

15 September 2025

At the conclusion of the Environment and Climate Change
Committee

Equity and Housing Committee

Agenda

- 1. Confirmation of Minutes**
- 2. Statement of Ethical Obligations and Disclosures of Interest**
- 3. Grants and Sponsorship - Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund - Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council**
- 4. Grants and Sponsorship - Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund - Property Industry Foundation Meanwhile Use Housing**

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As part of our democratic process, the City invites members of the community to speak directly to Councillors during Committee meetings about items on the agenda.

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To enable the Committee to hear a wide range of views and concerns within the limited time available, we encourage people interested in speaking at Committee to:

1. Register to speak by calling Secretariat on 9265 9702 or emailing secretariat@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au before 10.00am on the day of the meeting.
2. Check the recommendation in the Committee report before speaking, as it may address your concerns so that you just need to indicate your support for the recommendation.
3. Note that there is a three minute time limit for each speaker (with a warning bell at two minutes) and prepare your presentation to cover your major points within that time.
4. Avoid repeating what previous speakers have said and focus on issues and information that the Committee may not already know.
5. If there is a large number of people interested in the same item as you, try to nominate three representatives to speak on your behalf and to indicate how many people they are representing.

Committee meetings can continue until very late, particularly when there is a long agenda and a large number of speakers. This impacts on speakers who have to wait until very late, as well as City staff and Councillors who are required to remain focused and alert until very late. At the start of each Committee meeting, the Committee Chair may reorder agenda items so that those items with speakers can be dealt with first.

Committee reports are available at www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Item 1.
Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the following meetings of the Equity and Housing Committee are submitted for confirmation:

Meeting of 18 August 2025

Item 2.**Statement of Ethical Obligations**

In accordance with section 233A of the Local Government Act 1993, the Lord Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath or Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of the City of Sydney and the City of Sydney Council and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act, to the best of their ability and judgement.

Disclosures of Interest

Pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, the City of Sydney Code of Meeting Practice and the City of Sydney Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to disclose and manage both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any matter on the agenda for this meeting.

In both cases, the nature of the interest must be disclosed.

This includes receipt of reportable political donations over the previous four years.

Item 3.

Grants and Sponsorship - Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund - Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council

File No: X105028.013

Summary

The City of Sydney's Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund aims to support an increase in the supply of affordable and diverse housing in the City of Sydney. The fund is part of our commitment to overcome financial barriers to affordable and diverse housing development.

The City of Sydney has received a grant proposal from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to support the development of housing on a site that they own at 36-38 George Street, Redfern. The funding will enable the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to demolish the existing building and build between 6 and 10 units for its members. Their priority is to provide housing for their members who are Aboriginal elders, aged 55 years and over, who live independently and do not need residential aged care.

The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is an incorporated body constituted under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. They are also a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission. They own a small portfolio of housing which they manage for their members. They are currently working towards achieving registration as a community housing provider.

The grant is recommended to be issued in 3 stages. The first stage is to support the preparation of a development application. The second stage is to support the construction of the housing and is subject to development application approval, registration of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council as a community housing provider and confirmation of funding to complete the construction. The final stage is related to project completion and tied to security on title for the use of the housing by Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council members.

There is strong demand from Aboriginal community members for affordable housing for elders delivered by an Aboriginal controlled organisation in the inner city. When this demand is not met it can result in elders relocating away from their community to more affordable areas, housing stress, dislocation, sub-standard housing and overcrowding.

The City of Sydney has been working with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to identify how best to support the ambition of Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to deliver housing for members of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, initially focussed on members who are elders.

Preliminary advice on the applicable planning controls indicate that the building could be demolished and replaced with a housing complex of an estimated 6 to 9 2-bedroom units or 9 to 10 one-bedroom units at a total estimated cost of \$7.5M.

