

# Frequently Asked Questions Community Infrastructure Program – Strategic Projects

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government has announced an increase in funding for the Community Program - Strategic Projects (CIP-SP). The new proposal includes:

- a further \$550 million to be available for Strategic Projects in 2008-09 and 2009-10 to local governments on a nationally competitive basis.

The Government is also conscious of the additional needs of local communities that have been affected by the Victorian bushfires and the Queensland floods. We are consulting with councils to determine options for assisting the rebuilding effort in those communities.

### What is the CIP-SP \$550 million funding for?

The Australian Government will contribute \$550 million to local councils and their communities to stimulate additional growth and economic activity across Australia and to aid in rebuilding communities in the worst affected disaster declared areas.

Applications for the previous \$50 million, now \$550 million Strategic Projects program, were reopened for three weeks to provide an opportunity to local councils who were unable to submit an application in the first round or were unable to submit their preferred application. Applications closed at 4pm AEDT 6 March 2009. **This program is now closed.**

Under the \$550 million CIP-SP, funding will be available for a limited number of large strategic projects seeking a minimum Commonwealth contribution of \$2 million. Larger projects and projects which include partnership funding will be given preference.

All councils funded under the previous \$250 million CIP (please refer to [www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/rlcip\\_guidelines.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/rlcip_guidelines.aspx) for a list of eligible councils) and groups of such councils are eligible to apply for funds under CIP-SP. Councils may also apply on behalf of local not-for-profit organisations. Eligible projects must be additional and 'ready-to-proceed' (the project must be ready to commence construction within six months of signing the Funding Agreement), or be additional stages to projects that are currently underway.

The Government is also conscious of the additional needs of local communities that have been affected by the Victorian bushfires and the Queensland floods. We are consulting with councils to determine options for assisting the rebuilding effort in those communities.

Guidelines for both programs are available at [www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/index.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/local/index.aspx)

## QUERIES on CIP –SP \$550 million allocation:

### Who is eligible to apply for the Community Infrastructure Program- Strategic Projects funding?

- All councils funded under the previous \$250 million CIP will have the opportunity to access funding from the \$550 million.
- All original applicants have the opportunity to reconsider their application and submit an updated version or submit a new application for a new project. If a new or updated application is not received, your original application will still be considered.
- Councils who were unable to originally submit now have the opportunity to provide an application to the Department.
- Eligible projects must be additional and ‘ready-to-proceed’ (the project must be ready to commence construction within six months of signing the Funding Agreement (contract)), or be additional stages of projects that are currently underway.
- The Government is also conscious of the additional needs of local communities that have been affected by the Victorian bushfires and the Queensland floods. We are consulting with councils to determine options for assisting the rebuilding effort in those communities.

### What can the funding be spent on?

CIP-SP funding is available for single projects only and is for community infrastructure including new and major renovations or refurbishments consistent with types of projects listed at **Annexure A**.

Funding can be used for:

- construction or fit-out;
- preparatory work such as necessary engineering and geotechnical studies;
- land surveys and site preparation; and
- project management costs.

### What projects are ineligible?

- Funding will not be available for activities such as ongoing costs (e.g. operational costs and maintenance), road infrastructure covered by the Roads to Recovery or Black Spots programs.

Some examples are:

- Bicycle paths in association with a road are covered by Roads to Recovery, which includes a bicycle path that:
  - is located within the road reservation; or
  - where removed from the road reservation, provides a route between points on the road that is shorter than or broadly similar in distance to the road route.
- Painting of halls – funds cannot be spent ‘just’ to paint the halls. This is classified as maintenance and is ineligible. However, if it is part of a refurbishment of the hall which will result in more use of the facility it would be eligible.

- Toilet blocks are not eligible unless part of an integrated development involving an eligible project from Annexure A.
- Tourist interpretive centres are not eligible, unless they are part of a wider tourism infrastructure project.
- Purchase or replacement of office equipment.

### What are examples of eligible projects?

- Community centres
- Swimming pools
- Sports grounds and facilities
- Convention or trade centres
- Footpaths, streetscapes and curb reconstruction are eligible, if they are part of a suburb improvement program and not part of a road construction project - consistent with enhancing main streets and public squares in Annexure A.
- Paving or greening of road median strips and centre islands are eligible, for example if part of a suburb improvement program and not part of a road construction project – consistent with enhancing main streets and public squares in Annexure A.
- Airport infrastructure and terminals.
- Recreational bicycle paths such as those running through recreation reserves.
- Access facilities such as bus shelters, footbridges, jetties and boat ramps.

### What is the timeline for the CIP - Strategic Projects?

- A final and complete application form must have been received by 4pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time) on 6 March 2009.
- The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government will announce successful projects.

### How do I get a copy of the application?

- **This program is now closed.**

### How many applications can we submit?

- Councils can submit one application each and in addition can apply once as a part of a group of councils.
- Applications should be for one project and councils must be able to provide documentation such as a feasibility study, project plan, project cash flow projections, cost estimates and business plan with the application.

