



SPORT **HQ**

Facility planning guide

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government

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The information presented in this guide:

- is general in nature and does not consider your organisation's specific situation;
- is correct at time of publishing; and
- should not be considered as legal advice.

Introduction

This guide has been developed to demonstrate the planning process and provides an overview of the steps your organisation can take to continue on the path to facility development. The guide is divided into the five key steps, from developing your idea through to managing project delivery and funding acquittal.



1. The idea

Identified need

- Define objectives
- Assess current facilities
- Identify requirements
- Initial consultation, funding sources, budget and resources



2. Facility planning documents

Master plan > feasibility > concept designs > preliminary approvals > detailed design and documentation > approvals



3. Project planning

- Timeline
- Transition
- Forecast demand and budget
- Resource planning
- Cost estimation



4. Investment attraction

- Budget allocation
- Engagement with Council
- Grants / funding opportunities
- Borrowings



5. Project and funding management

- Approvals
- Tender
- Construction
- Cash flow
- Acquittal



1. The Idea

Your organisation has identified a need to develop your facilities. One of the most important questions at this stage is – **“Will this facility development align with your goals?”**. You can use the *Project Planning Workbook* to further explore your idea. Consider the following steps when developing your idea into a plan:

Define objectives

Clearly define what you hope to achieve from the facility development. This might include increasing capacity, improving safety, enhancing your members' experience or supporting new activities. Always bring it back to your organisation's goals. Your organisation's strategic plan can guide this process as it outlines the long-term goals and objectives of your organisation. Referencing your strategic plan ensures that the facility development aligns with your organisation's broader vision and direction. Adding your facility needs to your strategic plan keeps everyone on the same path.

Assess current facilities

Conduct a thorough assessment of your current facilities, noting their condition, capacity, usability and any limitations. There may be limitations on your site due to flooding, bushfire, environmental overlays, adjacent land uses, lease conditions (if any), zoning or contaminated land (e.g. decommissioned landfill). It's important to identify site constraints that may influence the project early. This then provides a baseline to work from and helps provide initial direction for required facility updates.

There could be potential to improve accessibility and equality through Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance and cultural and gender sensitivities.

Identify requirements

Write down what is needed to meet the defined objectives.

Funding sources

Carefully consider available funding sources when plotting out your project, especially when evaluating the project's scale and timeline, which can range from months to years, depending on the scale of the project.

Can the project be completed with organisation savings or will fundraising or grants be necessary? If external funding is necessary, consider what planning documentation may be required to help secure funding.

Stakeholder consultation

Consult with stakeholders, including members, staff, community partners and relevant governing bodies. While it's still early in the project, their input can provide valuable insights and may help to garner support for the project as it progresses. If you are on leased land, discuss your ideas with the land owner (e.g. your local Council). There may be limitations which restrict your project or certain approvals which you will need to obtain before you proceed. Some Councils require approval before you build a shed or remove a tree – it's best to check!

Be careful to manage expectations. Just talking about something might mean people think it will definitely go ahead. It's best to frame your consultation according to the current planning stage of your project.

Initial budget and resources

Start to consider the budget and resources for the project, for example:

What professional input might you require?

This might include things like quotes, designs and plans.

What resources do you have available to complete your project?

Consider the expertise of your people for project management and delivery, as well as any financial or in-kind contributions. It's important to note that some projects, especially those funded by government entities, may require the involvement of an accredited construction project manager as a mandatory item.

Consider potential conflicts of interest that may arise within the organisation during the planning or execution phases if you are thinking of paying members to deliver parts of the project. While it is acceptable for appropriately qualified or skilled members to bid for the work, it is important that any conflicts of interest are addressed transparently. Establishing a project subcommittee can help drive the project planning process while ensuring ethical considerations and potential conflicts of interest are addressed proactively.

What is the estimated cost of completing your project?

Consider anticipated construction and professional costs, as well as any contingency and escalation allowances. Also keep in mind that there may be costs associated with planning, design and approvals. This is just an initial estimate and the budget should be regularly reviewed and amended throughout the project. A professional quantity surveyor may be required to help determine the likely costs if the project is more complex and quotes from contractors are not available.



2. Facility planning documents

Once you have established your idea, you can proceed with the required facility development plans, reports and approvals. Not every document or step is required for every project. The documents required can depend on the complexity and scale of each project. The below table demonstrates the planning documents from early planning stages with less detail to final planning documentation with detailed design. A small project such as building a shed may only require initial stakeholder engagement with Council (if required), receiving quotes from a number of builders and engaging a contractor to build the shed. Larger projects may require some or all of the steps below.

🔗 Planning initiation and formation

Spatial analysis / facility layout plan

Provides a quick visual reference to show your project goals. A facility layout plan might be known as a site plan.

A preliminary design, sketch or concept plan to provide a visual indication of the project, or a diagrammatic overlay on an aerial photo of the site to show the proposed location and layout of main elements such as participation spaces, car parks, playgrounds and major buildings.