The proposal is broadly consistent with the Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines with the exception of the proportion of funding. The guidelines state a 30% cap on funding, however, this grant recommends a total of 40% towards project costs. The recommendation to approve the grant is consistent with the Lord Mayoral Minute about Supporting More Affordable and Diverse Housing from 23 June 2025. Under the Minute, the Council resolved to review the criteria related to the Fund's cap and noted that while the review is underway, applications should be considered flexibly even if they exceed existing caps.

This report recommends Council approve a grant of \$3 million to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund as detailed in Confidential Attachment B to the subject report, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash grant to Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council for \$3 million to support the preparation of a development application and construction to develop 36-38 George Street, Redfern for residential accommodation for members of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council as determined by the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council;
- (B) Council note the request from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is at Attachment A to the subject report and financial details are at Confidential Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council note that the grant may be withdrawn if the project materially changes from the current proposal as outlined in Attachment A to the subject report, or if a development application is not lodged within 12 months; and
- (D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - (i) finalise negotiations, execute and administer the grant agreement with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council in accordance with clauses (A) and (B); and
 - (ii) otherwise administer all matters relating to this grant.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Request from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council for Funding from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund
- Attachment B.** Funding Details (Confidential)

Background

1. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission. They own a small portfolio of housing which they manage for their members. They are currently working towards achieving registration as a community housing provider.
2. Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council has sought funding to demolish the existing building at 36-38 George Street, Redfern and to build between 6 and 10 units for their members, their initial priority is to provide housing for elders. Housing for Aboriginal elders is for Aboriginal community members aged 55 years and over.
3. Under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 an adult Aboriginal person can apply to become a member of a Local Aboriginal Land Council for an area where they live or have an association with. It is possible to be a member of more than one Local Aboriginal Land Council but only to vote with one Council.
4. To date, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council have not undertaken a residential development project.
5. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council owns the property and land at 36-38 George Street, Redfern.
6. The site is zoned MU1 mixed use and 'residential accommodation' is permitted. It has a floor space ratio of 1.5:1 and maximum building heights of 15m and 12m (3 to 4 storeys). It is not a heritage item but is within a heritage conservation area.
7. The City's Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund provides grant funding to community housing providers, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations to overcome financial barriers to developing affordable and diverse housing.
8. The funding would support Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to engage professional services and construct housing for their members. The proposal would increase the supply of self-determined Aboriginal housing in the local area, increasing the diversity of housing available to Aboriginal community members.
9. The proposal is generally consistent with the eligibility criteria and conditions of the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund subject to conditions and except for the portion the grant will provide towards the total project cost will exceed the 30% cap. Despite the grant providing for 40% of the estimated total project cost it is consistent with the Council resolution of the Lord Mayors Minute about Supporting More Affordable and Diverse Housing from 23 June 2025. The Council resolved to review the criteria related to the Fund's cap and noted that while the review is underway, applications should be considered flexibly even if they exceed existing caps.
10. The proposed grant has been structured to enable funding in stages linked to milestones. The first stage of funding is to support the preparation of a development application. The second stage of funding supports the steps to the construction of the housing and will become available if the development application is approved. The third stage is linked to project completion.

11. The provision of the total amount of funding is recommended subject to conditions that secure the affordable and diverse housing and use of the funds including:
 - (a) registration of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council as a community housing provider; and
 - (b) registration of a covenant on the title securing the use for housing members of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council in perpetuity.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

12. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This grant is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - Future residents of the housing built by the MLALC would have an opportunity to remain in an area of cultural significance to them. Without it they may be forced to relocate to more affordable areas outside the inner city.
 - (b) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - Supporting an Aboriginal Controlled Organisation to deliver a residential housing project builds capacity and diversifies the range of organisations in the local area who can deliver housing to meet the needs of a more diverse range of people.
 - (c) Direction 10 - Housing for all - The completed project would help to meet the strong demand for low-cost housing for Aboriginal people, it would also increase the availability of housing for Aboriginal community members that is delivered by Aboriginal Controlled Organisations.
13. The first of the 6 guiding principles refers to the City's commitment to authentically strengthen relationships and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and helping to build self-determining communities.
14. The provision of funding from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund would put this principle into practice. While funding was previously provided to a mainstream community housing provider for an identified role to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, no funding has been provided to an Aboriginal community controlled organisation from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund.

