

8. DIRECTOR ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY REPORTS

8.1 INGLEWOOD FOCUS ON FEASIBILITY STUDY

Summary

This report presents to Council outcomes from the Inglewood Focus on Feasibility project. The aim of the project was to investigate the feasibility of a community hub development in Inglewood that would service the Inglewood community and broader district into the future.

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File No:

Attachment: Draft Inglewood Town Hall Hub Strategic Plan
Inglewood Focus on Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council give in principle support for a community hub located at the Town Hall that includes the operation of the Inglewood Community Resource Centre and delivers improved facilities to the Town Hall.*
- 2. That Council receives the Draft Inglewood Town Hall Hub Strategic Plan and notes the opportunities identified in the plan.*
- 3. That Council explore alternative building forms to deliver a state of the art service to the Inglewood community.*
- 4. That Council continue to work with key stakeholders in order to seek funding to bring the Town Hall Hub project to fruition.*

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Nil

BACKGROUND

In early 2010 Council commissioned the Inglewood Focus on Feasibility Study (FoF) after request was made from Inglewood community groups and the Inglewood Community Resource Centre (ICRC) to investigate the feasibility of a community hub development within Inglewood.

The request followed a meeting held in late 2009 that included Councillors, Council staff, the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD,) Inglewood District Health Service (IDHS,) Inglewood and District Community Bank (IDCB,) Inglewood Development and Tourism Committee (IDTC) and the ICRC.

Following this meeting a Project Management Committee was formed representing these parties. A successful funding application was made to DPCD with a grant of \$25,000 and additional contributions from the parties to provide a total budget of \$30,000.

The project was put to tender and awarded to LMH consulting on the 24th of May 2010. In discussion with the consultant the PMC determined a central component of community

engagement would involve a Project Reference Group made up of stakeholders in the community as well as community and business leaders. This group comprised 45 people that were invited to attend 3 reference group meetings as well as be kept up to date through a moderated e-mail network.

Additional to this - surveys were undertaken, regular media coverage, meetings held with local businesses and established community groups, as well as focus group meetings with the Inglewood Town Hall and ICRC Committees of Management.

Through this process LMH consulting and the Project Management Committee determined the study identified two key streams coming together; the requirement in Inglewood for a vibrant and sustainable community centre (ICRC), as well as the need and desire of the community to upgrade and optimise use of the historic Inglewood Town Hall. These streams are the source for the attached reports.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The *Inglewood Focus on Feasibility Report* (attached) resulted in 5 key findings;

1. The needs of the Inglewood Community Resource Centre (ICRC) are not being met at its current venue
2. There is a need to renew the Inglewood Town Hall
3. The community strongly supports the Inglewood Town Hall is the most appropriate site for any future community hub
4. There is an opportunity to achieve township sustainability outcomes as a result of improved infrastructure at the town hall
5. There is an opportunity for better-integrated Inglewood Community Plan outcomes

Based on information presented in the *Feasibility Report*, it recommended that a Strategic Plan be prepared for the Inglewood Town Hall Hub. The final draft of the *Inglewood Town Hall Hub Strategic Plan* has been prepared and attached to this report.

The development of the *Strategic Plan* was born from the vision that the community have for future use of the facility. The vision was developed through consultation and based on its potential use as a community hub, to optimise its use, and the better integration of an important local landmark into the lives of the Inglewood community. In particular the facility was perceived to be a base for:

- Activities for special interest groups such as young people, young mothers and business groups
- A venue that is used for major events, family celebrations, balls, and both local and visiting performances
- A technology hub for internet access, research and business, including appropriate teaching/learning facilities
- Spaces where people can come and meet and chat with other people including 'green space' in the heart of Inglewood
- A place where community groups can operate from
- Personal development and support programs
- A unique range of career and professional and business development programs
- Information on services and programs available in the wider district

- Volunteer training and support, and information about volunteer opportunities
- Spaces for visiting services and appropriate meeting spaces

A concept design was developed in the *Strategic Plan* with cost estimates prepared by the consultants. The concept design and cost estimates are contained in the attached report. A preliminary cost estimate for the proposed development is \$3,135,564 based on a 4 stage development.

Considerations and alignment with council and other strategic plans:

- The project engages the Council Plan in five of the eight *Areas of Focus* including advocacy, asset management, township amenity and beautification, social connections and community engagement.
- Upgrade of Town Hall facilities is consistent with the Loddon Shire Council Building Asset Management Plan (BAMP.) This plan identifies the Inglewood Town Hall as a level 1 facility. It specifically relates to item 1.3.2 *Our Key Policy Principles*.
- Council give consideration to the existing relationship it has with three other externally funded community centres in Loddon located at Boort, Pyramid Hill and Wedderburn, This is referred to in the attached documents and noted in item 7.2 in the Building Asset Management Plan. *Demand for a community centre building in Inglewood, when the present lease expires, has been identified.*
- The Inglewood Town Hall is a substantial building and the solely owned Council/Community facility with 2 storeys. The cost of upgrading the Hall is expected to be above that required for other Level 1 Halls in the major centres. Maintenance costs are also expected to be greater and the project encourages tenancy and partnerships to assist with meeting these needs.
- Upgrade and encouragement for greater use of the Inglewood Town Hall is clearly articulated in the Inglewood community plan through the urban design framework. Strategies 12.1 and 12.2 from the framework are consistent with recommendations made in the attached documents.
- With regard to the regional context the *Southern Loddon Mallee Regional Strategic Plan* identifies six key strategies that support development of the region. The Inglewood Town Hall Hub project aligns with Strategic Direction 2 in the plan to; *strengthen our communities, especially in our small towns.*

Priority action 2.1 states *“Invest in and advocate for place based community planning, strengthening community leadership models, improving transport connections, encouraging joined up government service delivery and investing in urban renewal (including community hubs, recreation facilities and streetscape enhancement) to improve the liveability of small towns and their ability to manage change.”*

MOTION

Moved: Cr Curnow

Seconded: Cr Brownbill

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4. That Council continue to work with key stakeholders in order to seek funding to bring the Town Hall Hub project to fruition.

Carried

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