

ITEM 8.1 Safer Cities Program: Her Way Grant

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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Safer Cities Program was established by the NSW Government to help improve perceptions of safety in our cities and towns, particularly for women, girls and gender diverse people. The program will invest \$30 million across NSW over the next two years.

The Program is targeted specifically towards the experiences faced by women and girls, and has three aims:

- Increasing safety and access to public spaces;
- Enabling women and girls to move freely and alone in their community; and
- Increasing engagement with how the spaces are designed and managed.

The Her Way grant was established under the Safer Cities Program to trial temporary innovative place-based approaches to improve women's perceptions of safety while moving through and travelling within public spaces.

The City of Canterbury Bankstown has been selected as one of the ten councils in NSW to participate in the Her Way Program and to receive a \$1 million grant for the trial. The grant does not require Council to co-contribute funding and the grant can be used in conjunction with other grant funded projects.

ISSUE

This report seeks to advise that the City of Canterbury Bankstown has been selected to participate in the Her Way grant and recommends locations for the trial.

The grant provides Council with an opportunity to trial innovative, community informed, place based urban interventions. The success of the trial will be evaluated for its effectiveness for future permanent public space projects across the city.

RECOMMENDATION That -

1. Council take part in the Safer Cities Program and accept the Her Way Grant.
2. Council leverage existing funding for Lakemba, and approve this as the site for the Her Way grant trial.
3. Council undertake engagement with local women and women's groups to help inform the design and implementation of this project.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

POLICY IMPACT

The Safer Cities Program supports the aspirations of the Community Strategic Plan (CBCity 2036) and contributes to the City destinations of Safe and Strong, Moving and Integrated and Liveable and Distinctive. It is also consistent with the priorities identified in the Youth Action Plan, specifically, Objective 2.2 "Ensure public places are welcoming for women and girls".

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In accordance with the funding guidelines, the design, fabrication, delivery and maintenance are to be fully funded through the \$1 million Her Way grant. Council is not required to co-contribute funding and the grant can be used alongside other grant funding.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Community safety and perceptions of safety across the city is consistently raised as a priority by our community. The Her War grant aligns with and supports a number of adopted policies, strategies and programs currently being delivered by Council.

As part of the project, a key requirement is engagement with the local community particularly local women and women's groups.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Grant Requirements

As outlined, the City of Canterbury Bankstown has been selected as one of ten councils to participate in the Her Way program, and to receive \$1 million in funding to trial temporary innovative approaches to improve women's perceptions of safety in public spaces.

There are a number of requirements included in the draft funding agreement, including the following items of specific interest.

- The preparation of a Project Plan must be completed by May 2023. The Plan must include: scope, budget, governance, methodology, a stakeholder management plan that includes at least two night walks with women and girls to hear their perceptions of safety to compare to baseline data collected prior to interventions and a risk management plan.
- Her Way projects can add value to existing or planned works, including other grant funded projects (see below for more information).
- Council is to select two proposed precincts or locations for the pilot project. The locations must be within a 15-minute walk of a transport hub and ideally, should be high usage travel routes or precincts that can be improved to make women and girls feel safer.
- Selection of the specific trial project(s) will be determined by Council through further investigation and engagement with the local community by the end of July 2023 (although these will be in the precinct identified below).
- All projects are to be completed by the end of June 2024.

Proposed Locations

Based on the Her Way grant criteria, staff have undertaken an initial desktop analysis of potential locations. Lakemba has been recommended as it:

- aligns with the requirements/criteria for the grant program, namely it is a transport hub and is of strategic importance
- there is an opportunity to compliment the WestInvest funded public domain upgrades planned for Lakemba town centre.
- Lakemba has been identified as a Purple Flag site which is about encouraging night time activation. A key success to this will be to address any perceptions of safety.

Related Initiatives

Her Way will also be informed by Council's involvement in the 2023 Sustainnovation Challenge. The Sustainnovation Challenge program allows local secondary students the opportunity to help solve some of the complex problems we see in our local communities. Schools sign up their secondary students to work with community stakeholders, local government, business and industry, empowering them to develop creative solutions to be implemented in their community. In 2023, students in CBCity and beyond will be lending their minds to solving the problem of "How can we use SMART to create safer public spaces for women?" The challenge will take place in Term Two of 2023, and aligns with the goals also set

for the Her Way project. Students will be briefed during the Sustainnovation Challenge about Her Way with the aim of aligning solutions across both initiatives, and using student recommendations for on-ground trials in Lakemba and Belmore.

Next Steps

Should Council endorse acceptance of the Her Way grant, work will commence within the 2022-23 financial year. High priority actions include:

- Preparation of a Project Plan by May 2023;
- Development of an engagement strategy to work with local women and women's groups (including students through the Sustainnovation challenge) to identify opportunities for trial projects in Lakemba town centre; and
- Final selection of project(s) location and scope.