

# Metropolitan Greenspace Program 2005- 2006: Guidelines

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# DIPNR Sydney Greenspace Grant Programs: An Overview

## Introduction

### DIPNR Sydney Greenspace Grant programs: An Overview

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) administers funding programs to enhance access to and improve quality of **Sydney Greenspace**. The programs assist with the implementation of metropolitan planning strategies, through delivery of a network of conservation and recreation spaces that are the “lungs” of the city, contributing to high quality of life and for the enjoyment of all.

These programs are generally designed to assist the planning, conservation and recreation development of Sydney’s public lands and waterways that make up **Sydney Greenspace**. Projects funded under these programs help restore, conserve or enhance land in public ownership to provide accessible places with facilities for recreation pursuits through State and Local Government and community partnerships. Current DIPNR funding programs relevant to **Sydney Greenspace** include:

- Metropolitan Greenspace Program (MGP);
- Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program (CRFIP); and
- Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program (SSHAP) in partnership with the Waterways Authority and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority).

The programs build upon and extend the work undertaken by DIPNR, local government and community groups under the Parramatta River and Georges River Foreshore Improvement Programs. While the grant components of the two programs has been completed, their strategies and guidelines still apply to projects seeking funding under current grants programs. Detailed information is available from the DIPNR website <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/index1.html> under programs and services/funding programs.

### Relationship Between Funding Programs/General Guidance for Applicants

The aims of the **Metropolitan Greenspace Program** are as follows:

- the program aims to help councils plan and develop regionally significant areas of Sydney Greenspace
- the program aims to promote partnerships between State and local government.

Metropolitan Greenspace Program provides \$1 million per annum to **43 councils in the Sydney Metropolitan Region** for approved projects on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

These Metropolitan Greenspace Program guidelines and the application form are available from <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/index1.html> under programs and services/funding programs/Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

Applicants should note that projects submitted under one or more DIPNR funding programs may be reallocated by DIPNR to another funding program. This would be done when in the opinion of the Department they would better satisfy the relevant criteria or to achieve the balanced distribution of grant funds under the various programs. Where projects meet the criteria of more than one funding program, DIPNR reserves the option to reallocate the project or the project’s components for consideration under the most suitable program as required.

In general:

- the Metropolitan Greenspace Program applies to projects within the 44 Sydney Metropolitan Councils which satisfy the relevant criteria;
- the Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program applies to projects submitted by Cooks River Councils (excluding Bankstown Council) and eligible community groups which satisfy the relevant criteria; and
- the Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program applies to projects submitted by Councils within the Sydney Harbour Catchment area, registered clubs and eligible community groups which satisfy the relevant criteria.

Before applying, applicants should consider whether their project might be suitably submitted under one of the other DIPNR programs. The aims and objectives for these other programs are listed below.

### Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program

This program aims to enhance the natural environment and recreation opportunities along the Cooks River foreshore. The program promotes cooperation and partnerships between local government, the community and State government agencies, providing a total of \$500,000 per annum for the next four years commencing in 2003/2004.

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**Cooks River Councils and relevant environmental and community groups** are eligible to receive funding for approved projects on a dollar-for-dollar basis (refer guidelines for relevant Councils, Environmental and community groups must be incorporated or have the council as a sponsoring agent).

The objectives of the program are to:

- improve the green space along the Cooks River Foreshore;
- restore riverine habitats for native fauna and flora;
- naturalise riverbanks;
- improve access to the water and extend pedestrian and cycle links;
- enhance the use, enjoyment and safety of the river environs and regional open space along the Cooks River;
- rehabilitate environments degraded from past urban and industrial pollution;
- increase public awareness and appreciation of the values of the Cooks River and encourage community support for and participation in the restoration and enhancement of the river environs; and
- encourage collaborative solutions involving a number of councils, community groups and other relevant stakeholders.

The program guidelines and application form are available from <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/index1.html> under programs and services/funding programs/Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program.

## Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program

This program allocates grants to councils, registered clubs and state agencies to assist with the implementation of capital works projects that improve public access to and along the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and its tributaries for walking, cycling and recreational boating. Funding of \$2 million annually is provided on a dollar-for-dollar basis over five years commencing in 2003 and is administered by DIPNR. **Councils within the Sydney Harbour Catchment area and incorporated or registered clubs** (cycling, boating or other similar recreational organizations with the written support of local government authorities) may submit eligible projects the aims of which accord with the principles and objectives set down in the Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Plan or meet the Access Program

criteria and priorities. The key objectives of the Access Program are to:

- improve public access to, or along, the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and its tributaries;
- develop multi-purpose recreational facilities and settings;
- improve links from the foreshore to regional access networks (waterways, cycle paths, transport links);
- increase publicly accessible foreshore;
- increase recreational access opportunities between land and water;
- increase facilities catering for non-motorised modes of transport; and
- conserve, enhance and/or interpret natural and cultural heritage values, including Aboriginal cultural heritage.

A number of priority projects have been identified by the Access Plan, and these as well as other projects submitted for funding are assessed against the SSHAP criteria. The program guidelines and application form are available from <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/index1.html> under programs and services/funding programs/Sharing Sydney Harbour Access Program.

# Metropolitan Greenspace Program Guidelines

## Introduction

These guidelines will help local councils in the Sydney Metropolitan Region prepare applications for grants from the Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

This program is managed by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR).

## Program objectives

The objectives of the Metropolitan Greenspace Program are to:

- help councils plan and develop regionally significant open space areas that they own or manage, to enable the public to use them more effectively
- promote partnerships between state and local government, as well as to encourage joint council submissions for projects that cross local government boundaries.

## Project management

Councils can apply to have their project/applications assessed for funding by the Metropolitan Greenspace Program. Applications will be assessed for the contribution they make to extending or enhancing regional open space. Funding will be allocated on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Council will be responsible for project management and budgetary control of their own project. The council must nominate a project manager, who must have the appropriate project management skills and qualifications. DIPNR must be notified of any changes in project management.

**Projects funded under MGP shall be completed within the nominated time** (generally 12 months but not longer than 2 years) and within budget. Councils should have regard to any public consultation, impact assessment process or the requirements of heritage studies (natural or cultural) that may affect the timing of the project. Large projects may be broken into discrete stages for funding.

**Joint submissions** for funding that provide a coordinated approach to regional open space development **are encouraged**.

## What are the assessment criteria?

The following criteria will be used to assess applications for funding:

1. the project will enable the open space to be used by residents of the wider region or will significantly add to the variety of recreational opportunities available to those residents
2. the project will protect or enhance open space that is of regional environmental significance or has other significant natural or cultural values
3. the project will protect, enhance or facilitate access to or use of major regional waterways
4. the open space that is the subject of the project will form part of a network of existing or proposed open spaces that is of regional significance
5. the project will enhance the visibility or visual quality of open space, will enhance access to or enjoyment of open space for groups with special needs, or will demonstrate innovative approaches to the management or use of open space
6. the project will provide or enhance a significant area of open space in a region with a relative scarcity of open space
7. the project will relate to the development of open space areas which have been acquired using funds from the Sydney Region Development Fund (SRDF).

## What is Regional Greenspace?

Regional greenspace generally demonstrates a range of the following characteristics including:

- serves the needs of residents of a number of Local Government areas;
- larger than other facilities of the same type;
- can accommodate a substantial market;
- support a wide range of users, or specialist use;
- greater than normal funding (including MGP);
- developed to a high quality and standard of finish;
- unique to a region;
- environmental, heritage or other significance; and
- developed in collaboration (between Local Councils, State Government and other agencies).

