



**GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL**

# **COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCEDURE**

Adopted by ELT: 4 November 2013  
Next Review: July 2025



**GREATER  
SHEPPARTON**

**COMMUNITY PLANNING CORPORATE PROCEDURE**

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<b>Business Unit:</b>	Community Wellbeing
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Community Development Coordinator
<b>Approved By:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
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**DOCUMENT REVISIONS**

<b>Version #</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Adopted by ELT.</b>	<b>4 November 2013</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Approved by ELT.</b>	<b>7 June 2017</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>New Template. Restructure and update of content.</b>	<b>11 August 2021</b>

## PURPOSE

Greater Shepparton City Council (Council) is committed to working in partnership with small town and neighbourhood communities to implement the Community Planning Program.

Community Planning is planning for the future of an area that is led by the community. The purpose of Community Planning is to give local people greater ownership over their small town or neighbourhood by empowering individuals and groups to take a proactive role in shaping the future of the areas in which they live.

Through information gathering, identification of community assets (community resources) and community engagement, Community Plan Groups are established. Groups are then supported by Council to develop a Community Plan and a list of actions that the group would like to achieve. Council partners with Community Plan Groups to implement their plan through advocacy, seeking funding opportunities and building the skills and capacity of the group. Community Plans are reviewed periodically to ensure priorities continue to be relevant to the community.

Council will support Community Plan implementation in flexible and innovative ways which empower and embrace the needs of Greater Shepparton communities.

This Procedure outlines how Council will support communities to develop, implement and review Community Plans and outlines the commitment and contribution required from all stakeholders.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this procedure is to:

- Provide a process for the development, implementation and review of Community Plans
- Ensure communities within the municipality have an understanding of community planning.
- Ensure the community planning process values democracy, trust, equity, social justice, openness, mutual respect, collaboration and inclusion
- Increase the capacity of individuals and communities and be guided by the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach
- Acknowledge that community members have the desire and knowledge to contribute to decision making in their own communities
- Focus on achieving sustainable and realistic outcomes, in flexible and innovative ways, which empower and improve Greater Shepparton communities.

## DEFINITIONS

Reference Term	Definition
ABCD	Asset Based Community Development – The place-based philosophy which guides Council’s Community Planning Program.
Capacity Building	Development of awareness, knowledge, skills and operational capability by certain people, normally the community, to achieve their purpose.
Community	A community is defined as a small town or neighbourhood.
Community Plan	A Community Plan is a written document which identifies a community’s goals for the future and the priorities it has identified to achieve this vision.
Community Plan Implementation Fund (CPIF)	Council budget allocated specifically to contribute towards implementation of Community Plans and priorities.
Community Plan Group	Group of community members who form to oversee the development, implementation and review of a Community Plan.
Community Development Officer	A staff member from Council’s Community Wellbeing Department whose role is to act as a conduit between Council and the Community Plan Group.
Neighbourhood	A neighbourhood is a geographically localised community within a larger city (i.e. Shepparton).
Small Town	Small towns have been defined through ABS Census data as the largest townships (excluding Shepparton) within the municipality up to a population of 19,999.
Working Group	Small task groups may be established to work on particular Community Plan projects. They will be sub-groups of the Community Plan Group.

## Procedure

### 1. Development of Community Plans

A Community Plan is a written document that identifies a community's strengths and outlines how those strengths can be utilised to build capacity and enable empowerment for the future. A Community Plan captures the priorities a community has identified are important for a strong future.

Council is committed to supporting the development of Community Plans for small towns and neighbourhoods within the municipality. This commitment has been highlighted in the objectives of the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 and the Community Planning Policy 55.POL1. The Community Planning program aims for a whole of community approach whereby all groups and individuals in a community have the opportunity to be involved.

The Community Planning process in Greater Shepparton is guided by the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which is a global movement that considers local assets as the primary building blocks of sustainable communities. This approach encourages:

- Mapping capacities and assets within the community
- Using local assets to increase opportunities
- Community driven development and empowerment
- Building a community vision and plan.

Community Planning is based on the principle that local people are invariably the best source of knowledge and wisdom about their surroundings, and when this is harnessed, achieves better decision making results for all stakeholders. Each community identifies their own priorities and needs based on their own local identity, culture, history and assets. Council recognises, as a local government entity, it has a role to play in encouraging and facilitating activities that lead to community empowerment.

Council provides a suggested framework for the development of a Community Plan. This process has been developed to provide guidance to Council and the community to ensure positive outcomes can be achieved. Council does acknowledge that at times small towns and neighbourhoods require different approaches to achieving results in their communities. Council will endeavour to support communities in flexible and innovative ways.

#### Phase 1 – Information Gathering

- a) Establish a project team to assist with the consultation process which includes:
  - Community Champions
  - Council staff.
- b) Collect and review key data which may include:
  - Demographics
  - Age
  - Education
  - Ethnicity
  - Nationality
  - Employment.

- c) Collect and review reports and projects that impact on the local community which may include:
  - Existing Council documents
  - Analysis of community data.
- d) Collect information regarding Community Assets which may include:
  - Infrastructure – Buildings, Parks, Playgrounds, Schools
  - Community and Sporting Groups

#### Phase 2 – Community Consultation and Engagement

- a) Determine a consultation plan with the project team. Council's Community Engagement Strategy and Community Plan may be utilised.
- b) Develop consultation tools.
- c) Undertake community consultation for a minimum of four weeks.
- d) Consult with Internal Departments who may assist with:
  - Identifying relevant strategic links to their department and the area.
  - Identifying recent assets / achievements in the area.
  - Identifying upcoming works / priorities relevant to the area.
  - Providing advice on implementation of ideas / priorities identified through the consultation period.
  - Supporting the attendance of Councillors at public engagement events.
- e) Assist in building capacity in the community and encourage community ownership.
- f) Develop outcomes that are realistic, sustainable and can be implemented.

#### Phase 3 – Preparation of Community Plan

- a) Develop a Community Plan incorporating data gathered in phase one and two.
- b) Determine Priorities and Actions.
- c) Provide a copy of the Draft Community Plan to the community champions for feedback.
- d) Provide a copy of the Draft Community Plan to the wider community for feedback for a minimum of three weeks.
- e) Present Community Plan to Council for endorsement.

#### Phase 4 - Endorsement of Community Plans

- a) The Community Plan is provided to an Executive Meeting for noting.
- b) The Community Plan is provided to an Ordinary Council Meeting for endorsement.

## **2. Community Plan Groups**

A Community Plan Group is often initially formed from the community champions that assisted with the development of the Community Plan. If necessary, champions may join with an established group that will take on the additional function of a Community Plan Group.

In establishing and operating a Community Plan Group, the community will:

- Recruit individuals to the group from a broad representation of the local community.

- Facilitate and administer the group.
- Provide Council with a copy of meeting notes following each meeting.
- Meet on a regular basis to progress agreed actions and priorities from the Community Plan.

### Working Groups

Community Plan Groups may decide to form Working Groups, as required, to assist with implementing projects, activations or portfolios. These Groups may involve community members who are interested in working on a single priority that they are passionate about, rather than participating on the Community Plan Group. It is recommended that a representative from the Working Group attends the Community Plan Group meeting to ensure information flow between both groups.

### Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference define the purpose and structures of a Community Plan Group to assist with achieving the community's priorities. Community Plan Groups should consider having a Terms of Reference to outline the roles and responsibilities of the Group. A template will be provided for the Groups' consideration and can be supported by Council to implement.

### Community Plan Toolkit

A Community Plan Toolkit is a community resource available to Community Plan Groups. This toolkit will be provided on establishment of a new Community Plan Group.

The toolkit outlines the:

- Purpose and aims of Community Planning
- Role of Committees
- Role of Council
- Processes associated with the development, implementation and review of Community Plans
- Tip Sheets
- Templates.

Council will provide a Community Development Officer, from the Community Wellbeing Department, for each Community Plan Group. The objective of this role will be to act as a conduit between Council and the Group.

## **3. Council Support**

### Community Development Officer

Community Development Officers work in partnership with the community to build capacity and deliver projects that have positive impacts on community and places within Greater Shepparton.

Community Development Officers act as a conduit between Council and the community to assist the process of Community Plan implementation. Officers act as a contact point for the community, regularly attend meetings and will assist with the development, implementation and review of Community Plans and included actions.

### Involvement of Council Departments

Where necessary, Council departments will work with Community Plan Groups and Community Development Officers to implement priorities identified within a Community Plan or consult on other relevant matters to the location.

Council departments can be invited, or request to attend, a Community Plan Group meeting to inform or consult around information of relevance.

Regular meetings will be established between Council departments and the Community Development Team to monitor the progress of community projects.

