

**Electoral structure review - Merri-bek City Council - Response Submission  
Lambros Tapinos - Brunswick West - 05 November 2023, 03:31 pm**

Thank you for the opportunity. Please find the submission below.

# **Submission - L. Tapinos**

## **Merri-bek Council Redistribution**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission into the Merri-bek Boundary Review proposals released on 18 October 2023. This submission is separated into two parts concerning both boundaries and proposed ward names. Generally, the three options proposed are very similar and align with communities of interest, and somewhat with suburb boundaries. After careful consideration, I recommend Model 3 be adopted.

### **PARK 1: Ward Boundaries**

#### **Southern Wards (4).**

1. The Brunswick East and Brunswick West suburbs are perfectly arranged into one ward with only very minor and logical adjustments of the suburb boundary to align with major roads. The three options have the same boundary, and it would be recommended to keep those boundaries in the final report.
2. As for the suburb of Brunswick the options provided include a horizontal division along Victoria Street and Blyth Street with a North and South ward created in Brunswick. Alternatively, a vertical division along Sydney Road creating an East and West wards in Brunswick. The two Brunswick wards could expect to see significant growth in the transport corridors along Sydney Road and Lygon Streets and the Commission has rightfully proposed both of them slightly under the average. Because Sydney Road is the major activity centre of the municipality, it should not be split into sections. It would be preferable to have a ward boundary running along Sydney Road instead of crossing it

#### **North-East Wards (3).**

1. The suburb of Fawkner is not large enough to be its own ward and requires significant voters from North Coburg to reach the average. It is also likely to experience minimal growth compared to other areas of the municipality. Model 1 has the numbers below the average that is a problem. Models 2 and 3 provide a better outcome along Bakers Road with only a minor incursion into Hadfield required. It might be worth considering moving the southern boundary to Gaffney Street to include all of the Industrial Zone and align with the suburb boundary.
2. Regarding the suburb of Coburg and the areas of Coburg North the Commission has again proposed a horizontal division or vertical division along Sydney Road. For reasons outlined above it would be preferable to have a division along Sydney Road meaning the activity centre can be shared as in Brunswick – It would not be advisable to create a north and south divide splitting Sydney Road. Rejuvenation of the Coburg Activity Centre will be a major focus area for council over the next decade including both sides of Sydney Road.

#### **North-West Wards (4).**

The area comprises the suburbs of Pascoe Vale, Pascoe Vale South, Glenroy, Oak Park, Gowanbrae, and Tullamarine. The three models proposed all have minor variations, although Models 2 and 3 would align with the preferred option in the north-east region. Model 2 has Westbreen Ward with a 7.57% deviation from the average that is undesirable, but these areas are not expected to experience large amounts of growth compared to Glenroy. Although, the boundary can be corrected with minor adjustments, it might be preferable to adopt model 3.

#### **Recommendation 1: Boundaries**

It is recommended that Model 3 be adopted.

#### **PARK 2: Ward Names**

None of the options offers based on suburbs, parks or indigenous names offers the best solution in its entirety and a mix of these categories is required.

If the **Model 3** is opted the following name changes would be recommended.

Dunstan Ward	> West Brunswick Ward
Bulleke-bek Ward	> Bulleke-bek Ward
Randazzo Ward	> Coco Jackson Ward
Warrk Warrk	> East Brunswick Ward
Merri-Creek Ward	> Pentridge Ward
Harmony Park Ward	> Coburg Ward
Bababi Djinanang Ward	> Moomba Ward
Thomson Ward	> Pascoe Vale Ward
Westbreen Ward	> Westbreen Ward
Box Forest Ward	> Box Forest Ward
Moonee Ponds Creek Ward	> Djirri Djirri Ward

I would not recommend naming any wards after the Merri Creek or Moonee Ponds Creek as these river systems form the eastern and west boundaries of the municipality and have strong associations with a number of wards along those boundaries. I would also recommend that Wurundjeri Council be consulted about indigenous names before final adoption.

**East Brunswick Ward** and **West Brunswick Ward** align with suburb boundaries and the names works well for these wards.

**Bulleke-bek Ward** was recently discovered to be the indigenous name for area of Brunswick and adopted by the council for a new park. It is an indigenous name of local significance and should be allocated to the Brunswick ward west of Sydney Road where the park is located.

**Coco Jackson Ward** was Caribbean-Australian featherweight boxing champion in 1928-9 at age 21. I believe but cannot confirm, the family was decedent from former Jamaica slaves. He had a successful international career. He was a well-known and respected local in Edward Street from 1930 to 1979. He has a prominent laneway named after him.

If the commission adopts north and south wards in the suburb of Brunswick – naming the wards after the two train stations would work well. **Jewell Ward** and **Anstey Ward**.

**Pentridge Ward** is not only the former name of the suburb and prison, it is now, a major landmark activity centre with growing number of apartment dwellings and commercial businesses.

It is not desirable to name any wards Fawkner considering history with indigenous peoples. However, **Moomba Ward**, well-known from the festival but more importantly, a large park is located in Fawkner called Moomba Park.

**Coburg Ward**, **Pascoe Vale Ward** have strong associations with the centre of those suburbs, including their activity centres and major train stations. Likewise, **Box Forest Ward** named after the road and **Westbreen Ward** named after the creek in that area would be appropriate names. However, it would not be appropriate to name a ward that included Oak Park or Gowanbrae, West Glenroy. **Djirri Djirri Ward** named after open space grasslands linking Gowanbrae and Glenroy would be a good alternative.