



2020-21 Growing Suburbs Fund

Application Guidelines

ROUND 2

Growing Suburbs Fund

www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/gsf



Jobs,
Precincts
and Regions

Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne.

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2020-21 Growing Suburbs Fund Application Guidelines

ROUND 2

The second round of the 2020-21 Growing Suburbs Fund is an additional contribution by the Victorian Government towards meeting critical local community infrastructure needs for our most diverse and fast-growing communities.

It is positioned to quickly respond to the pressures being experienced by interface and peri-urban communities by fast-tracking high priority projects that support more resilient and liveable neighbourhoods and improved capacity for councils to respond to changing community needs and demands.

Message from the Minister



2020 has been a challenging year, but we know that councils will be at the centre of Victoria's recovery, creating jobs and building stronger communities.

And as a Government we will continue to provide the support they need to get big projects off the ground, employ local people and get the economy moving.

The Growing Suburbs Fund is one of our most effective ways of doing that.

Since 2015, it has leveraged more than \$750 million of investment across 221 different projects in the fastest-growing communities in Victoria, creating over 7500 jobs.

This record speaks for itself, and that's why the Victorian Budget 2020-21 committed another \$50 million to continue the good work. This is in addition to the \$25 million already provided to councils through the Growing Suburbs Fund in 2020-21.

We know that every Growing Suburbs Fund investment makes an enormous difference to local people.

Following the expansion into the peri-urban councils announced in June last year, more than 2.7 million Victorians live in areas that can access the Fund.

From new sports pavilions to parks and playgrounds, hubs for vital community services, cultural centres and kindergartens, the Growing Suburbs Fund is making our suburbs even better places to live and work.

Please take some time to read through these guidelines and understand the eligibility criteria and aims for 2020-21.

I am incredibly excited to see how this year's projects will continue the Growing Suburbs Fund's legacy of achievement for Victoria's fastest-growing communities.



The Hon Shaun Leane MP

Minister for Local Government



Contents

1. Overview	6
2. Objectives	6
3. Who can apply	7
4. What will be funded	7
5. Funding from other programs	8
6. Assessment process	9
Criteria	9
Supporting Documentation	11
7. How to apply	12
8. Funding conditions	12



1. Overview

The Victorian Government recognises that interface and peri-urban councils are diverse and are home to some of Victoria's most vulnerable communities. They are located on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne, marking the interface between the 'city' and 'country'. They also play a critical role in supporting Victoria's population growth and economy, contain productive rural land and make up 90 per cent of Melbourne's Green Wedge areas.

As a group, the interface and peri-urban councils comprise 30.4 per cent of Victoria's population. For over two decades, population growth in these areas has exceeded the State's average, and this trend is expected to continue with more than 1 million additional residents expected to be living in the interface and peri-urban areas by 2031.

The Victorian Government is investing an additional \$50 million through the second round of the 2020-21 Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF) to continue the timely delivery of critical infrastructure in interface and peri-urban communities.

The GSF will be delivered in coordination with other government infrastructure investments in interface and peri-urban communities. It is overseen by the Minister for Local Government and administered by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (Department).

2. Objectives

This second round of the GSF will contribute to meeting critical local infrastructure needs for communities in our changing and fast-growing outer suburbs. It is positioned to quickly respond to the pressures being experienced by interface and peri-urban communities by accelerating infrastructure projects that will make a big difference to the liveability and resilience of these areas.

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

- the social and economic recovery of communities and groups impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19)
- the needs of rapidly growing communities
- local employment creation in both the construction phase and the ongoing operation
- improved local economic conditions in interface and peri-urban communities
- improved capacity for councils to respond to changing community needs and demands
- the delivery of innovative models of integrated/shared community infrastructure.



3. Who can apply

The second round of the 2020-21 GSF is open to Melbourne's ten interface and six peri-urban councils.

The ten eligible interface councils are:

Cardinia Shire Council, Casey City Council, Hume City Council, Melton City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Whittlesea City Council, Wyndham City Council, and Yarra Ranges Shire Council.

