Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, who are an integral part of the workforce.

June 2020

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Introduction

‘Green infrastructure such as urban tree canopy, green ground cover, bushland, waterways, parks and open spaces will be valued for its economic, social and environmental benefits and will help to establish the Greater Sydney Green Grid, a network of walking and cycling links that will become increasingly important in daily travel arrangements improving sustainability and the wellbeing of residents.’ —Vision of A Metropolis of Three Cities (Greater Sydney Region Plan 2018, page 6)

‘A ‘Green Grid’ criss-crosses the region allowing residents to connect to a network of open space, natural areas and recreational facilities. Protecting the region’s coastal areas, water resources and biodiversity has assured the lifestyles, economic prosperity and environmental health of the region.’ —Vision of the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036, page 8

The Metropolitan Greenspace Program

The Metropolitan Greenspace Program is an annual grants program that provides seed funding to assist councils in Greater Sydney and the Central Coast region to deliver projects that improve regional open space and community livability. Livability and regional open space are important contributors to the health of our communities.

The program was established in 1983 to invest in links between Sydney’s bushland, parks, centres and waterways and to promote public use and enjoyment of these spaces. It has been adapted over time to meet current priorities. Funding is from the Sydney Region Development Fund, which the Office of Strategic Lands administers.

Delivering the Green Grid

In Greater Sydney and the Central Coast, the Metropolitan Greenspace Program helps deliver the vision of a Green Grid that crisscrosses the region, allowing residents to connect to a network of open space, natural areas and recreational facilities.

The Green Grid will promote a healthier urban environment and improve access to spaces for recreation and exercise.
Objective 32

The Green Grid links parks, open spaces, bushland, and walking and cycling paths

The Greater Sydney Green Grid connects communities to the landscape. It is a long-term vision for a network of high-quality green areas—from regional parks to local parks and playgrounds—that connect centres, public transport and public spaces to green infrastructure and landscape features. Within the public realm, it includes enhanced waterway corridors, transport routes, suburban streets, footpaths and cycleways.

The Greater Sydney Green Grid offers a network of green spaces that is far greater than the sum of its parts. It will keep the region cool, encourage healthy lifestyles, support walking and cycling, provide better access to open spaces, enhance bushland and support ecological resilience. Planning and delivery of the Green Grid will be influenced by the ways people move through places and the multiple roles of Green Grid corridors.

The delivery of the Greater Sydney Green Grid will build on past investments in the Regional Tracks and Trails Framework. Transport for NSW is establishing the Principal Bicycle Network, which will provide high-quality priority cycling routes across Greater Sydney. Opportunities to integrate the Principal Bicycle Network with the Greater Sydney Green Grid will be an important part of linking centres.

The Greater Sydney Green Grid will be delivered incrementally over decades, as opportunities and connections are refined and funded. Councils and the NSW Government will continue to use a range of land-use planning tools, funding programs such as the Metropolitan Greenspace Program and transport initiatives to deliver the Greater Sydney Green Grid.

Extract from Greater Sydney Region Plan 2018, page 168

Details of Green Grid priorities for each district are available online at: www.greater.sydney/district-plans

The Central Coast Regional Plan 2036 is at: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/Central-Coast/Plan
Program overview for 2019—20

Objectives and priorities

Purpose of funding

The 2019—20 objectives are to:

• improve regionally significant open space, including links between bushland, parks, centres and waterways
• enable more effective public use of regionally significant open space
• improve access to a diverse mix of open space opportunities for the community of Greater Sydney and the Central Coast
• promote partnerships between state and local government
• support projects that demonstrate a commitment to improved outcomes for health, sustainability, climate change and communities.

Funding available

In 2019—20, $3.85 million in funding has been allocated for the Metropolitan Greenspace Program. This funding will be available to eligible councils through a competitive grant process in which councils will be required to match the funding granted on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Funds obtained through the program will be eligible for use towards projects that enhance access to regionally significant public open space and contribute to the Green Grid priorities listed in the Greater Sydney District Plans. Funding is available for the following projects:

• capital-works projects such as shared pedestrian and cycle pathways, new or improved parks and open spaces, improved signage and accessibility
• planning and design, such as open-space plans, plans of management and master plans that will lead to capital works.

Eligibility

All councils in the Greater Sydney region are eligible to apply, including:


Central Coast Council is also eligible to apply.

All other councils are not eligible to apply.

How to apply

Councils should complete the Application Form, available at: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Metropolitan-Greenspace-Program](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Metropolitan-Greenspace-Program) and email it to: greenspace@planning.nsw.gov.au

The Metropolitan Greenspace Program team is available to provide information to potential applicants on interpretation of these guidelines, including types of projects eligible for funding. Team members can also provide advice on the online-application process.

An independent grants-assessment panel will assess all applications. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment staff will be available to provide feedback on unsuccessful grant applications. For enquiries or more information, contact the Metropolitan Greenspace Program team by email at: greenspace@planning.nsw.gov.au
Visit our website:

Read information about the grant program, to determine whether your council is eligible.

Read the guidelines to familiarise yourself with the program requirements and determine your application project type.

Download the application form.

Complete the application.

