

## **Grants and Sponsorship - Post Exhibition - Dixon Street Improvement Grant Guidelines and Haymarket Activation Grant Guidelines**

**File No:** S117676

### **Summary**

This report seeks Council adoption of the grant program guidelines for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant and Haymarket Activation Grant post exhibition.

The Dixon Street Improvement Grant will support capital works that improve shop and building frontages for a three year period. The Haymarket Activation Grant will support one major activation each year for three years in the Haymarket precinct.

The total budget for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant is \$1,200,000 over three years, starting in 2024/25. The total budget for the Haymarket Activation Grant will be \$600,000 over three years, starting 2024/25.

A further \$100,000 per year is the proposed maximum loss of revenue to the City associated with extending the value in kind fee waivers for projects funded through the Haymarket Activation Grant program.

On 12 February 2024, Council endorsed placing on exhibition the draft guidelines for the new Dixon Street Improvement Grant and Haymarket Activation grant. They were exhibited from 20 February to 19 March 2024.

The details of the issues raised in the submissions, together with the City's responses are included in Attachment D Engagement Report.

This report recommends the adoption of the exhibited Dixon Street Improvement Grant guidelines (Attachment A) with minor changes for clarity and Haymarket Activation Grant guidelines (Attachment B) with no changes.

## Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) adopt the Dixon Street Improvement Grant Guidelines as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) adopt the Haymarket Activation Grant Guidelines as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) note the submissions received from the community on the exhibited draft Grant Program Guidelines as shown at Attachment D to the subject report; and
- (D) note the proposed budget implications as described in the subject report and that programs will be incorporated into future budgets for public exhibition and endorsement by Council.

## Attachments

- Attachment A.** Dixon Street Improvement Grant Guidelines
- Attachment B.** Haymarket Activation Grant Guidelines
- Attachment C.** Resolution of Council - 19 February 2024 - Dixon Street Improvement Grant Guidelines and Haymarket Activation Grant Guidelines
- Attachment D.** Engagement Report

## Background

1. The Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy (the Strategy) was adopted by Council on 11 December 2023.
2. The Strategy provides a coordinated response to the community vision and evidence-based studies. It identifies actions in five areas:
  - (a) renewal of the heart;
  - (b) planning and heritage;
  - (c) public domain and public art;
  - (d) culture, events, and activations; and
  - (e) collaboration and partnerships.
3. The Strategy includes actions to explore two new grant programs:
  - (a) improve the shopfronts in the southern part of Dixon Street through a grant program; and
  - (b) more grant funding for community-led festivals and events in Haymarket.
4. Both actions received strong support from respondents during the public exhibition of the Strategy.
5. The budget for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant program and Haymarket Activation Grant program will be subject to future budget and public exhibition processes under the Local Government Act 1993.
6. The associated financial implications will also be subject to public exhibition and Council endorsement as part of the 2024/25 budget process.

## Dixon Street Improvement Grant

7. The Dixon Street Improvement Grant program will provide matched funding up to \$60,000 per grant to support capital works that improve shop and building frontages on Dixon Street south, including façade, awning and food and beverage shopfront improvements for a period of three years.
8. Three types of capital works projects will be supported for this grant:
  - (a) Street level major works provides matched cash funding up to \$60,000 per shopfront, and will prioritise:
    - (i) building works to bring food preparation to the front window to be visible from Dixon Street (required for this type of grant);
    - (ii) upgrades to shopfronts;
    - (iii) upgrading external signage and lighting;
    - (iv) installation of larger windows or bi-fold windows (opening up views from Dixon Street);

- (v) repair or restoration of existing awnings; and
    - (vi) works to improve accessibility.
  - (b) Street level minor works provides matched cash funding up to \$20,000 per shopfront, and will prioritise:
    - (i) upgrades to Dixon Street shopfronts;
    - (ii) upgrading external signage and lighting;
    - (iii) installation of larger windows or bi-fold windows (opening up views from Dixon Street);
    - (iv) repair or restoration of existing awnings; and
    - (v) works to improve accessibility.
  - (c) Upper storey works provides matched cash funding up to \$60,000 per property, and will prioritise:
    - (i) restoration or installation of signage or street art in keeping with Dixon Street's character;
    - (ii) cleaning, repair or repainting of external building façade;
    - (iii) repair or restoration of existing awnings and upper storey windows; and
    - (iv) removal of redundant air conditioning units, utilities, wiring or fixtures.
- 9. The Dixon Street Improvement Grants will be open to landowners and business occupants (with a letter of support from the landowner) of buildings in the Dixon Street South area.
- 10. In addition, applicants for street level major works must bring food preparation to the front window to be visible from Dixon Street, contributing to a 'chef's gallery' on Dixon Street.
- 11. Applicants will be supported through the process by a planning and design concierge service.
- 12. Minor changes have been made to the grant guidelines for clarity:
  - (a) Removing all references for applicants to 'register their interest'. Instead, a link will be included on the website, once the grant is live.
  - (b) Removing reference to 'works to improve accessibility' from the funding priorities. While accessibility remains a matter for consideration, the main aim of the grant is to improve the presentation and use of the building as experienced from the street. Accessibility will continue to be managed through standard regulatory requirements and processes.
- 13. Following completion of the grant application and assessment process, all grant recommendations for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant will be brought back to Council for approval.

