritage of the City of Melbourne community can be used. For example ANZAC commemorative names or Chinese Heritage names in China Town, the cultural history of the City of Melbourne, historical land use, and key people to the City of Melbourne.

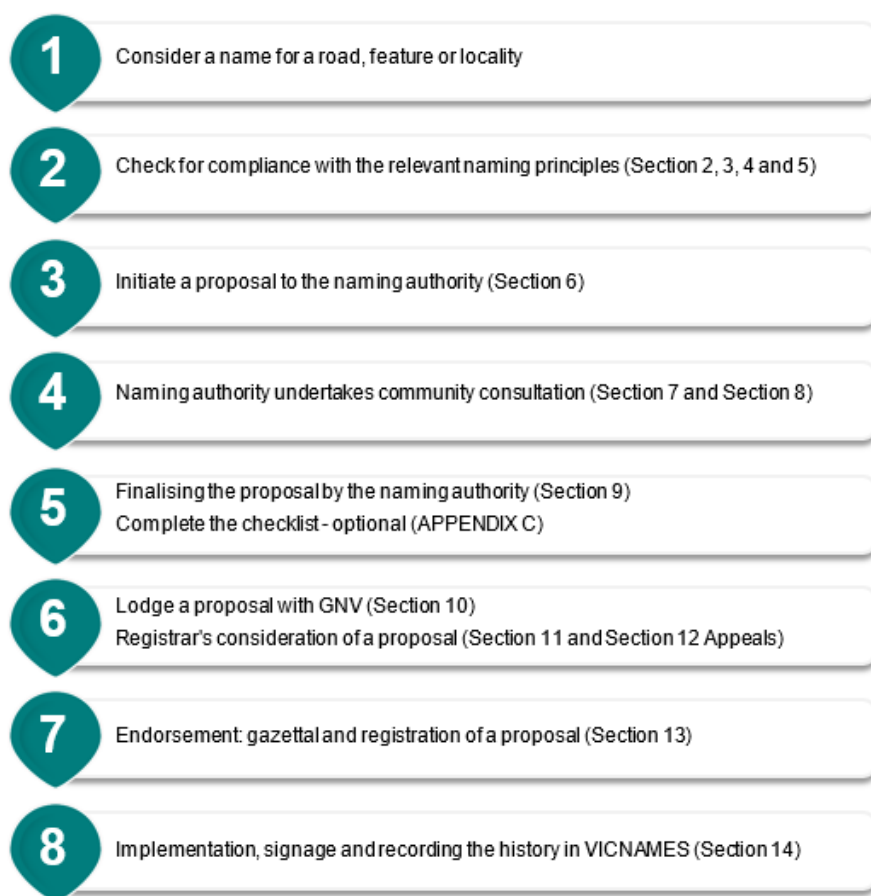
Proactive place naming proposals

While the majority of naming proposals are proponent or community-led, Council may, from time to time, proactively seek to name a place or road. Where the process is Council-led the same process and priorities will be followed as outlined in this policy (Aboriginal Language Names and Women of History) as well as compliance with the Naming Rules. In this instance, Officers will first discuss its intention to name a place or road in accordance with its Naming Priorities and this policy with Councillors. 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 after support from Councillors is gained, it may arise as a result of an approach by a member of the community or advice from a Council officer.

Please note: Not all roads / lanes can be named. Any naming proposals must meet the above guidelines and need to have valid and specific reasons to be named i.e., for the purpose of emergency services and / or a new development fronting the lane.

5.3 Council's end-to-end process

The process as defined by the Naming Rules:



How Council will work through the process:

1.	Council receives and / or proposes a naming request from an external source, or a request is initiated from Council. The request can be to name or re-name a road, place or feature within the City of Melbourne.
2.	A Council officer checks all necessary information has been provided by the party proposing the name. If insufficient, a request for additional information within 30 days will be made. Council officer also checks compliance with the Naming Rules.

