

9.7 SMALL BUSINESS FRIENDLY APPROVALS PROGRAM - FINAL REPORT

Attachments: 1. **Small Business Friendly Approvals Program - Final Report**

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council NOTES:**

1. **the Small Business Friendly Approvals Program – City of Vincent Final Report at Attachment 1; and**
2. **Administration will be reporting progress of the 33 reforms of this report to the Small Business Development Corporation and Council every six months.**

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

For Council to note the final report for the City of Vincent Small Business Friendly Approvals Program (SBFA), produced by the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC).

BACKGROUND:

The City of Vincent was selected to participate in the Small Business Friendly Approvals (SBFA) Program, being one of 20 successful local governments. The program is delivered by the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) who invest skills, knowledge, experience and budget to successful local governments.

The SBFA Program utilises Human Centred Design Thinking which involves participation from approvals-based teams and communications-focused teams. This includes team members who specialise in Building, Compliance, Customer Service, Environmental Health, Information Technology, Marketing, Place, Rangers, Statutory Planning and Strategic Planning. The City collectively contributed the equivalent of six months work by having team members attend 12 workshops, with Ink Strategy as facilitators.

The workshop journey included the following steps:

1. Empathise – understand user/customer needs.
2. Define – What and why is it important?
3. Ideate – How do we solve it/improve?
4. Prototype – Bringing ideas to life.
5. Test – Does it work?
6. Embed – Embedding and supporting?

SBDC provided the City with small business statistics prior to commencement of the program. Of the City's 5,566 businesses, 5,416 (97 percent) are small businesses and 3,278 are sole traders. A small business employs 0-19 people. These businesses contribute to a gross regional product of \$4.1 billion. This data reflects that small businesses are an essential part of the local economy, which is reflected in the Thriving Places priority of our Strategic Community Plan (SCP).

DETAILS:

The final report produced by SBDC can be viewed at **Attachment 1**. This report contains information on the six stages of the workshop journey, which resulted in 33 reforms. These reforms were refined from >300 ideas during the Ideation Phase and incorporated feedback from some local small businesses.

This feedback was obtained from Ink and formed part of the Empathise Phase. Four main themes emerged from this input, as detailed in the following table:

Theme	Selected Quote
Progressive outlook; constrained frameworks	Council presented as being very forward thinking, but the systems and processes don't back this up
A need to better understand small business pressures and need	I wanted to work collaboratively, but felt it was really difficult. I wanted to talk to someone but was always being told to 'put it in writing'
Limited ownership and consistency	The entire approvals process was not communicated up front
Help me to help myself	Expectations were difficult to understand and interpret

Two businesses provided advice on their experiences during the workshops which helped the SBFA team to consider ideas on how their experience could have been improved. These ideas were grouped into three reforms areas, being:

1. Better information – to make it easier for small businesses to navigate and understand requirements of the application and approvals process when starting, pivoting or growing their business.
2. Business Support Service – to support small business through a coordinated and collaborative five staged approach as they undertake their enquiry, pre-lodgement, lodgement, assessment/approval and operational journey.
3. Streamline processes to improve the customer experience – to implement solutions that streamline and expedite processes linked to small business applications and strengthen the system and tools that support process improvement.

Delivery of the 33 reforms is supported by an operational Implementation Plan which contains tasks and defines success. The progress of these tasks is reported to SBDC every six months. Some of the reforms were progressed during the prototype and testing phase of the workshops and it is expected implementation of these key tasks would be completed soon. These include:

- An overarching small business journey roadmap (part of Reform 1.5);
- Online approvals self-assessment questionnaire (Reform 1.14);
- Developing a workflow to embed a Business Support function (Reform 2.1);
- Initial review of forms (Reform 1.7);
- Drafting of an acoustic consultant's matrix to guide small businesses on when a report is required (Reform 1.6); and
- Steps to consolidate information on business enhancement opportunities through the website (Reform 1.13).

CONSULTATION/ADVERTISING:

Selected businesses participated in the 'Empathise' phase of the program.

