

# Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund

## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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# 1. Description and objectives of the program

The Victorian Government has announced \$2.7 billion to build the projects that matter to Victoria – and create the jobs that matter to Victorians.

The Building Works package will provide immediate benefit to communities across the state. This locally focused approach to driving our state's economy and creating local jobs is essential for communities as we respond to, and recover from, this pandemic. The investment will create thousands of jobs, including providing vital support to those working in our state's supply chains.

As part of the Building Works package, the Victorian Government has established the Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund ('the Fund') through an investment of \$3 million.

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Fund is to support local governments in managing the immediate challenges associated with the phased opening of business activity and building community confidence in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Fund will support the development and improvement of shopping strips as places of local economic activity and community gathering. The Fund will deliver small co-funded community improvement and local business initiatives to drive neighbourhood centre renewal, stimulate local business activity and improve public amenity and accessibility close to where people live and work.

## 1.2 Neighbourhood Activity Centres

**Neighbourhood Activity Centres for consideration would include locations where:**

- businesses and public amenity have experienced significant losses or which were already struggling pre-pandemic and could be supported to play a stronger role in economic and social recovery
- a significant proportion of local businesses are experiencing economic decline
- the urban form is not pedestrian friendly or less accessible for people with disabilities
- public realm and open space are experiencing decline or deterioration
- local economies and business confidence are declining
- access or use of community spaces/facilities is limited or unsafe.

## 1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund are to:

- Support initiatives in (council designated and planned) neighbourhood activity centres that stimulate local business activity; encourage local businesses to return; improvements to the public amenity and accessibility of suburban strip shopping areas.
- Support the implementation of the Victorian Governments 20-minute neighbourhood policy (particularly supporting projects that demonstrate a similar approach to the [pilot](#) sites) and focus on smaller scale approaches to revitalising suburban centres and be delivered in conjunction with local government, business and community sector stakeholders.

## 1.4 Fund Outcomes

The desired outcomes of the Fund are:

- Increased business confidence in economic recovery and survival
- Increased community confidence in the safety of suburban shopping strips
- Increased community use of suburban shopping strips
- Faster implementation of local government neighbourhood renewal projects

# 2. Eligibility

- The Fund is open to applications from the 32 Local Governments in Metropolitan Melbourne as listed below by Metropolitan Partnership Regions:

**Inner Metropolitan** – Melbourne City Council, Yarra City Council and Port Phillip City Council

**Inner South-East** – Bayside City Council, Boroondara City Council, Glen Eira City Council and Stonnington City Council

**Western Metropolitan** – Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Brimbank City Council and Hobsons Bay City Council

**Northern Metropolitan** – Hume City Council, Darebin City Council, Banyule City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Whittlesea City Council, Moreland City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council

**Eastern Metropolitan** - Manningham City Council, Maroondah City Council, Monash City Council, Knox City Council; Yarra Ranges Shire Council and Whitehorse City Council

**Southern Metropolitan** - Cardinia Shire Council, Casey City Council, Kingston City Council, Frankston City Council, Greater Dandenong City Council and Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

- Projects that are currently funded from the Suburban Revitalisation Program are in-eligible.

## 3. Projects and Activities

Activities and projects considered for funding will demonstrate how they will address the immediate challenges associated with the phased opening of business activity and building community confidence.

The fund can be used for permanent or temporary works. Temporary works provide the opportunity to trial permanent works in centres, this approach was undertaken as part of the 20-minute neighbourhood [pilot](#) project.

### 3.1 Examples of activities and projects

#### Activities and projects that may be funded are:

- enhance safety, accessibility and connections for pedestrians and cyclists
- streetscape improvements including installation of greenery, drinking fountains, seating and accessible paths
- improvements to public parks and other open spaces
- improving perceptions of safety by improving passive surveillance and lighting
- installation of pop-up parks and parklets
- community public art installations and 'creative spaces'
- community co-working and meeting spaces
- shop front improvement and business support initiatives
- improving connections to public transport within centres
- improving safety
- pilot initiatives that seek to achieve long-term improvements aligned with any of the above initiatives, and/or that may be replicated at other activity centres

It is expected that all activities will be delivered within twelve months from the signing of the grant agreement and before the 30 June 2022.

### 3.2 Ineligible Projects and Activities

#### Activities and projects will generally not be considered:

- requests for retrospective funding where projects have been completed or have commenced prior to receiving funding approval.
- projects requiring ongoing funding from the Victorian Government

- ongoing operating costs or salary subsidies, except where a salary subsidy provides project management support for the funded project
- private sector projects undertaken as a result of a Victorian Government contract
- the purchase of land
- for activities in areas that are not council designated neighbourhood activity centres.

## 4. Program Funding

The Fund is a competitive grant program open to the eligible Metropolitan Local Governments (see section 2) to apply for a maximum of \$100,000 for local infrastructure upgrades and maintenance, streetscape and public space improvements in Neighbourhood Activity/Strip Shopping Centres.

Local Governments will be required to make a co-contribution (financial and/or in-kind) of at least 50 per cent of the grant being sought.