Master plan/facility plan

Visualises the proposed development. Can include initial investigations and stakeholder and community consultation.

A master plan provides an overview of the proposed development including all retained, existing and proposed new buildings and structures, participation spaces, footpath networks, internal roadways and car parks. If required, additional detail such as approximate locations of lighting, drinking fountains, external furniture and entry signage can also be illustrated on the plan.

Various levels of investigations may be necessary at this stage including:

- Local government overlay analysis regarding issues such as zoning, flooding, bush fires, environmental and noise impacts
- Power supply, potable water supply, stormwater and effluent disposal investigations
- Site topography
- Stakeholder and community consultation may also be completed at this stage

🔗 Project assessment

Feasibility study and/or business case

Explores financial viability. An important step for large-scale projects that are seeking external funding.

This planning stage aims to determine the viability of a proposed facility development project.



2. Facility planning documents



Considerations and inclusions may include:

- Social and economic cost benefit analysis
- Demand assessment, gap and trend analysis
- Stakeholder and community engagement
- Capital and operational financial forecasting
- Governance and management
- Strategic context and policy alignment
- Benchmarking

Development approval stage

Concept plan

The preliminary consultant package for development approval. A concept plan might be known as a sketch design.

This design provides more detail than the master plan, including building floor plan layouts, sections and elevations. It also includes a higher level of detail in the external works such as notes about overland flow or drainage, locations of external furniture, finishes for footpaths and larger scale drawings of feature design nodes. 3D imagery can also be included at this stage. Other specialists such as town planners, environmental scientists and traffic engineers may include reports, if necessary.

Operational works approval / building approval / tender

Detailed design

Comprehensive package for approvals, tender and construction

This documentation package is usually a combination of reports and detailed construction plans and specifications. Architects, landscape architects and engineers (structural, civil, traffic, lighting engineers or otherwise) will produce detailed and dimensioned plans, schedules and specification documentation. Other specialists such as town planners, environmental scientists and traffic engineers may include reports, if necessary. A bill of quantities may also be produced for tendering purposes.

Site assessments

Consultants, engineers and town planners may be required to conduct site testing. These are best completed early in the project so there are no surprises. Potential testing and plans include:

- Geotechnical assessment and soil contamination testing
- Noise assessment
- Fire management plan
- Flora and fauna surveys (including seasonal surveys)
- Environmental management plan
- Flood management plan
- Native Title and Cultural Heritage assessments

Other planning documents

Depending on your project you may also require additional planning documents, for example:

- A project management plan
- A procurement management plan
- An asset management plan
- A risk assessment
- A management and operations plan
- A land management plan
- Emergency evacuation plans
- Event management plans including parking management

3. Project planning

When an organisation decides to complete a new project, careful planning is crucial to ensure success. Your planning should outline key steps to manage the project effectively. These steps include creating a timeline, planning for transition, forecasting demand and budget, procuring necessary resources and undertaking a tendering process if needed. Each of these elements plays a vital role in managing the project's flow, ensuring all aspects are accounted for and that the project is completed on time and within budget. Here's a closer look at these steps:

Timeline

Begin by mapping out a realistic timeline for your project. Consider all stages of the project from planning, procurement, construction, to completion. Factor in potential delays such as weather or the required approvals processes.

Transition

Plan for the transition phase during which the new facilities or changes will be put into use. This might involve training volunteers and staff, informing organisation members and updating any relevant operational procedures. In some cases, project construction may render your site, or part of your site unusable. Operational plans and financial contingencies should be put in place and temporary facilities may even be required.

Consider if your tendering process may involve a cost and incorporate an estimate in your overall budget.

Forecast demand and budget

Estimate the expected usage of the new facility and budget accordingly. This should take into account initial construction costs, ongoing maintenance and potential income from its use.

Be realistic and detailed with your budgeting. Often, unexpected costs can arise during facility development, so it's essential to plan for contingencies. A comprehensive budget that includes room for unplanned expenses will help ensure your project stays on track financially.



Resource planning

Determine the resources, materials and services you'll need to procure for the project. This could involve hiring a project manager, purchasing construction materials or securing a contractor.

Cost estimation

Once you've determined the requirements for your project, you will usually obtain cost estimates rather than moving directly to a formal tendering process. This involves seeking quotes from multiple suppliers or contractors, evaluating their proposals and then selecting the most suitable provider based on cost, experience and quality of service. For most grant applications, you will typically need at least three quotes to secure funding, especially for larger projects.

While the least expensive bid might be appealing, the cheapest provider may not always offer the best value or quality.

For larger or more complex projects, you might consider obtaining a cost estimate from a qualified quantity surveyor. This can provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the overall costs, including allowances for contingencies and escalation, helping you secure funding with greater confidence.

Consider if your cost estimation process may involve a cost and incorporate an estimate in your overall budget.

