

Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Development Facilitation Program




Department
of Transport
and Planning

Project Guideline

DFP-EOI

Unlocking Strategic Sites

 Development Facilitation
Program

Version [1.1]



Department
of Transport
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Overview

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from councils and industry in pursuing development opportunities via the new *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway.

The new pathway will establish a state-led framework to rezone strategically important land for new housing and employment opportunities. The pathway will allow the Minister for Planning (the Minister) to become the planning authority and initiate planning scheme amendments for matters that, in the opinion of the Minister, are of state or regional significance; or have been unreasonably delayed in the planning system.

Successful applicants from the EOI process will participate in a robust and thorough planning assessment process. Requests will be subject to the same referral and public notice requirements as standard assessments. DTP will engage referral authorities, local governments, and notify adjoining property owners and potentially affected parties where required by the planning scheme. Authority and community views will be considered in DTP's planning assessment.

About the rezoning pathway

The *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway will complement the Development Facilitation Program's (DFP) existing assessment pathways. This pathway will provide an additional assessment stream for planning scheme amendments that make a positive contribution towards the delivery of strategically important land for new housing and employment. This pathway is designed for projects that do not yet include a planning permit application for development.

Key objectives

Objectives of the *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway are:

- Accelerate the delivery of land for homes and jobs in Victoria.
- Increase investor confidence in Victoria.
- Support the Victorian Government's commitments under the Housing and Economic Growth Statements.
- Bring forward the appropriate development of land which will have a substantial effect on the achievement of planning objectives in Victoria.



Eligibility criteria

To be considered for involvement in the *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway, EOI requests must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Location and scale

- Be supported by state, regional and local planning policy.
- Be located within a defined 'settlement boundary' or, where a settlement boundary is not present, adjacent urban to zonings.
- Be two hectares or greater in size.
- Demonstrate the number of homes (if relevant) to be delivered.
- Demonstrate the number of short and long-term jobs to be delivered.

2. Complexity

- Demonstrate that civil infrastructure and services can be readily achieved and supported by servicing agencies.
- Demonstrate that contamination, flooding, bushfire, biodiversity, heritage and transport matters can be readily resolved.
- Demonstrate the delivery of significant and meaningful public benefits, including public open space, infrastructure contributions and affordable housing (where applicable).

3. Delivery confidence

- Demonstrate investment is committed or available to deliver the rezoning and subsequent development of the land.
- Demonstrate that impediments to delivery can be managed and/or have a clear pathway to resolution.
- Demonstrate the proposal has been unreasonably delayed by the planning system.
- Preference will be given to proposals where the applicant can demonstrate that a planning permit application is able to be submitted within 12-months of the rezoning finalisation.

Not all requests are eligible for the *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway, including:

- Land where the Minister for Planning has authorised or directed the Victorian Planning Authority to prepare or implement a plan for an identified precinct.
- Land that forms part of the Victorian Planning Authority's industrial land program.
- Proposals for land in the Green Wedge Zone.
- Proposals for land in an Urban Growth Zone where a Precinct Structure Plan has not been prepared.
- Proposals with major outstanding contamination, flooding, bushfire, biodiversity, heritage and transport issues.
 - For example, proposals requiring assessment under the Environmental Effects Act 1978 are ineligible, except where consent has already been obtained.
- Proposals at odds with the Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (MICLUP).



Submission requirements

If your project meets the eligibility criteria, you can make an EOI submission to the *Unlocking Strategic Sites* planning pathway.

4. Required documentation

An EOI submission must include:

- a detailed summary of the proposal.
- a detailed response to the eligibility criteria.
- identification of key issues and matters that the planning proposal will need to address.
- an outline as to how the proposal aligns with the strategic context and justification as to why the proposal has strategic merit.
- an analysis of site-specific merit.
- identification of key supporting studies and technical inputs.
- copies of any draft studies that may be required to be submitted with lodgement
- a clear outline of the proposed amendments to the planning scheme and any other statutory changes or approvals needed to support the project
- understanding and ability to resolve impediments to delivery.
- identification of all agencies and authorities that may need to be consulted during the preparation of the planning scheme amendment.
- details of prior engagement with key stakeholders (if commenced).

Project selection criteria

Following receipt of EOI submissions, DTP will identify sites eligible for assessment under this pathway. Selection of eligible sites will occur via an internal process, that may include consultation with the proponent and key stakeholders, including State agencies, authorities and councils as necessary.

Eligibility will be determined on whether a site meets the eligibility criteria and its capacity to positively contribute to the Victorian Government's housing and economic objectives.