LEGAL/POLICY:

All Acts, Regulations, Local Laws and Policies that relate to Small Business approvals.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Low: It is low risk for Council to note this report.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the City's *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028*:

Thriving Places

*We are recognised as a City that supports local and small business.
We encourage innovation in business, social enterprise and imaginative uses of space, both public and private.*

Innovative and Accountable

Our community is satisfied with the service we provide.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following key sustainability outcomes of the *City's Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019-2024*.
Waste Reduction

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following priority health outcomes of the City's *Public Health Plan 2020-2025*:

Reduced exposure to environmental health risks

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Thirty of the 33 reforms do not have a budget implication and these reforms can be delivered utilising existing budget. Three reforms may have a budget implication; however, these reforms require some further development to understand what the costs are and whether the costs can be incorporated into existing budget.

COMMENTS:

The SBFA reforms are to be delivered over a two-year period with Administration providing a performance report to SBDC every six months. Selected small businesses participated in the journey and were impressed with the progress the City made as part of this Program. The reforms of this program align strongly with the SCP and are being incorporated into corporate business planning.

Small Business Friendly Approvals Program

City of Vincent Final Report
May 2022

 Small Business Development Corporation

 CITY OF VINCENT



Acknowledgement

We join the City of Vincent in acknowledging the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people.

We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present, and we recognise their strength and resilience.

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Small Business Friendly Approvals Program

City of Vincent Final Report

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Thank you
to the following working group members for their contribution to the
City of Vincent Small Business Friendly Approvals Program

Department	Program Participant	Program Proxy
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Building	Justina Briggs-Bradford, Coordinator Building Services	Ford Broderick, Senior Building Surveyor
Communications/Events	Luke Hackett, Marketing and Communications Officer	Alana Raine, Digital Marketing Advisor
Compliance	Nadine Wellington, Coordinator Compliance Services	Sonia Woodside, Senior Compliance Officer
Customer Service	Lisa Cole, Coordinator Customer Service	Gemma Carter, Manager Marketing and Partnerships
Environmental Health	Prue Reddingius, Coordinator Environmental Health	Alex Ravine, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Information Technology	Loan Pham, ICT Support Officer	Milton Yee, Business Systems Analyst
Place Planning	Georgia Lawrence, Coordinator Place	Eamonn Lourey, Place Planner
Statutory Planning	Karsen Reynolds, Coordinator Planning Services	Mitchell Hoad, Specialist Planner
Statutory Planning	Jordan Korovesi, Coordinator Strategic Planning	Tim Elliot, Senior Strategic Planner
Rangers	Jean Lowther, Coordinator Ranger Services	Dean Lawrence, Senior Ranger
Small Business Development Corporation	Annette Brown, Senior Project and Engagement Officer	N/A

The Small Business Development Corporation would like to thank the local businesses who shared their own experiences to help identify improvements to the current approvals processes required to establish and grow a small business in the City of Vincent.





Welcome from the Small Business Commissioner

Over the past two years, governments and businesses have navigated the complexities of doing business in an unprecedented era. We developed a new set of learnings from living with, and managing, a global pandemic.

As I reflect on what we learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic, the stand out is how well small businesses adapted to disruption.

They recalibrated operations to respond to supply chain issues, financial uncertainty, shifts in consumer spending and engagement, and a heightened awareness of business vulnerability and risk.

We witnessed an outstanding commitment by small businesses to ensure the safety of their customers, staff, and the wider community, while continuing to provide the goods and services we all need. Many made significant sacrifices.

Never before has the sector been so agile, or played such a central role in helping our society adapt to the new way of living. The rapid response from small businesses to the challenges of the past year has allowed us to enjoy a stable and growing economy.

One outcome of this global crisis is the acknowledgement of the importance of small businesses. They continue to be a significant driver of our economy and a major source of jobs for Western Australians. With unpredictability expected for some time to come, governments at all levels

have recognised the pressing need to engage with and support the business community as it continues to build long-term sustainability and resilience.

The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC's) *Small Business Friendly Approvals Program* addresses some of this need. The City of Vincent is part of a select group of WA local governments chosen to participate in the intensive process to map, examine and improve the approval processes for local small businesses.

I would particularly like to thank the officers involved in the working group, who over a series of sessions reviewed current practices and developed strategies to deliver business transformation, enhance the customer experience and support business viability.

This report outlines the reforms they have identified to make a real difference for small businesses in the City of Vincent.

David Eaton
Small Business Commissioner
Chief Executive Officer
Small Business Development Corporation

Project background

Depending on the location and business type, licences and permits may be required at the local, state and federal government level. This multi-layered compliance process can present a host of challenges: firstly in understanding the processes, followed by identifying which approvals are required, then providing the relevant information to enable an assessment and determination to be made.

Many small business operators face the challenge of starting their business while also working full-time – or worse, have left their job with the intention of starting a business – and have limited understanding of how long government approvals can take. These entrepreneurs are faced with having to understand lease agreements, obtain finance, establish a supply chain or employ workers, as well as apply for licences to trade.

More broadly, businesses are also faced with challenges including unpredictable customer spending, increased competition from on-demand services, e-commerce, globalisation, and the disruption caused by COVID-19.

There has never been a greater need or opportunity to support the establishment and growth of small business in Western Australia.

The Small Business Friendly Approvals Program (Approvals Program) is an SBDC initiative that aims to assist regulating authorities to reform their approvals regimes and foster a supportive business environment. The process includes identifying issues facing small businesses, designing reforms to achieve more streamlined approval processes and supporting government authorities to implement those reforms.

A member of the SBDC's Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative, the City of Vincent was selected through a competitive application process to be one of 20 Western Australian local governments to partner with the SBDC to develop a customised Approvals Program Implementation Plan. The reform initiatives presented in the plan are the result of a detailed examination of the approvals process for a range of small business applicants in the City of Vincent. It addresses local government touchpoints and interactions with small business, from business idea to operation.

Enacting the reform initiatives detailed in the implementation plan will:

- reduce approval timeframes, saving both the City and business applicants considerable time and money
- foster a 'can-do' business-friendly culture and deliver an improved experience for the City's small business customers
- ensure more efficient and effective use of City resources
- align with the WA Government's Streamline WA reform agenda

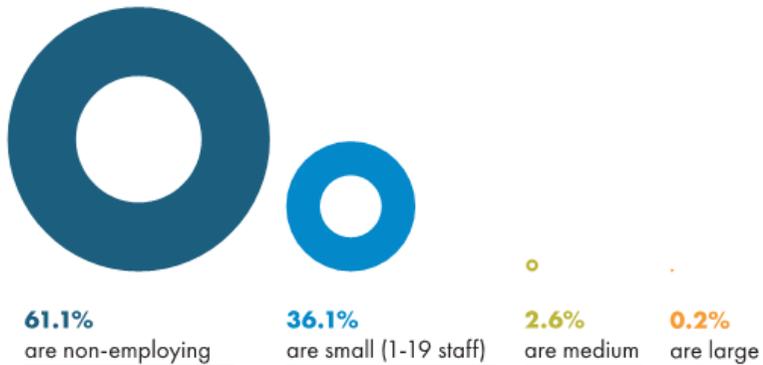


Small business statistics

Small business is big business in Western Australia, with 223,524 small businesses in the state¹

Ninety-seven per cent of all businesses are considered small (fewer than 20 employees).¹

97% of all businesses are **classified as small**

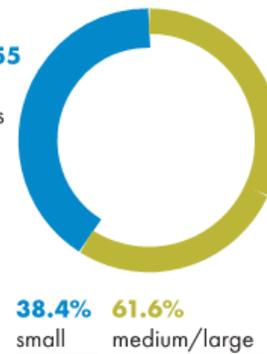


The small business sector contributes more than \$54 billion to WA's economy and employs almost forty per cent of the private sector workforce.^{2,3}

Share of private sector employment (by business size)

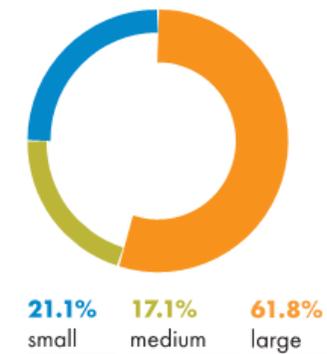
1.2m total private sector jobs

462,955 small business jobs



Share of private sector gross value added (by business size)

\$202.4b total private sector GVA



1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2017 to June 2021.
 2. Value of small business to WA economy is an estimate using a revised SBDC model based on previous work undertaken by ACIL Allen using ABS data. All figures are nominal (ie. in 2019-20 dollars).
 3. Share of private sector employment is an estimate by ACIL Allen using ABS data. The figure is at June 2020.

