

CIVIC RECOGNITION AND CIVIC EVENTS POLICY

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set clear guidelines for civic recognition of members of the community and/or community organisations;
- outline the categories of civic events facilitated by the City of Ballarat; and
- provide a framework and application guidelines for applications.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, City of Ballarat staff and community members/organisations seeking civic recognition or a civic event.

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Civic Recognition

The City of Ballarat is committed to celebrating and promoting civic pride within the municipal community. The City of Ballarat or the community may at times request to recognise persons and/or organisations.

Civic recognition may take the form of:

- Recognition letters/certificates of appreciation
- Civic events
- Lighting requests
- Keys to the City and Freedom of Entry
- Plaques and memorials (under the Plaques and Memorials Policy)
- Recognition of Ballarat's Olympians (under the Recognition of Ballarat's Olympians Policy)
- Recognition of Ballarat's Paralympians (under the Recognition of Ballarat's Paralympians Policy)

3.2 Civic events

A civic event is a high calibre event of significance to the City of Ballarat that the Mayor hosts. These events are planned, implemented and delivered by the Executive and Civic Services team.

Civic events are divided into several categories. Each of these categories are outlined below.

3.3 Category of civic events

3.3.1 Civic reception

A civic reception is the highest level of function, which involves the guest(s) of honour and invited guests approved by the Mayor. These are formal occasions with official proceedings. These events are determined by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.

The following dignitaries are within this category:

- The King or his Heirs as the Sovereign of Australia
- Governor-General
- Governor of Victoria
- Prime Minister
- Premier of Victoria
- Ambassadors
- Consuls and Consul-Generals
- International Dignitaries including Heads of State
- Mayoral Election
- Official Delegates from Sister Cities
- Defence Units or Personnel
- Recipients of Keys to the City and Freedom of Entry (refer to 3.5)
- Special dignitaries, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer

3.3.2 Recognition reception

A recognition reception includes the following:

- Australian Honours recipients/other official ceremonial events with a City of Ballarat connection. Approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.
- Australia Day Community Awards, including the categories of Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year and Community Event of the Year. Nominations for these awards are open for submission each year to recognise the outstanding achievements of community members who have gone above and beyond to improve the lives of everyone in the Ballarat community. Nominations are assessed and determined by resolution of Council.
- Key leaders and officials of significant state and national events being held in Ballarat. Approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.
- Acknowledgement of an outstanding and extraordinary contribution by or to the local Ballarat community (e.g. sporting, arts, culture, business, welfare, religious) of a person or group. Approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.

Guidelines for Recognition Receptions

- Community members and groups may request a recognition reception be held.
- Applications must be made in writing on the nominated application form.
- The application form, along with all requirements and guidelines for an application, are provided in Appendix 1.
- Applications must be submitted a minimum of eight (8) weeks prior to the requested date.
- Applications are assessed by the Executive and Civic Services team and approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, with the exception of the Australia Day Community Awards which are assessed and determined by resolution of Council.
- Completion of an application does not guarantee approval of the event.
- All applications will be reviewed against City of Ballarat guidelines, protocol and risk assessment prior to a final decision being made.
- A recognition reception application may be declined if the event does not reflect the City of Ballarat vision or goals, is deemed unsuitable, does not comply with policy guidelines, or provides insufficient planning time.

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- During the application process, the proposed event date may be re-negotiated if the proposed date conflicts with other events or capacity in the corporate events calendar.
- The list of invitees to all functions is approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.

3.3.3 Community celebration

A community celebration includes the following:

- Community group milestone event;
- Flag raising ceremony; or
- Anniversaries of significant City of Ballarat owned and operated facilities, assets or gardens.