*(Source: Southern Sydney Regional Recreation Demand Study, HM Leisure Planning Pty Ltd and Inspiring Place, 2003)*

# Metropolitan Greenspace Program Guidelines

Experience with MGP has identified 'regional' greenspace can also include:

- greenspace in areas with limited parkland or regional recreation opportunities;
- greenspace in areas undergoing major change (e.g population, growth or urban renewal); and
- parklands providing access for people from other areas/regions.

## Capital works projects

If the application is for capital works projects, councils must demonstrate that proposed capital works have been properly evaluated, planned, designed and documented. If the application is for planning work intended to lead to capital works, there must be adequate justification of the project and an indication of the expected outcomes upon completion.

The types of capital works that will be considered in relation to both new and existing open space include:

- walking tracks, recreational/bicycle trails
- development of better links between existing open space facilities
- interpretative signage and educational programs
- natural and cultural heritage conservation works that have conservation plans to guide them – these may be community-based but require professional management
- park and open space development and upgrading
- provision of recreational facilities
- landscaping and planting
- basic site works through fencing, grading and minor filling and drainage

The council or their consultants are responsible for providing the necessary labour, plant and materials and the necessary management and supervision – this could include working cooperatively with the community and relevant government agencies.

A high standard of design and documentation is expected. Design work can be carried out by the council or by consultants experienced in the field.

## Planning Initiatives

In considering the potential for future strategic regional projects it is considered essential to encourage forward planning of significant project initiatives.

In this context, DIPNR have identified target areas considered important to the strategic future of regional open space in the Sydney Metropolitan Region. Development/Construction projects in the following target areas are considered to be a high planning priority:

1. Regional recreational trails
2. Rejuvenating open space along creeklines/ waterways
3. Rejuvenation of Regional Open Space or parklands

In pursuing these target areas, joint Council submissions will be given a high priority. Projects that provide the design framework for future capital works will be well regarded.

## Available funds

Over \$1 million per annum is provided to Councils for approved projects on a dollar-for-dollar basis. \$1,495m in funding was awarded in 2004 from 19 grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$215,000 with an average project funding value of \$78,685.

## Project submissions

Applications for grants should be made on the application form provided on the DIPNR website. Applications should include:

- a statement of the project's intended outcomes
- an explanation of the aims and objectives of the project
- how the project fulfils the relevant criteria for selection
- an appropriate design and works program
- documentation of compliance with plans of management, conservation management plans and statutory requirements, and the way in which the impact assessment results have been incorporated into the project design.

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The following information should also be submitted:

- a map identifying the regional location of the land at 1:25,000 or 1:10,000 scale
- a plan at 1:500 or 1:200 scale identifying the proposed works
- a coloured concept plan to suit A3 format, for project documentation
- where construction is involved, an adequate outline of the proposed design and construction
- an estimate of costs of the work, including a budget breakdown showing which works the Metropolitan Greenspace Program grant will fund
- a timeline for the project
- details of councils, contractors, community groups or other organisations that will carry out the work
- an assessment of the environmental impact of the proposals and mitigating measures
- documentary evidence that statutory requirements have been evaluated and will be met
- evidence of landowners consent
- conservation plans for natural and cultural heritage values
- a performance evaluation plan outline
- evidence of community need and support
- demonstration of cooperation from adjacent councils and relevant State Government agencies
- the way in which the project will be documented so that staff changes and other changes have minimal impact on continuity
- the reporting structure during the project – regular progress reports to DIPNR will be required, ideally linked to an internal assessment process within the council. Projects will be randomly audited by DIPNR.

## Fax your application to:

Belinda Rollason on (02) 9895 7946  
or email to: [Belinda.Rollason@dipnr.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Belinda.Rollason@dipnr.nsw.gov.au)

## Post your application to:

Land Management Branch  
Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources  
PO Box 404  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

## Project approvals

All projects will be assessed by an independent panel chaired by DIPNR and comprising the Institute of Public Works and Engineering Australia, the Planning Institute of Australia, Parks and Leisure Australia, and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects.

