Submission Date: 26 Apr 2017 12:39 PM Reference No: 22 Form Details:
Name (required, for publication on website)
Peninsula Transport Assist
Email
Address
Phone Number
Preferred method of contact
Email
Budget Amount (if known, for publication on website)
$50,000
Submission Detail (for publication on website)
Request for MPS to provide $50,000 in financial support for Peninsula Transport Assist (PTA). This funding will assist PTA to continue to grow and provide ongoing affordable and accessible transport services to transport disadvantaged residents living on the Mornington Peninsula. The funding will specifically help PTA to sustain and expand its volunteer ridesharing service operations.
Submission attachment (for publication on website)
MPS-budget-submission1-for-PTA-25-Apr-17.docx (Attached)
Has funding previously been sought for this project? Yes
Will this project require ongoing maintenance or continued financial support from MPSC? (if known) Yes
Do you want to be heard at the s223 Committee meeting? Yes
All or any part of this submission will be made public and I have read the Confidentiality statements
I understand
PTA Budget Submission – Supporting Document

Our budget submission requests for the Mornington Peninsula Shire (MPS) to provide $50,000 in financial support to the Peninsula Transport Assist (PTA) in the FY17/18 budget. This funding will assist PTA to continue to grow and provide ongoing affordable and accessible transport services to transport disadvantaged residents living on the Mornington Peninsula. The funding will specifically help PTA to sustain and expand its volunteer ridesharing service operations.

PTA’s volunteers use their own cars to provide mobility assistance to Mornington Peninsula residents who need direct, affordable transport to health services, medical appointments, shops, community services, and social wellbeing and leisure activities.

The request for financial support aligns to the proposed 2017 – 2021 Council Plan that states that MPS will “continue to support the work of Peninsula Transport Assist”. The provision of affordable and accessible transport is a central element for achieving ‘a healthy, happy, inclusive and active community’ for our Mornington Peninsula residents and community members. PTA supports three of the key themes for our community in the Council Plan, including:

- a. Our Place - We create thriving, accessible and inclusive places to live, work and visit.
- b. Our Connectivity - We support an integrated transport and connectivity network; and
- c. Our Wellbeing – Our community works together to achieve reasonable standards of health and wellbeing for all residents, and we support a self-determined, engaged and inclusive community that is accessible to all.

About PTA

PTA was established in 2011 by Peninsula residents who were motivated by the need to improve community transport services for Mornington Peninsula residents.

PTA now has three staff members based at Legacy House in Mt. Eliza, supporting a volunteer driver workforce of 70 drivers. The volunteer rideshare service does an average of 170 trips per month. Of those, approximately 50% of the drives are to and from medical appointments; primarily transporting older people to metropolitan Melbourne hospitals and medical specialists.

PTA also provides a community bus hire service averaging 50 bus bookings per month for local community groups. The community bus service usually also includes providing groups with volunteer bus drivers.

PTA has advantages over alternative, similar transport services including:

- PTA’s ride sharing service is 50% cheaper than a taxi or Uber. In addition PTA does not charge for the time that the service takes. This means that volunteers
can stay with the person at their destination and help them at their appointment, in addition to driving to and from the destination. Such additional service assists our clients with tasks such as pushing their wheelchair, helping them find their doctor’s consulting suite in a busy hospital, providing moral support and helping to carry goods.

- PTA’s bus hire services are 40% cheaper than commercial vehicle hire companies as PTA maintains a vehicle registry that enables community groups to share each other’s vehicles on a cost recovery basis.

Organisations that support the bus hire service by including their bus in the registry can also receive an income by hiring their buses to other community groups on days when they are not using them. PTA takes care of the booking arrangements, provides additional accident insurance cover, invoices borrowers and pays the lending organisation a bus hire fee. Groups and individuals can also hire a volunteer bus driver, instead of using a paid driver. This can greatly reduce a community group’s costs when providing transport for events/services.

PTA’s 70 volunteer drivers are situated across all major regions of the Mornington Peninsula – Western Port, Rosebud, Mornington, Somerville and Mt. Eliza. Drivers are usually matched with clients who live in similar parts of the Mornington Peninsula, to reduce travel distances, increase sustainability and ensure that drivers are familiar with the roads and routes they need to travel. Similarly, PTA locates its buses in Mornington, Hastings and Rosebud when not in use, which makes it easier for residents to access and use the PTA bus hire service.

PTA is also dedicated to tackling climate change, associated with transport. Through our partnership with Carbon Neutral, PTA aims to minimise the impact of our services through the voluntary purchasing of carbon offsets.

PTA’s transport services address many Shire goals and objectives, in terms of transport, health and wellbeing, ageing well, sense of community and volunteering.

