
10. GLENORCHY CBD STEERING COMMITTEE - PUBLIC SPACE ENHANCEMENT GRANT

Author: Director Infrastructure and Works (Ted Ross)
Acting Manager, City Strategy and Economic Development
(Erin McGoldrick)

Qualified Person: Director Infrastructure and Works (Ted Ross)

ECM File Reference: Public Space Enhancement Grant

Community Plan Reference:

Valuing our Environment

We will work actively to revitalise our CBD areas – making them places that are distinctive, vibrant, walkable and well-connected. We will improve the amenity of our public spaces through public art and quality landscaping, promote walking and bike access and encourage high standard contemporary design for new buildings alongside creative reuse of our heritage buildings.

Strategic or Annual Plan Reference:

Valuing our Environment

- Objective 3.1 Create a liveable and desirable City
- Strategy 3.1.1 Revitalise our CBD areas through infrastructure improvements
- Action 3.1.1.01 Implement the Glenorchy CBD Strategic Framework
- Action 3.1.1.02 Implement the Public Space Enhancement Grant Project for a Children's Playground in the Glenorchy CBD.

Reporting Brief:

To recommend that funds allocated from a Public Space Enhancement Grant from the State Government be used to assist with funding the CBD Revitalisation (Stage 3) Project instead of the originally proposed Playground and Café/Kiosk project for the Council forecourt.

Proposal in Detail:

Background

As part of its campaign for the 2015 State elections, the Tasmanian Liberal Party promised \$1 million for public space enhancements in the Glenorchy and Hobart CBDs. It was agreed between the Councils and State Government to split the \$1 million equally between Hobart City Council and Glenorchy City Council (\$500,000 each).

Council signed a grant deed and received the first \$250,000 in grant funding in November 2014. The grant deed provided that the first \$250,000 was to be allocated by Council to a project before the second instalment was payable. The grant deed stated that the funding must be for an 'approved purpose'. 'Approved purpose' is defined as *"enhancing the streetscapes and improving than amenity of public spaces through urban design; and improving public access through pavement enhancements"*.

At the Council meeting on 3 August 2015, Council considered a range of options for allocating the grant funds, including a business case. Council ultimately resolved that:

"Council allocate the entirety of funding under the State Government's Public Space Enhancement Grant to a children's playground and café in front of the Council Chambers."

Subsequent Steps

Following adoption of the recommendation, a number of internal projects (Council's Accommodation Strategy and application to the Building Better Regions Fund) delayed implementation of the project.

A community engagement plan was approved by Council with consultation occurring from August to October 2016. The results were reported to Council in October 2017, and indicated that there was generally a positive response to the proposed concept. Further, more specific, consultation was undertaken in November 2017. This included consultation with the community, local schools and childcare centres. While the feedback from the further consultation was also generally positive, a number of concerns regarding vandalism, graffiti, personal safety and security of the proposal were raised.

Council officers gave further consideration to the project, which was placed on hold while a further analysis was undertaken in relation to a number of specific concerns, including:

- Council's current financial situation and the need to prioritise existing renewal projects over new infrastructure
- the suitability of the site in terms of size, requirement for fencing, interaction with adjoining businesses
- due diligence and business case work completed on the kiosk portion of the project, which established that the original August 2015 assumptions for demand and revenue were incorrect (subsequent analysis indicated limited potential for the operation of a viable business), and
- community feedback indicating concerns with regards to vandalism, graffiti, personal safety and security of a playground.

Council's CBD Revitalisation Project Steering Committee (**the Committee**) subsequently reviewed the grant and identified three (3) potential alternative projects which would potentially result in better use of the grant funds and better outcomes for the Community:

- Glenorchy skate facilities
- CBD toilet upgrades, and
- Assisting with the CBD Revitalisation Project (Stage 3)

The alternative projects were assessed against the following criteria:

- the project has already been consulted upon and Council is confident that there is strong support in the community
- the project has already been identified and funded as a priority in our renewals programme
- the project is deliverable within DPAC timeframes, and
- the project is a public space enhancement.

The Committee ultimately determined that the using the grant funds to partially fund Council's CBD Revitalisation Project (Stage 3) met all the criteria. Most importantly, the amount of funding \$500,000 could be offset against the entire project cost.

Other projects on the list remain funded and will be delivered regardless that they won't utilise the grant funds.

Accordingly, the Committee resolved at its 4 June 2018 meeting to:

"...recommend to Council that the Playground and Café/Kiosk project be placed on hold and that the Public Enhancement Grant of \$500,000 be used to fund the Barry Street to Terry Street upgrade (Stage 3)."

It is considered that the use of the grant funds to partially fund the CBD revitalisation project consistent with the approved purpose in the grant deed, namely enhancing the streetscapes and improving than amenity of public spaces through urban design and improving public access through pavement enhancements. Nevertheless, it is also recommended that the Department of Premier and Cabinet should be advised of any decision that Council makes in respect of the funds, as a matter of courtesy.

Consultations:

Mayor
General Manager
Director of Local Government
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Glenorchy CBD Steering Committee

Human Resource / Financial and Risk Management Implications:Financial

In transferring the grant to the CBD Revitalisation Project, Council will make a capital saving of \$500,000, plus ongoing maintenance and depreciation expenses that would be associated with the playground project.

Risk management

Risk Identification	Consequence	Likelihood	Rating	Risk Mitigation Treatment
Adopt the recommendation	Minor (C2)	Possible (L3)	Moderate (6)	Provide feedback to the community and engage with community in respect to a review of the Glenorchy CBD Strategic Framework
There may be some community concern in regards to the change in direction from the original intention, and lack of play facilities in the CBD				
Do not adopt the recommendation	Moderate (C3)	Likely (L4)	Notable (12)	Aldermen to clearly express why they support any decision to proceed with the kiosk/playground project.
Grant funds utilised to construct the kiosk/playground despite noted disadvantages, leading to ongoing maintenance and depreciation costs				

Community Consultation and Public Relations Implications:Community consultation

As noted above, consultation in relation to the proposed playground occurred from August to October 2016, and again in November 2017. Overall feedback was positive, but a number of concerns were also raised.

There has not been any consultation in respect of the proposed re-allocation of the grant funds to the CBD project.

Next financial year it proposed to engage with the community on the Glenorchy CBD Strategic Framework. This will provide an opportunity for the community to have input into and projects within the CBD including toilet facilities, skate facilities, and other activation projects.

Public relations

There may be a slight negative public relations impact, given that the community consultation in relation to the proposed playground project may have created expectations in relation to that project. However, this is expected to be justified by the positive impacts of abandoning the playground project, which, for the above reasons, is no longer considered to be the best use of the grant funds.

Recommendation:

That Council:

1. APPROVE the reallocation of Public Space Enhancement Grant funds from the Children's Café and Playground to the Glenorchy CBD Revitalisation Project (Stage 3), and
2. DIRECT the General Manager to write to the Department of Premier and Cabinet on behalf of Council advising of the decision to reallocate the Public Space Enhancement Grant funds.

Attachments/Annexures

Nil.