3.	Once the above information is provided, 'in principle' support is sought from Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) via VicMap Editing Service.
4.	Once 'in principle' support is obtained from GNV (if required), a request is made to Councillors seeking confirmation of in principle support to commence Public Consultation. In the case of an Aboriginal Language Name, support from the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party is also required. In the case of the name being linked to place, the local historical society will be consulted with first. If 'Called In' by Councillors, the proposed naming will be formally considered at a Committee/Council meeting. At this point Council decides to either proceed to the public consultation stage, or not to proceed. If Council does not choose to proceed to public consultation, then the proposal is considered to be declined at this point.
5.	If approved via a Briefing Paper, IDP or FMC Council, public consultation will occur for at least 30 days. This consultation period must abide by Section 7 of the Naming Rules. (This can include mail to the adjoining properties, signs, the use of Participate Melbourne and an advertisement in The Age).
6.	Compile and analyse all feedback (including submissions or objections) from the public consultation. Should alternative compliant names be recommended during the process and has community support, a separate poll can be used to determine which name is appropriate.* Prior to any poll being undertaken, 'in principle' support from GNV of the new name must be obtained.
7.	Council formally considers (via Briefing Paper, IDP or FMC depending on number of submissions) the naming proposal and either endorses the naming proposal or not. If Council does not endorse the proposal, then the proposed name is considered to be declined at this point.
8.	Any party who responded to the naming proposal, during the consultation period, must be advised of Council's decision. Council will write to objectors and submitters, when they are identified, informing them of the outcome of the naming proposal as per Section 8 of the Naming Rules. Objectors must be advised that they have 30 days to object directly to the Office of Geographic Names from the date of the notification or the date of application to Geographic Names for registration of the name by Council.
9.	If the naming requested is approved, an application is lodged with GNV for consideration and final approval by the Registrar of Geographic Names as per Section 10 and 11 of the Naming Rules. All submissions and objections, and responses to them are included in the application.

10.	If compliant the Registrar gazettes the name as per Section 12 of the Naming Rules.
11.	GNV registers the name in VICNAMES and sends out notification as per Section 13 of the Naming Rules.
12.	A signage installation request is made. Council installs signage and updates the history behind the name in VICNAMES as per Section 13 of the Naming Rules.

*Where there are multiple options, or a Road Naming Rules compliant name is suggested through the consultation process, a poll can be used to determine which name has more meaning to the community the proposed road to be named is located within. Prior to any poll, Councillors must be notified. The name that attains the majority of votes from any poll undertaken will be the name that is considered 'preferred' and will be reported to a Committee/Council Meeting for final decision. Polling will only apply to significant Places or Roads.

6 Fees

All applicable fees (including fees payable for Traditional Owner engagement, consultation fees and other out of pocket costs) must be paid by the naming proponent unless otherwise agreed by The City of Melbourne.

In instances where a new development requires a new road name to function, and the name is taken from one of the City of Melbourne's approved names, the development proponent must cover all fees.

Where the City of Melbourne is the proponent, the fees must be paid by the relevant Branch.

All fees are subject to change and based on individual circumstances (eg. number of letters or signs), fees for newspaper advertisements and Traditional Owner fees.

7 Delegation

7.1 Councillor Consultation under Delegation

- Seek approval to commence public consultation with proposed names.
- Refusal of a naming request.
- Approval of a naming request

7.2 Committee/Council Meeting

- Called in by two Councillors.
- To commence a polling process.
- Naming request has been through a poll process.
- Naming or renaming is of a significant place, feature or locality.

7.3 Table of responsible branches

Type	Responsible Lead Branch
Roads	Planning and Building
Parks and open space	Parks and City Greening
Infrastructure and bridges, squares etc.	City Infrastructure / City Design
Council buildings and facilities	City Property and relevant service provider (such as Creative City for libraries)
Geographical Boundaries	Governance / City Data
Marinas	Waterways

8 Guideline Review

To ensure the Guidelines remain current, these guidelines will be reviewed every five years in line with Geographical Names Victoria requirements under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* section 6 to review the official guidelines once every five years. The next date for review will be upon completion of the GNV review.

9 Related Documents

- Geographic Place Names Act 1998
- Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016
- AS/NZs4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007
- City of Melbourne Reconciliation Plan 2021
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Local Government Act 2020
- Road Management Act 2004
- Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2011

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- Survey Co-ordination Act 1958
 - Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
 - United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN) Resolutions (see 1.3.1 of the Naming Rules for the applicable resolutions)
 - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
 - The Welcoming Cities Standard