The City of Vincent's business landscape

Located three kilometres from Perth's central business district and covering a land area of just over 11 km², this compact inner city local government has a distinct sense of place across its six town centres.

With a population of over 37,000 in 2020¹, Vincent is home to 5,562² businesses that generate over 25,000 local jobs, with over 10 per cent, or approximately 3,800 residents, employed within the City.

With its bustling array of specialty shops, cafes and service offerings, it may not be a surprise that 97 per cent of businesses in Vincent fall within the small business category.

Viewed as one of the most progressive and innovative boutique local governments in Western Australia, the City has successfully built on its inner city heritage and neighbourhood clusters to create a great sense of place, prosperity and wellbeing across its six town centres.

A holistic management approach has seen Leederville, Mount Lawley, Mount Hawthorn, North Perth, Northbridge and the Pickle District flourish through the City's ability to connect communities, nurture people and natural assets, retain its character and charm, and support a vibrant small business sector.

This balance of people, place and prosperity puts the City in a strong and responsive position when the world was plunged into a state of emergency in 2020 with the emergence of the pandemic. People grappled then rallied, businesses pivoted and the

City responded swiftly as they led their community with an innovative *COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Strategy*. The Strategy guided the City's actions during COVID-19, enabling agile and responsive decision making that was based on a three phase approach: to respond and offer relief, adapt and evaluate, recover and rebound.

As part of its recovery and rebound phase, the City has partnered with the SBDC to strengthen and support its local economy. Recognising that this is not restricted to simply attracting new business opportunities, but to capture the entrepreneurial spirit that can emerge from unanticipated events like the pandemic, and to help their existing small businesses grow and thrive.

Whilst workshops were delivered during a period of instability and uncertainty as the State transitioned through different levels of health advice, the working group remained focussed. Their commitment and efforts have ensured that the results of this program will align with the *Vincent Rebound Plan* and support officers in streamlining processes and identifying ways to make it easier for small business to understand what regulatory approvals they will need to start, pivot or expand their operations in a world that adjusts to living with COVID-19.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistic Estimated Resident Population (ERP) 2020.

² National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIER) 2021.



The City of Vincent’s business landscape

Of the **5,566** businesses in the City, **5,416** (97 per cent) are categorised as a small business, employing 0-19 people, with **3,278** of these identifying as sole traders.¹

Top four industries by number of small businesses



Professional, scientific and technical services

624 (no employees)
573 (0-19 employees)
22.1% of all small businesses



Rental, hiring and real estate services

738 (no employees)
120 (0-19 employees)
15.8% of all small businesses



Construction

438 (no employees)
180 (0-19 employees)
11.4% of all small businesses



Health and social assistance

273 (no employees)
148 (0-19 employees)
7.7% of all small businesses

This data demonstrates that although hospitality businesses are more visible on the main streets and centres, there is a thriving services sector located within the City.

The business application and approvals landscape for the City of Vincent

Data collection across local governments differs significantly and often aligns with statutory requirements, as opposed to capturing information to assist in enhancing the small business customer experience.

An example is reported approval turnaround times, which are based on the receipt of ‘complete applications’, rather than the initial application submission date, which may be extended due to requests for additional information and/or sign off by referral agencies and associated regulatory requirements.

The Approvals Program guides local governments to identify improvements in how they provide information,

offer dedicated small business support and streamline internal processes. These changes aim to help small business customers submit complete and quality applications the first time, for efficient processing and reduced approval times across departments.

