

5.12. DAINTREE RIVER FERRY - TRAFFIC ANALYSIS PROJECT

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DEPARTMENT Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council delegates authority to the CEO under section 257 of the Local Government Act 2009 to proceed with the traffic engineering analysis project at the Daintree River Ferry and the associated costs be incorporated in the upcoming 2018-19 Annual Budget Review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has commenced stage 1 of the Daintree River Ferry contract renewal and included in this process is undertaking a traffic engineering analysis project at the Daintree River Ferry. Council had applied for funding under the State Government's Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program 2 and has recently been advised that this application was unsuccessful.

As the traffic engineering analysis project is deemed to be integral to the Daintree River Ferry contract renewal, Council's approval is sought to progress this project with the associated costs to be included in the 2018-19 Annual Budget Review.

BACKGROUND

Earlier this year, Council submitted a grant application to the State Government's Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program 2 (MIPP) however advice has recently been received that this grant application was unsuccessful. The traffic engineering analysis project at the Daintree River Ferry is deemed to be an integral project to inform the community and assist develop the tender documentation for the next ferry operations contract.

COMMENT

When traffic congestion issues are observed in a transport network (corridor congestion or intersection delays) it is common for road authorities to undertake transport planning studies (land use planning assessments, origin – destination surveys and catchment analysis) to calibrate a transport model that represents the congestion observed on the road.

Once a transport model is calibrated, then scenario testing of upgrade options and demand management controls can be tested. Similarly, micro-simulation modelling of specific delay causing points within a network (intersections, ferries etc) can be undertaken to represent the congestion observed. Once again, the modelling can be used to test various upgrade options and demand management controls at the points causing delays.

Once these assessments are completed, road authorities can then determine the most appropriate traffic management approach specific to the location in question. This will include cost - benefit analysis of various engineered and travel smart options, with the outcomes compared to industry standards for "Level of Service" criteria. The Level of Service adopted by a road authority will generally be discussed with road users (community engagement) so that community expectations are understood and in turn drive future investment.

The investigations Council anticipates to be undertaken as part of this activity includes a transport study to determine the road carrying capacity, peak hour demand and duration of the peak. Additionally, a traffic assessment of the ferry operations will be undertaken to quantify the delays to traffic and queue lengths during peak and off peak periods. The desired outputs from this project are anticipated to be in the form of a report detailing the current congestion issues and modelling of some high level solutions (second ferry, bridge or other travel demand initiatives).

This project will support strategic asset management activities, support Council to form a strategic view of infrastructure requirements and inform infrastructure planning at the Daintree River crossing.

Cape Tribulation Road is a *Local Road of Regional Significance* within the FNQROC transportation network and is the only 'coast road', north-south, between Mossman and Cooktown. This link provides important access for communities north of the Daintree River. The community north of the Daintree River and Tour Operators have approached Council with concerns regarding traffic congestion and delays during peak periods. This analysis will quantify the delays and will enable Council to review its level of service at this location.

The outputs of this activity will be used to inform the Council, community and road / ferry users of the level of congestion at peak times, provide high level assessment of a range of infrastructure and travel demand management options and enable Council to develop a strategic transport plan for this infrastructure link.

PROPOSAL

It is recommended to proceed with the traffic engineering analysis project at the Daintree River Ferry and the costs associated with this project be incorporated in the 2018-19 Annual Budget Review.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The costs associated to complete this project will be incorporated in the upcoming 2018-19 Annual Budget Review.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Understanding the congestion delays will allow Council to explore various options for upgrades and/or demand management controls.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: The region north of the Daintree River is heavily reliant on the tourism industry to drive the economy. Understanding the traffic congestion and modelling of specific delay points can be used to test various upgrade options and demand management controls at these points causing delays.

Environmental: Nil

Social: The Level of Service adopted by a road authority will generally be discussed with road users (community engagement) so that community expectations are understood and in turn drive future investment.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 Initiatives:

Theme 5 - Governance

5.1.1 - Establish and develop long term financial, resource and infrastructure planning to ensure ongoing capacity to fund operations and capital works programs.

Operational Plan 2018-2019 Actions:

4.1.2 - Undertake Stage 1 of Daintree River Ferry Contract renewal which will focus on community/stakeholder engagement and feasibility studies on potential ferry operations expansion.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Fully-Responsible Funding the full cost of a program or activity

CONSULTATION

Internal: The Executive Leadership Team

External: Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At its Ordinary Meeting on 24 July 2018 Council endorsed the community engagement plan for the Daintree River Ferry contract renewal and this engagement is currently in progress.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil