

2022-23 GROWING SUBURBS FUND

Report Author: Recreation & Active Living - Program Officer, Executive Officer
Recreation & Active Living

Responsible Officer: Mark Varmalis

Ward(s) affected: All

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

This report identifies proposed projects to be submitted as part of the State Government's 2022-23 Growing Suburbs Fund program and proposes Council provide contributions to achieve \$1 (Council / other sources) for \$1 (Growing Suburbs Fund) from the Capital Expenditure Program in future years for the delivery of successful projects. No more than 15 percent (\$7.5 million) of the total pool of funding will be allocated to a single Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That

1. ***Council Endorse the following projects for submission to the State Government's 2022-23 Growing Suburbs Fund:***
 - a) ***Lilydale Investment Precinct Project***
 - b) ***Morrison Reserve Youth Activation***
 - c) ***Pinks Emergency Relief Centre Amenities***
 - d) ***Queen Road, Lilydale Playspace Renewal***
 - e) ***McKenzie King, Millgrove Playspace Renewal***
 - f) ***Bluegum Reserve, Badger Creek Playspace Renewal***
 - g) ***Wright Avenue, Upwey Playspace Renewal***

2. ***Council give ‘in principle’ support and approval for Council contributions to achieve \$1 (Council / other sources) for \$1 (Growing Suburbs Fund) from the Capital Expenditure Program in future years for the delivery of each of those projects that are successful in submission to the Growing Suburbs Fund.***
3. ***A further report be provided to Council after submission outcomes are announced outlining proposed Council funding sources to align with successful projects.***

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

21 June 2022 Council Briefing – proposed projects to be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund 2022-23.

Council has also considered similar reports over recent years for earlier rounds of the Growing Suburbs Program, including at the following meetings:

- 21 September 2021 Council Briefing – proposed projects to be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund 2021-22
- 13 July 2021 Council Meeting – proposed budget allocations for successful projects from the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020-21 round two program
- 9 March 2021 Council Meeting – proposed projects to be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020-21 round two program
- 16 February 2021 Council Briefing – briefing of councillors on proposed projects to be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020-21 round two program
- 15 September 2020 Council Briefing – briefing of councillors on successful projects from the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020-21 round one program
- 14 July 2020 Council Meeting – proposed projects to be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020-21 round one program

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

The Victorian Government is investing an additional \$50 million through the 2022-23 Growing Suburbs Fund to continue the timely delivery of critical infrastructure in interface and peri-urban communities.

Grants will be targeted towards high priority community infrastructure projects that contribute to:

- community health and well-being; early education, libraries, learning and training; sport, recreation, and leisure facilities that have dedicated community space and support multiuse purposes;
- environmental and climate change resilience; placemaking, civic amenity, and community connecting;
- purpose-built facilities that respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In order to be considered for funding, it is mandatory that applicants provide supporting documentation such as schematic site/floor plans for the project, confirmation of other funding sources and a project plan.

Applications must also demonstrate:

- how the project will add to local economic activity and employment creation in both the construction phase and the ongoing operation;
- the extent to which the project will deliver benefits to the community and contribute to improved gender equality and the needs of diverse communities;
- the level of community support demonstrated by engagement activities, co-contributions or in-kind support from community members or groups;
- the increase in activities and community use of the facility the project will support.

A program wide funding leverage of \$1 for \$1 is in place.

Council's past performance on delivering government funded projects will be taken into consideration.

No more than 15 percent (\$7.5 million) of the total pool of funding will be allocated to a single Council. However, Council's Department contact has advised that any projects funded in partnership with Aboriginal community organisations will not be included in the 15 percent.

Growing Suburbs Guidelines were released by the Minister for Local Government on 23 May 2022 (Attachment 1).

Announcement of successful projects are anticipated from September 2022, with construction commencement within eighteen (18) months of the funding announcements (March/April 2024).

Projects must be completed within twenty-four (24) months of commencing construction.

Applicants must consult the Growing Suburbs Fund team before 20 June 2022 to discuss their project proposals prior to submission. Project proposals that have not been discussed will not be considered.

Evidence of a Council resolution providing support for each application and confirming the priority order of projects is a mandatory requirement.

Cost Plan is to be submitted within 90 days of the application.

The State Government's Growing Suburbs Fund 2022-23 offers Council the potential to accelerate the construction of key community projects.

This discussion will help inform the development of the project proposal to be submitted for the Growing Suburbs Fund.

Council officers will continue to manage the application process, with applications to be finalised and submitted by 4 July. As the program is closing prior to the Council meeting, a letter from the CEO is required at the time of application. Council meeting minutes are then required from the 12 July 2022 Council meeting by no later than 26 July 2022.

The recommended projects for submission are:

1. Lilydale Investment Precinct Project (Lilydale)
2. Morrison Reserve Youth Activation (Mount Evelyn)
3. Pinks Emergency Relief Centre Amenities (Kilsyth)
4. Queen Road Playspace Renewal (Lilydale)
5. McKenzie King Playspace Renewal (Millgrove)
6. Bluegum Reserve Playspace Renewal (Badger Creek)
7. Wright Avenue Playspace Renewal (Upwey)

Recommended Projects

1. Lilydale Investment Precinct Project

The Lilydale Investment Precinct project will continue an expansive planning exercise for the future of community services and facilities in Lilydale. Following on from the large amount of investigative work that has taken place through the Lilydale Revitalisation Project, Lilydale Place Plan, Lilydale Structure Plan, Lilydale Integrated Community Facilities Options Study, Draft Aquatics Strategy and Eastern Health Needs Assessment, this project will develop a design framework to achieve a coordinated and integrated development and open space precinct in the heart of Lilydale. Investigating built form, public realm, transport, hydrology and biodiversity, the plan will guide future community-oriented developments that will service Lilydale and surrounding urban areas as well as the Yarra Valley and Upper Yarra regional catchments.

Project Cost: \$300,000

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$150,000
- Council and other sources: \$150,000

2. Morrison Reserve Youth Activation

Morrison Reserve is set in a picturesque location with commanding views of the Yarra Ranges mountains to the east. It is a regional facility for athletics and cross-country running, home to local soccer and netball clubs. The reserve is popular for walking, dog walking and playspace and family picnics. Within the reserve is a Secondary College, Special Development School, CIRE Services and a Men's Shed.

The school oval is used for community AFL football and cricket.

This project includes an upgrade to the existing playground improving the amenity and accessibility of a well utilised reserve. Aligned with current best practices and design methods, this playspace will offer a variety of elements to provide opportunities for intergenerational and imaginative play, education and interaction with nature complementing physical activity. Responding to the community response, public toilets will be installed to support the playspace and new bike park.

The proposed Morrison Reserve Youth Space will include the construction of a multi-track bike park with options that cater for a diverse age range and skill development level. Complementing this will be community infrastructure that takes in the magnificent views and allows for opportunities for spectators, social interaction and family picnics.

Project Cost: \$3.4 Million

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$2.6 Million
- Council and other sources: \$800,000

A current amount of \$570,000 is listed in the Capital Expenditure Program for the playspace asset renewal. This would need to be increased by \$230,000 from either the Federal Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program or Council's Asset New & Investment Reserve.

3. Pinks Reserve Pavilion and New Basketball Court/Emergency Relief Centre

These projects form part of the Pinks Reserve State Government \$10M election commitment. The focus of this application is to seek funding for the aspects of the project that make its provision as one of Council's Emergency Relief Centres more accessible for the community, including: enhanced insulation (acknowledging that when the facility is used for emergencies it is often very hot or very cold), additions and upgrades to amenities, including bringing up to DDA compliance and modern standards, disability access upgrades and car parking modifications.

Project Cost: \$2.5 Million

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$1.25 Million
- Council and other sources: \$1.25 Million

Council has already committed over \$3m to the project which will be used as matching funding.

4. Queen Road Playspace Renewal

Play space upgrade as per Playspace Plan.

Project Cost: \$200,000

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$100,000
- Council and other sources: \$100,000 Matching funding already committed through Council's Capital Expenditure Program.

5. McKenzie King Playspace Renewal

Play space upgrade as per Playspace Plan.

Project Cost: \$350,000

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$175,000
- Council and other sources: \$175,000 Matching funding already committed through Council's Capital Expenditure Program.

6. Bluegum Reserve Playspace Renewal

Play space upgrade as per Playspace Plan.

