

**Submission ID:** O-0396  
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**Submission Topic:** Electorate Names  
**Electoral District:** Beaudesert (formerly Scenic Rim)

## **Submission:**

### **Submission Objecting to the Proposed Renaming of the Electoral District to "Beaudesert"**

#### **Overview**

This submission objects to the proposed renaming of the current Scenic Rim electoral district to "Beaudesert". The objection is based on the principle that electoral district names should reflect **communities of interest**, support **effective representation**, and promote **community cohesion** across the electorate.

It is submitted that the proposed name does not adequately reflect the shared interests, identities, and lived experiences of a significant proportion of residents within the district, and risks diminishing the sense of representation for communities that do not identify with the township of Beaudesert.

#### **Community of Interest**

A core consideration in determining electoral boundaries and names is the recognition and preservation of communities of interest. Within the existing Scenic Rim electorate, there are multiple well-established communities whose social, economic, historical, and cultural connections are not centred on Beaudesert.

In particular, communities within the former Boonah Shire area maintain strong local identities that pre-date the 2008 amalgamation and remain distinct today. Residents in these areas typically engage in daily life—work, schooling, health services, community organisations, and social networks—within their own towns and surrounding localities rather than in Beaudesert. Their community interactions, shared concerns, and local priorities therefore differ in meaningful ways.

Renaming the district after a single township risks obscuring these distinct communities of interest and does not reflect the diversity of lived experience across the electorate.

#### **Historical and Social Context**

The Scenic Rim Local Government Area was formed in 2008 through the amalgamation of the former Boonah Shire Council and a large portion of the former Beaudesert Shire Council. This process was met with significant community concern, particularly regarding the potential loss of local identity and representation.

The name "**Scenic Rim**" was deliberately adopted to address these concerns. It provided a geographically descriptive and neutral identity that allowed communities from different former local government areas to feel equally

recognised. Over time, the Scenic Rim name has become embedded in community life, local organisations, regional branding, and residents' sense of belonging.

Changing the electoral district name to "Beaudesert" would move away from this carefully developed shared identity and may be perceived as privileging one former shire and township over others, contrary to the intent of fostering long-term community cohesion.

### **Means of Communication and Interaction**

Effective representation also depends on how communities interact and communicate within an electorate. Many residents within the district do not regularly interact with Beaudesert as a service, employment, or social hub. Their patterns of communication and interaction are oriented toward other towns, rural centres, and regional networks.

An electorate name that implies Beaudesert as the central or defining community does not reflect these interaction patterns and may weaken residents' perception that the electorate genuinely represents their day-to-day realities.

### **Physical and Geographic Considerations**

The name "Scenic Rim" reflects prominent geographic features that are shared across the electorate and are widely recognised by residents as defining the region as a whole. It is a unifying descriptor that transcends individual towns and aligns with how many residents understand their place within South East Queensland.

While the revised boundaries of the electorate extend slightly beyond the Scenic Rim Local Government Area, the majority of the electorate remains within it. The additional area is comparatively small and does not substantially alter the dominant geographic and community character of the district.

### **Consistency with Existing Electoral and Local Government Identities**

It is also relevant that comparable electoral districts, such as Lockyer Valley and Southern Downs, retain names that align with their broader regional identities rather than individual townships. This consistency supports voter recognition, continuity, and clarity in representation.

Maintaining the Scenic Rim name would be consistent with this approach and with community expectations developed over more than a decade of local government and electoral use.

### **Community Cohesion and Effective Representation**

Electoral district names are not merely administrative labels; they shape how communities see themselves represented within the democratic system. A name that resonates with only part of the electorate risks undermining the sense of inclusion that supports effective representation.

Retaining the Scenic Rim name acknowledges the full diversity of communities within the district and reinforces the principle that no single town defines the electorate to the exclusion of others.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed renaming of the Scenic Rim electoral district to “Beaudesert” does not adequately reflect the communities of interest, patterns of interaction, shared history, or collective identity of a significant portion of the electorate. Retaining the name “Scenic Rim” better aligns with Electoral Commission principles by supporting inclusivity, continuity, and community cohesion.

For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Electoral Commission retain the name **Scenic Rim** for the electoral district.