

Local Government Transport Advisory Panel

**Terms of Reference,
Guidelines, Policy and
Processes for the Special
Local Roads Program**

**Adopted by the LGA Board on 25
January 2017**

Next review due November 2019

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1. Terms of Reference

Introduction

Funding for strategic local roads in South Australia is made available under the South Australian Special Local Roads Program (SLRP).

Funding for the Special Local Roads Program is provided from:

- 15% of Identified Local Road Grants; and
- 15% of funding from the SA allocation of Roads to Recovery.

Functions

The Local Government Transport Advisory Group (LGTAP) is established to provide advice to the Local Government Association Board for the recommendation of projects under the 15% of Identified Local Road Grants and 15% of funding from the SA allocation of Roads to Recovery to the Federal Minister for Local Government and Territories.

Process

The LGTAP will make one call for applications for funding each year for:

- 15% of Identified Local Road Grants; and
- 15% of funding from the SA allocation of Roads to Recovery.

Identified Local Road Grants

The LGTAP will consider applications from Regional Local Government Associations, the Metropolitan Strategic Roads Committee, and groups of Councils. In performing this function the LGTAP will give preference to those projects that have been developed through Local Government Regional Transport Plans and transparent planning processes as will projects that have been previously funded by the LGTAP and remain a priority for the region.

The LGTAP in prioritising roads for funding for consideration by the South Australian Local Government Grants Commission (the Grants Commission) give due weight to State Government Plans such as the State Strategic Plan, State Infrastructure Plan and the State Land Use and Transport Plan. The Grants Commission in turn will make recommendations to the State Minister for Local Government who in turn will forward these to the Federal Minister for Local Government and Territories for approval.

Roads to Recovery

The LGTAP will consider applications from Regional Local Government Associations, the Metropolitan Strategic Roads Committee, and groups of Councils or consortiums where projects are driven by Local Government with substantial financial contributions and support from partner organisations.

The LGTAP will propose a program of works across South Australia for allocation of funding. In performing this function the LGTAP will give preference to those projects that have been developed through Local Government Regional Transport Plans and transparent planning processes.

The LGTAP will in making its recommendations to the Local Government Association Board for recommendation to the Federal Minister for Local Government and Territories, give due weight to State Government Plans such as the State Strategic Plan, the Planning Strategies and the State Transport Plan.

Membership

The LGTAP will have the following membership:

- Three Members from Local Government:
 - At least one Member will be a member of the LGA Board;
 - At least one Member will be from a metropolitan Council with the required skills and experience;
 - At least one Member will be from a country Council with the required skills and experience;
- A nominee of the Minister for Local Government;
- A nominee of the Minister for Transport;
- A representative from the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services who will have an advisory role (AusLink requirement); and
- A Senior Officer of the Local Government Association.

The LGA Board will nominate the Chairperson for the LGTAP which shall be a person from the group of three Local Government Members.

Executive Support

Executive support for the Committee will be provided by the Local Government Association.

Reporting

Agendas and Minutes of the LGTAP will be published on the Local Government Association website. The LGTAP will provide an annual report on its operations and provide details of approved submissions on the LGA website by 30 September each year.

Review

The membership and Terms of Reference of the LGTAP will be reviewed every 2 years and a report provided to the LGA Board.

2. Guidelines

The Local Government Transport Advisory Panel (LGTAP) uses a specialist database developed by the Grants Commission as a consistent framework to assist planning and prioritising road proposals. The Roads Infrastructure Database assists the LGTAP in assessing candidate road proposals on an equitable basis, accounting for State and regional strategic planning processes and technical issues.

A project to review the database was undertaken in early 2013 with an additional review undertaken in August 2013. The additional review involved an update to the “fit for purpose” standards spreadsheet, including associated references, developed as part of the original methodology. It is consistent with Recommendation 3 from the Final Report of the initial review. Both review projects were undertaken by HDS Australia.

The following process describes the framework of this database as used by the LGTAP for the assessment and prioritising of particular road proposals. The flow chart shows the key steps taken to assess an individual road proposal, ranging from determination of the primary purpose of the road through to establishment of its priority against other road proposals.