Project Cost: \$350,000

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$175,000
- Council and other sources: \$175,000 Matching funding already committed through Council's Capital Expenditure Program.

7. Wright Avenue Playspace Renewal

Play space upgrade as per Playspace Plan.

Project Cost: \$200,000

Proposed funding to be sought:

- State Government: \$100,000
- Council and other sources: \$100,000 Matching funding already committed through Council's Capital Expenditure Program.

Options considered

The proposed projects align with the Growing Suburbs Fund guidelines and are sufficiently resourced. No other projects are being proposed at this time due to their applicability to the guidelines for the Growing Suburbs Program or their readiness to meet "shovel ready" expectations of the program.

Recommended option and justification

Council officers are recommending that the proposed projects be submitted to the Growing Suburbs Fund to provide opportunity to deliver priority infrastructure for our community whilst leveraging funding opportunities available and to reduce the financial burden on Council's capital budget.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

A program wide funding leverage of \$1 for \$1 is in place. Officers have been advised that there is an opportunity to seek more than 50% funding contribution in some instances on the basis of other projects being substantially funded through other sources than the Growing Suburbs Program.

No more than 15 percent (\$7.5 million) of the total pool of funding will be allocated to a single Council.

Due to the Growing Suburbs Fund funding being provided upfront as a lump sum, Council contributions will likely be required in the 2024-25 financial year.

Projects have been identified based upon their ability to meet Program Guidelines and to achieve improved community outcomes with minimal impact to Council's existing Capital Expenditure Program. All projects are proposed to have no further impact to Council's Capital Expenditure Program and utilise existing funding allocations that have been listed.

Council funding commitments are listed in the table below:

Priority order	Project	Total Project Cost	Growing Suburbs Fund Submission	Council Contribution/Other Sources
1.	Lilydale Investment Precinct Project	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000

2	Morrison Reserve Youth Activation	\$3.4 Million	\$2.6 Million	\$800,000
3	Pinks Emergency Relief Centre Amenities	\$2.5 Million	\$1.25 Million	\$1.25 Million
4	Queen Road Playspace Renewal	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
5	McKenzie King Playspace Renewal	\$350,000	\$175,000	\$175,000
6	Bluegum Reserve Playspace Renewal	\$350,000	\$175,000	\$175,000
7	Wright Avenue Playspace Renewal	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan:

Yarra Ranges Council Vision 2036

“Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we value our natural beauty how connected our communities are, and how balanced growth makes this the best place in the world”.

Yarra Ranges Council 2036 Strategic Objectives describe what we are working towards and how we want Yarra Ranges to be in the future.

The development of these proposed projects, through careful community consultation and master planning, will deliver facilities and infrastructure that meets the growing and diverse needs of our community, therefore contributing to the Yarra Ranges Council Vision.

Council Plan – Safer, Stronger, Together 2021 – 2025

The proposed projects respond to the major initiatives and Strategic Objectives identified in the Council Plan by constructing community facilities (quality infrastructure and liveable places).

Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

The Health and Wellbeing Plan sets strategic direction for how Council works to support optimal health and wellbeing for its community.

Council's vision for health and wellbeing is that: Yarra Ranges has connected and healthy communities that are resilient, fair and inclusive. Our places are liveable and sustainable.

The new priorities of the Plan are:

- respond to public health impacts of emergencies;
- tackle climate change and its impact on health;
- increase healthy eating;
- increase active living;
- improve mental wellbeing and social connection;
- prevent violence against women and children; and
- reduce harmful alcohol and drug use.

The proposed projects respond to this by providing opportunities and encouraging people to participate in physical activity.

Recreation and Open Space Strategy (2013 - 2023)

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy is a framework to manage and improve sport and recreation facilities, parks, community spaces and recreation services. It aims to create healthy and active environments and services, including the development of clubs and participation initiatives.

The Strategy “consolidates recreation strategies and feasibility studies and reserve master plans under one umbrella document and prioritises actions in an action plan”.

