

# UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

## Policy No. 088

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### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the way in which Council will deal with unsolicited proposals. Council will consider unsolicited proposals on merit and in the context of Council priorities. All proposals will be directed to the Chief Executive Officer for coordination of the assessment and recommendation process.

If there is merit in an unsolicited proposal, equal opportunity will generally be afforded to other participants to submit proposals, however due regard will be given to the possible intellectual property or commercial-in-confidence information in the proposal. The capacity for an assessment to be undertaken in confidence is crucial to developing a receptive and open environment to receive innovative proposals.

### 2 Scope

The policy covers ideas individuals or organisations want to undertake either in partnership with or utilising some Council asset or resources. Such proposals can have the potential to help Council deliver on its strategic plan through partnerships with people and organisations that share a common strategic vision for Darwin.

### 3 Policy Statement

Elements of an unsolicited proposal that may be considered new, unique or innovative include characteristics such as:

- intellectual property or innovative ideas;
- ownership of software or technology offering a unique benefit;
- unique financial arrangements;
- ability to deliver a strategic outcome;
- other demonstrably new, unique or innovative elements that would not be entirely realised or available through an open competitive process; and
- ownership of a key piece of infrastructure or land or any augmentation of existing infrastructure or land (either by Council or the proponent).

Determinations of whether there are any elements that are new, unique or innovative are made by Council and are subjective.

Council Policy No. 088 – Unsolicited Proposals				
Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	Responsible Officer: General Manager City Performance	Next Review Date
1.0	22\0891	26/06/2018		30/06/2022

# UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

## Policy No. 088

---

Proposals should provide sufficient information to enable them to be assessed against the criteria contained at **Assessment Process**. Generally, it would be expected that proposals contain the following information:

- outline of the proposal;
- objectives of the proposal;
- unique or distinctive element(s) of the proposal;
- rationale, if any, for not participating in an open competitive process;
- nature and extent of anticipated outcomes;
- public benefits the proposal will bring to the Northern Territory;
- financial and commercial details, including sources of funding and a cost estimate;
- the nature of support requested from Council including why Council support is necessary for the project to proceed;
- details of intellectual property;
- details of the proponent(s); and
- proposed duration of the arrangement.

A proposal must contain a clear statement that Council may submit the proposal to a competitive process if Council exercises its discretion not to proceed with a proposal at any time. Any proposal that seeks to deny Council this right may not be progressed under this policy.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will take the lead role in the receipt and coordination of the consideration of unsolicited proposals through an internal assessment panel.

### ASSESSMENT PROCESS

#### STEP 1 – INITIAL REVIEW

The CEO will undertake an initial review to determine whether the proposal is considered to be an unsolicited proposal.

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## Policy No. 088

---

### STEP 2 – STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

1. The CEO will undertake a strategic assessment of the proposal to determine:
  - (a) alignment with Council policies and priorities;
  - (b) whether the proposal contains qualities that are new, unique or innovative, and that may not be able to be achieved or fully realised through an open competitive process; and
  - (c) the level of public benefit.

The CEO may request additional information from the proponent as required.

2. Proposals that are determined by the CEO to align with Council policies and priorities; contain qualities that are new, unique or innovative, and have sufficient public benefit, will undergo a formal evaluation (Step 3). The identification, recognition and protection of any intellectual property will be addressed and agreed with the proponent at this stage.

A decision to evaluate an application will not signify any commitment or obligation on behalf of Council.

3. Where proposals do not warrant progression to the formal evaluation stage, proponents will be advised accordingly.

### STEP 3 – FORMAL EVALUATION OF PROPOSAL

1. The CEO will assess the proposals against the following assessment criteria:
  - financial viability;
  - capital requirements;
  - the rationale, if any, for not participating in an open competitive process;
  - the level of overall public benefit;
  - strategic importance and consistency with Council's plans, priorities and strategies;
  - capability and capacity of proponent to deliver the proposal; including the degree of previous experience of the proponent in the delivery of infrastructure, goods and services;
  - value to Council – encompassing economic benefit, service delivery, risk allocation, and qualitative outcomes; and

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## Policy No. 088

---

- the level of contribution required of Council and how/if it will be repaid either directly, or indirectly through the provision increased benefits to Council.

The CEO may determine additional assessment criteria relevant to a particular proposal to be used in the formal evaluation process and may request additional information from the proponent.

- The CEO's evaluation report will be submitted to the Council for consideration. Where applicable, the evaluation report will recommend a process for progressing the proposal if Council decides to move forward with it. In recommending a process the CEO will consider, and take into account, existing policies and legislation.

Generally the recommended process will afford other industry participants equal opportunity to submit proposals for the opportunity through an open competitive process. The nature of the competitive process and any recognition of the original proponent will be determined on a case by case basis.

Where a competitive process is not recommended, the CEO must outline the qualities that are new, unique or innovative and that would not be able to be achieved through an open competitive process. In addition, the CEO must outline the process to reach final approval and agreement, taking into account existing policies.

- Following consideration by Council, proponents will be advised of the outcome of the evaluation process, and where applicable, any next steps. It should be noted that a decision to proceed directly with a proponent or through a competitive process will not signify any commitment or obligation on behalf of Council.

### RESOURCE COMMITMENTS

The process for developing and assessing an unsolicited proposal will require the commitment of resources by both the proponent and Council. While this policy seeks to minimise the costs to the proponent, Council will not reimburse costs associated with the unsolicited proposals process incurred by the proponent.

### REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed periodically to assess its effectiveness in dealing with unsolicited proposals.

Council Policy No. 088 – Unsolicited Proposals				
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1.0	22\0891	26/06/2018		30/06/2022

# UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

## Policy No. 088

---

### 4 Definitions

Unsolicited Proposal –proposals from the private and non-government sectors seeking consideration outside of the usual process.

### 5 Legislative References

Local Government (Accounting) Regulations Part 13

### 6 Procedures / Related Documents

- Policy No. 025 Community Engagement
- Policy No. 010 Land Acquisition and Disposal
- Policy No. 083 Long Term Lease
- Strategic Land Holding document 2015

### 6 Responsibility / Application

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will take the lead role in the receipt and coordination of the consideration of unsolicited proposals through an internal assessment panel.

### 8 Document Control

Council/Administrative Policy			Responsible Officer:	
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Council Policy No. 088 – Unsolicited Proposals				
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