Strategic Alignment – Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2028

15. The City of Sydney Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan refers to a vision for reconciliation: "is a future where our strong, trusted relationships with self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities enable greater equity, opportunity and understanding in the community".
16. The provision of financial assistance to support a self-identified aspiration of an Aboriginal controlled organisation to deliver housing to their own community members is consistent with this vision.

Risks

17. Identified risks arising from the recommended grant are within the City's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We make decisions that align with our corporate objectives, policies and strategies and are committed to conducting our activities in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations and relevant industry standards.
 - (b) We acknowledge that some financial risks may be necessary to achieve our goals, particularly when investing in new initiatives that align with our strategic objectives. We carefully evaluate financial options and risks and consider the potential impact on our financial position, cash flow, and overall stability.
 - (c) Our risk philosophy is centred around achieving a balance between innovation, community and user satisfaction and risk management, ensuring that we meet our strategic objectives to provide the levels of service that are both affordable and considered appropriate by the community.
18. Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council have not, to date, delivered a residential construction project. To mitigate the risks associated with a lack of development experience, the grant has been structured to source professional services, including a project manager to oversee the project. There are also measures integrated into the project to build the capacity of Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council staff during the project.
19. Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council may not achieve registration as a community housing provider or under the Local Scheme for Aboriginal community housing providers. The City understands Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council have begun the process of registering as a community housing provider. To mitigate this risk the City could consider providing support, if required, to support this task.
20. The development application may not be approved. Planning staff at the City have considered the applicable planning controls at the site. Preliminary advice indicates that the proposed development type is permissible. The engagement of appropriately qualified professionals to prepare the development application mitigates the risk of the application not securing development approval.
21. To avoid any perceived conflict of interest related to the City of Sydney providing funding to support the preparation of development application that it assesses, the development application will be managed in accordance with the Council-related Development Applications Policy.

Social / Cultural / Community

22. Providing meaningful assistance to an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation to fulfill their self-identified aspiration to provide housing to their own community members is consistent with the principles of self-determination which provide for choice, participation and control.
23. Gaining experience in engaging professional services to deliver a housing project builds capacity. A project of this size is an appropriate initial project. It lays the foundations for more ambitious larger scale projects in the future.

24. There is an identified gap in the availability of low-cost accommodation for Aboriginal people, including elders in the local area and housing delivered and managed by an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation.
25. Aboriginal housing which prioritises elders fulfills an important role between generalist housing and residential aged care. There is an identified shortage of this type of accommodation in the local area.

Financial Implications

26. Approval of the grant will reduce the Affordable and diverse housing fund internal cash restriction by \$3 million.
27. The funds for the recommendation set out in this report will be included in relevant financial year's budget.

Relevant Legislation

28. Section 356(1) of the Local Government Act states that a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions. Public exhibition of this sponsorship is not required because the funds are being paid to a not-for-profit organisation that is not operating for private gain.
29. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
30. Attachment B contains confidential commercial information which, if disclosed, would prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
31. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

EMMA RIGNEY

Executive Director City Life

Sam Ngui, Program Manager - Affordable and Diverse Housing

Attachment A

**Request from Metropolitan Local Aboriginal
Land Council for Funding from the
Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund**



Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
Level 2, 150 Elizabeth Street Sydney NSW 2000
PO Box 1103 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Telephone: (02) 8394 9666 Fax: (02) 8394 9733
Email: officeadmin@metrolalc.org.au

Ms Monica Barone
Chief Executive Officer
City of Sydney
GPO Box 1591
Sydney NSW 2001

mbarone@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

25th August 2025

Dear Monica,

On Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) as CEO write to affirm MLALC are the private owners of 36-38 George Street Redfern aka the "site".

