ORDINARY MEETING	
24 JANUARY 2024	9

CLIFTON BEACH EROSION MANAGEMENT PG22031-02 - APPLICATION TO COASTAL AND ESTUARINE RISK MITIGATION PROGRAM

50/5/32-01 | #7307127

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. Approves the acceptance of grant funding under the State Government's Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program for the breakwater construction for Clifton Beach Erosion Management PG22031-02.
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the grant, including the execution of the grant agreement.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

N/A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Council Officers successfully applied for grant funding up to the value of \$1,037,000 for the Breakwater Construction for Clifton Beach Erosion Management project PG22031-02 under the State Government's \$50M Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program (CERMP).

The CERMP supports projects that reduce the impact of natural disasters on coastal communities. The Department of Environment and Science (DES) submitted ten local and state government project proposals and received \$8.4M in funding for these. DES will administer funding for these projects over three years.

The construction of the breakwaters will provide longer term protection of the foreshore whilst reducing ongoing costs of regular sand nourishment programs.

The project has a total budget allocation of \$2,500,000 in 2024/25 in Council's Capital Works program. The State government has committed \$1,037,000 of funding to this project under the Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation program.

BACKGROUND:

Continued erosion of Clifton Beach has resulted in the need for erosion protection structures to be considered. Sand nourishment campaigns have been previously completed with these campaigns undertaken at substantial cost with limited success as the sand continues to be washed away by wave action as part of the natural coastal processes. It is desirable to reduce the frequency and improve the effectiveness of sand nourishment by implementing a more permanent engineered solution to retaining the sand and hence the proposal to now construct these rock breakwaters.

COMMENT:

The primary objective of the project is to trap sand being transported north along Clifton beach and reduce the risk of long-term erosion on the beach. Trapping sand will improve the resilience of the beach and improve the functionality, be more attractive and more useable for the community.

Tropical Cyclone Jasper recently highlighted the fragility and dynamic nature of Cairns northern beaches, reinforcing the value and urgency of additional coastal protection.

The delivery of this project has an opportunity to be accelerated utilising resources committed to the Holloways Beach breakwater project, delayed pending confirmation of proposed Casuarina Street remediation solution.

A sand nourishment program is anticipated to continue following construction of the breakwater structures and will be completed as a separate project.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (recommended):

That Council:

- Approves the acceptance of funding under the State Government's Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program (CERMP) administered by the Department of Environment and Science (DES); and
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the grant, including the execution of the grant agreement.

Option 2:

That Council does not approve the acceptance of funding under the State Government's Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program (CERMP) and the project does not proceed at this time.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risk Management:

Coastal processes are complex and there is no guarantee that the proposed rock breakwaters (also termed headlands) will be as effective as planned however the donothing approach has 100% certainty that Council will be constantly undertaking sand nourishment campaigns on a regular basis at a considerable cost to the community.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

As a tourism-oriented economy, Cairns is rebounding from the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, which has restricted the movement of people across borders and social distancing measures, resulting in a loss of jobs, incomes and businesses in the region. Ensuring that our highly valued coastal assets remain attractive and functional without suffering the most severe effects of coastal erosion is one way of supporting our tourism orientated economy.

Undertaking the project will reduce the ongoing financial burden on Council for regular sand nourishment.

Community and Cultural Heritage:

Retention of sand on the beach and reducing erosion is a strong community benefit and responds to community concern that the coastal erosion processes are continuing unabated with limited Council action.

Natural Environment:

The project directly tackles the environmental issue of coastal erosion.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The recommendation of this Report supports Council's Corporate Plan, in particular:

- Focus Three Design for Liveability.
- Focus Four Community and Culture.

CONSULTATION:

Prior to the works being undertaken the community will be fully informed of the proposed works and the impacts of the project during construction such as increased construction traffic and some restrictions on beach access at the location of the proposed works while the breakwaters are installed.

Government Departments:

Department of Environment and Science (DES).

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