

# MANGAUNG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



## POLICY ON PUBLIC PLACES AND STREET NAMING

January 2009

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy provides guidelines for four instances of naming of public places and features, namely:

- a) Giving new name or names to previously unnamed features;
- b) Naming as part of new township establishment;
- c) Renaming of features that have names already; and
- d) Naming without further approval.

The Policy will be implemented in conjunction with the terms of reference for the establishment of the Public Places and Street Naming Committee. It will again be utilised to ensure that there is timeous naming and promulgation of names to ensure speedy service delivery in areas such provision of relevant municipal and other related services as emergency, banking, postal services, accurate billing, including navigation, identification, preservation of historical value and tourism. This process shall also ensure that Mangaung Local Municipality builds one community through the recognition of the different languages, cultures, histories of its people and/or heritage. The process will also assist to build one common identity for the people of Mangaung.

The implementation and roll-out of the naming and renaming process must therefore be handled in such a manner as that it unites the people instead of creating divisions. It must lead to a common purpose and destiny of people while at the same time preserving their diversity in a manner that does not undermine one from the other.

The Policy will be implemented in such a manner that it adheres to the guidelines as contained in the Hand on Geographical Names issued by the South African Geographic Names Council (SAGNC) and in collaboration with the Provincial Geographic Names Committee (PGNC).

## **2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The Policy regulates the naming of the following features and landmarks in the municipal area:

- 2.1 Streets.
- 2.2 Municipal buildings.
- 2.3 Parks and cemeteries.
- 2.4 Cadastral names.
- 2.5 Any other feature or features falling within the area of competency of the Municipality.

## **3. PRINCIPLES FOR GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**

The South African Geographic Names Council has laid down principles that must be applied to all geographic names in South Africa and Municipalities are expected to adhere to these principles when naming places, streets and other features within their areas of jurisdiction.

Below is an outline of these principles.

### **3.1 One name for one entity**

- Each individual feature or entity should have one official name.

### **3.2 Geographic names that should generally be avoided**

- Names that have already been approved for other places in South Africa.
- Names of places in other countries and names of countries.
- Names of which the spelling or pronunciation is so close to that of an existing name that confusion might result.
- Names which are blasphemous, indecent, offensive, vulgar, unaesthetic or embarrassing.
- Names which are discriminatory or derogatory as regards race, colour, creed, gender, political affiliation or other social factors.
- Names which are too long or clumsily compounded.
- Names consisting of a personal name only, without an additional generic element (such as “park”).
- Names that may be regarded as advertisement for a particular commercial product, service or firm.

### **3.3 Naming places after persons**

- Names of living persons should generally be avoided.
- Geographic entities named after persons should be in accordance with the stature of the persons concerned (not, for instance, naming an obscure feature after a person of national importance).
- Written permission should, where possible, be obtained from the individual or individual’s family or heirs before that person’s name is used.

### **3.4 Other important considerations**

- The naming of all streets including the applicable generic terms.
- The length of street names should always be taken into consideration in terms of cartographic layout of maps, i.e. shorter names for shorter streets, longer names for longer streets etc.
- When a name of a person is used, the stature of the person should be in relation to the prominence of that street.
- When a natural or man-made barrier, intersects a street, the affected street may be named by using the existing name in addition to a direction route marker, e.g. Church Street North or South.
- If a barrier or turn which intersects a street is removed for any reason, in other words, when two or more streets are connected, the affected streets should be renamed to prevent one street having two or more names.
- A named street shall have definitive start and end points, which can either be a natural or man made barrier, for instance a T-junction, a Cul-de-sac, a Y-junction, a Circle, a river, a level railway crossing, etc.
- Bends and changes of direction shall not be regarded as start or an end point for the naming of a street.
- If an existing street is extended in the same direction, the new section should retain

the same name as the existing street, or the whole street may be renamed from start to end.

#### **4. NAMES BANK FOR MLM**

- 4.1 The Public Places and Street Naming Committee will amongst others ensure that Mangaung Local Municipality through the Directorate: Economic Development and Planning keeps and maintains the Names bank for the Municipality.
- 4.2 The Names Bank is a database consisting of existing geographical names within the Mangaung Local Municipal Area.
- 4.3 All new names and proposed name changes should first be verified against the Names Bank, in order to avoid duplication and confusion.
- 4.4 The Names Bank should form part of the functions of the sub-directorate Planning, which is also responsible for the cartography and mapping of the Mangaung Local Municipal area.
- 4.5 Geographical names in the Names Bank must also reflect the following information:
  - (a) The language of the name.
  - (b) When upper and lower case letters are used in a name, the capital letters must be clearly indicated, e.g. Thaba 'Nchu or GaBosela.
  - (c) The origin and meaning of the name, its historical connections to the geographical feature, or the name in honour of a person should be as comprehensive as possible.
  - (d) References to historical, linguistic and/or other information where oral traditions prevail, the source of information must be as comprehensive as possible. Archival documents in support of the information can be attached as an annexure.

#### **5. WHO MAY APPLY FOR APPROVAL OF A NAME**

The following categories of institutions, bodies or persons may apply on a prescribed form for approval of a name:

- All government departments,
- A municipality,
- Post office,
- Property developers, or
- Any other body/institution or person.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

##### **6.1 The development of a new township**

The Developer is responsible for the annotation of the approved street names on the General Plan and the erection of street name boards of the Township. Eventually the Mangaung Local Municipality will have to take overall responsibility for the maintenance of street name boards/signage.

## **6.2 Changing a name**

- The Municipality is liable for all the costs incurred in the erecting or changing of a name. These include endorsements on General Plans, new name boards, removal of old boards/signs and the publication of notifications and the funding of community meetings.
- The Municipality is liable for all the legal and administrative costs resulting from the name changing.
- The Municipality shall not be liable for costs incurred by others and which are due by them, as a result of name changing.

## **7. THE NAMING PROCEDURE**

### **7.1 Procedure for giving new name or names to previously unnamed features**

- 7.1.1 Any of the applicants as indicated in paragraph 5 above initiates the process by submitting a formal written application/request on a prescribed application form.
- 7.1.2 The sub-directorate Planning then:
  - 7.1.2.1 Scrutinizes the proposed name of names according to the Policy Guidelines.
  - 7.1.2.2 Verify the non-existence of a similar name in the Names Bank.
  - 7.1.2.3 Requests inputs from the external and/or internal advisors, where necessary.
  - 7.1.2.4 Compiles a report to be submitted to the Public Places and Street Naming Committee.
  - 7.1.2.5 The Public Places and Street Naming Committee recommendations are then submitted or subjected to a process of community participation.
  - 7.1.2.6 The following steps, which must happen during the 21 day advertisement period, will be covered during the community participation:
    - The Ward Councillor and ward committee of the area affected by the name change or where the geographic feature is located will be requested to place the matter on the agenda of the ward committee for discussions.
    - After the matter has been discussed by the ward committee, it will be referred to the constituency meeting for deliberations with the community and interest groups.
    - The Ward Councillor and ward committee must ensure that the constituency meeting that is called to discuss the name change has only this matter on the agenda for such a meeting. No other matters may be discussed or considered during that meeting.
    - The Office of the Speaker will be represented in both the ward committee and constituency meetings as indicated above.
    - Public Places and Street Naming Committee may nominate and request one of its members to attend the meetings.
    - The report of the ward committee will be submitted to the Office of the Speaker.
    - In the case of a name change which is of concern or interest to the whole of the municipal area, such as the naming of the buildings, the Office of the Speaker will also convene a public hearing in the affected area and the invitation and participation will be extended to other parties and the community at large and not necessarily the residents of that area alone.