MLALC confirm that it has had a long term aspiration for the site to provide seniors and or elders accommodation for MLALC members since acquiring the site in early 2000's.

MLALC is to demolish the premises and to build housing for its members on the site. It is estimated that we could build between 6-10 units at the location. Initially the priority would be providing housing for members who are elders in our community.

MLALC have been in discussions with staff at the City of Sydney (CoS) about the support the CoS may be able to offer to assist MLALC to progress our seniors and or elders housing project.

MLALC affirms that the site has been used as MLALC operational base up until recently leasing the site from July 2022 until July 2025, and as such being recently vacated provides an opportunity to begin the process of preparing a development application with a view to securing approvals and commencing construction as soon as possible.

MLALC Board has approved MLALC to formally request \$3m from the CoS Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund to assist the MLALC to deliver housing for our members at 36-38 George Street Redfern.

MLALC acknowledge this would be a significant contribution to the estimated total cost of the project and would reduce the contribution needed from state and commonwealth funding sources. We would seek this funding once we have secured an approved development application

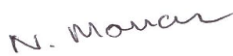
MLALC verifies that financial support for the project is critical to the MLALC being able to deliver much needed affordable housing, including for our elders.

MLALC currently as at August 2025 has over 45 applicants seeking MLALC elders and or seniors housing or accommodation and MLALC anticipates this to increase based on demographics, socio economics, health wellbeing, rental affordability and racism.

MLALC attest the importance of affordable housing delivered by Aboriginal controlled community organisations cannot be underestimated and is articulated in many studies and reports on benefits of Aboriginal community-controlled services delivery of benefits of and for Aboriginal communities in social services such as housing.

Should CoS require any additional information and or clarification please feel free to make contact at anytime via telephone 0283949666 or email nmoran@metrolalc.org.au

Yours In Unity

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Moran', written in a cursive style.

Nathan Moran
CEO MLALC

CONFIDENTIAL

By virtue of the Local Government Act 1993 Section 10A Paragraph 2

Document is Restricted

Item 4.

Grants and Sponsorship - Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund - Property Industry Foundation Meanwhile Use Housing

File No: X105028.024

Summary

The City of Sydney's Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund aims to support an increase in the supply of affordable and diverse housing in the City of Sydney. The fund is part of our commitment to overcome financial barriers to affordable and diverse housing development.

Following a Resolution of Council on 17 February 2025 asking the Chief Executive Officer to investigate how Council can work with existing organisations to encourage and facilitate the use of vacant properties for meanwhile housing, including opportunities for financial or in-kind support, staff received briefings from organisations involved in supporting meanwhile use housing.

The term 'meanwhile use' is commonly used to describe the temporary use of a building or place for a limited time before it takes on a permanent future use or is redeveloped.

The Property Industry Foundation have initiated a state-wide project to facilitate short-term housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through meanwhile use housing. It aims to connect owners of vacant properties with homelessness services and community housing providers. The connections will be enabled by a platform called EverySQM (square metre) which will list available properties that could be used for new meanwhile use housing projects. The platform will be supported by a dedicated staff member who will run and promote it and connect the parties needed to deliver meanwhile housing projects. The platform is expected to be ready to launch in February 2026.

The Property Industry Foundation are seeking a contribution of \$70,000 per annum for 2 years (total commitment \$140,000, equivalent to about half the total project costs) to support the finalisation of the EverySQM platform and the employee related expenditure related to the project.

This report recommends providing a grant of \$140,000 total over two years from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund subject to the conditions detailed in the following recommendations.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash grant to the Property Industry Foundation for \$140,000 over 2 years (\$70,000 per annum) to support their meanwhile use housing project; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - (i) finalise negotiations, execute and administer the grant agreement with the Property Industry Foundation in accordance with clause (A); and
 - (ii) otherwise make decisions and administer the other conditions relating to this grant.