Council's Risk and Assurance department arranges public liability insurance to cover identified community members for meetings, community led events and activities where applicable.

### Councillor Representation

Community Plan Groups are encouraged to invite Councillors to attend a Community Plan Group meeting or community activity each year. This representation will ensure Councillors are well informed around the priorities and achievements of small towns and neighbourhoods.

### Advocacy

Community Plans may identify Actions that are not the responsibility or delegation of Council to deliver. In these circumstances advocacy may be most appropriate way to progress these priorities. Council will work with the Community Plan Group to identify methods of advocacy, which may include:

- Community Plan Groups writing letters of support to the responsible organisation.
- Opportunities for Council to advocate on behalf of the Community Plan Group.
- Participation in consultation related to local, state and federal policy and strategy development.
- Identification of new external partnerships.

### Capacity Building

Council hosts varying capacity building workshops and professional development opportunities throughout the year which are promoted to Community Plan Groups. These may include grants, economic development, heritage, sport and recreation and governance workshops.

A minimum of two sessions per year will be planned to support and empower Community Plan Groups to improve their capacity and ability to achieve positive outcomes for their communities.

### Celebrating Achievements

The Community Development Team will circulate a monthly newsletter to Community Plan Groups, Executive and Councillors to celebrate the achievements of Community Plan Groups and their local communities.



## 4. Funding Options

Council will assist Community Plan Groups to identify appropriate avenues of funding to assist with achieving identified Actions in a Community Plan. These opportunities may include local, state and federal funding and programs.

### Community Fundraising

Financial contributions from the community are one way to indicate strong community support and can be used to leverage other funding sources. Local organisations, sporting clubs, service clubs and businesses may be in a position to contribute towards a Community Plan Action.

### Council Grants

Council provides grants as one-off financial assistance to not-for-profit organisations running local projects and activities, such as events, community development activities, community health initiatives, environment, revitalisation of spaces and heritage projects. Further information is available on Council's website.

The grants program is aligned with the objectives of the Greater Shepparton Council Plan, to support established and emerging communities through activities, programs and events that contribute to community strengthening and bring a wide range of social and economic returns to the municipality.

### State and Federal Government or Other Sources

Community Plan Groups are encouraged to seek funding or leverage funding through state and federal grant streams. Council can offer advice and assistance with external funding applications.

Greater Shepparton City Council has also partnered with Moira Shire Council and Strathbogie Shire Council to provide the Goulburn Valley Funding Finder website. This free and useful tool assists businesses and community groups to search for grants across all tiers of government: local, state, and federal, as well as philanthropic organisations.

### Community Plan Implementation Fund (CPIF)

Council will commit funds each financial year (subject to annual budgetary processes) toward implementing priority actions identified within the endorsed Community Plans. Community Plan Groups will have access to Council's CPIF via an application process.

The CPIF is divided into three streams; capital items, operational projects and specialist funding programs. This table indicates the definitions identified for these funding streams.

CPIF Funding Streams		
Capital	Operational	Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects over \$10,000</li> <li>• Become part of Council’s fixed assets</li> <li>• Council owned / controlled infrastructure</li> <li>• Included in Council 10yr Capital Expenditure Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewals which don’t change the nature of the asset</li> <li>• Completed within one year</li> <li>• Includes events, assets, equipment, feasibility studies and masterplans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-annual funding rounds via EOI process</li> <li>• Based on common priorities across Plans</li> <li>• Includes assets, events, place making programs</li> </ul>

Council will work with Community Plan Groups to submit Expressions of Interest for the **Capital** items highlighted within Community Plans. This expression of interest will be used to identify the responsible department and to prepare capital budget bid paperwork for consideration within Council’s budget approval processes. The Community Development Officer will keep the Community Plan Group informed of the status of the decision making, which is aligned with the approval of the Council budget, typically in June each year.

**Operational** funding applications are submitted at any time throughout the year via an application process that details budget and community contribution to the project.

*Applications under \$5000* are required to submit a Project Proposal for review and approval by the relevant delegation. Council will provide written confirmation advising the Community Plan Group of the outcome.

*Applications over \$5000* are required to submit an Expression of Interest which will be circulated to relevant Council departments for comment. Following this process, the applicant will be notified of the feedback and if the project is suitable to progress, the applicant will be requested to complete a Project Proposal. Council will provide written confirmation advising the Community Plan Group of the outcome.