Each day a business opening is delayed due to an incomplete application, and consequent stalled assessment and processing, it is not only costing the business in relation to rent and operating expenses,

but also postpones earnings and employment opportunities.

As indicated in the following data sets, assessment efficiencies can significantly reduce approval times. Being able to start operating as soon as possible generates income, creates jobs and establishes the small business as an active contributor to the community’s social and economic landscape.

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2017 to June 2021.

The business application and approvals landscape for the City of Vincent

1,733 applications received across departments in 2020/21



2020/21 building applications

-  **754** building applications received
-  **710** building applications determined
-  **15 days** is the average time taken to determine uncertified applications
-  **6-7 days** is the average time taken to determine certified applications

130 (17.2%) of the building applications received related to commercial enterprises, including 23 occupancy permits and six demolition permits.

2020/21 health applications



552 health applications received



10 days is the average time taken to determine complete health applications

552 (100%) of health applications received related to commercial enterprises and comprised of the following:



174 (31.5%) market stall applications

158 (28.6%) food business (notification/registration) applications

124 (22.5%) noise permits

41 (7.4%) liquor licensing section 39 applications

30 (5.4%) public building approval applications (events)

14 (2.5%) skin penetration premises

11 (2%) public building approval applications (permanent, 'bricks and mortar' premises)





2020/21 development (planning) applications



427 (planning) applications received



478 (planning) applications determined¹

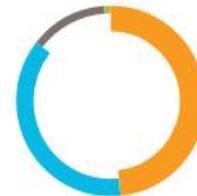


76 days is the average time to determine incomplete applications (noting that 81% of applications submitted are incomplete)



71 days is the average time to determine complete applications

97 (20.3%) of determined development (planning) applications relating to commercial enterprises consisted of²:



47 (48.4%) change of use applications

36 (37.1%) proposed commercial developments or alterations and additions to commercial properties

13 (13.4%) signage applications

1 (1%) home occupation/home business application

¹ Note; determined applications included applications carried over from the 2019/20 financial year.

² The City will only progress (or 'start the clock') applications that have all the required approvals information (e.g. missing information, plan revisions and external referrals to agencies for advice and comment). This is the time adjusted figure.

³ The number and % of applications has been determined using approval types typical to all business types i.e. small, medium and large.

Program approach

In an Approvals Program first, the cross-functional working group was plunged into a workshop scenario that collided with new COVID-19 health restrictions and subsequent work orders as Western Australia re-opened its borders and the State entered into a Safe Transition Plan.

At a time of heightened community anxiety and uncertainty, the program commenced and workshop delivery was realigned and poised for agility. This encompassed measures to support corporate directives, adhere to updated State health orders and ensure the workplace was as safe as possible for those participating. This included:

- Mandated mask wearing
- Compulsory check-ins at multiple workshop sites
- Designing and setting up workshop spaces with suitable social distancing whilst still enabling the team to work closely and collaboratively
- Individual food portions
- Ensuring high hygiene standards were maintained
- Working with a corporate work structure of split teams within departments
- Managing virtual workshop participation as required
- Virtual Council and staff presentations

As the State navigated living with COVID-19, the working group quickly adapted to the 'new normal' and fully engaged with the program, quickly pivoting when required and maintaining a sense of presence and motivation.

Professionally facilitated, the cross-departmental team was guided through the five steps of human centred design thinking.

The five steps of design thinking



Empathise



Define



Ideate



Prototype



Test

Starting with the customer perspective – empathise

Human-centred design thinking is based on considering the customer perspective.

It is vitally important to hear a customer’s experience first-hand in order to connect to the needs, desires and motivations of real people, and use this to inspire and spark fresh ideas.

The working group was provided with survey results, phone interview responses and direct feedback from two local small business owners operating in the City.

What was heard from the City’s small business customers fell into four distinct themes:



Theme 1: Progressive outlook; constrained frameworks

Council presents as being very forward thinking, but the systems and processes don’t back this up

Activation agenda is difficult to achieve/ be part of – i.e. activating public space around my business

My ability to innovate or be flexible and nimble was limited

My business fell through the gaps; I was told, “we have these rules – we don’t have a rule that fits, so you have to abide by the rule that doesn’t”

People were pleasant, but the framework didn’t accommodate my business



Theme 2: A need to better understand small business pressures and needs

I wanted to work collaboratively, but felt it was really difficult. I wanted to talk to someone but was always being told to ‘put it in writing’

If I had known everything upfront I might not have proceeded

I felt that the ‘real world’ lens was not applied; the focus didn’t seem to be on the right issues

I don’t understand why my business had to meet ‘regulatory obligations’ when other businesses seemingly don’t

Staff were ‘by the book’ – I needed to elevate issues, where sometimes a different resolution was achieved



Theme 3: Limited ownership and consistency

The entire approvals process was not communicated up front

I felt like I was being ‘bounced around’ and had to keep repeating myself

Different officers with different approaches and risk tolerance to the same issues – you were never sure what you were going to get - “it depended on who you spoke to”

The City has the regulations etc. but not the resources or people with knowledge to advise how to navigate those regulations

There is no consistent contact and high staff turnover is a challenge – “you think you are making headway, then they leave” (recurrent issue)



Theme 4: Help me to help myself

Expectations were difficult to understand and interpret

It is hard to find information on the website

A ‘pre-approval’ phase to understand what I needed to do and when would have been invaluable

I could never get the full picture of what was required – “at the end of the tunnel, was another tunnel”

I wonder whether the place team could have helped?

Creating a better customer experience through human-centred design thinking – define, ideate and prototype

The Approvals Program highlighted the positive and successful Place Management approach to economic development by the City, which focuses on shopfront strips and public spaces within the six town centres.

However, what the Program has identified is the opportunity to broaden support and help all small businesses operating within Vincent start, grow and thrive. These include home based businesses and those located outside of the central hubs which are supported and serviced by dedicated Place Planners.

Following open and honest customer feedback, the group undertook to put themselves in the shoes of a small business owner. To fully understand and appreciate the challenges of turning a business dream into a reality, the process included creating small business customer personas and different business model scenarios.

Based on the City's current process mapping and drawing on the experiences of the small business owners that shared their own challenges in navigating the application and approvals process, the next step involved a rigorous journey mapping exercise.

Local government officers traditionally work in departmental 'silos' and only deal with the applications relating to specific subject matter and legislation. Looking through the lens of a small business operator who thinks they are just dealing with 'the Council' but is potentially dealing with multiple departments within the local government, in addition to external State and Federal agencies, provided a holistic view of the application and approvals journey.

Mapping the process in great detail assisted the cross-functional team to identify and define the challenges, come up with fresh ideas, prototype and test solutions. Over eleven workshop days, the group identified ways to:

- Improve **internal and external customer** information and communication;
- Engage small businesses early and **guide them through the journey**;
- Develop quality and consistent processes to **simplify approvals**;
- Make City policies and decision making **'fit for purpose'** for small businesses and the community; and
- **Use data to better service** small business customers and drive continuous improvement.



Creating a better customer experience through human-centred design thinking – define, ideate and prototype

Over 300 individual ideas were clustered and refined into three clear areas of improvement:



Better information - to make it easier for small business to navigate and understand requirements of the application and approvals process when starting, pivoting or growing their business.



Business support service - to support small business through a coordinated and collaborative five staged approach as they undertake their enquiry, pre-lodgement, lodgement, assessment/approval and operational journey.



Streamline processes to improve the customer experience - to implement solutions that streamline and expedite processes linked to small business applications and strengthen the system and tools that support process improvement.

The workshop series allowed officers to develop and test their conceptual ideas with two local small business representatives, who had previously shared their experiences and challenges of starting a business in the City. Their overwhelming support of the work undertaken by the working group contributed to the next stage of refining the reform and implementation planning.

Based on the three specific reform pillars, a series of high-level actions aimed at improving the customer experience, reducing approval times and creating internal efficiencies were developed by the working group. This process included identifying:

- How the reform concept linked to community and corporate aspirations
- What would be needed to achieve these reforms
- Who would need to be involved to drive this process
- How long the reforms would take to implement
- A summary of the effort, benefit and cost involved.