Guidelines for Community Celebrations

- Community members and groups may request for a Community Celebration to be held.
- Applications must be made in writing on the nominated application form.
- The application form along with all requirements and guidelines for an application are provided in Appendix 1.
- Applications must be submitted a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to requested date.
- Applications are assessed by the Executive and Civic Services team and approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.
- Completion of an application does not guarantee approval of the event.
- All applications will be reviewed against City of Ballarat guidelines, protocol and risk assessment prior to a final decision being made.
- A Community Celebration application may be declined if the event does not reflect the City of Ballarat vision or goals, is deemed unsuitable, does not comply with policy guidelines or provides insufficient planning time.
- During the application process, the proposed event date may be re-negotiated if the proposed date conflicts with other events or capacity in the corporate events calendar.
- The list of invitees to all functions is approved by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.
- Guidelines and criteria for Flag Raising Ceremony applications are as outlined in the Flag Flying policy.

3.3.4 Project milestone events

Project milestone events for federal or state funded projects are organised in accordance with the relevant agreement or guidelines. These are privately facilitated events and can include sod turns, photo opportunities and media events, ribbon cuttings and official facility or infrastructure openings.

3.3.5 Citizenship Ceremonies

The City of Ballarat hosts Australian Citizenship Ceremonies on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs, in accordance with the Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code. These are privately conducted events for conferees and their invited guests to celebrate becoming an Australian Citizen.

3.4 Lighting

City of Ballarat has designated locations for lighting requests, which can be requested by the community upon application.

The locations that lighting requests are available for are as follows:

- Ballarat Town Hall Clock, 225 Sturt St, Ballarat Central
- Eureka Centre Fountain, 102 Stawell St Sth, Eureka
- Lake Wendouree Fountain, Wendouree Parade, Lake Wendouree

Guidelines for Lighting

- Lighting requests will be assessed against the criteria by the Executive and Civic Services team.
- The application form along with all requirements and guidelines for an application to be made are provided in Appendix 2.
- Only applications in writing from locally based community groups or members for events or nationally recognised days and activities will be eligible to be considered.
- The City of Ballarat will not light up in colours representing former regimes or countries that are not recognised by the Australian Government.
- Guidance for designated days of national significance as set out in the Department of Home Affairs yearly calendar of Cultural and Religious dates, the World Health Organisations calendar of World Global Health days and Diversity Australia's calendar of Diversity and Inclusions days will be taken into account when reviewing an application.
- Permission may be granted for a minimum of one (1) day to a maximum of seven (7) days.

Criteria

The following criteria will be considered when a lighting request is received by the City of Ballarat.

The light up request:

- promotes respect for all;
- is part of an event, a nationally recognised day of significance, a world global health day or a diversity and inclusion day;
- is consistent with Council's vision, goals and policies;
- embraces a sense of belonging and enhanced community life; and
- is not connected to individual advancement, political or cultural sensitivities nor exposure to adverse criticism of Council or the community as a whole.

The City of Ballarat will not approve requests from community groups or members who:

- do not share Council's views on embracing diversity and multiculturalism and promoting a safe and peaceful community;
- are representative of a political party.

Event Priority

On days where specific community days or events are not being recognised, the City of Ballarat will light up at its discretion. The City of Ballarat will also take priority for light ups in promotion of City of Ballarat led events, which recognise a city-wide response or initiative, recognise commercial partnership events at its discretion, or as outlined within the listed significant dates.

Significant Dates

Monday to Sunday of the week which includes 21 March	Harmony Week (incorporating UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March)
31 March	Trans Day of Visibility
17 May	IDAHOBIT Day
26 May	National Sorry Day
27 May – 3 June	Reconciliation Week (incorporating Mabo Day on 3 June)
Sunday to Saturday of the week which includes 20 June	Refugee Week (incorporating World Refugee Day on 20 June)
first Sunday to second Sunday in July	NAIDOC Week
28 November	Timor-Leste Proclamation Day of Independence (in partnership with Friends of Ainaro)

City of Ballarat reserves the right to decline all applications proposed to occur on public holidays unless they are part of a City of Ballarat led event on such dates.

