



14.4 **PICK MY PROJECT, VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: KYLIE BENNETTS, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE CEO

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To introduce the Victorian Government's Pick My Project community grant initiative and confirm an assessment and approval process for partnering on projects and projects that might be proposed to occur on Council land.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Pick My Project is a Victorian Government community grant initiative with \$30M available to fund local projects across the State (between \$20,000 and \$200,000). The new online program was announced as part of the State Budget 2018/19 and will be administered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC). Details on the initiative can be found at - <https://pickmyproject.vic.gov.au/>
- 2.2 Pick My Project allows Victorian residents to partner with eligible organisations (Project Partners) to submit ideas and projects. The State Government, has indicated that Councils are considered an eligible Project Partner. Councils may also be contacted by potential applicants or DPC with a request to partner on a project or provide land consent (if the proposed project involves Council land).
- 2.3 If a Council agrees to support a partnership or agrees to a proposal being undertaken on land it owns this does not guarantee a project will receive funding. The intent of the State Government initiative is that it is a community led democratic process, which inevitably relies on the results of an online poll to determine successful projects. It is possible that Council's involvement with an initiative proposed through the Pick My Project grant funding does not progress beyond the assessment of partnerships and/or providing pre-emptive land use consent.
- 2.4 However, it is important that a robust process for assessing projects is undertaken as Project Partners are ultimately responsible for the project, ie the Project Partner takes on management of design, delivery and reporting. Pick My Project provides a one-off funding payment to the Project Partner. Ongoing costs must be covered by the Project Partner and additional funding will not be provided if project cost exceeds the proposed budget.
- 2.5 This paper recommends that the assessment of requests to become a Project Partner and provision of advice to DPC on projects within the municipality are delegated to the CEO. Primarily this approach is recommended because this is only one part of the assessment process, with the success of a project or initiative being voted on by the broader Victorian community. This approach is also recommended because of the tight timeframes to respond to DPC and because it is a pilot project, at this point in time officers are not able to predict how many requests will need to be assessed.



- 2.6 If Council are to provide this delegation to the CEO, it is proposed that the CEO provides advice back to those making a request to Council on whether the Council could take on the role of Project Partner as well as providing relevant advice back to DPC. An Officer Working Group would be convened with the purpose of coordinating the assessment of projects. The CEO would seek where necessary, advice from Councillors, and at a later date provide Councillors with a briefing report for noting outlining those applications that the CEO has agreed would be appropriate for the Council to either partner or consent too.
- 2.7 In exercising this delegation, the CEO would ensure that proposals were assessed in a way that is consistent with existing community grant criteria and other Council endorsed policies, master plans and strategies, including the Community Funding policy tabled for consideration at the Wednesday 6 June Council meeting.
- 2.8 In addition, to be an eligible project DPC requires project partners commit to completing the project within a 12-month period. As such assessment of projects by the CEO would also consider impacts on existing Council priorities scheduled for delivery in 2018/19, and the Council 2018/19 budget, which will be endorsed prior to the DPC announcing winner projects in September 2018.
- 2.9 The approach described in this report has been discussed with other inner metropolitan Councils, and it is understood that they are likely to be adopting a similar approach.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Delegates to the CEO the ability to provide advice to stakeholders and DPC on the ability for the City of Port Phillip to undertake the role of Project Partner or provide land consent to Pick My Project requests, given the community-led decision-making process to follow and the short timeframe for assessment.
- 3.2 Notes that the assessment of these requests and initiatives will be undertaken by the CEO consistent with existing Council community grant criteria and endorsed policies, master plans and strategies and will also take into consideration the impacts the proposal may have on future planned works and Council's capacity to deliver projects in the mandatory 12-month period.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The Victorian Government launched, Pick My Project, with \$30 million available to fund local projects. Victorian residents can submit a project idea with a budget of between \$20,000 to \$200,000. The assessment includes an online democratic voting process (restricted by geography). The winning projects will have the most votes.