A series of key outcomes and recommendations, with associated actions, are detailed in the document. Of relevance they include:

- Provision of quality and diverse sport and recreation facilities, parks and community spaces, including by “adopt[ing] principles to maximise use of reserves and shared use...in master planning and building projects” and by “identify[ing] opportunities to diversify open space functions or settings to offer greater variety in recreation opportunities”;
- Council support with the activation and improvement of public spaces through Council programs, services and capital works, including by “reflecting local art, culture and heritage in the design of public spaces”, by “designing spaces that encourage enhanced activity, social experiences and events in public spaces that include all people in a community”, and by “designing environmentally sensitive spaces”;
- Council support for a connected community through “...accessible facilities; services; and opportunities [and] a network of trails and footpaths...” and the specific actions of “adopt[ing] principles of access and connectedness in master

planning park improvement projects” and “implement[ing] the Hike and Bike Plan...prioritising projects that connect communities to open spaces”; and

- Protection of the environment, including by “explor[ing] opportunities for nature based recreation and tourism activities” and “integrat[ing] environment sustainable design and water sensitive urban design features in capital works improvement projects, where practical”.

Yarra Ranges Council Environment Strategy 2015 – 2025

The vision for the Environment Strategy is “we are dedicated to making Yarra Ranges a place of thriving communities, at home in healthy landscapes”.

Of relevance to these projects are the following goals and corresponding element:

- Thriving communities, goal 5: “Our communities are resilient in the face of changing climate and more extreme events”, including by “build[ing] and maintain[ing] community infrastructure that is adaptable and can withstand extreme climate events”, by “promot[ing] the adoption of sustainable building design and construction techniques across the municipality” and by “reduc[ing] Council’s energy consumption in line with Council’s ‘Adapting to a change climate and energy future’ plan...”

Equity, Access and Inclusion Strategy 2013-2023

Through this Strategy, Council recognises that inclusion for people with disability in all aspects of community life is a human right that also brings many social, cultural and economic benefits for the wider community. It further states as one of the goals that Council buildings and infrastructure are accessible to everyone in our community.

Child and Youth Strategy 2014-2024

This Strategy has the vision that Yarra Ranges will be a place where every child and young person will be able to thrive, reach their potential and actively participate in decision making. Outcome 2 has the most relevance to this project, stating that “Adequate Infrastructure exists to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.”

RELEVANT LAW

A Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken specifically for this project. However, learnings will be carried across from the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination Project Gender Impact Assessment.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental Impacts

Environmental impacts will be fully explored as part of the ongoing process for each project.

Social Impacts

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) identifies that high levels of obesity, dementia and poor mental health are significant issues for our community. The Strategy recognises that increasing physical activity will deliver more substantial health and wellbeing outcomes. The development of these priority projects will actively support the outcomes of the Strategy.

These projects represent a great opportunity to provide quality community infrastructure and provide an opportunity for local families to take part in an active lifestyle, increasing health and wellbeing outcomes and supporting the outcomes of the Strategy.

There are significant challenges across the Yarra Ranges with certain pockets of disadvantage in a number of small townships and remote areas; these projects offer opportunities for low/no cost participation in physical activities for local communities including young people, women and indigenous members of the community that typically do not get sufficient exercise and health outcomes.

High levels of obesity, dementia and poor mental health are significant issues for our community with 25% of Yarra Ranges' residents seeking help for a mental health-related problem in the last 12 months compared to 18% across Victoria, and 39.9% sedentary or insufficient exercise. Increasing physical activity will deliver greater health and wellbeing outcomes.

These projects will also help encourage healthy childhood development, improve social interaction, and provide a focus on gender equity.

There are strong links to social and community impacts resulting from the delivery of these projects. They include:

- Enhanced community access to infrastructure that encourages health and wellbeing outcomes;
- The revitalisation of local communities;
- Reduction of social isolation;
- Reduced levels of unemployment;
- Greater connection to place;
- Increased visitor footprint;

- Increased female participation in sport and recreation; and
- Increased levels of physical activity

Economic Impacts

The number of jobs based in Yarra Ranges fell by 6.2% between March and July 2020, with 2,598 jobs lost. Employment fell most in Accommodation and Food Services, with 12.6% of jobs within this industry lost, and Retail Trade with 9.5% of jobs lost - Retail Trade is Yarra Ranges' largest employer. Other industries with substantial job losses include Education and Training, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Arts and Recreation Services.