5. Selection and assessment overview

Phase 1 – Project selection from EOI

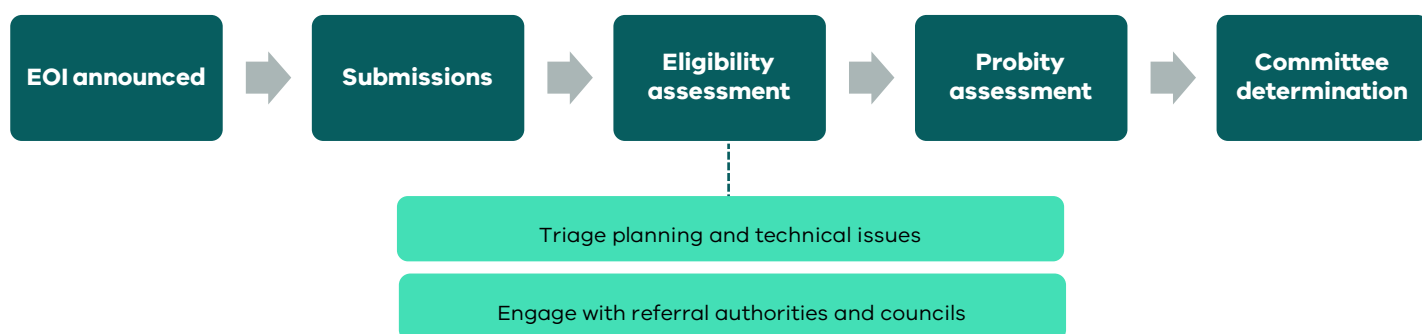
DTP will assess rezoning requests to confirm a project's eligibility and triage planning and technical issues. This involves:

- Assessment against the relevant eligibility criteria and planning policies.
- Triage planning and technical issues.
- Request further information, if required by DTP to assess the request.
- Engagement with council and relevant government departments and agencies through informal consultation and briefings.

DTP will prepare a consolidated assessment and present its recommendation to an internally appointed Project Control Group (PCG). The PCG will oversee governance of the planning pathway and determine if a rezoning request is recommended for further assessment by DTP. The Minister will be briefed on the PCG recommendation and will determine whether a project is endorsed for further assessment.

Alternatively, the PCG and/or Minister may recommend that a rezoning request continue through a standard rezoning process with council.

Figure 1: Phase 1 - Eligibility assessment



Phase 2 – Assessment of planning scheme amendment request

DTP will undertake a detailed assessment once a project is endorsed for assessment by the Minister.

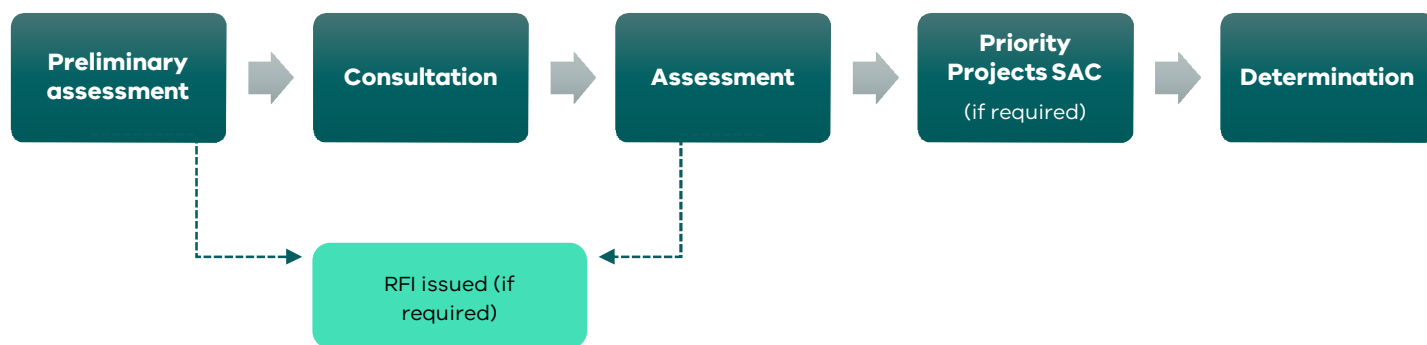
A project may be put on public consultation, including notification to the relevant council, government agencies and bodies, key stakeholders and neighbouring owners and occupiers as required.

A project may be referred to Planning Panels Victoria Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee (PPSAC) to hear submissions and provide independent advice to the Minister for Planning.

DTP will prepare a final assessment incorporating the findings of the public consultation and PPSAC recommendations.

A final planning decision is made by the Minister for Planning or delegated to DTP.

Figure 2: Phase 2 - Application assessment





DTP's discretion

The Minister and DTP (under delegation from the Minister) reserves the discretion to make the final, non-appealable decision regarding the eligibility of sites and/or exercise the Ministerial powers of intervention pursuant to section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*. At any stage during the site identification and selection process, DTP can determine that a site is no longer a priority for the Victorian Government. In such cases, consideration of the site in question may be deferred and/or redirected to other established planning pathways.

Submission instructions

Submissions must be made via the [Unlocking Strategic Sites Engage Victoria](#) page. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

Additional information

For any questions or further clarifications regarding this Expression of Interest, please contact:

Contact team: Planning Facilitation

Email Address: planning.facilitation@transport.vic.gov.au

Phone Number: 1800 950 088

We encourage all interested parties to read the full EOI document carefully and submit their expressions of interest in a timely manner.

Probity

The *Unlocking Strategic Sites* pathway will be subject to strict governance and probity to ensure a fair and transparent assessment process. The department will make all decisions under the process, in keeping with relevant guidelines, policies and plans.



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