



Report of the REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Status of National Standardization of Geographical Names in the Philippines

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Manila, Philippines





The official languages in the Philippines are FILIPINO and ENGLISH.

There are other recognized languages in the Philippines called auxiliary languages.





The Philippines does not have a names board, committee or authority.

But the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) published a “Revised Guidelines on the Naming and Renaming of Streets, Public Schools, Plazas, Building, Bridges and other Public Structures”





Contents of the revised guidelines,

- 1. Who may name or rename**
- 2. What may be renamed**
- 3. The Character of names**
- 4. Naming / renaming after persons**
- 5. Historical significance**
- 6. Aesthetic unity**
- 7. Continuity**





Contents of the revised guidelines,

1. Who may name or rename

- All Public places : President of the Philippines or by Congress
- Public places under local government units (LGUs) : concerned LGU





Contents of the revised guidelines,

1. Who may name or rename

- Changing names of local government unit : plebiscite
- Changing names of public places :
National Historical Institute





Contents of the revised guidelines,

2. What may be renamed

- political units
- National roads, public places/buildings





Contents of the revised guidelines,

3. The Character of names

- Have historical and cultural significance;**
- Contribute to national pride**
- Indigenous names should always be preserved especially if the name is unique to the place**





Contents of the revised guidelines,

3. The Character of names

- Hispanized and foreign terms : historically significance; legitimately used;
- Filipino words encouraged;
- Short and simple for practical and aesthetic reasons; nicknames or aliases discouraged;
- Natural features shall not be renamed unless reverted to their old indigenous names





Contents of the revised guidelines,

3. The Character of names

- Complicated and confusing names are discouraged;
- Schools, hospitals and other public structures named after the province of municipality shall not be renamed
- Natural features such as islands, rivers, seas and other shall not be renamed unless reverted to their old indigenous names.





- Contents of the revised guidelines,**
- 4. Naming / renaming after persons**
- **Allowed to honor a person or family who contributed to the welfare of the Filipino people;**
 - **Public places named after presidents or national heroes cannot be replaced with names of people of lesser importance**





Contents of the revised guidelines,

4. Naming / renaming after persons

- **Not named after a living person** Roads can be named :
 - **Presidents and national heroes for primary roads**
 - **Senator and congressmen for secondary roads**
 - **Local officials for tertiary roads**





How are geographical names decided for use on maps?

- for the names of political units, we use the Philippine Standard Geographic Code (PSGC) by the Philippine Statistics Authority;
- for natural features (mountains, rivers) we coordinate with the local government unit officials





For the Philippines, a names authority will be useful.

In creating our maps, we had several problems with geographical names collection due to inconsistencies encountered.





At a national level, there is an old Philippine gazetteer published by the USGS based on 1:250,000 scale in the 1980s.

The names include approved names by the US Board on Geographic Names, unverified names cross-referenced with approved names and unverified names.



We are ongoing with geographic names collection at scale 1:50,000, which will be the basis for an updated gazetteer.



Thank you 😊