The six eligible peri-urban councils are:

Bass Coast Shire Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, Golden Plains Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Moorabool Shire Council and Surf Coast Shire Council.

While only interface and peri-urban councils can apply for funding, not-for-profit or private sector organisations are encouraged to partner with these councils to put forward proposals for the 2020-21 GSF.

4. What will be funded

The second round of the 2020-21 GSF will fund new, expanded or upgraded infrastructure projects within Melbourne's ten interface and six peri-urban councils.

The program will support projects that have a direct benefit to communities and surrounding catchment areas across the following broad infrastructure categories:

- 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

As part of their applications, councils will need to submit a Project Plan that outlines the timelines for the project(s) they plan to undertake and demonstrate that projects can commence construction within 18 months of the grant being announced. Funded projects must be completed within 24 months of the commencement of construction.

There is no limit to the number of projects a council can submit for consideration. A council resolution providing support for each application and a priority order of projects is mandatory. **Projects that do not meet these conditions will not be considered for funding.**

The second round of the 2020-21 GSF WILL NOT fund:

- projects that have already commenced construction (including, but not limited to site clearing, earthworks, building works and any form of early works)
- projects located on land that is in the process of or yet to be acquired
- projects that are sporting pavilions or single use sports grounds that cannot demonstrate a dedicated community use space(s) for groups other than the resident sporting clubs
- infrastructure that is fully scoped and funded through a development contributions plan, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that GSF funds will bring forward delivery, or that the actual costs of delivering the infrastructure materially exceed the total of developer contributions

- routine or ongoing maintenance activities, cosmetic works, repair of facilities damaged by vandalism, fire or other natural disasters where the damage should be covered by insurance
- recurrent operating costs, including utilities and staffing resources
- drainage, waste, resurfacing, roads and associated footpaths, and public transport infrastructure
- construction of infrastructure that does not have a direct community benefit or address an identified community need
- service connections (while these elements will form part of construction, council contributions should be used for these purposes)
- bundling of small projects into a larger project for submission.

5. Funding from other programs

The GSF aims to accelerate the delivery of critical community infrastructure and complement, rather than replace, other funding sources available to these communities. Projects that receive funding from multiple programs must comply with the conditions of each of the relevant programs.

Applications received for the second round of the 2020-21 GSF that are eligible for, and primarily within, the scope of other funding programs must identify the additional value and discrete component to be achieved through GSF funding.

Applications must identify any additional sources of funding sought, including State and Commonwealth government programs, as well as eligibility for contributions from developers.



6. Assessment process

Criteria

All applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria as specified below. An application must address all assessment criteria. Claims made against each criteria must be substantiated with evidence.

Percentage weightings are provided as a guide to the relative importance of different criteria in the assessment process. Applications must address all relevant criteria and provide relevant supporting documents as set out on page 11.

Applications will be assessed against the following project assessment criteria:

Why? (25%)

Applications will be required to demonstrate the extent to which the project addresses an identified need in the community by:

- demonstrating the connection between the project and a rapidly growing community, clearly identifying the need or gap in infrastructure provision that the project will address
- demonstrating how the project will add to local economic activity and employment creation in both the construction phase and the ongoing operation
- demonstrating how the project aligns with and delivers against current state policy objectives
- demonstrating how the project will deliver on the purpose of the GSF and the desired outcomes.

Applications that directly address needs resulting from population growth will be favourably considered. Applications that progress partnerships between Aboriginal organisations, councils and government will also be considered favourably.

Who? (25%)

Applications must clearly demonstrate the extent to which the project will deliver benefits to the locality and:

- contribute to improved gender equality and the needs of diverse communities
- clearly identify the intended benefits (social, economic, and/or environmental) that the project will deliver
- demonstrate the breadth and depth of the expected benefits including who will benefit and how.
- Demonstrate how councils can improve employment outcomes for vulnerable job seekers in their communities.