### How long before I have to return the form?

- You needed to return the application before 4pm (Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time) on 6 March 2009.

### What if I can't meet the timing to return the form or provide you with all the information?

- Incomplete or late applications may not be considered for funding.

### **Why do I have to provide all this information?**

- In order to assess projects, the Department needs to make reasonable enquiries to ensure the proposed expenditure is an efficient and effective use of public money and is in accordance with Commonwealth policies.
- Based on the information provided in your application, the Department will undertake a risk analysis in accordance with the CIP – Strategic Projects guidelines.
- For some projects the Department may also request an Independent Viability Assessment to determine the extent of any risks.

### **Why is an Independent Viability Assessment required?**

- An initial assessment of all projects will be undertaken, based on the size and complexity of the overall project and the level of funding to be provided. For projects where a more detailed analysis is required, an Independent Viability Assessment (IVA) may be undertaken.
- There may be an IVA undertaken on the applicant organisation.
- Be sure to sign the declaration contained within the application.

### **How long will the process take once I have submitted my information?**

- The Department will work with the proponent with the aim of finalising the Funding Agreement (contract) within four weeks of a project being approved by the Minister.
- Please be assured that the Government is keen to see projects undertaken with the least possible delay.

### **Can we start our project once the application is in?**

- Do not assume an application will be successful. Proponents should not make financial commitments based on notification of funding approval from the Australian Government until the Funding Agreement (contract) has been executed by both parties.

### **When does the project have to be built?**

- Construction must commence within six months of the Funding Agreement (contract) being signed by the recipient and the Commonwealth.

### **Who will approve funding for the program?**

- The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government will make the funding decisions, after advice has been provided by the Department.

- The information the Minister will have will include a risk analysis undertaken by the Department and comments on recommended projects from the Australian Council of Local Government.

### **When will we finally get the funds?**

- When the Minister has made a decision about the release of funds, a letter will be sent to successful applicants advising them of the project's status and an officer from the Department will contact them as soon as possible to complete a Funding Agreement (contract).
- Funding Agreements (contracts) will be structured to schedule the release of funds of 25%-50% payment up front and the remaining 50-75% to be paid incrementally on achievement of milestones. First payment will be received upon signing of the Funding Agreement (contract), a tax invoice being provided and confirmation of the commencement date of construction.

### **Is there any way I can find more funding?**

- You will need to consider how you can meet any additional costs. Additional funding will not be made available under the CIP-SP program.
- You could also consider applying for other funding through one of the Government's current funding programs. The Government's GrantsLINK website at [www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au) makes it easy to find suitable and relevant grants for community projects.

### **Where do I send the application?**

- **This program is now closed.**

### **How will I know if my application has been received?**

- We will notify councils of receipt of applications after 6 March 2009.

### **Will the approved projects be published on the website?**

- The successful applications for the CIP-SP will be published on the website.

### **Can I courier or hand-deliver my application?**

- No. For security reasons, the Department does not have the facility to receive applications delivered by hand.

### **Being a Council in a remote area, I have a slow internet connection. Will that affect me lodging an application electronically?**

- No. Applications submitted electronically will be deemed to have been received on time if sent (email) or submitted (web link) by 4:00pm AEDT on 6 March 2009. The applicant must ensure that the complete application is submitted before the required time.

## **Annexure A.**

### **Social and cultural infrastructure**

- Town halls
- Community centres
- Libraries
- Local heritage sites
- Museums
- Cultural centres
- Enhancement of main streets and public squares
- Theatre/music/art spaces
- Historic buildings
- Parks and gardens
- Internet kiosk infrastructure
- Kitchens for organisations
- Community market areas

### **Recreation facilities**

- Sports grounds and facilities
- Sports stadiums
- Community recreation spaces
- Playgrounds
- Rail trails
- Swimming pools
- Walking tracks and bicycle paths
- Skate Parks
- BMX/Mountain Bike parks/trails
- Surf lifesaving clubs

### **Tourism infrastructure**

- Convention or trade centres
- Memorial halls/walkways
- Tourism information centres
- Local infrastructure to support or provide access to tourist facilities
- Community public attractions
- Buildings for exhibits

### **Children, youth and seniors facilities**

- Playgroup centres
- Youth centres
- Scout/guide halls
- Senior citizens' centres

### **Access facilities**

- Disabled access infrastructure
- Footbridges
- Bus/rail terminal upgrade
- Jetties/wharves/piers/pontoons
- Foreshore development
- Boat ramps

### **Environmental Initiatives**

- Water source and treatment
- Drain and sewerage upgrades
- Water conservation infrastructure
- Waste management and processing infrastructure
- Wastewater infrastructure
- Water recycling plants
- Water catchments
- Recycling plants