- 7.1.3 The application or proposal is advertised in the local media calling for comments and objections which must be submitted within a period of 21 days (which is inclusive of weekends but exclude public holidays). The notice period of the advertisement should run parallel to the public hearings and constituency meetings organised and facilitated by Councillors.
- 7.1.4 Within 14 days after the expiry of the 21 days of community consultation, sub-directorate Planning compiles a further report to serve before the Public Places and Street Naming Committee containing the community submissions. The Chairperson of the Committee and the Speaker may grant an extension based on the recommendation of the City Manager after an evaluation of the volume of applications received.
- 7.1.5 Public Places and Street Naming Committee considers the report from sub-directorate Planning and takes the decision, which will be referred to as a preliminary decision.
- 7.1.6 The preliminary decision is advertised and communicated to the members of the community.
- 7.1.7 Public Places and Street Naming Committee will allow for a period of 14 days for any person or party to submit objections to the preliminary decision.
- 7.1.8 The applicant will also be given an opportunity to make further inputs based on the objections received.
- 7.1.9 Within 10 days after the close of the 14 days notice period, sub-directorate Planning compiles a final report which will take into account the objections and further comments and inputs received to serve before the meeting of the Public Places and Street Naming Committee that must be held within the 10-day period mentioned earlier.
- 7.1.10 The Public Places and Street Naming Committee adjudicates on the final submissions and makes the final decision on the name and thereafter forwards its report to Council.
- 7.1.11 If there are further objections, such objections will be submitted to Council for a final adjudication and a decision on whether or not to reverse or uphold the decision of the Committee.
- 7.1.12 Once the Council has approved the report the next step is to determine whether the geographical feature is of local or national concern, where after the provisions of paragraphs 7.2 and 7.3 below will apply.

## **7.2 Geographical features of local interest**

- 7.2.1 After Council approval, the names are deemed to be officially ratified and the Cadastral basis and other Council maps are updated accordingly.
- 7.2.2 The Names Bank is updated accordingly.
- 7.2.3 Sub-directorate Planning will inform the applicant, Telkom (Ltd), the Post Master General, the Surveyor General, regional commander of the SAPS and other interest or relevant bodies.
- 7.2.4 Sub-directorate Planning will inform the major tourism mapping vendors (AA, Map Studio, Braby's etc.) of all changes on an annual basis.
- 7.2.5 The media liaison officer will publish the information in the local media.

### **7.3 Geographical features of national interest**

7.3.1 The Public Places and Street Naming Committee applies, on behalf of the Mangaung Local Municipality, to the South African Geographical Names Council (SAGNC) via the Provincial Geographical Names Council (PGNC) for approval.

7.3.2 After notification of approval by the SAGNC the name is deemed to be officially ratified and sub-directorate Planning vision will proceed as in paragraph 7.1 above.

### **7.4 Procedure for naming as part of new township establishment**

- The naming of such places or features can happen in three (3) ways:
  1. Through the proposal and incorporation of the names by the developer. Such proposed names will be submitted to the Public Places and Street Naming Committee for consideration and a decision.
  2. By own initiative from the Municipality, if it is a developer, whereby the sub-directorate Planning will submit proposals to the Public Places and Street Naming Committee for consideration and a decision.
  3. By any other applicant as envisaged in paragraph 5 above and such proposed names will be submitted to the Public Places and Street Naming Committee for consideration and a decision.
- If any part of the area is populated, the procedure as outlined in paragraph 7 will be followed.

### **7.5 Procedure for renaming of features that have names already**

- The application submitted for the name change or renaming will have to meet the requirements of paragraph 9 below.
- The applicant shall submit to sub-directorate Planning an application on a prescribed form and in addition shall submit a detailed motivation explaining the reasons for the name change or renaming that is proposed.
- Any other party that is affected or is deemed to be affected shall be notified of such an application.
- Sub-directorate Planning will prepare a report to be submitted to the Public Places and Street Naming Committee for consideration.
- If the Committee decides that the application/request does not merit any further discussions or consideration, it will close the matter and the applicant will be informed accordingly.
- However, if the Committee is of the view that the application/request merits consideration, the process as contained in paragraph 7 above will be followed.

### **7.6 Naming without further approval**

7.6.1 Where existing streets are extended and the street name has been approved, the existing name must be given to the extension.

7.6.2 When a new township is established within an already approved name zone, a new extension name or number need only be added to the existing name without further approval.

## **8 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Community participation process will entail amongst others, the following steps:

- 8.1.1 Public hearings as defined in the Council's Standing Rules and Orders.
- 8.1.2 Constituency meetings.
- 8.1.3 Advertisements in the local media.
- 8.1.4 Billboards and posters.

## **9 POLICY FOR STANDARDISATION**

### **9.1 Why geographical names should be standardised**

- People tend to give the same name to different places.
- Names may sound the same, or the spelling of one place name may be very similar to that of another.
- Names can be spelled in different ways.
- In a multilingual country such as South Africa, places often have more than one name.

It is important to regulate, or standardise names for the purpose of affirming the country's history and national identity, for trade and commerce, transportation and communications etc.

### **9.2 Standardization or regulation is based on**

- The current spelling rules of the languages from which the names are derived.
- The wishes of the local population provided they are not in conflict with the principles of the SAGNC.
- The historical use of the name.
- Redress, where a name is changed on the basis of historical consideration.
- United Nations resolutions on the standardisation of geographical names.
- Any other relevant factors which the SAGNC may identify.

### **9.3 Human Rights and the South African Constitution**

Determining a name for a place requires taking into account historical and linguistic considerations, communicative convenience, the spirit of a community and the spirit of the nation and redressing the skewed legacy of the past.

### **9.4 Changing of existing names**

As geographical names form part of the historical, cultural and linguistic heritage of the nation, it is more desirable to preserve than abandon them.

### **9.5 Some legitimate grounds for changing names**

- A new name that has replaced an existing name may be objectionable and certain people would like to see the original name restored.
- Some linguistic corruptions of names may be offensive.

- A name may be deemed offensive because of its association, even though it was originally approved in all innocence.

## 9.6 Changes for the sake of standardisation

- When an existing name is granted official status, its form may have to be standardised (e.g. its spelling may have to be modernised).
- A decision may have to be taken regarding the relative status of an alternative spelling.
- Where different spellings of the same name are used for different entities (for instance, a suburb, a post office, a river, or a town), the form should be standardised.
- The form used for a particular entity should be fixed.
- The number of entities to which a particular name applies should be limited.

## 9.7 Considerations to be taken into account when reviewing names

- Archives, oral tradition and other resources should be researched.
- When consideration is given to whether an original name should be re-instated, its relevance to the needs and convenience of present-day society should be taken into account, bearing in mind the original language to which the name was assigned may have disappeared from use over time.
- It may be impossible to ascertain the correct form of the original name because its language form or origin (e.g. San and Khoi languages) is unknown.
- Legislation other than the SAGNC Act governs types of geographical names (i.e. the name of the country, names of provinces, local authorities and cadastral names).

## 9.8 Criteria for determining whether a geographical name is a Local or National concern [SAGNC Regulations, 2003 (Regulation 339 of 2003)]

Geographical names are assigned to features on earth that occur either naturally, man-made, or are adapted by humans, which can be populated.

Local Concern		National Concern	
The area must be situated within the jurisdiction of the local authority		Any geographical name other than those referred to under local concern	
This includes:		This includes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Streets</li> <li>▪ Cemeteries</li> <li>▪ Municipal buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Squares</li> <li>▪ Local parks</li> <li>▪ Privately owned buildings and farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Towns</li> <li>▪ Suburbs</li> <li>▪ Post Offices</li> <li>▪ Wetlands</li> <li>▪ National Parks</li> <li>▪ Stations</li> <li>▪ Airports</li> <li>▪ Any form of human settlement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harbours</li> <li>▪ Highways</li> <li>▪ Mountains</li> <li>▪ Streams</li> <li>▪ Rivers</li> <li>▪ Bays</li> <li>▪ Points</li> <li>▪ Islands</li> <li>▪ Government dams</li> </ul>

Avenue/Laan	A wide and attractive city street, often lined with trees on both sides, and on a smaller scale than a boulevard
Boulevard	A wide, pretentious street; usually a traffic artery or primary road lined by trees on both sides, and/or on central median
By-pass/Verbypad	A wide road which by-passes a densely populated suburban area to allow traffic to flow past with less delays
Close, Place/Oord; Plek	A blind alley or cul-de-sac
Crescent/Singel	A semi-ring road, or street with an arc, which subtends an angle of less than 180°
Drive/Rytaan	A picturesque route, or a private carriageway to a dwelling
Expressway/Snelweg	A dual carriageway with controlled grade-separated intersections at approximately 500m intervals
Freeway/Deurpad	A dual carriageway with grade-separated intersections and interchanges at 5km intervals
Lane/Steeg	A narrow road or trail (alley), usually for service vehicles only
Road/Weg	A public communication road (generally used to describe thoroughfares outside built-up areas)
Street/Straat	A road in the city or town serving houses, businesses, shops, etc
Nature trail/ Natuurwandelpad	A footpath for hikers and/or people to enjoy the scenery
Track	Only suitable for 4x4, usually for eco-tourism