

Plaques & Memorials Policy

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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide a policy framework for management of existing plaques and memorials, installation of new plaques and memorials and assessment of new requests for plaques and memorials within public space in the City of Monash.

2.0 POLICY SCOPE

The policy covers plaques and memorials on Council owned or managed land, including streets, reserves or parks. All new plaques and memorials will be required to conform to this policy, with the exception of the following:

- signage, display boards, banners, public artworks or temporary roadside memorials
- war memorials, which require approval by other authorities
- naming of places or facilities, which are provided for under Council's *Guidelines for Community Request for the Naming of Council Facilities (2012)*
- plaques and memorials to be located within the Oakleigh Pioneer Park Heritage Precinct, to which Council's *Policy on Plaques, Memorials and Public art in the Warrawee Park Heritage Precinct* applies

Whilst there are existing plaques or memorials within the City of Monash that predate this policy an existing plaque or memorial should not be taken as a precedent for future approvals.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Public space is a significant part of the City's social and cultural heritage and makes a valued recreational, environmental and aesthetic contribution for people who live, work, and recreate in the City. Plaques and memorials provide recognition and can contribute to an understanding of significant events or persons closely associated with history.

Any decision regarding plaques and memorials needs to consider the balance between the desire to commemorate events or individuals and the ongoing enjoyment of uncluttered public space.

In 2004, Council endorsed the City of Monash *Policy on Plaques, Memorials and Public art in the Warrawee Park Heritage Precinct*.

In 2012, Council approved the City of Monash *Guidelines for Community Request for the Naming of Council Facilities*, which were developed to provide a consistent and standard procedure for naming Council facilities.

This policy will provide a consistent and standard procedure for assessing requests in relation to new plaques or memorials.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Plaque

Flat tablet of metal, stone or other material which may include text and/or images that commemorate a person, event or historical information relevant to a particular location. The tablet may be fixed to an object, building or hard ground surface located within public space.

Memorial

An object established to commemorate a person, group, association or event. A memorial may be a 'living thing', such as a tree or garden.

Public Space

All Council owned or managed land that is open or accessible to people. This includes:

- Council owned public open space including bushland reserves and sports fields
- Land managed by Council but owned by another body
- The exterior or interior of Council buildings within public space
- Reserve furniture within public space (such as reserve benches, picnic tables etc)
- Any other infrastructure within public space (such as picnic shelters, barbeques, playgrounds etc)
- Activity centre locations, including footpaths, median strips, public squares, malls and laneways
- Road reservations.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Council recognises that plaques and memorials provide recognition and are important in celebrating significant historical events and persons or organisations closely associated with the leadership, cultural and social development of the City.

Policy objectives

Council is committed to achieving the following outcomes:

- Provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate significant historical events and persons or organisations closely associated with the leadership, cultural and social development of the City.
- Protect the intended purpose, environmental values and aesthetic appearance of Council public space.
- Provide a clear and equitable framework to manage requests for plaques and memorials to be located within Council public space.
- Ensure risks are adequately considered in relation to plaques and memorials on Council land.
- Intersectional gender equality.

General principles

To protect the intended purpose and aesthetic appearance of Council public space, Council does not generally encourage installation of plaques and memorials on land owned or managed by Council.

Plaques and memorials will only be considered where they are consistent with Council's strategic and urban design vision for the proposed location. The proposal must be consistent with relevant Council strategies, master plans and the land's public purpose, and must not result in a change of use of the land. The siting or appearance of a plaque or memorial must not negatively impact the aesthetic or environmental value of public space, nor on the use of the space by the community.

Plaques and memorials are to meet all relevant planning and building requirements. They are to be designed and sited in a way that will not damage the supporting structure or natural environment or create a public risk. Plaques and memorials are to be constructed in a manner that will require little ongoing maintenance will be resistant to vandalism. Plaques attached to an asset like a seat, building, etc. must be durable and must have a life equivalent to the asset to which they are attached.

All costs associated with the design, construction, installation and maintenance of plaques or memorials are to be paid by the person making the request for the plaque or memorial. Once approved, installation of any plaque or memorial must be undertaken by Council. Installed plaques and memorials will become the property of Monash City Council and will be entered into Council's Asset Register. Maintenance of plaques and memorials must be undertaken by Council.

Council does not guarantee to retain plaques and memorials in perpetuity. Generally, a plaque or memorial will be retained in place for as long as practicable, with the following exceptions:

- the area in which the item is sited is to be redeveloped; or
- ongoing maintenance costs are prohibitive; or
- in the case of a plaque, the asset to which it is attached has reached the end of its useful life; or
- the condition of the plaque or memorial is poor.

If a plaque or memorial is removed due to any of the reasons above, Council will not guarantee replacement of the plaque or memorial, however replacement plaques or memorials of similar or different style or form may be considered. All reasonable efforts will be made to identify, contact and advise relevant stakeholders (including family members).

Existing plaques and memorials

Existing plaques and memorials will generally be retained in place for as long as practicable, subject to exceptions as listed above.

New plaques installed by Council

Plaques may be installed by Council on Council owned or managed land, buildings or structures to commemorate an opening of a new or refurbished Council building or facility, or a historically significant event.

Where project funding has been provided by an external agency, such as the State or Federal Government, and acknowledgement of the funding agreement is required in the form of a plaque, the layout and wording of the plaque will be in accordance with the funding agreement.

Plaques installed by Council will be funded by Council. Council may seek a financial contribution from funding partners if applicable.

Requests for new plaques and memorials on Council owned or managed land

Council will consider requests for new plaques or memorials, including those from private individuals and community groups for installation of plaques and memorials on land owned or managed by Council.

Plaques and memorials will only be considered where the following criteria are met:

- commemoration of an individual that is/was strongly linked to the City of Monash; and
- commemoration of an individual that has made a substantial contribution to the leadership, cultural and social aspects of the City's development or shared community history. The contribution of the individual must have been exceptional and extend beyond what might reasonably be expected through paid employment or voluntary contribution to the community.

Plaques or memorials will also be considered for the commemoration of:

- a Monash group or association who have made a substantial and outstanding contribution to the Monash community; or
- a significant historical or cultural event which has a profound resonance with the broader Monash community or is of national or state significance.

Consideration will be given to addressing an imbalance in recognition of contributions made by under-recognised groups, including but not limited to women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the multicultural community or the LGBTIQ+ communities.

The subject of a requested plaque or memorial must also have a clear association and strong significance to the location proposed for the plaque or memorial, and must not have been already commemorated elsewhere in the City.

Plaques and memorials commemorating deceased persons will not generally be considered until an individual has been deceased for at least one year, in order to allow for appropriate development of historical perspective, however Council may approve plaques or memorials commemorating living persons at Council's discretion. Approval will be sought from a deceased person's next of kin or appropriate relative/s where practicable.

Memorials including reserve seating with attached plaques will be considered where they meet the requirements of this policy, and are consistent with Council's strategic and urban design objectives for the proposed site. Significant donations for public space infrastructure (e.g. barbeques, picnic shelters etc.) may be acknowledged by mounting a plaque on or adjacent to the infrastructure.

6.0 APPROVAL PROCESS

Placement of plaques or memorials in public space requires prior written approval from Council. Persons making initial enquiries regarding the installation of a plaque or memorial should be referred to this policy for direction regarding criteria applicable to the enquiry.

New plaques installed by Council

1. Applications must be in writing and should include all relevant details including proposed text or images as well as the preferred location for the plaque or memorial.
2. The final artwork for any plaque shall be approved by the Manager and relevant Executive Leadership team member of the Council division delivering the project and the Manager Communications and Media and referral to the Chief Executive Officer for final approval.
3. Council commemoration plaques will generally include the following information, in order:
 - Monash Council logo
 - Identification of the Council facility or event
 - The name of the Councillor and other persons (if applicable) opening the facility or event on date (day, month, year)
 - The Mayor (if not already included in the above dot point)
 - Funding partner(s) recognition (if applicable)
 - Councillors' names (first name, last name -alphabetically)
 - Funding partner logo (if applicable)

If the information or layout is required to be different from the above, this should be discussed with the Project Working Group or other appropriate group) and this reasoning included when proceeding with the approvals process listed above.

Requests for new plaques and memorials on Council owned or managed land

1. Applications for new plaques and memorials must be in writing and must demonstrate compliance with this policy. Applications should include all relevant details including proposed text or images as well as the preferred location for the plaque or memorial.
2. Initial review of the application will be made by Council Officers in accordance with the criteria in this policy.
3. Final review of the design and layout, wording and location of any proposed plaque or memorial will be undertaken by:
 - Manager Property & City Design
 - Manager Corporate Governance & Legal
 - Director City Services
 - Director City Development
4. A Council resolution will be required to approve the installation of a plaque or memorial.
5. If approved, the design, manufacture and installation will be coordinated by Monash City Council and all costs will be borne by the applicant. In some instances, and at its sole discretion, Council may contribute toward the cost of the manufacture and/or installation.
6. If not approved, alternative commemorative options could be considered, including:
 - A donation to council's city greening program
 - Development of a written history and/or website content
 - Approaching private landowners or the Federal or State Government on land they own.

Any request for the placement of a plaque or memorial within public space that is managed by but not owned by Council will initially be assessed by Council referring to this policy. If assessed by Council as conforming to this policy the request will be referred to the landowner for final approval. Approval from other responsible authorities may be required if a plaque or memorial is proposed on land controlled by legislation.

Plaques or memorials placed in Council public space without Council approval will be removed. All reasonable efforts will be made to identify and contact the persons responsible for placing the item to advise them of this policy and to return any removed item to them.

7.0 **RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

City of Monash Guidelines for Community Request for the Naming of Council Facilities (2012)

City of Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy

City of Monash Active Reserves Strategy

City of Monash Walking & Cycling Strategy

City of Monash Activity Centre Structure Plans/ Masterplans

City of Monash Policy on Plaques, Memorials and Public art in the Warrawee Park Heritage Precinct