The following pages summarise the overarching plan developed by the working group during the Approvals Program workshop series. This framework is supported by an internal and highly detailed implementation plan, a 'live' document that will guide the execution of specific individual tasks over the next 24 months, and feed into a reporting mechanism that will track task completion and achievements across the organisation.

Reform area 1: Better information

To make it easier for small business to navigate and understand requirements of the application and approvals process when starting, pivoting or growing their business.

Reforms	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment ¹		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
1.1 Identify and update all communications accessed by small business customers to increase understanding of the application and approvals process to start and grow a business in the City	●				● (stage 1)		● (stage 2)		High	Low	Lead: Marketing & Communications Support: Customer Service, ICT, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Rangers
1.2 Create a series of audio/video tools to increase understanding of the small business application and approvals process	●		●				●		High	High	Lead: Marketing & Communications Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place
1.3 Build an internal knowledge bank for the Business Support function to assist in providing clear and concise answers to small business customer queries	●	●	●			●			High	Med	Lead: Customer Service Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Rangers, Marketing & Communications
1.4 Review and update the functionality of the website to make small business information easy to find and understand	●		●		● (stage 1)		● (stage 2)		High	Med	Lead: Marketing & Communications Support: ICT, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Rangers, Engineering

¹ Return on investment describes the benefit from the point of view of the small business customer (high, medium or low) where effort is from the point of view of the City of Vincent.

Reform area 1: Better information

Reforms	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
1.5 Create a series of visual roadmaps to provide an overview for small business on the approvals journey and keep them informed of assessment processes and timeframes	●	●	●			●			High	Low	Lead: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place Support: Marketing & Communications, Small Business Innovators (working group)
1.6 Provide clear and consistent guidelines for small business on noise assessments and acoustic reports	●	●				●			High	Low	Lead: Built Environment & Wellbeing Support: Development & Design
1.7 Review and simplify forms, permits and advice notes to make it easier for small business to complete (including visual examples where necessary)	●	●	●		● (stage 1)		● (stage 2)		High	Med	Lead: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Rangers, Policy & Place Support: Marketing & Communications
1.8 Improve cross team information sharing and internal communications to raise visibility and value of small business to the City	●	●	●			●			Med	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee, Small Business Innovators Support: All
1.9 Promote the role of external agencies in the small business application and approvals journey through City communications	●	●	●		●				Med	Med	Lead: Small Business Innovators Support: Marketing & Communications, All

Reform area 1: Better information

Reforms	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
1.10 Engage with real estate industry bodies to better inform local agents of approval processes and small business obligations, to address leasing risk for small business	●	●					●		High	Med	Lead: Policy & Place Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing
1.11 Expand access and reach of business e-news to keep small business updated on the City's programs and initiatives	●	●	●		●				Med	Med	Lead: Policy & Place, Support: Customer Service, Marketing & Communications
1.12 Better identify and segment small business through data capture on existing forms	●	●	●		●				Med	Low	Lead: ICT Support: Customer Service, Small Business Innovators
1.13 Consolidate and centralise permits and applications for business enhancement activities on the website	●	●	●			●			High	Low	Lead: Policy & Place Support: Rangers, Built Environment & Wellbeing
1.14 Develop a small business self-assessment tool to help applicants determine what approvals the business model may require	●	●	●		●				High	Low	Lead: ICT Support: Customer Service, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing
1.15 Develop and consolidate information for events approvals and small businesses operating at events	●	●	●			● (stage 1)	● (stage 2)		High	Med	Lead: Marketing & Communications Support: Policy & Place, Rangers, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Waste, Engineering

Reform area 2: Business support

To support small business through a coordinated and collaborative five-staged approach as they undertake their enquiry, pre-lodgement, lodgement, assessment/approval and operational journey.