The largest decreases in jobs in Yarra Ranges were in the areas around Warburton (a 7.4% drop), Healesville (a 6.9% drop), and in the Hills (a 6.5% drop). Their largest decreases in employment were in Accommodation and Food Services jobs.

Tourism is not classified as a separate industry, but it supports 7.7% of jobs in Yarra Ranges - many of them in Accommodation and Food Services, and Arts and Recreation Services. Nationally, the number of day visitors dropped by 48% between March and July, and the amount spent dropped by 52%. This does not reflect Stage 4 lockdowns in Melbourne from the start of August.

Council's Youth COVID-19 Impact Survey of young adults 18-25 years old reported that 50% had lost work as a result of COVID-19 and were accessing Job-Keeper and Job-Seeker. This demonstrates the significant impact of COVID-19 on young people in Yarra Ranges who often rely on the industries most impacted such as tourism, hospitality and retail.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Lilydale Investment Precinct Project

The Lilydale Integrated Community Facility Options Study was developed through strong and far reaching conversations with major stakeholders, service providers and facility users. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 this will continue in the proposed Lilydale Investment Precinct project to broaden in general community consultation. A detailed engagement plan will be developed on inception of the Lilydale Investment Precinct.

There was widespread community engagement in developing the now-adopted Lilydale Place Plan.

Morrison Reserve Youth Activation

Pre design consultation has been completed and the initial concept consultation recently commenced. Given the anticipated high interest from the community staff are working with the communications team closely to regularly consult throughout the design process.

Pinks Emergency Relief Centre Amenities

Extensive engagement was undertaken in the development of the Pinks Reserve Master Plan which incorporates the proposed improvements to the Kilsyth Sports Centre. The upgrades to the Centre are further supported through funding assistance from State Government to build an additional indoor basketball court and improvements to the badminton and table tennis halls. The need to improve the current basketball player and community amenities came through strongly in the 450 plus responses. Early in the master planning consultation for this site, a local resident spoke of his desire to one day be able to bring his basketball loving son with high needs, to watch live basketball near his home.

Queen Road Playspace Renewal / McKenzie King Playspace Renewal / Bluegum Reserve Playspace Renewal / Wright Avenue Playspace Renewal

Community consultation will be done on all projects prior to concept design. Wright Avenue Playspace has undertaken initial consultation where community provided feedback on how they currently use and value this space. Bluegum Reserve, Queen Road and McKenzie King playspaces will undergo pre design consultation later this year.

Once a concept is prepared the designs will be presented to community members and key stakeholders and feedback will be sought on the proposals.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Internal collaboration occurs with the following teams as part of the project planning; Parks and Bushlands, Traffic and Transport, Community Development, Indigenous Development, Design and Place and Planning.

External collaboration occurs with relevant state agencies, youth groups and community.

Lilydale Investment Precinct Project

Through tying together the previous work that has been developed across many areas of Council, this project will involve collaboration of a team of interdisciplinary experts with a wealth of knowledge, to develop an integrated planning approach that supports innovation. Innovation in design, delivery and governance will be a focus for this project.

The Integrated Community Facilities Options Study and Eastern Health Needs Assessment are both projects funded with support from the Lilydale Revitalisation Board. The project team will continue to collaborate with the Board, as they progress this work.

A component of this project will be to start exploring innovative governance, business and partnership opportunities to ensure the successful delivery and management of facilities into the future.

Morrison Reserve Youth Activation / Queen Road Playspace Renewal / McKenzie King Playspace Renewal / Bluegum Reserve Playspace Renewal / Wright Avenue Playspace Renewal

Internal consultation has been undertaken with key council staff including parks and bushlands, youth and communications teams. At this stage no collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies has been sought.

Pinks Emergency Relief Centre Amenities

The design development for the Kilsyth Sports Centre and associated works at the netball and football/cricket pavilion projects on this site, has involved extensive consultation and collaboration across most areas of Council to ensure that drainage, traffic, open space, planning and site usage needs have been addressed. The tenant clubs are actively involved in project specific and overall working groups. Melbourne Water is the referral body involved in these projects. Innovative design solutions have been investigated as part of the complex drainage issues that have impacted the project.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessments will be undertaken on the projects as they progress through their planning and delivery stages.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. 2022-23 Growing Suburbs Fund Guidelines