Attachments

Attachment A. Correspondence from Property Industry Foundation - Request for Support for EverySQM Platform - 30 June 2025

Background

1. The term 'meanwhile use' is commonly used to describes the temporary use of a building or place before it takes on a permanent future use or is redeveloped.
2. The Property Industry Foundation is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission, set up to assist people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.
3. The Property Industry Foundation has strong relationships in the property and construction sectors, including those who have been involved in the delivery of some of the earliest meanwhile use housing projects in Sydney. This is especially valuable given the dependence on available sites in meanwhile use housing.
4. An example of a meanwhile use housing project is The Central Project which saw the former Adina hotel at 2 Lee Street Haymarket in Central offered by the developer TOGA for a period of more 12 months in 2023 to the My Foundations Youth Housing and Settlement Services International to use as transitional housing for young people and refugees while planning approvals were secured.
5. Demand for crisis (immediate) and transitional (medium term) housing is strong, especially in the City of Sydney.
6. The latest Street Count showed a 24% increase since the previous year in rough sleeping in the local area, totalling 346 people.
7. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that in 2023-24 in NSW there were roughly 300 unassisted requests for specialist homelessness services each day. More than three fifths involved a request for short term or emergency accommodation. The most common reason for turning people away was a lack of available accommodation.
8. The Property Industry Foundation have recruited a dedicated staff member to support a statewide meanwhile use housing project. The project will provide resources and support to property owners and to community housing providers and homelessness services with an interest in delivering meanwhile use housing options for people experiencing homelessness. The work was informed by consultation with both developers and community housing providers and homelessness services.
9. One of the main features of the project is the launch of a new platform that will list available properties. The platform will also contain resources, including templates, to guide users in relation to legal and regulatory issues. The staff member from the Property Industry Foundation will run the platform and actively promote it and meanwhile use housing more broadly to potential users.
10. The Property Industry Foundation have secured in-kind contributions and committed their own funding to the project. They are seeking a one off \$140,000 (\$70,000 over 2 years) contribution from the City of Sydney of roughly half the delivery costs over the next 2 years.
11. Non-asset based projects have received funding from the Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund. This has included the Affordable Housing Ideas Challenge research project and employee related expenditure for an identified position to promote affordable housing to the Aboriginal community.

12. The application from the Property Industry Foundation is broadly consistent with the Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines even though they are seeking more than a third of the future project costs in funding. To date the Property Industry Foundation have given an estimated total of \$120,000 of in-kind contributions to the project and have identified funding sources for the remainder of the projected costs to deliver the project for the next 2 years.
13. The recommendation to approve the grant is consistent with the Lord Mayoral Minute about Supporting More Affordable and Diverse Housing from 23 June 2025. Under the Minute, the Council resolved to review the criteria related to the Fund's cap and noted that while the review is underway, applications should be considered flexibly even if they exceed existing caps.
14. If approved the funding agreement would require the Property Industry Foundation to:
 - (a) provide reports outlining progress of the project including the number of projects in the City of Sydney every quarter
 - (b) focus on potential meanwhile use housing projects in the City of Sydney local government area and
 - (c) submit a report on lessons learnt from the implementation of the project within 2 years.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

15. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - People experiencing homelessness are at significant risk of exclusion from the community. Enhancing the capacity of services who assist people experiencing homelessness is a constructive means of increasing the inclusivity of the city.
 - (b) Direction 10 - Housing for all - Given the lack of stable, long term affordable housing options for people, meanwhile use housing is a pragmatic way to reduce the cost of accommodation for services who provide crisis and transitional housing to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Organisational Impact