Actions	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
2.1 Establish a consistent and collaborative internal workflow for small business customers that contact the City wanting to start or grow their business	●	●	●			●			High	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee, Small Business Innovators, Customer Service Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Marketing & Communications
2.2 Establish a customer experience focused 'Business Support' function to guide small businesses through their approvals journey, and identify small business specialists from technical approvals-based teams to work in collaboration to make it easier to do business in Vincent	●	●	●			●			High	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee, Customer Service (Business Support Team) Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Rangers, Engineering
2.3 The Business Support workflow is embedded within business and workforce planning	●	●	●	●		●			High	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee, Management Team Support: Customer Service, All relevant teams
2.4 Identify, create and update current systems/processes and associated tools to support the Business Support function across the organisation	●	●	●			●			High	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee, Small Business Innovators Support: Customer Service, All relevant teams

Reform area 2: Business support

Action	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
2.5 Business Support – Stage 1 – Responding to a small business enquiry	●	●	●				●		High	Med	Lead: Customer Service Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Other relevant teams
2.6 Business Support – Stage 2 – Assisting a small business during pre-lodgement	●	●	●				●		High	Med	Lead: Customer Service Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Other relevant teams
2.7 Business Support – Stage 3 – Receiving a small business application at lodgement	●	●	●				●		High	Med	Lead: Customer Service, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing Support: Other relevant teams
2.8 Business Support – Stage 4 – Assessing a small business application	●	●	●				●		High	Med	Lead: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, All other technical experts from teams Support: Customer Service
2.9 Business Support – Stage 5 – Post-approval support for a small business	●	●	●			●			High	Med	Lead: Policy & Place Support: Customer Service, All relevant teams

Reform area 3: Streamline processes to improve the customer experience

Implement solutions that streamline and expedite processes linked to small business applications and strengthen the systems and tools that support process improvement.

Action	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
3.1 Develop a process to implement a 'fast track' planning approval stream for low-risk applications	●	●	●		●				High	Low	Lead: Development & Design Support: Built Environment & Wellbeing, Engineering, Policy & Place
3.2 Ensure effective assessment of small business applications by reviewing and updating internal delegation and referral timeframes	●	●	●		● (stage 1 & 2)	● (stage 3)			High	Med	Lead: Executive Management Committee Support: Governance, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Rangers, Engineering, Policy & Place
3.3 Review and simplify the City's event approval process to make it easier for small business	●	●	●			● (stage 1)	● (stage 2)		High	High	Lead: Marketing and Communications, Built Environment & Wellbeing Support: Policy & Place, Rangers, Development & Design, Waste, Engineering
3.4 Review small business application data and information to determine if an Application Assessment Unit (AAU) or other mechanism should be formed to improve cross functional review of small business applications	●	●						●	Med	Med	Lead: Development and Design Support: Built Environment & Wellbeing, Engineering, Waste, Policy & Place
3.5 Centralise and actively maintain small business customer records to improve quality and consistency of communication	●	●	●				●		Med	Med	Lead: Customer Service, ICT Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Rates, Marketing & Communications

Reform area 3: Streamline processes to improve the customer experience

Action	Resources				Timeframe				Return on investment		Responsibility
	People	Process	Technology	Budget	<3m	<6m	<12m	>12m	Benefit	Effort	Contributors
3.6 Standardise online lodgement and payments for all small business applications	●	●	●	●				●	High	High	Lead: Strategy and Development, ICT Support: All teams with small business approval function
3.7 Create a centralised online portal to enable small businesses to track the progress of their applications	●	●	●	●				●	High	High	Lead: ICT Support: Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing, Policy & Place, Marketing & Communications, Rangers
3.8 Review relevant policies and local laws to streamline and reduce approvals burden for small business, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Law review – trading in public places local law and local government property local law Licensed Premises Policy Parklets Policy Construction Management Plan Sound Attenuation Policy Planning Exemption Policy – i.e. Commercial Fit outs and COVID exemptions Concerts and Events Policy Parking Policy 	●	●					●	High	High	Lead: Policy & Place Support: Corporate Strategy & Governance, Development & Design, Built Environment & Wellbeing Engineering	
3.9 Improve consistency of process by ensuring process mapping is up to date and easily accessible across the organisation	●	●	●		● (stage 1)	● (stage 2)	● (stage 3)		High	Med	Lead: ICT Support: All teams

