

ORDINARY MEETING**23 NOVEMBER 2011****12****LIVEABLE CITIES INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING PROGRAM**

Malcolm Robertson: 1/59/3-01: #3386357

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council progresses with two funding applications under the Liveable Cities Program as follows :

Stream 1 Planning and Design - 'Cairns City Centre Master Plan Detail Design'

Stream 2 Demonstration Projects – Implementation of Cairns Cycling & Walking Strategy.

INTRODUCTION:

The Australian Government's Department of Infrastructure and Transport is calling for applications for its Liveable Cities Program. The Program will provide \$20 million over 2011-12 and 2012-13 in two streams — up to \$500,000 for Planning and Design projects, and up to \$4 million for Demonstration projects.

The Liveable Cities Program is open to State and Territory governments, and local governments within the 18 major Australian cities. Applications will close on 15 December 2011. The program is looking to fund innovative solutions to improve the liveability of our cities through high quality urban design, improved quality of open space and public places, addressing high levels of car dependency and traffic congestion and tackling the challenges of climate change.

BACKGROUND:

The Australian Government released its National Urban Policy – *Our Cities, Our Future* – in May 2011. The Policy represents an important contribution by the Australian Government to COAG's cities reform agenda. The Liveable Cities program shows the Government's commitment to make the largest of our cities and regional centres even more productive, sustainable and liveable.

The Program will seek to improve the capacity of major regional cities to undertake strategic planning in line with the COAG agreed criteria and will support the development of demonstration projects that facilitate urban renewal and strategic urban development.

The Department is seeking projects that will achieve;

- improved alignment of urban planning and design with the National Urban Policy and COAG principles;

- partnerships for action or planning where these have not previously existed;
- governance arrangements resulting in lasting partnerships between levels of government, parts of government and government and private interests;
- lessons or successful outcomes that can be transferred or applied to other partnership projects;
- planning approaches that break down specialist silos;
- enhanced collaboration resulting in improved outcomes in urban planning and delivery.

Program funding will be limited to no more than 50% of project costs. The Program has two streams:

- planning and design, which will provide up to \$500,000 for projects to improve the capacity of these capital and regional cities to undertake strategic planning and design; and
- demonstration projects, which will provide up to \$4 million for projects within capital cities and major regional cities that drive urban renewal and strategic urban development that contributes to improving the productivity, sustainability and liveability of our cities.

Applications are invited from State and Territory governments and local government authorities in 18 identified major cities, including Cairns. To ensure applicants put forward only their priority projects and, to encourage applicants to work in partnership, applicants may apply for funding for only one planning and design project and one demonstration project.

Approvals are expected to be announced in March 2012 and projects completed by 30 June 2013.

COMMENT:

Stream 1 Planning and Design

Council's City Centre Master Plan fits well within the criteria for this funding program. The Master Plan is currently entering into the detail design phase, to allow for future operational rollout of the major components. Council has currently made a financial commitment of \$490,000 within this year's Capital Works Budget and has notionally allocated a similar total in 2012/13. This commitment would allow for up to \$500,000 in matching funds to be sought for detailed planning and design under the funding program.

The proposed scope of works within the funding application includes the following:

- Engagement of Place Manager to deliver the following planning components of the City Centre Master Plan
- Develop detail design and costing of
 - Shield Street heart upgrade
 - Grafton Street upgrade
 - Median planting throughout City Centre Master Plan area
 - Outdoor dining upgrades

- Develop “interpretive layer” for City centre
- Ongoing community and stakeholder consultation and communication about City Centre Master Plan progress
- Coordination with Dept. TMR around the integration of works on Lake and Spence Streets relative to the Cairns Transit Network.

Stream 2 Demonstration Projects

It is proposed to submit an application under this stream to implement innovative projects identified in the Cairns Cycling & Walking Strategy. Council’s current capital works budget commitment is \$2m per annum and it is intended to apply for a matching amount through the Liveable Cities program.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Corporate and Operational Plans:

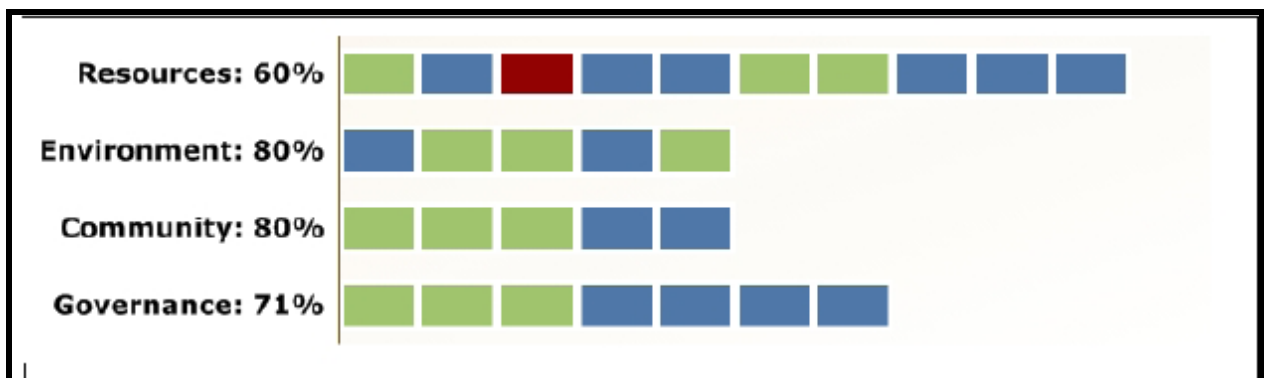
The following Council Corporate Plan 2009-2014 objectives are relevant:

- to improve the quality and opportunities for use of public space across the region; and
- to deliver a transport network, including footpaths and cycleways, that better matches service level expectations and future growth.