Priority will be given to projects that are considered investment ready, have a well demonstrated need for government assistance, have a plan in place for the centre, and which deliver a place-based impact.

## 5. Application and assessment process:

### 5.1 Application

The process for applying for funding under the program is outlined below:

- all applicants are to complete on-line application form for funding. Applicants are encouraged to email ([suburbandev@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:suburbandev@ecodev.vic.gov.au)) to discuss their idea and seek advice
- all applications are to be submitted **no later than 21 August 2020**. Note that early applications are encouraged and will be assessed as soon as possible
- all applications will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria
- applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be reviewed by an assessment panel who will consider the application and make a recommendation to the Minister for Suburban Development or Ministerial delegate for funding
- the Minister or Minister's delegate will consider the advice and determine whether to approve the application for funding. Decisions on funding approval will be made on a competitive basis based on funding availability
- applicants will receive a letter confirming the outcome of the application.

## 5.2 Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against their response to the criteria listed below as well as supporting documents.

Weightings in percentage show the relative importance of different criterion in the assessment process.

### **Project aims – 30%**

The application demonstrates the extent to which the project:

- addresses objectives of the Fund (Section 1.3)
- the project will deliver the outcomes of the Fund (Section 1.4)

### **Project need – 20%**

The application specifies a Neighbourhood Activity Centre or Centres that:

- requires investment to address issues listed in Section 1.2
- requires Victorian Government support such as funding to proceed

### **Project alignment – 30%**

- is consistent with the 20-minute Neighbourhood outcome, direction and policies (as outlined in Plan Melbourne) as well as consistent (and/or supports) the pilot project findings [report](#).
- is aligned to the priorities of the relevant Metropolitan Partnership

### **Project delivery and capability – 20%**

The application demonstrates the extent to which the project:

- is investment ready, supported by a clear project management approach including a realistic project management plan.
- is financially viable, based on sound cost estimates and represents value for money
- be successfully delivered within anticipated timeframes (no more than 12 months after the signing of the agreement) and budget
- if appropriate to the project outcomes, proposes a collaborative approach with a range of partners and indicates how they will contribute to the project

## 6. Conditions of funding

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), detailing all funding obligations and conditions.

The Grant Agreement should also be complemented by a Project Plan, a detailed budget with breakdown of expenditure and timelines as well as details of planned activities.

The standard terms and conditions on which the funding is offered is contained in the Grant Agreement.

Grant Agreements are legally enforceable documents that clearly set out the obligations of both parties. The Grant Agreement aims to protect the Victorian Government's interests and the efficient and effective use of public money.

It also ensures there is appropriate recognition of Victorian Government support in project-related publications, media releases and promotional material.

Grant Agreements must be signed in accordance with the regulatory framework under which the application operates and will:

- describe the purpose for which the funding must be used
- set out any requirements or conditions that must be met prior to the payment of a grant instalment
- outline agreed milestones and project outcomes that must be achieved before payment of a grant instalment

Once the Grant Agreement has been signed, the applicant will be required to actively manage and deliver the project and will be required to provide progress reports to DJPR.

### Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Successful applicants will be required to contribute to an evaluation which is undertaken during and/or after completion of the project. Successful applicants will be required to submit a completion report and provide evidence of project completion.

After completion of the project, applicants must submit an evaluation report which assesses the project's success in meeting its stated objectives, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Successful applicants may be required to contribute information on project outcomes, including longer-term impacts beyond project completion, for use in program evaluation reviews and DJPR marketing materials. It is the responsibility of successful applicants to put in place adequate collection arrangements to capture the appropriate data in relation to outputs, outcomes and impacts.

These arrangements will assist DJPR to undertake a robust evaluation of the Fund.



DJPR reports publicly on grants and programs it administers. The reporting includes the identity of successful applicants and projects and, where applicable, deviations from or exceptions to the assessment and approvals processes are set out in these guidelines.

## **Acknowledgement**

Successful applicants need to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support through the provision of a grant from the Fund. The Grant Agreement includes a requirement that all activities acknowledge Victorian Government support through logo presentation on any activity-related publications, media releases and promotional material in accordance with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) guidelines.

## **Communication of Initiative**

Successful applicants must liaise with DJPR to coordinate any media communications related to the activity. Successful applicants may be required to contribute information on activity outcomes for the state to use in communications materials.

## **Privacy**

Any personal information about the applicant or a third party in the application will be collected by DJPR for the purpose of grant administration. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government agencies for the purposes of assessing applications. If personal information about third parties is included in the application, ensure third parties are aware of the contents of this privacy statement and the contents of the DJPR Privacy Policy available from the Privacy Officer (details below).

Any personal information about the applicant or a third party in correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) and other applicable laws.

DJPR is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information.

The department's privacy policy is available from:


### **Privacy Officer**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions GPO Box 2392  
Melbourne, VIC, 3001, AUS  
Email: [privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

Enquiries about access to information about you held by DJPR should be directed to:

### **Freedom of Information Manager Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions**

GPO Box 2392  
Melbourne, VIC, 3001, AUS  
Email: [foi@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:foi@ecodev.vic.gov.au)



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