Submit the application by 30 September 2020.
Assessment process

The table below outlines the assessment process and time frames for the 2019—20 Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2020</td>
<td>Minister for Planning and Public Spaces announces 2019—20 grants round</td>
<td>Councils notified. Online applications open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September 2020</td>
<td>Applications close</td>
<td>Initial check of council information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>Independent assessment of projects scored against criteria</td>
<td>Recommendations to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and endorsement of successful projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2020–May 2022</td>
<td>Commencement of capital-works projects. Projects due for completion within 18 months.</td>
<td>Ongoing monitoring of project delivery; councils submit progress reports and final acquittal of grant funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2020–November 2022</td>
<td>Commencement of planning and design projects that will lead to capital works. Planning and design to be completed and construction started within 24 months.</td>
<td>Ongoing monitoring of project delivery; councils submit progress reports and final acquittal of grant funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your application

Projects eligible for program funding

To be eligible, applications must demonstrate both of the following:

- **matched funding**—grant funding must be matched dollar for dollar with cash funding; in-kind contributions may be included
- **regional status of open space**—you must demonstrate the regional qualities of the open-space project for which you are seeking funding and contribution to Green Grid.

Types of eligible projects

The types of projects eligible for funding can be either capital-works or planning projects.

Capital works

The types of capital works that the program will consider in relation to both new and existing open space include:

- walking tracks and recreational/bicycle trails
- playgrounds
- bushland and environmental management or restoration
- interpretative signage and educational programs associated with trails and greenspaces
- conservation works guided by appropriate planning and assessment
- park and open-space development and upgrading
- recreation facilities
- soft-landscape works
- hard-landscape works.

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

Planning projects

Planning projects that will lead to capital works must be justified through an assessment of anticipated outcomes. The types of planning works that are eligible include:

- local council open-space strategies
- regional open-space feasibility studies
- master plans or plans of management
- recreation trails planning, feasibility or master plans (no construction)
- natural/cultural heritage studies, interpretation, archaeological investigation, conservation-management plan, bushland or vegetation-management plans.

Ineligible projects

The following works are not eligible for funding under this program:

- projects outside NSW
- purchase or lease of land
- funding of personnel or staff positions
- civil works associated with car parks
- amenities blocks
- seawalls and jetties
- buying or upgrading non-fixed equipment
- events, marketing, branding, advertising or product promotion
- projects requiring ongoing funding from the NSW Government
- retrospective funding to cover any project component that is already complete or underway.
Assessment of eligible applications

If eligible, applications will need to demonstrate strategic alignment to a NSW Government strategy or government commitment and Green Grid objectives.

Criteria used to assess applications are consistent with previous grants rounds. They are:

- regional network
- recreation values
- landscape design, planning and management
- natural heritage
- cultural heritage
- sustainability, special needs, health.

An expert assessment panel comprising four members from the following list will assess the applications:

- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment—Public Spaces Division
- Government Architect NSW
- Office of Sport
- Greater Sydney Commission
- NSW Health
- Australian Institute of Landscape Architects NSW chapter

Criteria used to assess applications are:

**Viability**

- Project is well-planned, with appropriate approvals and risk management in place
- Realistic timelines to complete within the time frames
- Strategic partnerships and collaborations

**Budget**

- Detailed and accurate budget
- Provide value for money and is realistic for the scale and impact of the project
- Demonstrate an appropriate use of public funds
- Include the appropriate provision for contingencies
- Include insurance and other liabilities

The panel will also consider applications that will provide benefit to people with special needs, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, regional and remote communities, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The design of green, open and public space should meet Australian standards for mobility and access and should integrate the principles of inclusion for the design and delivery of play spaces. Visit: [www.everyonecanplay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.everyonecanplay.nsw.gov.au)

**Alignment to Premier’s Priorities**

Projects that support the NSW Premier’s Priority to increase walkable access to quality open, green and public space in urban areas will be prioritised.

Successful applicants within Greater Sydney must provide shade to any park or public open space constructed or upgraded and immediate surrounds. They must provide one tree for every $2,500 of funding and must register trees as part of the Five Million Trees for Greater Sydney program. Visit: [www.5milliontrees.nsw.gov.au](http://www.5milliontrees.nsw.gov.au)

**Project completion**

Applicants must provide a final report at the completion of projects and should include it with the submission of final payment claims. The report should include photographs and any other evidence of project completion.
Payment of grants

A financial acquittal and project report will be required within three months of completion of the project.

The project report will be assessed against the outputs and outcomes information provided by the applicant.

Part payment of grants

Councils may apply for part payment of their grant. The grant funds may be separated into a maximum of four instalments within the time frame set out by council and appropriate to completion of relevant stages.

- Each request for payment of an instalment is made to the Metropolitan Greenspace Program team and must include an updated status report on the project, including the invoiced amounts for approval by the program administrator.

- Grant recipients must provide progress reports. These may include photographs and evidence of progress at quarterly intervals or at project milestones for the program administrator to approve staged payments.

Insurance requirements

Organisations applying for funding through this program must have a minimum public liability insurance cover of $20 million.

We recommend, though it is not a condition of funding, that applicant organisations have personal accident and professional indemnity insurance. Organisations that employ staff must comply with the NSW Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998.
Submission of applications

We must receive completed applications by 5 pm (AEST) 30 September 2020. We will email you to acknowledge receipt.

planning.nsw.gov.au/infrastructure-funding