Prior to the commencement of this process in any application year, the LGTAP will ensure that applications have met the basic requirements of legislation, AusLink and Special Local Roads Program (SLRP) criteria where applicable. Generally, applications must include:

- Justification and objectives of the project, including a description of the functions of the road and any existing problems;
- A map showing the location of the project in the road network;
- Description of the nature and extent of the project, highlighting the principal aspects and aligning these with each of the “fit for purpose” categories, that is, freight, tourism, social; and
- Points at which the proposal interlinks with other regional, State or Federal plans or policies. The LGTAP will in making its recommendations give due weight to available State Government plans such as South Australia’s Strategic Plan, State Planning Strategies, the State Infrastructure Plan and the State Transport Plan.

Further to these requirements, LGTAP will seek assurances that applications have been formed and submitted with the support of other Councils, Regional LGA’s/Metropolitan Local Government Group or other partnering organisations, and that Councils and/or regions will contribute funding to the project.

Analysis Process

- Step 1: Define Purpose – Primary, Secondary, Second Level within Purpose. Primary purposes provide mutually exclusive priority lists.
- Step 2: Determine Standards – construction and maintenance consideration; the “ideal” situation. Determine standards by primary purpose, modified by Secondary purpose modified by Second Level of purpose.
- Step 3: Establish the Gap – existing state of the road.

- Step 4: Determine the Cost – technical issues; degree of gap closure achieved by proposal vs cost.
- Step 5: Determine the Benefit – list of benefits; economic, social and safety issues.
- Step 6: Prioritise within Primary Purpose – three priority lists by Primary Purpose. Weighted influencing factors eg roadside use; social need.
- Step 7: Prioritise across Primary Purposes – single priority list. Policy considerations and project urgency issues.

A brief description of each step in the analysis process follows. Subsequent sections expand the description of each step and discuss underlying requirements that will assist in the completion of the “Funding Application”:

Step 1 - Define Purpose

- The term "primary purpose" is used in order to incorporate the breadth of strategic activities and to address the range of varying design standards that will apply to different road proposals.
- For each of the primary purpose areas, a mutually exclusive priority list will be established.
- In addition to the primary purpose, each road may have one or two secondary purposes that add weight to the importance of the road.
- Moreover, there may be one or more secondary levels of purpose, which will further affect "fit for purpose" standards.

Step 2 - Determine Standards

For each primary purpose, and as further modified by the secondary level of purpose, a particular "fit for purpose" standard can be established. "Fit for purpose" can be defined as providing **minimum acceptable design/construction standards** for the situation (ie a road has a specific purpose and is then built/maintained to a standard to enable it to be fit for purpose).

Step 3 - Establish the Gap

By comparing the existing road standard against the defined "fit for purpose" standard, it is possible to determine the “gap”. The "gap" is therefore defined as the improvement in standard required to upgrade a particular road from its current standard to a standard that is fit for purpose.

Step 4 - Determine the Cost

Once the gap is determined, it is possible to estimate the cost of improvements required to bring the particular road up to a standard which is fit for purpose. This "Cost to Close the Gap" is best equated to the cost of the proposed upgrade (as supplied in grants applications), as it is not practical to arbitrarily apply automated cost estimation techniques to estimate the cost to close the gap. *However, using "Cost of Upgrade" as an approximation for "Cost to Close the Gap" assumes that the upgrade proposal brings the road to a fit for purpose standard. This may not always be the case.*

Step 4A Determine the Extent to which the Gap is Closed

An assessment needs to be made of the extent to which any gap (between the current standard and the fit for purpose standard of a road) is closed by an upgrade proposal.

Step 5 Determine the Benefit

To assess the benefit of a particular proposal, consideration needs to be given to a range of influencing factors that define what benefits can be achieved by the proposal. The most important of these factors is the road's "significance", as defined within relevant Council, regional and state transport strategies.