Be prepared for flexibility at each step of your project. As it progresses, new information or changes in circumstances may require adjustments to your initial plans.

Tips for obtaining quotes:

- Before contacting suppliers for quotes, have a well-defined scope of works and accompany your request with at least a sketch design and site plan
- When comparing potential contractors or suppliers, ensure you're comparing 'like-for-like' quotes. This means that each quote should be based on the same specifications, materials and scale. This is often a requirement for funding applications
- Giving potential contractors a clear timeline, including when you wish to start and when the project needs to be completed, helps them gauge their capacity and the feasibility of bidding to take on the project
- If your organisation hasn't yet secured funds, make this known to contractors. While it might lead to some contractors hesitating to provide a quote, others might be more willing if they're informed upfront

4. Investment attraction

When it comes to attracting investment for facility developments, organisations must proactively engage various stakeholders. A well-thought-out budget, clear communication, an understanding of grants and funding opportunities and careful consideration of borrowing options can all contribute to the successful funding of a project. Here are some steps to guide organisations in attracting investment:

Budget allocation

As infrastructure grants often require a financial co-contribution, you will need to determine how much of your organisation's money can be allocated towards the project.

This will form the basis of your funding and help investors and funding bodies understand your commitment to the project.

Engagement with Council

Engage with your local Council early. They may provide advice, resources or even funding for community projects. Maintain open and regular communication to foster a positive relationship and to ensure your project aligns with local plans, regulations and strategies.

If your project is to be constructed on Council-owned or controlled land, you will also need Council's written permission to conduct the project.

Grants / funding opportunities

Investigate and apply for relevant grants and funding opportunities, which could come from government grant programs, sporting bodies, businesses or community initiatives. Keep in mind that grants can be highly competitive. Always be aware of application deadlines, as project timelines can span a number of years, and ensure your project aligns with each grant program's specific criteria. Please refer to the accompanying fact sheets on being grant ready and grant writing.

Borrowings

While most organisations won't own the land they intend to develop (i.e. they will usually lease it from their local Council), it can be possible to secure commercial loans from banks or other financial institutions against a lease.

If you intend to seek commercial borrowings to help finance a facility development, make sure you understand the terms and conditions, including interest rates and repayment schedules, and that such a loan would be appropriate for the level of financial risk your organisation is willing to take.

Some organisations have also borrowed money from members to help fund facility developments. Before taking loans from members, it is important to consider the longer-term implications. If you intend to borrow money from members to fund facility developments, exercise caution and maintain open communication. All loans should be based on clear, legally-binding agreements outlining the terms and repayment plan. You should seek expert advice before taking on any borrowings so that you can make informed decisions that align with your organisation's financial goals and risk tolerance.

Remember, attracting investment requires patience, perseverance and, most importantly, a well-developed plan. It's a collaborative effort that involves communicating the organisation's vision and the positive impact of the project on the community.



5. Project and funding management



Once an organisation has completed the planning stages for a new project and secured funding, it's time to transition into the execution phase. This is where all the preparation begins to materialise into tangible results. The execution phase typically involves the tendering process, overseeing construction and finally, the acquittal process, where the organisation provides a report to funding bodies detailing how funds were used. An organisation may choose to hire a project manager, if necessary, to execute these stages. Here are the steps involved:

Approvals

Before proceeding to the project's construction phase, you will need to complete your final designs and obtain all necessary approvals. These steps will help you avoid potential legal or procedural roadblocks down the line. Confirm that the final designs align with the organisation's vision and meet all regulatory and stakeholder specifications. Additionally, any permissions or clearances required from local, state or federal bodies should be secured.

Tender

This is a process where the organisation invites bids from various contractors to undertake the project. When evaluating these bids, consider both price and non-price criteria. While the cost is undoubtedly significant, other factors like the proposed timeline, the contractor's experience, past projects and the quality of their work should be weighed into the decision-making.

Once you select a bid, you'll sign a contract with the chosen contractor. If you have received grant funding you may be required to secure the funding body's approval before you sign the contract.

Construction

During this phase, the organisation needs to closely monitor the project's progress to ensure it's on track and meets the agreed standards. Regular site visits, meetings with the contractor and status updates should be part of the process.

Cash flow

It is important to understand and plan your cash flow during construction. Key project completion stages may require you to pay your contractor. However, unless your grant funds are paid upfront, or the project stages align with your grant payment milestones, short term cash flow deficits may occur which will need to be accommodated.

Acquittal

This is a crucial final step where the organisation demonstrates to funding bodies how the money was used. It's essentially a financial report providing evidence that the funds were spent appropriately and according to the agreed terms. The acquittal process might require you to present invoices, receipts, proof of expenditure (e.g. bank statements) and a summary of project outcomes.

The success of the project depends heavily on careful management during these phases. You should therefore maintain transparency, good communication and stay organised to ensure the project is completed successfully and to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.