

5.3. MATURING THE INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE PROGRAM 2 - SUBMISSION - DAINTREE RIVER FERRY CAPACITY OPTIONS ANALYSIS PROJECT

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DEPARTMENT: Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

1 Support a submission to the State Government's Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program 2 for a \$100,000 grant to supplement the Daintree River Ferry Capacity Analysis Project; and

2 Delegate authority to Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to administer this matter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for a funding submission to the State Government's Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program (MIPP) to enable strategic planning studies and investigations around the Daintree River Ferry operations.

BACKGROUND

The Queensland Government's Maturing Infrastructure Pipeline Program (MIPP) was established to support the development of a robust pipeline of local and state government infrastructure projects by investigating and documenting the potential viability and feasibility of proposals. MIPP was originally allocated \$20 million from the State Infrastructure Fund to support the progression of projects along the infrastructure pipeline.

Through the 2017-18 State Budget, the Queensland Government announced a \$10 million injection to the program, resulting in phase two (MIPP 2).

MIPP 2 will support local government applications for two categories of activities:

- strategic planning studies or investigations that inform infrastructure planning and development of the infrastructure investment pipeline
- business case and/or detailed design stages of proposed infrastructure projects.

The aim of MIPP 2 is to provide funding assistance to support:

- the strengthening of local governments' strategic infrastructure planning functions and future informed investment decisions and grant applications
- the development of the necessary documentation for infrastructure projects that have the potential to contribute to economic growth and jobs, or enhance livability
- informed infrastructure investment decision-making by Local and State Governments.

The Administration had already commenced planning to establish a comprehensive project strategy regarding the renewal of the Daintree River Ferry Contract which is to occur 1 July 2021.

This planning has already identified that this project would require a traffic engineering analysis and MIPP 2 provides an opportunity for Council to submit a proposal to engage an appropriately qualified professional service provider to undertake this work. The outputs from this work will inform Council on the nature of the traffic congestion and provide quantifiable traffic engineering outputs that will help Council form a strategic view on key infrastructure priorities and needs.

With long-term financial and environmental sustainability at the forefront of Council's mind, project findings will enable Council to align current and future transport needs with sound engineering and asset management.

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 these 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 benefit – cost 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).

The funding sought 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

The proposal is for Council to support a submission to the State Government's Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program 2 for a \$100,000 grant to supplement the Daintree River Ferry Capacity Analysis Project.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost for undertaking this analysis is \$100,000.

MIPP 2 eligible activity costs include professional third party service provider fees to provide advice or services for the project.

As Council has less than 1,000 full time equivalent employees the cost of additional internal resources required to undertake procurement and initiation activities associated with MIPP 2 are also eligible costs.

Council is not required to contribute a co-contribution towards this project however monthly progress reporting by Council to the State will be expected should Council's submission be successful.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

To mitigate risks Council must obtain and utilise reliable factual data to inform decision making with all elements of the new Daintree River Ferry contract. The construction costs and ongoing maintenance of any additional traffic demand initiatives will impact future budgets affecting the Shire as a whole.

Therefore it is imperative that Council manages all risks to minimise impacts on financial sustainability ensuring all communities within Douglas also remain sustainable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: MIPPs funding will enable the engagement of professional services to engage in strategic planning for infrastructure and services to assist Council determine key priorities to protect and where possible enhance the economy of our region. Initial work at the concept stage will provide Council with a clear direction on future requirements.

Environmental: The Daintree River Ferry operates within an internationally recognised pristine locality and consideration of any additional infrastructure must take into account impacts, both short and long term, on the environment.

Social: With long-term financial and environmental sustainability at the forefront of Council's mind, project findings will enable Council to align current and future transport needs with sound engineering and asset management.

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.

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: In developing the MIPP 2 submission the following internal stakeholders were consulted:

Chief Executive Officer; Acting General Manager Operations; Manager Governance; Grants Officer

External: In developing the MIPP 2 submissions community feedback was taken into consideration around the traffic congestion issues and calls for investigations into a second ferry and bridge; State Government Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Extensive community engagement will be undertaken during the Daintree River Ferry contract renewal project.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil