



PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS IN COUNCIL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE POLICY

PREAMBLE

Whitehorse City Council manages over three hundred parks, reserves and other areas of public open space. These areas often hold a special significance for those that live near them, use them, or have involvement in their management or maintenance. This public open 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.

The significance that these areas of public open space hold for many people results in Council receiving many requests for the placement of commemorative plaques and memorials in public open space. This policy has been created to assist with providing a clear direction for decisions to be made in relation to new plaques or memorials. Any decision needs to consider the balance between the desire to commemorate events or individuals and the ongoing enjoyment of natural uncluttered open areas.

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this document is to provide a policy framework for assessing community requests for, and for the installation of new plaques and memorials within public open space in the City of Whitehorse.

OBJECTIVES

2. To ensure that there is a clear and consistent method for assessing community requests for new plaques and memorials in open space.
3. To ensure that the installation and ongoing management of new and existing plaques and memorials in open space is undertaken in an agreed manner.

DEFINITIONS

4. **Plaque** - For the purpose of this policy, "plaque" refers to a flat tablet of metal, stone or other material which includes text and and/or images which commemorate a person/groups/association or an event and/or provide historical text or information relevant to its location. Such a tablet is affixed to an object, building or hard ground surface located within public open space.
5. **Memorial** - For the purpose of this policy 'memorial' refers to an object established in the memory of a person, group, association or event. This may include sculptures, statues, fountains and other landscape objects (but not plaques).
6. **Open Space** - For the purpose of this policy 'public open space' refers to all Council owned or managed land that is primarily reserved for leisure, recreation or nature conservation purposes. This includes:
 - Council owned public open space including bushland reserves and sports fields
 - Public open space managed by Council but owned by another body
 - The exterior or interior of Council buildings within public open space
 - Park furniture within public open space (such as park benches, picnic tables etc)
 - Any other infrastructure within public open space (such as shelters, barbeques, playgrounds etc)

This policy excludes land set aside as road reserve.

SCOPE

7. This policy replaces any previous policy, guidelines or approval process in regard to the installation of any form of plaque or memorial in open space in the City of Whitehorse.
8. A number of plaques and memorials are in existence in Council open space. Any existing plaque or memorial cannot be taken as a precedent for future approvals.
9. This policy applies to Council public open space as defined in the definition section above.
10. This policy does not cover signage, display boards, public art, historic interpretive signage or plaques and memorials outside of Council owned or managed public open space.

POLICY

Plaques installed by Council to commemorate an opening or other event

11. Plaques may be installed by Council to commemorate the opening of a new or refurbished Council building or facility, or to commemorate an event that may be of historical significance now or at some time in the future.
12. Where an external agency such as the state or federal government has provided funding for a project and the funding agreement requires recognition in the form of a plaque, the layout and wording of this plaque will be in line with the funding agreement.
13. Plaques installed by Council will be funded by Council. Council may seek a financial contribution from funding partners if applicable.
14. The final layout and wording of Council initiated plaques shall be submitted to the Communications Department for approval. Council commemoration plaques will generally include the following
 - Identification of the Council facility or event
 - The name of the person/s who opened it
 - Date (day, month, year) of opening/event
 - Funding partner recognition (if applicable)
 - Mayor
 - Councillors names (first name, last name – alphabetically)
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - City of Whitehorse logo (either top or bottom, left hand side, horse facing in)
 - Funding partner logo (if applicable)

This wording/layout may vary as appropriate based on the needs of the facility/event. Alterations to this layout must be approved by the Communications Department and the relevant General Manager.

Plaque or Memorial requests from the community

15. Plaques and memorials commemorating deceased persons will not generally be allowed to be placed in Council open space. In exceptional circumstances they may be allowed, and will only be considered where they meet the following criteria:
 - They commemorate a deceased individual who was a member of the Whitehorse community and who has made a substantial contribution to the Whitehorse community
 - The contribution of the individual was extra-ordinary and over and above what might reasonably be expected through paid employment or their voluntary contribution to the community, and that contribution stands out from others who may have also made a valuable contribution.

16. Generally a request to place a plaque or memorial commemorating a deceased individual will only be considered where the individual has been deceased for at least **one year**, to allow for appropriate development of historical perspective.
17. Plaques or memorials may also be considered where they:
 - Commemorate a Whitehorse group or association who have made a substantial and outstanding contribution to the Whitehorse community
 - Commemorate a significant historical or cultural event which has a profound resonance with the broader Whitehorse community or is of national or state significance.
18. The subject of a requested plaque or memorial must have a clear association and strong significance to the location proposed for the plaque or memorial.
19. Requests for plaques and memorials will only be considered where they are consistent with Council's master plan or concept plan for the proposed area of open space. If there is no master plan or concept plan for the proposed area of open space then the request must be consistent with Council's Open Space Strategy and the land's public purpose and must not result in a change of use of the land.
20. Recognition of **significant** donations for open space infrastructure (e.g. barbeques, picnic shelters, picnic settings, playgrounds, buildings etc) may be acknowledged by way of a plaque permanently mounted on or adjacent to the infrastructure.
21. Placement of plaques or memorials in public open space must have prior written approval from Council. Any plaque or memorial which has been placed in Council open 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 the removal. Reasonable attempts will be made to return any removed item to the persons responsible for its placement.
22. Any request for the placement of a plaque or memorial within open 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 land owner for final approval.
23. The placement of plaques and memorials in Whitehorse should be consistent with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development.
24. The placement of a plaque or memorial in public open space must not detract from the aesthetic value of the space, nor have a negative impact on the use of the site by the community.
25. Subjects that do not meet this criteria can discuss the possibility of donating a tree or park furniture with the Leisure and Recreation Services Department. Such a donation would only be considered on the condition that **no plaque** would be installed. Approval for the species of tree rests with Council.
26. This Policy does not cover the naming or renaming of Council facilities. Enquiries of this nature should be referred to the Criteria and Procedures for naming of Council Facilities after an Individual.

IMPLEMENTATION

27. 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.
28. Applications for the installation of a plaque or memorial will be accepted from a variety of sources including individuals, groups, clubs, committees and societies etc.

29. Applications must be **in writing**, must demonstrate in detail their conformance with this policy and should be made to the Manager Leisure and Recreation Services Department. Applications should include the type of plaque or memorial, the proposed design (including dimensions, wording, colour, and materials) as well as the preferred location.
30. Initial review of the application will be made by Council Officers for its conformance with the criteria in this policy.
31. Final approval for the design and layout of any plaque or memorial rests with the Manager Leisure and Recreation Services Department.
32. If assessed as conforming, a report will be made to the General Manager Human Services for final consideration. Requests for plaques or memorials may also be referred to Council for final approval in some circumstances.
33. Once approved, the manufacture and installation will be coordinated by Whitehorse City Council and all costs will be borne by the applicant. In some instances and at its own discretion Council may contribute toward the cost of the manufacture and/or installation.
34. Once installed any plaque or memorial will become the property of Whitehorse City Council and will be entered into Council's Asset Register. Maintenance of plaques and memorials is the responsibility of Whitehorse City Council.
35. Whitehorse City Council does not guarantee to retain plaques and memorials in perpetuity. Normally 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
 - The use of the area in which the item is sited changes significantly in character and the item is not deemed suitable for the site
 - The structure or support on which the item is located is to be removed or permanently altered.
 - The item has been vandalised and is no longer viable.
36. If a plaque or memorial is removed due to any of the reasons above all efforts will be made to identify, contact and advise relevant persons associated with the placement. Council cannot guarantee replacement of the plaque/memorial.

RESPONSIBILITY

37. The authority for approval for the installation of plaques and memorials lies with Whitehorse City Council and is subject to this policy, together with any other policies of the Council that may be approved from time to time.
38. General Manager Human Services

RELATED LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

39. Criteria and Procedures for Naming a Council Facility After an Individual
40. Art Collection Policy 2009 – 2014
41. Whitehorse Open Space Strategy (2007)