What? (20%)

Applications must provide details of what the funding will be used for and:

- demonstrate that schematic site/floors plans have been developed
- demonstrate consistency with climate change, environmentally sustainable design, and universal design principles. Consideration should be given to achieving positive environmental outcomes e.g. reducing operational costs, reducing environmental impacts of construction, energy and water efficiencies
- explain how the proposed infrastructure will be managed and its benefits sustained once the infrastructure is delivered.

<p>How? (20%)</p>	<p>Applications must provide details that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a sound approach to delivering the project, providing realistic timeframes for delivery, and demonstrating that the project is financially viable and represents value for money • demonstrate capacity to implement and/or source expertise to manage the delivery of the project • outline the proposed funding contributions for the project. Projects that have significant council contributions and attract further public, not-for-profit or private sector investment are desirable and strongly encouraged. <p>Applications must identify how council will fund the difference if applications for other funding contributions are unsuccessful.</p>
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<p>The extent of council and community support for the project (10%)</p>	<p>Applications must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the project is a recognised strategic council priority and is consistent with key council plans such as the current Council Plan and Strategic Resource Plan, community plans or structure plans and/or policy documents • the level of community support. This could be 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.
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<p>Program wide criteria</p>	<p>A program assessment panel will consider six program-wide factors. These factors are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistency with state priorities – the panel will consider how each project aligns local and State priorities • leveraged funding – Councils are expected to contribute funding to the delivery of each project. A notional program wide funding leverage of \$1 for \$1 is in place. • geographic distribution – no more than 15 percent of the total pool of funding will be allocated to a single council • diversity of infrastructure/project types – the assessment will seek to ensure that funded projects represent a mix of infrastructure • council's past performance on delivering government funded projects will be taken into consideration • the consideration of the Green Star Rating certification for design, construction and operations for sustainable buildings.
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Supporting documentation

In order to be considered for funding, it is **mandatory** that applicants provide the following supporting documentation with submission of applications:

- evidence of a council resolution providing support for each application and priority order of projects
- site/floor plans for the project
- confirmation of other funding sources
- project plan.

Council are also required to provide estimated ongoing staffing for the project, broken down by female and male employees. This will be included in the on-line application form.

Any applications that do not provide this documentation will not be assessed.

The following documentation would be **beneficial**:

- applicable permits including Cultural Heritage Management Plans, Environmental Effects Statement etc
- a business case, feasibility study or cost benefit analysis that may have been completed for the project
- relevant sections of council reports, plans, strategies or community consultation that demonstrates support for the project (please do not attach entire documents)
- project budget, cost plan or relevant quantity surveyor (QS) reports where appropriate.

The Department reserves the right not to assess an application should:

- the application not address the assessment criteria by completing each question within the online application form
- the project fall into one or more of the categories under what the GSF will not fund (see Section 4)
- the mandatory supporting documentation (as requested above) not be included.



7. How to apply

Applications will be received through a single application round, opening on 27 January 2021 and closing on 10 March 2021. Applicants must consult the GSF team before 3 March 2021 to discuss their project proposals prior to submission. This process will include a site visit to each proposal location. Project proposals that have not been discussed will not be considered.

A brief overview of the timeline for the second round of the 2020-21 GSF is summarised below:

Applications Open	27 January 2021
Applications Close	2.00pm 10 March 2021
Assessment and Decision Making	March/April 2021
Announcements From	April 2021
Funding Agreements Executed	April/May 2021
Construction Commencement	Within 18 months of the funding announcement
Construction Complete	Within 24 months of commencement

Department staff may contact applicants to seek further clarification of information submitted.

Some applicants may be requested to submit further information following initial assessment of applications by the Department.

Applications must be submitted via the link at www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/gsf. These should be received by the Department no later than 2pm on 10 March 2021.