16. If approved, the grant would be managed by the Program Manager, Affordable and Diverse Housing.

Risks

17. Any identified risks arising from the recommended grant are within the City's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We make decisions that align with our corporate objectives, policies and strategies and are committed to conducting our activities in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations and relevant industry standards.
 - (b) We acknowledge that some financial risks may be necessary to achieve our goals, particularly when investing in new initiatives that align with our strategic objectives. We carefully evaluate financial options and risks and consider the potential impact on our financial position, cash flow, and overall stability.
 - (c) Our risk philosophy is centred around achieving a balance between innovation, community and user satisfaction and risk management, ensuring that we meet our strategic objectives to provide the levels of service that are both affordable and considered appropriate by the community.
18. The Property Industry Foundation has undertaken consultation with homelessness services, community housing providers and asset owners over the last 8 months, including two roundtables, to establish the level of support for the proposed database and to identify and mitigate risks.
19. Potential users advised wanting a one-stop shop where they could get guidance and legal templates for meanwhile use arrangements. As a result, the platform will feature advice and guidance about the legal and regulatory aspects of meanwhile use housing.

Social / Cultural / Community

20. A housing first approach relies on long term housing with wrap around supports in response to homelessness, while preferable, the shortage of this type of housing creates a role for crisis and transitional housing as a safety net.
21. Homelessness services providing this safety net face significant and growing demand for their services. They operate in an environment of highly constrained resources, which limits their capacity to meet the extent of the demand put on them.
22. Depending on the refurbishment costs required, access to properties, albeit temporarily, at little to no rent, is valuable and may increase the capacity of providers to meet more of the demand for their services.
23. Providing funding for the Property Industry Foundation meanwhile use housing project presents the City of Sydney with an opportunity to play a constructive role to support the provision of crisis and transitional housing.

Financial Implications

24. Approval of the grant will reduce the Affordable and diverse housing fund internal cash restriction by \$140,000.
25. The funds for the recommendation set out in this report will be included in the relevant financial year's budget.

Relevant Legislation

26. Section 356(1) of the Local Government Act states that a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions. Public exhibition of this sponsorship is not required because the funds are being paid to a not-for-profit organisation that is not operating for private gain.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

27. It is anticipated that \$70,000 will be provided in 2025/26 and \$70,000 will be provided in 2026/27.

EMMA RIGNEY

Executive Director, City Life

Sam Ngui, Program Manager - Affordable and Diverse Housing

Attachment A

**Correspondence from Property Industry
Foundation – Request for Support for
EverySQM Platform – 30 June 2025**



30 June 2025

Council of the City of Sydney
Town Hall House
456 Kent St
Sydney, NSW, 2000

Attention: Monica Barone, CEO of the Council of the City of Sydney

Dear Monica,

Proposal to develop a Meanwhile Use Database to connect owners of vacant property with homeless charities and community housing providers for short-term use for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

I am writing to request support for a **Meanwhile Use Database** in line with a recent Council resolution on 17 February 2025 to support the use of vacant properties for short-term housing.

Meanwhile Use is a pragmatic, short-term response to increase affordable housing supply and sector capacity using existing resources.

There is an increased understanding of what Meanwhile Use is, and how it is used as a short-term solution for vulnerable cohorts facing homelessness. Charities and community housing providers can use these properties as an opportunity for homeless people to stabilize their situation while they find longer-term housing solutions.

Successful examples of Meanwhile Use

Addison Road: TOGA bought a hotel in 2016 on Addison Road to develop. Realising that the development pathway would take a few years, TOGA leased the hotel to youth community housing provider - My Foundations Youth Housing - for 3 years. This gave My Foundations 42 fully furnished rooms to use for young people. During this time, the residents were able to stabilise, finish education and connect with employment. In the end, My Foundations had use of the hotel for five years, and every youth resident was connected with longer-term housing options over this period.

Beecroft House: Twilight Aged Care owns the property in Beecroft and has it earmarked for development in the future. In the meantime, since 2019, the property is being used to provide accommodation for up to twenty women who are fifty-five or older. Link Wentworth is the community housing provider which acts as the tenancy manager and Women's Community Shelters refers women to Beecroft House and provides case management. Residents can have tenancy for up to two years, and during that time they are connected to a network of housing providers to find a longer-term solution to their housing needs.