- 4.2 The website <https://pickmyproject.vic.gov.au/> states, *Victorian residents will be encouraged to submit ideas for any projects that could benefit their community. This could include small infrastructure projects, or programs to strengthen community cohesion. Projects could include sport and recreation activities, improving health and wellbeing, innovation, arts and culture, and ideas that improve community and bring people together.*
- 4.3 The applicant must live in the community for where they are submitting a project idea.
- 4.4 Applications for *Pick My Project* opened on Monday 21 May and will close on Sunday 24 June 2018. The process will be:
- 4.4.1 **Step 1:** Submitting your project idea (May – June 2018)
- 4.4.2 **Step 2:** Review (June – July 2018)
- 4.4.3 **Step 3:** Voting (July – August 2018)
- 4.4.4 **Step 4:** Announcement (September 2018)
- 4.5 The following categories are eligible for funding:
- mobility and transport
 - community infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation
 - community inclusion, health and safety
 - arts and culture
 - environment, sustainability and waste
 - innovation and technology
 - education, training and skills
 - jobs, economic development, agriculture and tourism.
- 4.6 DPC have released guidelines for Pick My Project (attachment 1).
- 4.7 Councils are not able to submit an application for funding, however as part of the application process, individual applicants need to identify an eligible organisation to sponsor or support their project, known as a Project Partner. Councils are described in promotional material and the guidelines as an example of a Project Partner.
- 4.8 During **Step 1**, applicants may approach Council seeking support for a project. During **Step 2**, DPC may refer eligible applications to Council for formal consent when a project is on Council land.
- 4.9 The Project Partner is ultimately responsible for the project as they take on management and delivery, including the receipt of funds, meeting reporting requirements and a commitment to complete the project within a 12-month period.
- 4.10 This paper recommends that the assessment of requests to become a Project Partner and provision of advice to DPC on projects within the municipality are delegated to



the CEO. Primarily this approach is recommended because this is only one part of the assessment process, with the success of a project or initiative being voted on by the broader Victorian community. This approach is also recommended because of the tight timeframes to respond to stakeholders and DPC and because it is a pilot project, at this point in time officers are not able to predict how many requests will need to be assessed.

- 4.11 If Council are to provide this delegation to the CEO, it is proposed that the CEO provides advice back to those making a request to Council on whether the Council could take on the role of Project Partner role as well as providing relevant advice back to DPC. An Officer Working Group would be convened with the purpose of coordinating the assessment of projects. The CEO would seek where necessary, advice from Councillors, and at a later date provide Councillors with a briefing report for noting outlining those applications that the CEO has agreed would be appropriate for the Council to either partner or consent too.
- 4.12 In exercising this delegation, the CEO would ensure that proposals were assessed in a way that is consistent with existing community grant criteria and other Council endorsed policies, master plans and strategies, including the Community Funding policy tabled for consideration at the Wednesday 6 June Council meeting.
- 4.13 To be an eligible project DPC requires project partners commit to completing the project within a 12-month period. As such assessment of projects by the CEO would also consider impacts on existing Council priorities scheduled for delivery in 2018/19, and the Council 2018/19 budget, which will be endorsed prior to the DPC announcing winner projects in September 2018.
- 4.14 Council approval does not guarantee a project will receive funding. Projects deemed eligible by DPC (which have approved partners and land consent) will be posted online for the community to vote on. Projects with the most votes in each geographical location win. Port Phillip is a part of the Inner Metro region, with the Cities of Melbourne and Yarra.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Council officers have conferred directly with the DPC on Pick My Project, as part of wider teleconference on Friday 4 May and in a meeting with the cities of Melbourne and Yarra on Wednesday 23 May. Key information received from those meetings is contained in this report.
- 5.2 Shared concerns and proposed solutions for administering Pick My Project have also been discussed between councils, most recently at an Inner Metro Action Plan (IMAP) meeting on Friday 25 May (cities of Melbourne, Yarra, Stonnington, Maribyrnong and Port Phillip). Officers understand that similar recommendations to those contained within this paper will be put forward to other IMAP Councils.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a risk that feasible projects will fall outside of existing Council policies, strategies or plans.



7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 Funding is one-off, ongoing operational and maintenance costs must be covered by the responsible organisation and additional Victorian State Government funding will not be provided if project cost exceeds the proposed budget.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 Community projects may impact the environment, potentially in a positive way, this will be considered as part of assessment.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 This process empowers the community to put forward projects and have input on the decision of projects.
- 9.2 It should be considered that the awarding of funds will be strongly influenced by community groups with the largest membership, association networks and social media following.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 Council should encourage applicants seeking partnership with Council to consider ideas and projects that align with existing policies, master plans and strategies.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 Early-June – Council officers forms assessment committee.
- 11.1.2 Mid-June – Committee meets as required to assess project partnership requests.
- 11.1.3 Late-June/July – Committee meets as required to assess land consent requests as provided by DPC.
- 11.1.4 July – Council briefing that outlines applications that Council will partner/consent.
- 11.1.5 September – Council informed of winning projects. Project teams set up to support deliver on projects where Council is identified as the Project Partner.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 Councils has been asked to assist in promotion of Pick My Project, officers can share information through the following channels.
- Council's website

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 6 JUNE 2018



- social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)
- E-Newsletters (CoPP This)
- existing community forums and business groups

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

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ATTACHMENTS 1. Pick My Project - FINAL GUIDELINES