The Corporate Plan also lists City Centre Masterplan and Cycling & Walking Strategy implementation as key initiatives to be pursued.

Sustainability:

Stream 1 – Planning and Design ‘Cairns City Centre Master Plan Detail Design



The outcome of the activity will contribute to a reduction in non-travel related GHG emissions. The delivery phase of the activity will result in an increase in travel related GHG emissions.

The activity includes strategies to reduce the consumption of raw materials by at least 10%. The total value of products/materials that have a recognised sustainability rating exceeds 5% of the projects capital cost.

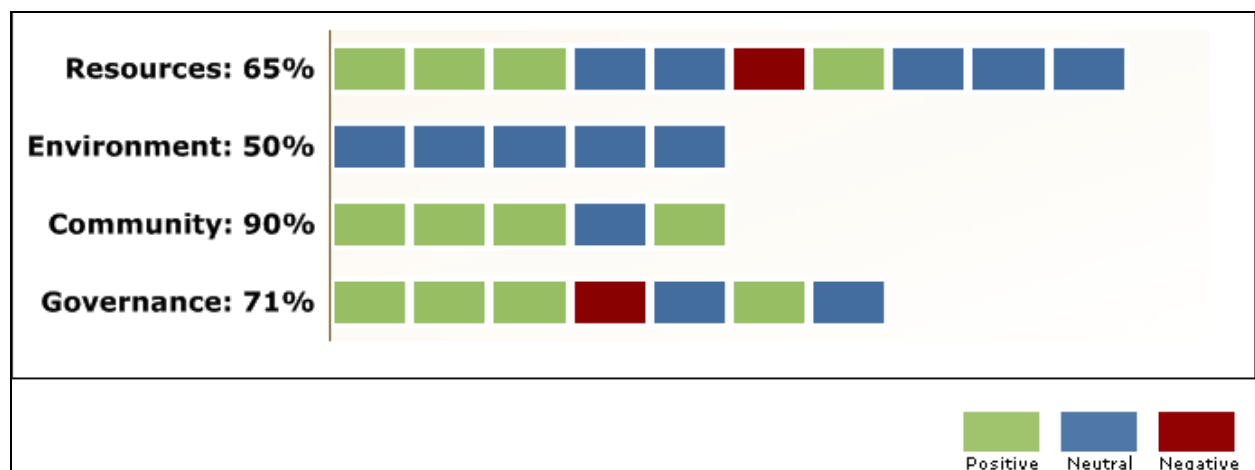
The outcome of the activity will reduce or detain stormwater/overland flows to reduce impacts on the receiving environment. The delivery phase of the activity has been planned to avoid potential impacts on waterways.

The activity includes actions to improve the environmental values of the site/precinct. The activity will deliver additional open space or improve the amenity of existing open space. The activity includes actions that will provide/ improve access to services for all members of the community.

The activity will support employment in the region, via external businesses or by increasing jobs within Council. The activity will use materials that are sourced, grown and/or manufactured in North Queensland.

The activity is within budget and meets or exceeds the scope defined in the Operational Plan.

Stream 2 – Demonstration Projects ‘Implementation of Cairns Cycling & Walking Strategy



1. Improving Resource Efficiency
Minor impact on resource Efficiency is balanced by the contribution this project will have on the reduction in travel-related green house gas emissions.
2. Conserving Biodiversity
Neutral Impact on the Environment as minimal disturbance to the existing environmental values.
3. Enhancing Community Health and Wellbeing
This will be achieved by creating infrastructure to encourage cycling and walking.
4. Delivering Sound Governance and Economic Management
This will be achieved by increasing the use of cycling and walking as alternative modes of transport and will be delivered according to budget.

Financial and Risk:

Required matching funding has been identified within 2011/12 and 2012/13 Capital budgets. The results of the Stream 1 Project will inform future capital works from 2013/14, subject to budget approvals.

CONSULTATION:

Council Planning Strategies, Technical Support Services and Infrastructure Management Branches have been consulted in development of this report.

OPTIONS:

That Council:

1. Progress with two funding applications under the Liveable Cities Program of:
Stream 1: Planning and Design – ‘Cairns City Centre Master Plan Detail Design’
Stream 2: Demonstration Projects – Implementation of Cairns Cycling & Walking Strategy
2. Not progress with these submissions to the Liveable Cities Program – Application for Funding.

CONCLUSION:

Successful application for Liveable Cities Program funding would significantly enhance the planning process for the operational rollout of the City Centre Master Plan and provide additional funding to implement the Cycling and Walking Strategy earlier than currently estimated.

The outcomes from the Stream 1 detailed planning will ensure Council has “investment ready” plans in place to inform future Council capital works budgets and future grant fund processes.

Malcolm Robertson
Inner City Facilities Manager

Alice Heather
Manager Sport, Recreation and Community Development

Ian Lowth
General Manager Community and Cultural Services