

1.1 MEN'S SHED – PROGRESS REPORT (COM77: FR)

Responsible Director: Carolyn McClean

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the progress of a project to develop a Men's Shed in Monash and,*
- 2. Gives approval for an application to be submitted to the State Government Men's Shed Program 2009 for a grant of \$50,000 to assist fund a Men's Shed in Monash.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is update Council on the progress of the Men's Shed in Monash and to gain approval from Council to apply to the State Government Men's Shed Program 2009 for a grant of \$50,000 to assist fund a Men's Shed in Monash.

The Department of Planning and Community Development's definition of a Men's Shed is '*to provide activities to support men's health and well-being and enhance their social interaction*'. Men's Sheds activities are mostly located in a shed or workshop space in a community based setting and aim to promote men's health and community connection. Activities at a Men's Shed can include:

- Learning new skills and life-long learning (from woodwork to cooking),
- Volunteer opportunities,
- Connecting with others in the community (increasing social connectedness),
- Contributing to the community (e.g. through mentoring or community projects),
- Partnering with community organisations.

BACKGROUND

In November 2007, Glen Waverley Rotary approached the City of Monash with an interest in pursuing the possibility of developing, in partnership with Council, a Men's Shed in Monash, preferably in the Glen Waverley/ Mount Waverley area. The Lions Club of Waverley have also been working with men for the past two years in anticipation of a facility to host a Men's Shed. The Lions have 22 men currently in their program who could become members of the new Men's Shed and assist with tasks such as building the benches in the facility.

DISCUSSION

Early in 2009, Glen Waverley Rotary committed in writing to financially support this project with a contribution of \$20,000 cash or in-kind and the Lions Club of Waverley has committed in writing \$20,000 in-kind funding over the next two-year period. Apart from the funding committed by Rotary and Lions the groups are very enthusiastic and would like the men, who will be the users of the facility, to be involved as much as possible to take ownership of the project.

Waverley Community Learning Centre (WCLC) is currently in discussions with Council about providing management support and mentoring through an auspice

agreement with the Men's Shed. Men's Sheds usually collaborate with other community organisations to share resources (including insurance) and build on existing services and many undertake community projects to assist the community.

Further discussions are also continuing with community groups, such as the men's group at Wavlink and disability services who have also expressed interest in supporting a Men's Shed project in Monash. The discussions with these groups are focusing on how the groups can utilise the proposed facility to extend their current services.

After assessing available locations in Monash and the needs of the future members of the Men's Shed, the unused Bogong Avenue Scout Hall (which is on Council land) has been proposed as the facility. The Scouts have been contacted about this and have agreed for the Men's Shed to be constructed there. The Scouts are currently in discussions with Council about how they will be reimbursed for the building.

Proposed works for the existing Scout Hall will include:

- Establishment of a female/accessible toilet;
- Refurbishment of existing male toilets;
- Renewal of the kitchen;
- Establishment of a communal eating/meeting area;
- Creation of a new office and store room;
- The Garage is to be refurbished as a locker room, tool store and general store;
- The conversion of main hall into a workshop; and
- External storage space and access ramps to front and rear of building.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

After approaching Council with a proposal to develop a Men's Shed in Monash, Glen Waverley Rotary have written to Council, formally agreeing to put \$20,000 (either cash or in-kind) towards this project. Lions Club of Waverley has committed \$20,000 in-kind funding over a next two-year period.

The State Government Department of Planning and Community Development have released their Men's Sheds Program 2009 which funds infrastructure for new Men's Sheds, up to \$50,000. This grant closes on the 22nd May 2009. Council would assist Rotary and Lions in applying for this grant.

The \$90,000 will be able to cover the cost needed to make the Men's Shed safe and functional and cover the purchase of the Scout Hall at minimal cost.

CONCLUSION

This project will enhance the health and well-being of men in Monash through providing a space and opportunity for them to be engaged. With the local ageing population, this space will increase social interaction as well as skills required for independent living. The project will also engage the wider community and community organisations, and has the potential to advocate widely for men's health.