Step 6 Prioritise within Primary Purpose

- By weighting the various influencing factors identified in Step 5, an initial prioritised list of proposals is obtained for each of the three primary purpose categories. This initial ranking by "weighted benefit" provides a general overview of the relative benefit of various proposals, but does not take into account the number of road users and other industry or community groups which benefit from the proposal, nor the individual cost of the proposal.
- By combining the weighted benefit with a measure of the road use (namely traffic volume), divided by road length and proposed cost, it is possible to come up with a second prioritised list. This list of "weighted benefit cost scores" will then indicate which proposals provide greatest "value for money" in terms of maximising benefits to the greatest number of users per km of road upgraded per dollar of cost.
- Note that whilst it is technically possible for the "weighted benefit cost score" list to be used to compare road upgrade proposals across the state, it is not considered advisable to do so. The influence of "traffic volume" and "cost per km" factors vary considerably across LGA Regions, and even across Councils within regions. The weighted benefit cost score will therefore be used as a tool for differentiating road upgrade proposals that otherwise show similar "weighted benefits". This can be applied within individual LGA Regions and/or across (or even within) individual Councils

Step 7 Prioritise Across Primary Purposes

To determine priorities between each of the primary purpose areas, policy and project urgency considerations will need to be applied. The LGTAP will undertake this step manually, using the three "priority within purpose" lists based on weighted benefits, as generated in Step 6.

1. Development of Purpose

a) Primary Purpose

Three primary purpose categories have been developed as a basis for this approach, namely:

Freight

Facilitates industry development by linking key industries to major transport routes and contributes to efficient movement of large volumes of heavy freight vehicles.

Tourism

Provides access to tourism sites and locations, and enables people to view scenic attractions in a safe and enjoyable manner.

Community Access

Provides for community development and equitable access to community facilities, whilst minimising the impact of heavy vehicles on the community.

While a particular road proposal may have one primary purpose, say **freight** it may well have a secondary purpose, such as providing for a **community access** purpose by linking communities within the regional area. This factor will assist the LGTAP in determining an appropriate "fit for purpose" standard for the road and to enable roads with multiple purposes to be weighted accordingly when determining benefits.

b) Second Level within Purpose

Following the determination of key primary purpose categories, there is often a second level within each purpose that will impact on design standards. For example, the use of B-Doubles will require a higher standard with respect to road geometry than normal commercial vehicles.

A set of second levels within each purpose category has been developed which involve a number of specific design standards. It is important to note that there is some overlap between these second levels of purpose and their associated primary purpose categories (eg "Commercial" appears in the "Freight" category of primary purpose, while "Commercial / Bus" appears in both the "Tourism" and "Community Access" categories).

The second levels for each of the primary purpose categories are as follows:

Freight

- PBS Classification L1 – Up to Single Articulated
- PBS Classification L2 – B-Double
- PBS Classification L3 – Double Road Train

Tourism

- General Passenger
- Commercial / Bus
- Bicycle Route

Community Access

- General Passenger
- Commercial / Bus
- Bicycle Route

2. Determination of "Fit for Purpose" Standards

This step employs a **planning tool** to look at a broad range of minimum performance standards. These collectively create a basis for quantitatively assessing whether a particular road is "fit for purpose". It is **not an engineering tool** for use in designing new or upgraded roads, because it cannot reasonably address the many qualitative considerations and detailed site investigations necessary to fully define all requirements for safe and efficient operation of a particular road.

The proposed set of standards listed in this section have been settled on after an extensive, though not necessarily exhaustive, literature search of available state, federal and some overseas road/traffic design standards.

Before considering which standards to apply, it is necessary to recognise that road/traffic design standards vary considerably between "metropolitan" and "rural" situations. However, the term "metropolitan" can often mean just the Adelaide region, whereas many regional cities and towns in South Australia also contain roads for which a metropolitan standard of road/traffic design should apply. Thus, the terms "built up area" and "non-built up area" are used, rather than metropolitan and rural. These terms are then consistent with the extensive work already carried out by the Grants Commission in defining all Local Government administered roads within South Australia as being in "built up" or "non-built up" areas.

In addition to knowledge of any particular road's primary purpose, second level within purpose, and whether or not the road is in a built up area, details of various traffic parameters are required before appropriate standards can be determined.

