

**INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE****17 SEPTEMBER 2014****1****COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS - SHIELDS STREET HEART PROJECT****M Ringer: 1/3/21-19: #4457220****RECOMMENDATION:****That Council:**

- 1) Notes the outcome of the community consultation for the Shields Street Heart Project;**
- 2) Proceeds to the detailed design of the Shields Street Heart project that will include, amongst other things:**
  - **Lawns, shade trees and tropical garden beds;**
  - **Modern lighting technologies;**
  - **Public Art;**
  - **Water features;**
  - **Toilets.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, to negotiate and finalise all matters relating to this project.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Cairns Regional Council undertook community consultation for the Shields Street Heart project from 10 June through to 18 July 2014 using a range of communication methods.

Overall, community survey results have showed strong support for undertaking the project (78%), with only 12% preferring that nothing is done. The community favoured lawns and gardens, modern lighting, public art, a water feature and toilets, as part of the design. The majority would prefer the upgrade completed as a single project as opposed to staging construction over two years.

Given the strong support for the project, it is recommended that Council proceed to the detail design of the project.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Shields Street Heart project is a component of the City Centre Master Plan that aims to continue to improve and revitalise the Cairns CBD. It will form the second stage of the City Centre revitalisation, following the completion of the Lake Street City Centre Alive project.

The Shields Street Heart project aims to provide more public space for meeting, dining and pedestrian activity associated with active street environments to enhance business activity. The project proposes an urban park design with new trees for shade and grassed areas. The additional open space will be create a more aesthetically pleasing, tropical environment.

At the May Ordinary Council Meeting, Council resolved the following:

*That Council:*

- ‘1. Endorses the Community Engagement Plan for the Shields Street Heart project*
- 2. Proceeds with Community Consultation over a 6 week period with a report to be brought back to Council at the conclusion of the consultation period.*
- 3. All external and internal communications will be managed by Council's Marketing and Communication Branch, with assistance from Council's Infrastructure Services Communications Unit.*

*carried’*

Consultation for the Shields Street Heart project was undertaken by Cairns Regional Council from 10 June 2014 to 18 July 2014. In keeping with Council's community engagement guiding principles, a range of communication tools, survey instruments and engagement methods were used as part of the consultation process. These included surveys and fact sheets, public meetings, on-line surveys, displays, print and on-line media, a traders meeting, mail outs and shop front.

Elements of the concept design include new garden beds, trees and lawns, water features, a kiosk, toilets, public art and modern lighting. The public was asked to provide feedback on the elements they favoured, those they least liked, and what changes to the concept plan they would like to see. Feedback was also requested on construction timing.

#### **COMMENT:**

There was very strong support for modern lighting technologies (83%), for public art (74%) and for the introduction of bollards for fully pedestrianizing the area for events (80%). There was also strong support for the city park (75%), with 31% supporting the concept and 35% preferring it on both sides of Lake Street. 63% of respondents want toilets in Shields Street, and most businesses support them as well. Council officers will investigate whether the redevelopment of the School of Arts building can accommodate additional public toilets.

Apart from the community survey, there was also positive feedback received for the project via the 'Your Say' online forum with the majority supportive of the city park and a main water feature.

A concept plan of Shields Street between the Esplanade and Abbott Street was also included in the consultation material, for which Council received limited feedback. Responses included replicating the natural underground watercourse as a series of water features complemented by a continuity of indigenous heritage public art, and support for connecting the Esplanade to a water plaza and the city park.

Comments from other written submissions were supportive of the concept to refresh this area, with some believing that it would help activation. Also, given its high usage and importance, the entire link between the Esplanade and Cairns Central Shopping Centre should be updated because it is 'tired' and unattractive. There were no objections to the plan as long as there is sufficient space for public use of the existing street level footpath, and new landscaping.

This section of Shields Street (between the Esplanade and Abbott Street) did not form part of the original City Centre Alive consultation in March 2013, and is not included in Council's 2014/15 Capital Works Program. However, Council officers will carry out further consultation on this part of the CBD Masterplan as part of any future project to enhance the section of Shields Street.

### **CONSULTATION:**

Consultation for the Shields Street Heart project was carried out in accordance with the Community Engagement Plan, adopted by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 28 May 2014. Further consultation will occur during the design phase of the project with the community, traders and through the City Centre Alive Steering Committee.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **Corporate and Operational Plans:**

The undertaking of this project supports Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 with particular reference to:

**Goal 1** "A vibrant, inclusive and healthy community with access to services and facilities which reflect its unique character, role and needs".

The Shields Street Heart project will provide a vibrant city centre for the community and local businesses, designed with unique ties to culture and history. The project will result in improved services to the community and a safer pedestrian environment for visitors to the CBD.

**Goal 2** "A strong and sustainable regional economy that supports the growth of new and existing industry and business activities whilst enhancing local lifestyle and providing long term employment opportunities".

The project will provide an attractive, enhanced CBD for the community and an active streetscape for businesses, with an aim to strengthen activity in the CBD and build business confidence.

Statutory:

Council will comply with Local Government purchasing requirements in delivering these works.

Financial:

The Shields Street Heat project has an allocation of \$2.5M in 2014/15 and \$4.5M in 2015/16, as part of Council's Capital Works Program. The detail design phase will determine an accurate cost of the project, at which a PLA will be submitted to Council for approval. Any revised total project cost can be reflected in Council's 2015/16 Capital Works Program.

Council will submit the Shields Street Heat project as a funding proposal under the State Government's Royalties for the Regions program, which, if successful, will provide additional external funding this financial year. Details of the submission will be provided in a Council Report to the Ordinary Meeting on 24 September 2014.

Options:

## Option 1:

Proceed to detailed design of the Shields Street Heat project that will include, amongst other things:

- Lawns, shade trees and tropical garden beds;
- Modern lighting technologies
- Public Art;
- Water features;
- Toilets.

## Option 2:

Do not proceed to detailed design of the Shields Street Heat project.

Michael Ringer  
Co-ordinator Strategic Planning

Heliuss Visser  
Manager Infrastructure Planning



Bruce Gardiner  
General Manager Infrastructure Service