No central platform for Meanwhile Use

NSW & VIC (pls send mail to):
Suite 5, Level 2, Grafton Bond Building
201 Kent Street
Sydney NSW 2000

QLD
Level 10, 95 North Quay
Brisbane QLD 4000

Ph: 1800 313 116
E: enquiries@pif.com.au
W: www.pif.com.au
ABN: 67 641 455 709

Despite the growth of Meanwhile Use, there is no central platform that connects property owners that are open to Meanwhile Use with charities and community housing providers that could use these properties.

The Foundation is developing a central platform – the Meanwhile Use Database - to connect property owners with vacant properties to charities, community housing providers, and other organisations that can activate these spaces to provide temporary accommodation for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Following constructive discussions with City of Sydney representatives, this request for support is a direct outcome of those meetings. We look forward to working together to ensure this platform becomes a practical, effective tool in addressing homelessness across Sydney.

The Property Industry Foundation's expertise with property and homelessness

The Property Industry Foundation has a 29-year history of providing support to homeless youth in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria. The Foundation seeks to increase the supply of accommodation available to youth charities and community housing providers. It sees the development of a Meanwhile Use Database as part of its mission. While the Foundation is focused on youth homelessness, it will promote the use of the database across all homelessness and housing agencies, and it will not be restricted to the youth cohort.

The Foundation is uniquely placed through its deep connections with the property industry to work with asset owners to identify properties that might be suitable and guide them through the meanwhile use process. It is currently engaging with owners who are open to Meanwhile Use arrangements, helping to increase the supply of housing through short- to medium-term activation of otherwise unused spaces.

The Foundation has led a period of consultation with charities, community housing providers and asset owners over the last 8 months, including two roundtables, to establish the level of support for the proposed database. This period of consultation has established a strong level of support as well as a strong understanding of the concerns that property owners want to see addressed on the platform.

Launch of Meanwhile Use Platform – EverySQM (Square Meter)

The Foundation is currently building the Meanwhile Use Database which will be called EverySQM and expects to do a 'soft launch' of the database in October 2025, with a full launch expected in February 2026.

The Meanwhile Use Database will function as a platform whereby:

- Asset owners can list potential properties and connect with suitable charities and community housing providers who can use those properties for short-term use. We expect this to be for a minimum of 12 months but understand that in certain cases this could be for a shorter period.
- Users can also find advice and guidance about the legal and regulatory aspects of Meanwhile Use on the platform. This was a key concern for property owners, who wanted a one-stop shop where they could get guidance and legal templates for meanwhile use arrangements.
- Asset owners can look at successful case studies and connect with asset owners who are experienced in Meanwhile Use to assuage any concerns. This was another key concern for property owners, who wanted to know that tenants would successfully transfer to longer-term housing solutions prior to the owner reclaiming the property and wanted to talk to owners that had done it already. At both round tables community housing providers were able to re-assure asset owners about using the time residents are in a meanwhile use facility to connect them with longer-term housing solutions.

- The platform will promote and demystify Meanwhile Use with asset owners and with the broader community.

Request for support

The Property Industry Foundation is looking for support from the City of Sydney Council – both financial support and advocacy for the platform.

The key elements required for the platform are:

- A senior resource to establish and run the platform, liaising with parties etc. (\$95k/year).
- Ongoing development and maintenance of the platform (\$30k/year).
- Marketing strategy and implementation (\$25k/year).

Any further incidental costs will be covered by the Foundation. The senior resource will be employed by the Foundation, the platform will be supported by the Foundation, and will be promoted on the Foundation's website, etc.

The Foundation is committed to funding the platform for two years to establish it and is seeking co-funding of \$70k/year from the City of Sydney for a two-year period to support the establishment of the platform.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Mills', with a horizontal line underneath.

Kate Mills
Chief Executive Officer
Property Industry Foundation