**Specialist** funding opportunities will be provided to Community Plan Groups twice a year. These programs will be developed based on common themes identified across Community Plans. Council will circulate an Expression of Interest and will be promoted directly to the Community Plan Groups. The aim of these funding rounds is to support Community Plan Groups to implement common priorities and projects and create efficiencies across the Community Planning process.

The following criteria applies to all CPIF funding streams:

Criteria	Description
Strategic Links	Applications will demonstrate how their project links to the Council Plan and the relevant Community Plan.
Land Owner Approval	Approvals and permits are obtained from relevant land owners.
Procurement Guidelines	Council is required to comply with its Procurement Guidelines.  When Groups are seeking quotes to support their applications it is important to note the quotations are required for the whole job cost not just the amount requested from Council. It is recommended to request long standing quotes (of up to 3 months) to enable decision making to occur.
Contingency	It is important for contingency to be considered in developing project budgets for EOI's and Project Proposals. Contingencies of between 20% - 40% are recommended, however further advice on appropriate contingencies for each project will be offered.
Acknowledgment of Council Financial Contribution	Applicants will be required to acknowledge funding received from Council through any media or publications regarding the project or activity.
Mobile Objects / Equipment	Community Plan Groups are eligible to seek funds for mobile objects or equipment. Mobile objects or equipment are defined as those that do not have a permanent fixed position. Mobile objects may include; computers, projector screens etc. It is the expectation that should the Group no longer require this equipment in the future, that the object or equipment is not sold for profit, rather that the object / equipment is gifted to another similar organisation or community group.
Matching Component	It is not a requirement that Community Plan Groups raise a matched component (financial or in-kind) for capital items. Any matched contribution would be looked at favourably but it's not essential.  For Operational Applications, at least 25% matching is required for each application. Matching may include financial or in kind contribution or materials.  <u>In kind labour is typically valued as:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$25 per hour, unskilled labour</li> <li>• \$50 per hour, skilled labour.</li> </ul>

If a Community Plan Group is successful in obtaining Operational or Specialist CPIF funding and can provide an auspice for the project, then funds can be transferred to the auspice, whilst the Community Plan Group deliver the project. All auspices will sign a grant agreement and the project should be completed and acquitted within 12 months of receiving funds.

Alternatively if the Community Plan Group are unable to provide an auspice, Council will work in partnership with the community to deliver the project and pay associated costs directly to the suppliers as previously agreed. Alternative arrangements will be considered if required.

The approval of Operational or Specialist CPIF Funding Applications is aligned with Council's Instrument of Delegation, as per the below table. It is not likely that there will be many of these types of projects valued over \$10,000 as projects over this value are usually constituted as a capital project. Operational projects which are over \$10,000 may include masterplans or projects that will not become the asset of Council.

Amount	Delegation	Outcome Timeframe
\$0 - \$500	Coordinator Community Development	Two Weeks
\$501 - \$5000	Team Leader Community Strengthening	Two Weeks
\$5001 - \$50,000	Manager Community Wellbeing	Two Weeks
\$50,001 +	Director Community	Four Weeks

## 5. Review of Community Plans

Council will work in partnership with Community Plan Groups to review their Community Plans on a periodical basis to ensure that the Community Plan Group have an opportunity to:

- Highlight achievements
- Consult with the wider community
- Determine upcoming priorities
- Identify new actions that should be included
- Seek new membership.

A full review of the Community Plans is recommended to occur every five years. This will provide opportunity for the community to update demographics, strategic links, the vision of the town and all the associated priorities.

## 6. Annual Summary

Each year (July / August) Council Officers will provide a summary of Community Plan activities for the previous 12 month period to Council Executive and Councillors. This summary will include:

- Committee achievements

- Completed projects
- Successful funding applications
- Emerging issues
- Current priorities
- Other achievements.

## RELATED POLICIES AND CORPORATE PROCEDURES

- Greater Shepparton City Council, Council Plan 2017 – 2021
- Community Planning Policy 55.POL1
- Greater Shepparton City Council Community Engagement Policy
- Community Plan Implementation Fund Guidelines
- Community Plan Toolkit

## RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2020*

## REVIEW

This corporate procedure will be reviewed every four years by the Community Development Coordinator in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. It may be reviewed earlier upon recommendation from Greater Shepparton City Council's Executive Leadership Team.



26<sup>th</sup> October 2021

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**Peter Harriott**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Date**

## ATTACHMENT

*Nil*