Recommendations for funding will be based on the merits of the projects, with final approval being granted by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning.

## Funding period

Councils will be advised of project selection in August/September 2005. A certified financial statement from the appropriate council specifying a commitment to the selected project is required within one month of being notified that the project has been approved. If not used, grants lapse after 24 months unless there is prior approval from DIPNR for extension.

## Payment

Payment to council for projects is **made on the completion of stages or on the completion of whole project** in accordance with the approved design and works program and to the satisfaction of DIPNR.

**Progress reports** are required including photographs and evidence of progress at six monthly intervals or at project milestones for staged payment to be approved by DIPNR.

**A final report** including photographs and evidence of project completion and expenditure by the Project Manager is required at the completion of projects, to be included with the submission of final payment claims in order for DIPNR to assess the project outcomes.

## More information

For more information contact DIPNR's Greenspace Coordinator Belinda Rollason:

**phone:** (02) 9895 7260, or

**email:** [Belinda.Rollason@dipnr.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Belinda.Rollason@dipnr.nsw.gov.au)

**web:** <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/index/html>  
under programs and services/funding  
programs/Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

# Appendix: Other Funding Programs

## Other relevant funding programs

Other funding programs are available to councils for the conservation and development of **Sydney Greenspace**. DIPNR's **Sydney Greenspace** grant programs (CRFIP, MGP and SSHAP) can link with other programs to deliver integrated outcomes. Some funding programs that may be compatible are as follows.

- **EPA Stormwater Trust Grants** provide funds for projects that will have significant and long-term benefits for the health of urban waterways and those that can easily be adopted or adapted by a number of councils to effectively address stormwater issues.

Refer to <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/stormwater/usp/index.htm> for further details.

- **The Estuary Management Program** was established in 1992 to restore and protect estuaries along the NSW coast. DIPNR administers the Estuary Management Program which targets a broad range of issues and engages local communities in the process. The program focuses on improving or maintaining the overall health and functionality of an estuary, and maintaining the integrity of the whole system (its chemical, physical, and biological properties, as well as its economic, recreational, and aesthetic values). DIPNR helps local councils achieve these goals providing a 50% subsidy is available under the Government's estuary management program.

Refer to <http://www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/care/water/estuaries/About/mgmtprog.html> for further details.

- **Sydney Greenweb** funding is provided by the Natural Heritage Trust, passing funds to Sydney local councils to undertake biodiversity and revegetation initiatives recommended in the Green Web Sydney Action Plan (1997).

Refer to <http://www.greenwebsydney.net.au/> for further details.

- **Catchment Protection and Improvement Grants** provide up to \$8,000 for community projects consistent with the SCA's objectives.

Refer to <http://www.sca.nsw.gov.au/catchments/funding.html> for further details.

- **Coastcare Community Grants** provide funding for community groups to work cooperatively with local managers to manage coastal and marine areas.

Refer to <http://www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/community/coastcare/index.html> for further details.

- **NSW Environmental Trust** grants provide funding for projects involving environmental restoration and rehabilitation to prevent or reduce pollution, waste or other environmental degradation, environmental research and environmental education.

Refer to <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/envtrust/intenvprog2004.ad.htm> for further details.

- **Capital Assistance Scheme and Regional Sports Facility Program** assists local government and not for profit organisations develop community oriented sporting and recreational facilities.

Refer to [http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/finance/F\\_grants.asp](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/finance/F_grants.asp) for further details.

- **The RTA Bicycle Program** allocates \$5 million annually to NSW Council bicycle projects, this includes over \$1 million for the Sydney Metropolitan Councils. The dollar for dollar funding is to assist Councils with the development and implementation of their local bicycle networks.

Detailed information on RTA funding for Sydney Council projects is available from the website <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/trafficinformation/trafficfacilities/localcouncils/memorandumofunderstanding.html>.