



Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program

As the closest tier of government to the community, local governments have a critical role in delivering vital services and ensuring the quality of life for communities across Australia. Local governments are now also playing a key role in protecting the community from the impacts of COVID-19.

The Australian Government has committed \$500 million to the Local Road and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCI Program) to support jobs, businesses and the resilience of local economies.

From 1 July 2020, councils will be able to access funding to support delivery of priority local road and community infrastructure projects.

Who will receive funding?

All local councils will be eligible for funding under the LRCI Program.

State governments and the shires of Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Norfolk Island and the Lord Howe Island Board that deliver council services to unincorporated areas in their jurisdiction will also be eligible for funding.

In addition, the Northern Territory Government will be eligible for funding for roads in areas which until 2008 were unincorporated and for which responsibility has not been transferred to relevant councils.

How much funding will each council receive?

Each council will receive a share of funding under the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (see *Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program: Funding Allocations*).

A council's share of funding has been calculated in a similar way to how the Roads to Recovery Program and the road component of the Financial Assistance Grants works. This formula takes into consideration road length and population and is based on recommendations of Local Government Grants Commissions.

How can councils apply for funding?

Councils will be able to select the projects to be funded in their community according to priorities at the local level.

Similar to the Roads to Recovery Program, councils will need to submit a Work Schedule that outlines the project(s) they plan to undertake.

As long as these projects are eligible local road or community infrastructure projects, they will receive funding.

What projects will be eligible for funding?

Funding is available for local road and community infrastructure projects that involve the construction, maintenance and/or improvements to council-owned assets (including natural assets) that are generally accessible to the public.

Projects will need to deliver benefits to the community, such as improved accessibility, visual amenity and safety benefits.

Eligible local road projects could include works involving any of the following associated with a road:

- traffic signs;
- traffic control equipment;
- street lighting equipment;
- a bridge or tunnel;
- a facility off the road used by heavy vehicles in connection with travel on the road (for example, a rest area or weigh station);
- facilities off the road that support the visitor economy; and
- road and sidewalk maintenance, where additional to normal capital works schedules.

Eligible community infrastructure projects could include works involving:

- Closed Circuit TV (CCTV);
- bicycle and walking paths;
- painting or improvements to community facilities;
- repairing and replacing fencing;
- improved accessibility of community facilities and areas;
- landscaping improvements, such as tree planting and beautification of roundabouts;
- picnic shelters or barbeque facilities at community parks;
- playgrounds and skateparks (including all ability playgrounds);
- noise and vibration mitigation measures; and
- off-road car parks (such as those at sporting grounds or parks).

When will funding be available?

Funding will be available from 1 July 2020.

Are there any conditions that apply to funding?

Councils will need to complete all project works by 30 June 2021 to receive their full nominal share of funding.

Councils will also need to demonstrate that projects are additional to their pre-COVID-19 work program for 2020-21. If a project has been brought forward from a future work program it will be eligible for funding.

Additional conditions, such as signage requirements, will be outlined in program guidelines, which are currently being finalised.

What are the next steps?

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications will be consulting with local government organisations to finalise implementation arrangements for the LRCI Program.

Councils will then be asked to agree to the program arrangements and identify local projects in their area.