

PROJECT LAUNCH APPROVAL 601334 – 2026/27 ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRAM (NEW FOOTPATHS)

L&C | 79/7/1-01 | #7953332

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

1. Approves the 2026/27 Active Travel Program (New Footpaths) with an overall Project Launch Budget of \$1,500,000 excluding GST and an approved end date of 30 June 2027.
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to enter into contract, negotiate, finalise and execute any and all matters associated with or in relation to this project subject to Council's normal procurement policies and practices.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report seeks endorsement of the Project Launch Approval (PLA) of the 2026/2027 Active Travel Program (New Footpaths) with a Project Launch Budget (PLB) of \$1,500,000 (ex GST) and Approved End Date (AED) of 30 June 2027.

The intent is to complete the nine outstanding routes carried over from the 2025/26 Neighbourhood Pathways Program along with two new routes.

The project aims to construct multiple sections of footpath across the city with a focus on constructing complete connections and addressing high-priority missing footpath links to:

- complete gaps in the primary pedestrian network
- provide connectivity to key trip generators (schools, aged care, retail)
- improve safety, address areas of high concern within the community; and
- improve accessibility to bus stops and other local destinations.

The project completion will result in approximately 3.5 km of footpaths being constructed.

The project has been approved by the Capital Review Board for early works of under \$1,000,000. This will allow the subcontractor to remain engaged and provide a cost-effective outcome for Council.

BACKGROUND:

Council's Active Transport Strategy (adopted March 2020) aims to develop a more active and connected community by supporting more people to walk and cycle, more often. The Network Implementation Plan contained within the Strategy provides a long-term plan for the ultimate active transport network for Cairns. It is designed to allow Council flexibility to deliver projects in a prioritised manner by assessing new projects at a regional level for best network outcomes.

Projects are assessed using the following, robust assessment criteria:

1. Hierarchy (25%)
2. Safety (15%)
3. Complexity (5%)
4. Community Need (20%)
5. Connectivity (30%)
6. Strategic Alignment (5%)

The Neighbourhood Pathways Program (NPP) is a pilot program launched in September 2024. The community were provided an opportunity to request small-scale improvement projects that enhance the quality of life in their neighbourhoods. This year's active travel program will also deliver outstanding pathway works carried over from the previous year's NPP.

Projects were assessed using the following assessment criteria:

1. Accessibility
2. Community Demand
3. Complexity
4. Value for Money

COMMENT:

The proposed program includes new footpaths to be constructed at the following locations:

1. **Graham St, Mount Peter**- From Wiseman Rd to Mt Peter Rd (and Jubilee St)
2. **Olive St, Manoora** – From Hoare St to Moody St (complete missing links)
3. **Buchan St, Bungalow**- From Ray Jones Dr to Spence St (missing links on western side)
4. **Tills St, Westcourt** - From Cazaly's to Harald Falge Park (western side)
5. **Little Pease St, Manoora**- From Anderson St to Little Pease St intersection / kerb ramps
6. **English St, Manunda** - From Wilkinson St to Anderson St (western side)
7. **English St, Manunda** - From Hoare St to Tills St (western side)
8. **Machans Street, Machans Beach**- From existing footpath (eastern side)
9. **Clifton Beach Rd/Arlington Esplanade**- Small missing links and kerb ramps connecting to Arlington Esplanade intersection and bus stops.
10. **Little St, Manunda** – From Arc Disability to existing at Greenslopes Street intersection.
11. **Mt Milman Dr, Smithfield** – Small missing links from existing at bus stop to Cattana Road / Smithfield bypass shared path access

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (recommended)

That Council:

1. Approves the 2026/27 Active Travel Program (New Footpaths) project with an overall Project Launch Budget of \$1,500,000 excluding GST and an approved end date of 30 June 2027.
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to enter into contract, negotiate, finalise and execute any and all matters associated with or in relation to this project subject to Council's normal procurement policies and practices.

Option 2:

- That Council does not approve the PLA for the Active Travel Program (New Footpaths) 2026/27 at this time.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risk Management:

As with any construction project, there are risks to the overall timing and delivery of the works due to inclement weather and availability of resources. However, a suitable time contingency has been allowed to enable the works to be completed within the financial year, with substantial works planned to be completed prior to the wet season.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The project is included in Council's capital works program for 2026/27. There is an allocation of \$1,500,000 in the 2026/27 budget for the Active Travel Program, sufficient to undertake the works. Project costs will need to be closely monitored throughout delivery to ensure the program remains within the approved budget.

Community and Cultural Heritage:

In Australia, walking for exercise or recreational walking is consistently the most popular physical activity, with cycling also in the top 5 physical activity preferences. Locally, the Cairns community continue to tell Council that safe shared paths are a priority through the Our Cairns Survey. This project will result in 3.5 km of new footpath infrastructure across Cairns, creating better connectivity and improving liveability and directly respond to community demand.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The project strongly links to Council's Corporate Plan - Focus Three: Design for Liveability and Focus Four: Community and Culture.

Statutory:

All relevant statutory requirements will be satisfied under the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Queensland Government's Cycling Strategy and Walking Strategy.

Policy:

The 2026/27 Active Transport Program is delivered in accordance with the Active Transport Strategy. The project delivery will be undertaken in accordance with Council's adopted Procurement Policy.

CONSULTATION:

Council consulted extensively on the Active Transport Strategy prior to its adoption in 2020 and it is still considered relevant to respond to priority active transport outcomes. The development of the Neighbourhood Pathways Program was built on an extensive and innovative community engagement exercise delivered in 2024. Council received over 900 responses during the engagement period.

Notification for each connection identified in the program will occur at a localised level (via a notification of works) and a description of the works will also be available on Council's website.

ATTACHMENTS:

Nil



David Parsons
Acting Executive Manager Community Spaces



Tim Dendle
Acting Director Lifestyle & Community