3.5 Keys to the City and Freedom of Entry

Keys to the City

The granting of the Keys to the City is a symbolic presentation, which represent the highest honour that a city can confer on an individual or organisation. The tradition of using a key, date back to medieval times, when many cities were enclosed within walled fortifications. The key symbolised the relationship between a city and the king or ruler of the land on which the city was located.

It will be awarded to an individual or organisation in furthering the ideals of the City of Ballarat or to recognise outstanding achievement in public life, sport, community or humanitarian work at a national or international level.

The Key to the City of Ballarat is presented by the Mayor at a civic reception.

Criteria that will be considered for all applications:

- The nominee has signed support of two independent sources.
- In the case of individuals, signed support will not be accepted from family members or relatives.
- In the case of groups or organisations being nominated, signed support will not be accepted from employees or providers of other paid, contractual services to the group or organisation. If an organisation or group, then the nominee needs to be a bona fide reputable registered entity.
- Where an achievement or a contribution is being acknowledged this is independently verifiable, is of a high level and over and above what might ordinarily be expected of a person/group.
- There is a close association between the achievement being recognised (or the person/group being acknowledged) and Council’s strategic priorities.
- Keys to the City will not be made in recognition of length of service, but for depth of impact and enduring value to communities of interest.

Freedom of Entry

The right of Freedom of Entry is a significant honour, demonstrating trust, loyalty and a sense of community between a city and a military unit. It is conferred in recognition of their achievement while on active service or overseas duty or as a mark of respect and gratitude for their efforts in the defence of Australia.

This award is restricted to Australian military and civilian units that have, through their command, a significant attachment to the City of Ballarat.

It is celebrated with a parade of the unit through the city streets to the Town Hall and the presentation of a gift from the City of Ballarat. Additionally, a Civic Reception may be held in conjunction with the parade.

Guidelines for Keys to the City and Freedom of Entry

- Individuals or organisations may apply to receive or nominate to be granted Keys to the City.
- Australian military and civilian units may apply or nominate to be granted Freedom of Entry.
- Council may, at its own discretion, determine to award the Keys to the City or Freedom of Entry to any eligible person or organisation.
- Granting of Keys to the City or Freedom of Entry to the City applications will be determined through resolution of Council.
- The application form along with all requirements and guidelines for an application to be made in writing are provided in Appendix 3.
- Applications must be submitted a minimum of twelve (12) weeks prior to requested date.
- Once received this will be reviewed by the Executive and Civic Services team and a report to Council will be written for consideration.
- Presentation of a document conferring the Keys to the City or Freedom of Entry to the City will be prepared and Council's Common Seal affixed.

3.6 Minimum notice periods

Applications must comply with the minimum notice periods outlined below:

Civic Event Category	Notice Period
Recognition Reception	Minimum eight (8) weeks
Community Celebrations	Minimum six (6) weeks
Light Up Requests	Minimum six (6) weeks
Keys to the City/Freedom of Entry	Minimum twelve (12) weeks

4.0 Supporting documents and references

4.1 Legislation

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Victoria)*

4.2 Associated Documents

- Flag Flying Policy
- Plaques and Memorials Policy
- Recognition of Ballarat's Olympians Policy
- Recognition of Ballarat's Paralympians Policy

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- Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code
- Calendar of Cultural and Religious Dates | Dept of Home Affairs
- WHO global health days and campaigns
- D&I Days & Dates - Diversity Council Australia
- Intercultural Plan 2022-2026
- LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026
- Reconciliation Action Plan_2019-2021

4.3 Definitions

City of Ballarat	Means the body corporate constituted in accordance with the LGA 2020.
Community	A person or organisation who are based within the municipality of the City of Ballarat.
Council	Council consists of the Councillors who are democratically elected to represent the Ballarat municipality in accordance with the LGA 2020.

5.0 Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

6.0 Policy owner

The owner of this policy is the Chief Executive Officer. Enquiries regarding this policy should be referred to the Head of Executive and Civic Services.

7.0 Authorisation

Adopted by City of Ballarat Council on 28 August 2024 (R138/24).