## Haymarket Activation Grant

14. The new Haymarket Activation Grant program will provide support for one major activation each year for three years in the Haymarket precinct, to the value of \$200,000. The activation will attract people to Haymarket, celebrate Asian cultures and strengthen community inclusion and cohesion.
15. Value-in-kind up to the value of up to \$100,000 will also be made available, including fee waivers for street banner pole hire, venue hire, outdoor event related application fees, power access fees, event road closure fees or other applicable City service and event hire fees normally chargeable for such events.
16. The Haymarket Activation grant guidelines are based on the guidelines approved by Council for the Precinct Activation grant program in 2022.
17. The Haymarket Activation Grant program will prioritise projects that:
  - (a) celebrate Asian cultures and communities;
  - (b) strengthen social inclusion, enable connectedness and reduce social isolation;
  - (c) support the visitor economy through activations, events and promotion;
  - (d) represent the cultural and social diversity of our community; and
  - (e) activate Haymarket with creative programming.
18. The Haymarket Activation Grant program will be open to not-for-profits and for-profits, delivering an activation within the Haymarket area.
19. Following completion of the grant application and assessment process, all grant recommendations for the Haymarket Activation Grant program will be brought back to Council for approval.

## Key Implications

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

20. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This program is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
  - (a) Direction 3 - Public places for all - the Haymarket Activation Grant program will activate streets and public spaces in Haymarket with cultural events and activities.
  - (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - the Dixon Street Improvement Grant program will support business to make their shopfronts attractive, inclusive and inviting.
  - (c) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - the Haymarket Activation Grant program will activate streets and public spaces in Haymarket with cultural events and activities.

- (d) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - the Haymarket Activation Grant program recognises the unique characteristics and history of Haymarket, and by activating the precinct with cultural events and activities will enliven the precinct and entice people to visit.

### **Organisational Impact**

- 21. The grants and sponsorships contract management process will involve key staff across the City of Sydney. Identified staff set contract conditions and performance measures for each approved project, and review project acquittals, which include both narrative and financial reports.
- 22. Applicants for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant program will be supported through the process by a planning and design concierge service. This concierge service will be supported using existing resources within the Planning Assessments Unit.

### **Risks**

- 23. Operational risks associated with implementing the proposed new grants are considered low and have been explored by City staff. There has been internal consultation with staff across areas of the City and further consultation and consideration will be given to the operational impact of implementing the grants during the application period.

### **Cultural / Environmental / Economic / Social**

- 24. The City's Grants and Sponsorship Program provides the City with a platform to support cultural, economic, environmental and social initiatives from the communities and business, within the local area.
- 25. The Haymarket Activation Grant program and the Dixon Street Improvement Grant program have been developed in response to feedback from the Haymarket and Chinatown Revitalisation Strategy community engagement process.

### **Financial Implications**

- 26. The total proposed budget for the Dixon Street Improvement Grant is an estimated \$1,200,000 over three years (subject to participation), subject to public exhibition and Council endorsement.
- 27. The total proposed budget for the Haymarket Activation Grant is an estimated \$600,000 over three years, subject to public exhibition and Council endorsement.
- 28. The Dixon Street Improvement Grant program and Haymarket Activation Grant program will form part of the Grants and Sponsorship Program and budgets for 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27, be referenced within the Operational Plan for each of these years and has been included within the draft Long Term Financial Plan presented to Council in the current report cycle (May 2024).

29. A maximum of \$100,000 per year for three years impact of future revenue forgone from the waiver of City service and event hire fees will affect future financial years' results and will be reflected in the Operational Plan for each of these years and has been included within the draft Long Term Financial Plan presented to Council in the current report cycle (May 2024).

### **Relevant Legislation**

30. In accordance with Section 160(1) and (2) of the Local Government Act 1993, these draft guidelines were placed on public exhibition for 28 days and any submissions up to 42 days will be considered when finalising the grant guidelines.
31. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides that a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions following a public exhibition process.

### **Critical Dates / Time Frames**

32. The Haymarket Activation Grant program will run for a three-year period, commencing in 2024/25. This program will open for applications in May 2024, prior to the 2024/25 budget being approved. This will give the successful applicant time to plan and present an event, so as not to occur at the same time as pre-existing festivals and events taking place within or in the vicinity of the Haymarket area (for example Sydney Lunar Festival). This was successfully achieved in 2021/22 when the Precinct Activation Grant program was approved by Council. This will also allow for recommendations for the grant to be considered by Council by August 2024.

## Public Consultation

33. On 12 February 2024, Council endorsed placing on exhibition the draft guidelines for the new Dixon Street Improvement Grant and Haymarket Activation grant. They were exhibited from 20 February to 19 March 2024. During public consultation, 11 submissions were received for the Haymarket activation grant guidelines, one of which was answered in Traditional Chinese. Ninety-one per cent of submissions support the grant guidelines (64 per cent support the guidelines without changes, 27 per cent support the guidelines with changes). Nine per cent do not support the grant guidelines, stating that they would prefer the funding be put towards improvements to Dixon Street.
34. During public consultation, eight submissions were received for the Dixon Street improvement grant guidelines. One hundred per cent of submissions supported the grant guidelines without changes. Respondents commented that Dixon Street needs rejuvenation and that this grant program is “absolutely necessary.” The community stated that this program is “well targeted in its focus” of uplifting the attractiveness of the street, with an “emphasis/incentive on food.”
35. Three written submissions were made on behalf of local community groups and organisations, providing joint feedback for both grant guidelines. Two of the submissions expressed strong support for both programs, while the third focused on recommendations and considerations for the implementation of the grants.
36. The details of the issues raised in the submissions, together with the City's responses are included in Attachment D.
37. Given the strong support for both grant guidelines, no changes are proposed to either grant guideline in response to the consultation.

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