

ITEM 8. COMMUNITY SERVICES GRANT - WATERLOO PUBLIC HOUSING ACTION GROUP**FILE NO: X006880****SUMMARY**

Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has submitted a Community Services Grant application to support the Future Planning Office and community-led engagement in the redevelopment of the Waterloo Social Housing Estate.

Waterloo Public Housing Action Group advocates for the rights of social housing tenants in Waterloo. It has been very active in the past 18 months, speaking with tenants, community members, government staff and ministers since the State Government announced its intention to redevelop the Waterloo Housing Estate.

Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has secured significant in-kind and pro-bono support. It has an agreement with Family and Community Services for a meeting place and office in Wellington Street, Waterloo, where it has established the Future Planning Office. It has secured pro-bono expertise from academics, architects, urban designers, planners and researchers to support the community to engage with the master planning process.

The grant will enable Waterloo Public Housing Action Group to:

- continue the support for the community delivered through the Future Planning Office as demand increases from tenants during the upcoming consultation process;
- expand its resources using funds to engage technical experts to facilitate information sessions for tenants seeking more information about master planning and related issues; and
- document feedback received from community members (tenants) through its activities and report this to Family and Community Services to be considered in the master plan consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a one-off cash grant of \$47,980 (excluding GST) to Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Incorporated as auspice for Waterloo Public Housing Action Group; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a grant agreement with Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Incorporated.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. The Waterloo Housing Estate has been announced as a State Significant Precinct. The State Government has commenced master planning to redevelop the area.
2. There are currently over 2,000 social housing units on the site. The tenants who live there are critically impacted by the redevelopment. It is vital to the wellbeing of the community that they are effectively engaged in the process.
3. The City has advocated for the importance of a trusted channel for feedback from tenants into the master plan and for opportunities that strengthen community capacity to participate in the master planning process.
4. The Future Planning Office was established in late June 2017 by Waterloo Public Housing Action Group. It has hosted a range of successful tenant-led activities in preparation for the master planning and redevelopment process.
5. Waterloo Public Housing Action Group approached the City to request support for increased tenant-led activities in Waterloo through a community services grant.
6. Waterloo Public Housing Action Group is not an incorporated body.
7. Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Incorporated is an incorporated community organisation formed by Waterloo residents. The group focuses on the provision of markets and community gardens in the area.
8. Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has identified Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Incorporated as the preferred organisation to auspice Waterloo Public Housing Action Group.
9. Waterloo Residents Markets and Gardens Incorporated is supportive of the work of Waterloo Public Housing Action Group and members of this group participate in activities of the Future Planning Office. Both organisations are tenant-led.
10. The Department of Family and Community Services has acknowledged tenant-led activities as a valuable contribution to the master planning process and has agreed to accept the Waterloo Public Housing Action Group report as part of the official consultation process.
11. The application from Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has been assessed against the City's Community Services Grant Program. It was found to strongly align with the following key outcomes of the program:
 - (a) increased participation in community, civic life and local decision making;
 - (b) increased community capacity to address local needs/opportunities; and
 - (c) strengthened social cohesion, sense of belonging and connection to place.

12. The project achieves these outcomes through providing a dedicated community space for engagement and learning for local tenants. The funds will be used for workshops to share information with tenants and facilitate a feedback loop to collate tenant ideas, concerns and aspirations to be submitted as part of the master planning process. This will be achieved through a range of formal and informal gatherings increasing opportunities for tenants to build their connections and increase their skills and knowledge.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

13. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This grant is aligned with the following *Sustainable Sydney 2030* strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – this tenant-led program will build networks and community knowledge of a complex process and contribute to community resilience through a time of dramatic change.
 - (b) Direction 8 - Housing for a Diverse Population – the project will contribute to the renewal of social housing and the engagement of social housing tenants in the renewal process.

Organisational Impact

14. The Safe City team will provide administrative support for this grant through the role of grant relationship management.

Risks

15. Master planning is very demanding on the community. The local social housing residents will be asked by the Department of Family and Community Services to participate in a range of official engagement activities. It is important that the activities hosted by the Future Planning Office contribute to the final outcome and do not become confused with the Government-led engagement process.

Social / Cultural / Community

16. The Waterloo social housing community is diverse and complex. The Future Planning Office provides a safe and welcoming place for tenants during a time of change and uncertainty. Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has considered the needs of the tenants in planning this project.
17. The office is staffed by volunteers who are tenants and know the community.
18. The project budget includes translations of material and workshops into Russian and Chinese.
19. The office is resourced with materials in different formats that are accessible, including a physical model of the area and easy English guides to the process.
20. An Aboriginal Liaison Officer (paid for by the Department of Family and Community Services) will be based in the Future Planning Office.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

21. Provision for the allocation of funding for this grant to Waterloo Public Housing Action Group has been made in the 2017/18 Grants and Sponsorship budget.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

21. Section 356 (1) of the Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

22. The first phase (visioning) of the Family and Community Services-led consultation is proposed to commence in late September 2017 and concludes in November 2017. Family and Community Services has informed Waterloo Public Housing Action Group that it will need to provide its report within this period.
23. Family and Community Services has agreed that Waterloo Public Housing Action Group can have access to the space until 30 June 2018.

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