**Access for all**

The ABS age structure forecasts for MPS indicate that there will be a continual increase in the population over the age of sixty-five years for the next twenty years. MPS also estimates that 38,000 residents currently have some form of disability, with nearly 7000 residents requiring assistance with daily activities. PTA provides transport services to support access for all in the community, assisting those members of the community who have a disability, cannot drive or do not have access to transport. The population and health statistics highlight the growing demand for community transport on the Mornington Peninsula into the future.

**Connectivity & Transport**

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is approximately 720 square kilometres in size with limited public transport options, particularly in rural areas. Given this, residents who do not have access to a car or cannot drive face significant disadvantage when it comes to accessing employment, education, health and social support services. A
growing a number older residents no longer drive and need personalised assistance to access shopping, community and medical services. As an innovative vehicle and volunteer sharing network that pools community resources together PTA fills gaps in transport services on the Mornington Peninsula. The act of offering a person a lift or driving a community group's bus can dramatically increase the region’s connectivity.

Suburbs with lower socio-economic status usually also have higher rates of single person households and households with transport disadvantage due to lower car ownership. PTA addresses this transport disadvantage on the Mornington Peninsula in areas such as Capel Sound, Hastings and Mornington Park. In these areas, there are a higher number of seniors who live by themselves who now no longer drive, but still want to be able to live independently.

**Health and Wellbeing**

By increasing the availability of community transport services, we help to sustain active ageing for our clients. Improving older people’s ability to move around their neighbourhoods helps to increase their social, cultural and civic engagement. It also improves older people’s access to community and health services, which is essential to wellbeing and independent living.

A significant amount of PTA’s services are used to assist residents to access health services both in and out of the MPS region. Regular trips include transporting clients to and from major hospitals; including Frankston, Alfred, Box Hill and Epworth-Freemasons Hospital, medical specialists, eye clinics and GP Doctors. Without the assistance of PTA many clients would be unable to access these medical services or would have to rely on more expensive and less supportive means of transport.

Lack of access to transport can result in declining social capital as research suggests that people who no longer drive reduce their levels of social participation in social activities, such as belonging to music groups, sporting clubs and volunteering. This can weaken social cohesion as people’s sense of belonging to their community also declines. People without access to transport often feel lonely and become socially isolated.

**Volunteering**

Volunteering with community based organisations such as PTA can help to channel extra time in retirement into a meaningful activity that has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the volunteer. Research indicates that people who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression than those who do not volunteer. The research also shows that volunteering has greater health benefits to older people than to all other ages. Volunteering for older adults provides additional physical and social activity, as well as providing individuals with a sense of purpose at a time when their social roles are changing.

Volunteer driving is a great job for men, as it aligns to men's interests and strengths. Many men love their cars and enjoy driving as a pass time. Driving is a defined role and it is accessible to a broad group of men who share this skill. It's easy for a person to quantify the difference they're making, volunteer drivers also develop
strong relationships with their passengers and drivers. Our PTA volunteers often remark that they feel a sense of pride and a sense of purpose from driving. Giving back to the community is major motivator for people who volunteer with PTA.

Community Partnerships

PTA has a strong relationship with the Mornington Peninsula Shire as this charity was formed with initial assistance through the State Government’s Transport Connections Project auspiced through Council. The Shire has a representative on the Committee of Management at PTA which helps shape the strategic direction of the organisation. PTA and the Shire also have a contractual arrangement for PTA to manage the Shire Community Bus Program. They also assist by supporting PTA advertising in the Community News, the Peninsula Wide Magazine and on the Council website.

PTA also has a strong relationship with other local and Victorian based community groups and organisations, including Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the RACV. The RACV has provided funding for the development of a community transport software product and an online eLearning Mobility platform and has agreed to support PTA in the Royal Auto Magazine through the Beyond Mobility Program.

Age Friendly Award

In 2016 PTA was awarded the inaugural Age Friendly Award from the Victorian State Government in recognition of its outstanding contribution to the alleviation of transport disadvantage on the Mornington Peninsula. This achievement recognised not only the great work that has been done by the volunteers and committee of PTA, but also the Mornington Peninsula Shire’s commitment to providing alternative, sustainable and affordable transport services. The success of PTA reflects well on Council as well as PTA.

Growing PTA services

Over the past year, PTA has achieved much success, including development of a volunteer information pack, informative education videos for drivers, and improving our booking and billing options for clients. PTA aims to continue to grow and improve our community transport services, by providing more opportunities for point to point transport, fine-tuning services and improving the administration of the service.

The provision of $50K in funding from Mornington Peninsula Shire in FY17/18 would assist PTA to continue to improve the valuable transport services that we provide to the Mornington Peninsula community.

Thank you and regards,

Neil Toyne
President
PTA