The critical parameters are:

- Traffic volume (in AADT - Annual Average Daily Traffic per Austroads Definition);
- Heavy vehicle loading (expressed in "Equivalent Standard Axles" ie ESA's, for the design life of the pavement);
- Presence of parking/cyclists (built up areas only), and
- Speed environment.

Applications must also include surface type (ie simply "surfaced" vs "unsurfaced") as a further initial parameter before standards can be applied.

The choice of "surfaced" vs "unsurfaced" is not, however, completely unrestricted. Common sense and engineering judgement, has been used to apply some restrictions, such as:

- only "Category A - Formed and Sheeted" unsurfaced roads (as defined in the LGA's Unsurfaced Roads Manual) should be permitted as an option in built up areas;
- only "Category A - Formed and Sheeted" unsurfaced roads should be permitted as an option for roads in non-built up areas with "freight" as the primary purpose; and
- only "Category D - Tracks" unsurfaced roads should be permitted as an option for roads with "tourism" as the primary purpose and "4WD" as the second level within that purpose.

Considering the above factors, it is possible to select appropriate standards for defining whether a road is fit for its purpose. These standards have been grouped under four fundamental headings, namely:

a) Speed Environment

Design speed is a key standard which applies in both "built up" and "non-built up" areas, collectively reflecting such fundamental parameters as vertical profile, horizontal geometry and site distance, all leading to a particular safe travel speed.

In built up areas, the average flow speed (both in off-peak conditions and in peak hour) reflects the degree of congestion in the road segment, collectively reflecting the capacity of the cross-section layout (through lanes vs mixed through/turning lanes), capacity of intersections and number of access points onto the road.

b) Dimensions

Overall carriageway width is a measure of the overall width of the road surface required to safely handle the type and volume of traffic. Carriageway width (bridges) provides an added measure of the minimum clearance requirement for points of restricted access (and high construction cost) where shoulders may not be cost effective to provide.

Lane width is a measure of "through lane" requirements, particularly as they apply to multi-laned roads. Lane width is highly dependent on traffic volumes, and the presence of a high percentage of heavy vehicles, such as on freight routes. In built up areas, allowing room for on-street parking and/or cyclists can add up to 2.1 metres to the recommended width of the kerbside lane on a freight route, where at least one through lane is required (bicycle and freight movements are incompatible).

Consideration should be given to providing for cycling movements on the adjacent road network or with off-road facilities, where this is not possible, the width above applies).

In non-built up areas, shoulder width is also a key dimension, reflecting the need to allow vehicles room for pulling off of the main carriageway (such as due to a breakdown), or to recover in the event of accidentally running off the main carriageway. The standard for shoulder width increases significantly with increase in traffic volume. Whilst for normal circumstances shoulders do not need to be sealed, designated cycle routes require between one and three metres of sealed shoulder (depending on the speed environment) in addition to normal sealed carriageway requirements. Sealed shoulders can also be worthwhile on some sections of road to reduce the risk of run-off road crashes.

Height clearance is a major consideration for freight routes, and also where buses (commuter or tourist) use the route.

c) **Geometry**

Whilst basic geometric considerations are covered by "design speed" under the speed environment heading, special consideration needs to be given to horizontal curve radius (particularly in hilly areas where isolated curves can be very tight) due to the problems of heavy vehicle tracking (corner cutting) creating a significant safety risk for on-coming vehicles.

Vertical grade is also a key consideration, particularly for freight routes, because of the high safety risks associated with the large uphill speed differential between commercial vehicles and cars, and the potential for loss of control (including brake failure) on steep downhill grades (similarly for routes used by vehicles towing caravans).

In built up areas, critical to the movement of large vehicles (freight and, occasionally, buses) is intersection turning radius, while roundabout lane width and roundabout radius are also two major considerations for safe movement of commercial vehicles and buses.

d) **Strength/Durability**

Traditionally, pavement strength has not been directly specified, but has been reflected in design pavement depths chosen after site investigation of sub-soil conditions, knowledge about the available sub-base and/or base course material strengths and traffic loading predictions have been taken into account. Such a methodology is very site specific. As a more practical alternative, this report specifies pavement thickness as an indicator of overall pavement strength.