If you have any queries, please contact DJPR on 0411 752 071 or email gsf@ecodev.vic.gov.au

8. Funding Conditions

Funding agreement

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with the Department. Funding agreements establish the parties and outline their commitments and obligations to each other, as well as setting out the general funding terms and conditions. It is recommended that applicants review the Common Funding Agreement standard terms and conditions before applying.

No funding will be released until the Department and the applicant have executed the funding agreement and the appropriate milestone evidence identified in the funding agreement has been met. This includes confirmation of construction starting within the 18-month timeframe.

The Department reserves the right to withhold payments in cases where there are concerns relating to the delivery of the project. In this instance, the Department will release funding when appropriate actions have been taken to ensure the funded project will be delivered within the agreed timeframes.

In the event that a project has not commenced construction within the 18-month timeframe, the Department reserves the right to recall any funding already released for the project.

In the event of a project being delivered for less than the budget stated in the funding agreement, applicants will be required to return unspent funds negotiated on a pro rata basis.

Project monitoring and delivery

Funding recipients are required to comply with project monitoring and reporting requirements outlined in the funding agreement. It is the Department's preference that councils appoint a primary contact for all matters relating to reporting, monitoring and delivery. Councils are responsible for project delivery, including any project cost overruns should they occur. In cases where applications are submitted in partnership with third party organisations, it is expected that councils will take responsibility for project delivery.

Councils are to extend an invitation to the GSF team to participate in any Project Control Board meetings that occur throughout the duration of the project.

Councils must also take full responsibility for the cost of ongoing operation and maintenance of any facilities through their asset management processes.

In cases where a project is delayed for an unreasonable length of time, or substantive changes to scope are made after funding has been approved, or where a project fails to be delivered, the Department reserves the right to cancel the grant and, if applicable, recoup any payment that has already been provided.

A request to vary the timing of an approved project must be discussed with Department prior to the submission of a variation request. Any timing variation over 6 months must be accompanied by a letter from the council's chief executive officer approving the request.

Timing variation approvals are at the discretion of the Department and may lead to a reduction or cancellation of the grant.

Progress reports will be requested throughout the life cycle of the funding agreement. These reports are required to be submitted through the Department's online system. A final report with financial acquittal for all project income and expenditure is required to be submitted to Department together with:

- building compliance or occupancy certificate
- photographs of the completed facility
- an invitation to the department to inspect the facility in operation
- media coverage material.

An outcomes report is also required to be submitted to Department within 12 months of construction completion. This will need to include information and data demonstrating:

- increased usability
- increased activities and programs
- visitation, including age breakdown where applicable
- new initiatives that have been implemented as a direct result of funding from the GSF
- the delivery of innovative models of integrated/shared community infrastructure (e.g. partnerships formed, service delivery model developed).

Local Jobs First Policy

The Local Jobs First Policy (LJF Policy) issued under the *Local Jobs First Act 2003* supports businesses and workers by ensuring that small and medium size enterprises are given a full and fair opportunity to compete for both large and small government contracts, helping to create job opportunities, including for apprentices, trainees and cadets. The LJF Policy is implemented by Victorian Government departments and agencies to help drive local industry development. The LJF Policy applies to grant projects where the value of the grant is above the threshold values of:

- \$3 million or more in metropolitan Melbourne, and
- \$1 million or more in regional Victoria.

Projects funded through the GSF will have to comply with the Local Jobs First Policy.

Local Jobs First requirements will be built into all funding agreements where these thresholds apply.

Further information regarding the requirements can be found at:

<https://economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/victorian-industry-participation-policy>.

Acknowledgement

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support and promotional guidelines will form part of the funding agreement. Successful applicants must liaise with the Department's program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

Successful applicants may be required to provide information on activity outcomes for use in program evaluation or in the Department's communication material.

Privacy

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering the funding and informing the public of successful applications.

In order for us to administer your application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal details with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include departmental staff, Members of Parliament and their staff, external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other government departments. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

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

To obtain a copy of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Privacy Policy, please email gsf@ecodev.vic.gov.au

For information about how to access information about you held by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, please email gsf@ecodev.vic.gov.au

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