

6.4 GREEK NATIONAL DAY PROPOSAL

Submitting Councillor: Cr Paul Klisaris

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Approves a budget allocation of \$30,000 to support the Oakleigh Village Traders Association to host and deliver the Greek National Day community and cultural celebration in Eaton Mall Oakleigh in March 2019; and*
- 2. Considers ongoing funding for this event as part of the 2019/20 budget process.*

INTRODUCTION

On Sunday 25 March 2018, we were honoured by the visit of the Evzones, Greece's preeminent ceremonial military unit of the Hellenic National Guard. The Evzones were enthusiastically welcomed to the City of Monash with a celebration in Eaton Mall on Greek National Day. The event, a partnership between the City of Monash and the Oakleigh Village Traders Association, typified the fantastic contribution, profile and heritage of Monash's Greek community and particularly, even passionately, highlighted the significance of Eaton Mall as the centre of Greek Culture in Melbourne.

Greek National Day in Eaton Mall drew an attendance of over 7000 people to enjoy a cultural celebration of food, music and dance. Its success has resulted in a community call for this event to become an annual celebration of Greek National Day.

BACKGROUND

Greek National Day is held each year on 25 March, a significant day that has evolved from Greek Independence Day, commemorating the start of the War of Greek Independence in 1821. Outside Greece, Melbourne is one of the most populous Greek cities in the world, with Oakleigh being its cultural epicentre.

To observe both this great heritage and the cultural diversity of Monash, an annual Greek National Day event proposes to take advantage of the natural culinary and cultural activity that attracts the community to the Eaton Mall precinct, introducing cultural and popular music and dance performances for a day of celebration.

The proposal continues the partnership with the Oakleigh Village Traders Association, who have advocated to Council on behalf of the community to

seek the introduction of this annual event. I'm pleased to advise that the high level of positive community feedback that traders have received in response to the Evzones event has been a major motivation for this proposal.

DISCUSSION

The annual Greek National Day celebration proposal demonstrates the vibrancy of our multicultural community. This is an opportunity to continue to embrace an important cultural date as part of Cultural Diversity Week each March.

I'm always pleased to reinforce that Eaton Mall is an established cultural and culinary feature of Melbourne, with a merited national profile, reinforced on a daily basis by everyone who enjoys its cafes, restaurants and great ambience. This proposal provides an opportunity to demonstrate Council's support of this annual event as an investment in the economic development of the precinct and value of its growth potential as a local and cultural tourism event.

To deliver an event of the scale equivalent to the Evzones visit, funding in the vicinity of \$55,000 will be required, inclusive of the \$30,000 proposed as funding by Council. Council provides ongoing funding support for a number of other major cultural events in the city, who are responsible for sourcing and meeting the balance of the funding for the safe and effective delivery of the event. In the case of this proposal, the Oakleigh Village Traders Association will be responsible for sourcing and meeting the balance of event funding.

Council Plan Strategic Context

The proposal speaks to Council's *Healthy and Resilient Monash Integrated Plan*, notably our commitment to Participation in an Engaged, Confident and Connected community:

Community engagement

- Community engagement is a dynamic process that builds resilient relationships and the community's strength.

Programs and activities

- Community based programs, activities, events and celebrations that respond to community needs, interests and aspirations impact positively on health.

Creative expression

- Community based arts and cultural activities, services and events that celebrate cultural diversity, support artistic expression and strengthen community.

The proposal also demonstrates the vision of the *Monash Arts and Cultural Plan 2015-2018*:

To inspire strong, vibrant, creative and connected communities

It addresses the strategic intent of the Plan to:

- Encourage and support participation in arts and cultural activities at a local level and within communities of interest; and to
- Ensure opportunities to participate in cultural activities that are reflective of the cultural diversity of the Monash community.

Location

It is proposed that the event stage and activities will be located in the Chester Street car park east of the Mall. This is a large open space suitable for the event that will act as a complement to Eaton Mall activity on the day.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Welcoming the community from across the city, I believe that an annual Greek National Day event, will be a significant promotion and celebration of Greek culture and reinforce the value of Monash's highly diverse community, its diversity and heritage, inclusion and creativity, featuring local performers, musicians and cultural groups.

We know that a sense of community and belonging are essential to individual and collective health and engagement. This proposal provides a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate and reinforce these aims, featuring music and dancing, in one of the city's most culturally vibrant activity centres, appealing to all age demographics that are welcomed to Eaton Mall.

CONSULTATION

Planning, consultation and implementation of the Evzones event project was conducted with members of the Oakleigh Village Traders Association. It is proposed that the Oakleigh Village Traders Association will continue to seek feedback from traders and the community in the development and evaluation of the annual Greek National Day event.

CONCLUSION

With Council's funding support, I commend to my fellow councillors to support this exciting proposal by approving the allocation of \$30,000 per annum (with CPI) to the Oakleigh Villages Traders Association for the delivery of the Greek National Day community celebration in the City of Monash.