Whilst suitable for surfaced roads, pavement thickness is not a suitable indicator of pavement strength for unsurfaced roads. As an alternative, road quality categories (defined in the Local Government Association of SA's "Managing Unsealed Roads in South Australia" publication) are proposed. These categories range from a graded track (Category D) through to a fully formed and engineered road (Category A).

Individual bridge/culvert mass limits are a second important strength related design consideration. Often, the overall route classification may be down-graded due to

one or two isolated bridges having a lower capacity and being unable to be bypassed.

Surface roughness has been included as a measure of strength related performance of a road pavement as it ages. Although some examples of high roughness counts reflect initial poor construction standards, it is generally more likely that high roughness is a sign of a deteriorating pavement which manifests itself in general deformation, rutting and high levels of pavement defects. High roughness of a road surface also has a potential economic cost to vehicles using the road, particularly heavy vehicles, in terms of extra wear and tear on the vehicle and possible damage to the load.

Section 4: Standards of the application form lists, as columns, the above 17 standards and then establishes individual "fit for purpose" levels for each relevant standard against each combination of primary purpose, second level within purpose, built environment and surface type. Not all standards apply to each purpose/category combination. In addition to the actual standards, the spreadsheet identifies where traffic parameters influence the standard. The spreadsheet also lists relevant references, highlighting the source of information upon which the selected standard has been based.

3. Establishment of the Gap

The 17 individual standards discussed in the previous section collectively define the "fit for purpose" standard of a particular road. These same parameters, *from a planning viewpoint*, provide the basis for defining the current state of a road. Note that, apart from measuring pavement deflection and surface roughness, no other pavement condition or seal condition measurements, or maintenance standards, are suggested. This is because the methodology in this report is focussed upon the ability of a road to safely and efficiently meet its purpose, *not* what physical condition the road is in, unless that physical condition has reached such a state of disrepair that it directly impacts upon the road's ability to meet its purpose.

In order to establish the gap between current condition of the road and its "fit for purpose" standard, Councils will need to supply data on relevant traffic parameters and on the current standard of the road. Traffic parameters required are the traffic volume and heavy vehicle loading, along with (for built up areas only) the presence of parking/cyclists and (for unsurfaced roads) the general speed environment. Note that traffic parameters should be supplied for the conditions expected within a two to five year timeframe, *not* current conditions, since the reason for many roads requiring an upgrade is the expected increase in traffic loading resulting from planned developments, not just current traffic loads.

By comparing "fit for purpose" standards with current standards, the gap in the ability of the road to meet its purpose is established.

4. Determination of the Cost to Close the Gap

The gap between current and fit for purpose standards represents an economic cost in terms of the inability of individual roads within the road network to meet suitable standards for safe and efficient operation in line with their defined purpose. However, quantifying that cost requires an understanding of the individual situation for each road, since the gap in standard may be caused by many varying factors. Therefore the cost to close the gap should be derived from individual Council estimates of the road upgrade proposals as contained in grant applications, rather than some holistic formula which attempts to put a broad dollar value on the gap using arbitrary (non-site specific) parameters.

Before a cost to close the gap can be adequately defined using this method, any proposed upgrading of the road (and its associated cost) must be tested against the fit for purpose standards. This is because it cannot automatically be assumed that a particular proposal will close all aspects of the gap in standards. Councils will therefore be required to define the standards achieved by the proposed upgrade, using the same (up to) 17 standards defined earlier, and also provide their estimate of the percentage of the gap which is closed by the upgrade proposal.

Once the above information is supplied, a modifying factor can be applied to the upgrade's proposed cost, to obtain a closer approximation of the total cost to close the gap. The proposed modifying factor is:

$$\text{Cost to Close Gap} = \text{Upgrade Cost} / \% \text{ of Gap Closed}$$

As an example, a proposed upgrade which only closes 80% of the identified gap in standard would result in the "cost to close gap" being 25% greater than the upgrade cost.

This method for determining the cost to close any gap in standards is clearly an approximation, which cannot ultimately replace a detailed assessment of costs on a site specific basis. However, it will be a valuable planning tool for the purpose of assessing and prioritising road grant applications, where it is clearly impractical to perform a detailed independent analysis of the cost to close the gap in standards for every proposal submitted.

5. Determination of Factors Influencing Benefits

The relative potential benefits of any proposed road upgrade are derived from a series of "benefit influencing factors". These influencing factors, in turn, impact on the priority of each proposal.

Influencing factors have been categorised into six key areas. Each key area has been weighted according to its relative importance in determining the overall benefit of road upgrade proposals. In the case of the "Economic" area, further individual weightings have been applied to the three sub-areas of road user benefits, community benefits and road owner benefits. Within each area (or sub-area in the case of the "Economic" area), influencing factors have been given equal importance in determining the percentage of that area (or sub-area) weighting which should be applied for any given road upgrade proposal.

The key areas, sub-areas and specific influencing factors are as follows:

a) Secondary Purpose (10%)

Does the road offer?

- One secondary purpose (eg freight, tourism or social) in addition to the primary purpose.
- Two secondary purposes (eg freight, tourism or social) in addition to the primary purpose.

b) Regional Significance (25%)

Does the road have?

- Community significance (ie part of a formal Council transport strategy).
- Regional significance (ie part of a regional transport strategy).
- State significance (ie links in with a state freight or tourism strategy).

c) Economic (20%)

Does the road proposal provide a?

Road user benefit (10%), such as:

- Reduce delays and operating costs for heavy vehicles.
- Provide direct access to major industrial developments, freight generators and specific facilities such as grain silos, wineries, processing plants, etc.
- Facilitate a higher classification of freight movements (eg commercial to B-double).
- Facilitate direct access for intermodal transport operations:
 - Rail
 - Sea
 - Air

- Assist export of products by improving quality (market condition) and reducing impacts of dust, etc.
- Provide direct access to new industrial precincts.

Community benefit (5%), such as:

- Benefit regional employment and sustain communities
- Assist attraction of economic investment to region

Road owner benefit (5%), such as:

- Reduce the road maintenance effort

d) Access (15%)

Does the road proposal?

- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Link areas of particular land uses to strategic routes.
- Provide a higher standard alternative route.
- Complement the existing arterial road network.
- Provide improved access to key population centres.
- Ensure communities are not isolated by flooding.
- Act as a collector road for local traffic and for heavy traffic.
- Provide all weather access.
- Provide access to other types of transport as a passenger intermodal connector:
 - Bus
 - Rail
 - Air

e) Safety (20%)

Does the road proposal?

- Reduce conflicts between tourist, freight and commuter traffic.
- Contribute to safer travel and reduced accidents.
- Provide safe overtaking opportunities and reduce frustration and fatigue.
- Reduce exposure to travel risk.
- Provide access for school buses.
- Provide access for emergency services.
- Remove traffic from city/town areas.

- Reduce road roughness and potential dust hazards.
- Reduce the impact of roadside hazards such as culverts and overhanging trees.

f) Environmental (10%)

Does the road proposal?

- Reduce environmental pollution:
 - Air
 - Noise
 - Water
- Minimise impact of heavy vehicles on local community.
- Reduce reliance on road transport and encourage other forms of transport.

6. Prioritisation within Primary Purpose

As previously stated, this initial ranking by "weighted benefit" provides a general overview of the relative merits of various proposals, with maximum priority given to those proposals with regional and/or state significance that have the most individual benefits. The ranking does not take into account the number of road users and other industry or community groups which benefit from the proposal, nor the individual cost of the proposal. However, the results reasonably accurately reflect the current evaluation process applied by the LGTAP. It is therefore recommended that the "weighted benefit within primary purpose" priority lists be used as the main criteria for ranking of road upgrade proposals.

In order to differentiate proposals that show much the same weighted benefit score, it is proposed that the above weighted benefit score also be expanded as follows:

- a) Multiply the weighted benefit score (wb) by the traffic volume (tv) using the route (in AADT). This applies the individual benefits of the proposal to each user of the route, to provide a "total road user benefit" score. At this point, the formula will clearly be biased towards more highly trafficked roads, which is not unreasonable. Note that broader benefits to the economy and/or community are not specifically included, having already been covered in the original weighted benefit score.
- b) Divide the total road user benefit score by the "cost to close gap / road length (rl) to be upgraded (in km)". This will effectively "normalise" the total road user benefit score on a "per \$ per km" basis, so that lower cost proposals, or those where a relatively long length of road is being upgraded, will have their benefit score elevated.

Noting that the "cost to close gap" has previously been defined as being equal to "upgrade cost (uc) / % of gap closed (gc)", then the components of the formula described above can be brought together as follows:

$$\text{Weighted benefit/cost score} = \text{wb} \times \text{tv} \times \text{rl} \times \text{gc} / \text{uc}$$

Using the above "weighted benefit/cost score", new priority lists within primary purpose can be generated. These will indicate which proposals offer the greatest "value for money" on a "road user benefit per \$ per km" basis. However, as previously stated, it is important at this stage to only apply the weighted benefit/cost score as a means of differentiating proposals within individual LGA Regions, or across (or within) individual Councils. Other factors still need to be considered for inclusion before such a score could be unilaterally applied in establishing state-wide priority lists.

3. General Policy

Introduction

The Special Local Roads Program (SLRP) was established under the joint approvals of the South Australian, Commonwealth and Local Governments. The Program commenced in 1985-86 and facilitates funding of significant and strategic works throughout the State.

Funding for the SLRP is provided from:

- 15% of Identified Local Road Grants; and
- 15% of funding from the SA allocation of Roads to Recovery.

As a result of the Commonwealth's AusLink White Paper the LGA State Executive has established the LGTAP to propose and monitor a continuing program of projects for the prioritisation of funding under the SLRP.

Each year the Panel will call for submissions from Regional LGA's and the Metropolitan Local Government Group and groups of Councils or consortiums where projects are driven by Local Government with substantial financial contributions and support from partner organisations. The LGTAP will propose a program of works across SA for allocation of funding from the SLRP. In performing this function the LGTAP will give preference to those projects that have been developed through Local Government Regional Transport Plans and transparent planning processes.

Priorities can be established by assessment of submissions from member Councils or by the Regional LGA/Metropolitan Local Government Group itself. There will be a call for submissions each year for the Special Local Roads Program. The LGTAP will make recommendations for projects to the LGA Board which will, in turn, make recommendations to the Grants Commission for review. The Grants Commission will then forward its recommendations to the State Minister for Local Government for his endorsement and the State Minister will forward the recommendations on to the Federal Minister for Local Government and Territories for approval.

Candidate Projects

All submissions for projects to be funded under the Special Local Roads Program are to be made on a "Standard Funding Application". These applications must be forwarded to the LGTAP through the appropriate Regional LGA/Metropolitan Local Government Group or agreed body by the published closing date. It must be noted that all projects submitted for funding must be prioritised by Regional LGA's/Metropolitan Local Government Group or, where appropriate, Councils.

The application to the LGTAP also provides for a written financial commitment from the Council/Councils to the project.

In addition, a project submission should provide the justification, cost, scope, nature and design features of the project and its timeframe. Sufficient detail is required for the Committee to assess the appropriateness of the proposal in terms of its purpose and also its technical aspects.

Any requests for changes to submitted funding applications must be made in writing to the LGTAP.

The LGTAP encourages substantial projects, but will not endorse funding in any particular region of the State that commits too great a proportion of the available funds such that other regions of the State cannot be funded for a considerable period of time.

Councils are required to certify that the projects submitted are financially sustainable. The LGTAP will not provide funding to projects that have not completed the relevant financial sustainability documents.

Councils need to agree to contribute to the cost of the project. Additionally, continuing projects funded in one particular year under the Special Local Roads Program, or the special projects component of the Roads to Recovery Program, will need to be re-submitted for funding consideration in subsequent years. An update on the progress of these projects is to be provided to the Panel annually.

4. Communications Policy

Principles

The LGTAP is committed to the principles of open governance. It will undertake its activities according to principles of transparency and accountability to ensure that each sphere of government and all applicants for funding are satisfied that decisions are made on equitable and common guidelines.

Decision Making

The minutes of the LGTAP will be published on the LGA website.

Information explaining the purpose and function of a database used for the assessment of road funding proposals will also be available at the LGA website, along with the guidelines used by the LGTAP to guide its decisions.

To ensure that the LGTAP decisions are made with the authority delegated to it, decisions will only be made when a quorum of members is present.

Record Keeping and Availability of Information

Copies of all correspondence relating to the decisions and operation of the LGTAP will be retained by the Senior Officer at the LGA offices, 148 Frome Street, Adelaide. All correspondence relating to funding submissions will be provided to each Panel member.

Proceedings for LGTAP meetings will be noted in minutes to be drafted by the Project Coordinator. Hard copies of minutes approved by the subsequent meeting of LGTAP will be stored at the LGA and placed on the LGA website by the Project Coordinator.

Records of LGTAP meetings will be publicly accessible except when commercial in confidence issues are discussed, during which the LGTAP will function in camera.

LGTAP may elect to discuss or consider in confidence any information or matter of a confidential nature, the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to prejudice the person who supplied the information, or to confer a commercial advantage on a third party.

When in camera discussion occurs, the LGTAP will note in minutes the reasons for discussions being so held. At the end of a meeting the LGTAP may decide that the discussion as recorded may be returned to the public record, or if it shall remain confidential.

The LGTAP in its annual report will note the occasions and reasons discussions took place in confidence.

The records of the LGTAP (including minutes, reports, recommendations and financial statements) will be presented to the LGA Board along with its recommendations for project funding. The LGA Board will note these records and deliberate upon the recommendations of the LGTAP.

The same information will be available in the annual report of the LGTAP, with the exception of exclusions noted elsewhere in this policy.

Accountability

Calls for funding will be made in January each year for the following financial year.

The Project Coordinator will provide the call for funding LGA Circular to Regional LGA's and the Metropolitan Local Government Group inviting application.

The LGTAP will be required to report to the membership of the LGA by way of update reports to:

- LGA Board;
- Annual General Meeting of the LGA; and
- An annual report.

Once approved by the respective Federal Ministers and successful applicants have been notified the LGA will include the approved projects via the LGA website and through LGA Circulars.

Publicity

The LGTAP will continue to promote its role throughout Local Government in SA to ensure that all parties with an actual or potential interest in its processes are aware of the opportunities available to them. The Chair of the LGTAP will be its spokesperson.

Information about the Panel and its functions, where deemed appropriate and necessary by LGTAP, will be announced in LGA News, via Circular, information sessions at meetings including Regional LGA's/Metropolitan Local Government Group and on the LGA website.

The Grants Commission will also continue to provide information about the SLRP and the LGTAP to Council Members and Council Staff as part of its visiting program.

5. Application Process

- Step 1: Council to complete road designs (note this cost is NOT funded by LGTAP)
- Step 2: Council to consider Relevant Cost
- Step 3: Complete Whole of Life Cost
- Step 4: Complete Application Form
- Step 5: Submit application to Regional LGA or MSRC**

If successful, Councils will be required to complete a Progress Report annually.

**Regional LGA's – Central Local Government Region, Eyre Peninsula LGA, Murray & Mallee LGA, South East LGA and Southern & Hills LGA

MSRC – Metropolitan Strategic Roads Committee

6. Consideration and Approval Process

- Step 1: The LGA will call for submissions
- Step 2: Regional LGA's and the Metropolitan Strategic Roads Committee will provide deadlines to Councils
- Step 3: Councils will complete applications (following LGTAP guidelines) which will be forwarded to their Regional LGA or MSRC
- Step 4: The Regional LGA or MSRC will then assess and forward prioritised funding applications to LGTAP in April
- Step 5: LGTAP will make its recommendations to the LGA Board in June
- Step 6: LGA Board recommendations will be provided to the Grants Commission for its consideration in June/July
- Step 7: The Grants Commission will forward its recommendations to the State Minister for Local Government for his endorsement and the State Minister will forward the recommendations on to the Federal Minister for approval in July/August.
- Step 8: The Minister will make announcement of projects via letter to Councils (August/September)

**Regional LGA's – Central Local Government Region, Eyre Peninsula LGA, Murray & Mallee LGA, South East LGA and Southern & Hills LGA

MSRC – Metropolitan Strategic Roads Committee

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