

7.11. SAFER LOCAL ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM TRANCHE 4 SUBMISSION - FOREST CREEK CULVERT UPGRADE

REPORT AUTHOR	Project Engineer
MANAGER	Manager Infrastructure
DEPARTMENT	Infrastructure Planning and Delivery

RECOMMENDATION

That Council retrospectively endorses the Forest Creek culvert project funding application submitted to the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sports and the Arts for funding under the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program Tranche 4.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a 2023 inspection, the Forest Creek culvert was identified as being in very poor condition due to severe corrosion, which ultimately led to its failure and subsequent road closure. A temporary bypass now carries all traffic, however, it requires ongoing maintenance due to frequent high rainfall.

To provide a permanent and resilient solution a design has been completed to replace the culvert with reinforced concrete box culverts (RCBCs), which offer enhanced durability and increased capacity. The total project cost is estimated at \$602,194 (including 20% contingency).

Council has applied for 80% funding (\$481,755) through the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP) Tranche 4. The remaining \$120,439 will be covered by Council's annual drainage renewal budget. This application is a resubmission following an unsuccessful application under SLRIP Tranche 2.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, a Level 2 Inspection rated the Forest Creek culvert in very poor condition due to severe corrosion of the corrugated steel pipes. This type of culvert has a history of catastrophic failure. To mitigate risk, a 5-tonne load limit was implemented and a temporary bypass constructed to allow heavy vehicle movements.

The culvert has since failed, resulting in the closure of that road section. All traffic now relies solely on the bypass, which demands ongoing maintenance due to the area's high rainfall.

A detailed design has been completed to replace the structure with reinforced concrete box culverts (RCBCs), which offer an increased design life, durability and drainage capacity.

To reduce the impact on the annual drainage renewal budget, the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP) was identified as a suitable funding source. Under SLRIP, the Australian Government will contribute up to 80% of total project costs, to a maximum of \$5 million per project.

The total project cost is estimated at \$602,194, including a 20% contingency. To prioritise

this urgent renewal an application was made under SLRIP Tranche 2, which was unsuccessful. On advice from the SLRIP team, the application has now been resubmitted under Tranche 4.

Council is seeking the maximum 80% contribution (\$481,755), with the remaining \$120,439 to be funded from the annual drainage renewal budget.

COMMENTS

If the Tranche 4 application is successful, works could proceed in the next financial year utilising the drainage renewal budget. If unsuccessful, the project will need to be considered under future Capital Works Budgets.

Applications for SLRIP Tranche 4 closed on 30 September 2025.

PROPOSAL

That Council retrospectively endorses the Forest Creek culvert project funding application submitted to the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sports and the Arts for funding under the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program Tranche 4.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The funding application is for the maximum 80% contribution which will reduce the funding required from Council for drainage renewal.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Without securing grant funding through SLRIP, Council will be required to fund the entire project.

This project is required to replace a failed drainage structure and to reduce maintenance costs of the temporary bypass.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Will offset Council's cost.

Environmental: Will allow the temporary bypass to be removed from the creek and increase capacity of the culvert.

Social: Will improve resilience, safety and capacity of critical infrastructure.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 3 - Service Delivery

We deliver Council services effectively and efficiently to meet community expectations, focusing on the wellbeing of both the community and our employees.

3.4 - Ensure capital and maintenance programs for infrastructure/open spaces are prioritised

and delivered on time.

3.7 - Identify and manage risk.

Operational Plan 2025-2026 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

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:

Advocate	Council makes representation on behalf of the community on important issues, funding opportunities, projects and programs. Council will use its influence to seek the best outcomes for the community.
Service Provider	Council provides many services to the community from roads and waste services to libraries and recreational facilities. Services evolve over time and it is the Council's mission to ensure that these services are appropriate, delivered efficiently, and designed with the customer at the centre.

CONSULTATION

Internal:	Operations and Maintenance team
External:	RECS Consulting Engineers (design), and Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sports and the Arts

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

1. SLRIP Factsheet - May 2025 [7.11.1 - 2 pages]



Australian Government

BUILDING AUSTRALIA



Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program

May 2025

The Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP) is an application-based, merit-assessed program that provides funding for eligible projects to local, state and territory governments which address current and emerging priorities in road infrastructure needs.

The program commenced on 1 July 2024 and consolidated the former Bridges Renewal Program, and the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program, and introduces new focus areas. The Heavy Vehicle Rest Area initiative sits underneath the SLRIP with its own separate focus area.

Projects funded under the SLRIP must directly address at least one of the focus areas below:

Focus area	Objective
Road safety	Increase Australia's road safety through the improvement of road infrastructure.
Productivity	Improve productivity and efficiency outcomes through improving and connecting road networks.
Bridge Renewal	Improve access for communities and facilitate higher productivity vehicle access through the upgrade and replacement of bridges, including culverts.
Road resilience	Improve the resilience of critical road corridors that are vulnerable to closure or reduced capacity during and following natural disasters or extreme weather events.
Road sustainability	Contribute to decarbonisation goals by minimising or avoiding embodied, operational and/or enabled emissions. This could be through use of recycled or sustainably sourced materials in the project, or by delivering a project that will reduce carbon emissions caused in transport, etc.
Heavy vehicle rest areas	Facilitating rest for heavy vehicle drivers at locations of need, through the construction or upgrade of heavy vehicle rest areas and amenities.

How much funding is available?

Funding of at least \$200 million per year will be available under the program, with a maximum of \$5 million per project.

Who can apply?

Applications can only be made by state, territory or local governments. To be eligible, projects must:



Directly address at least one focus area



Be for construction on an existing or proposed road



Be on a public road



Be a whole and complete project
(not reliant on other work)

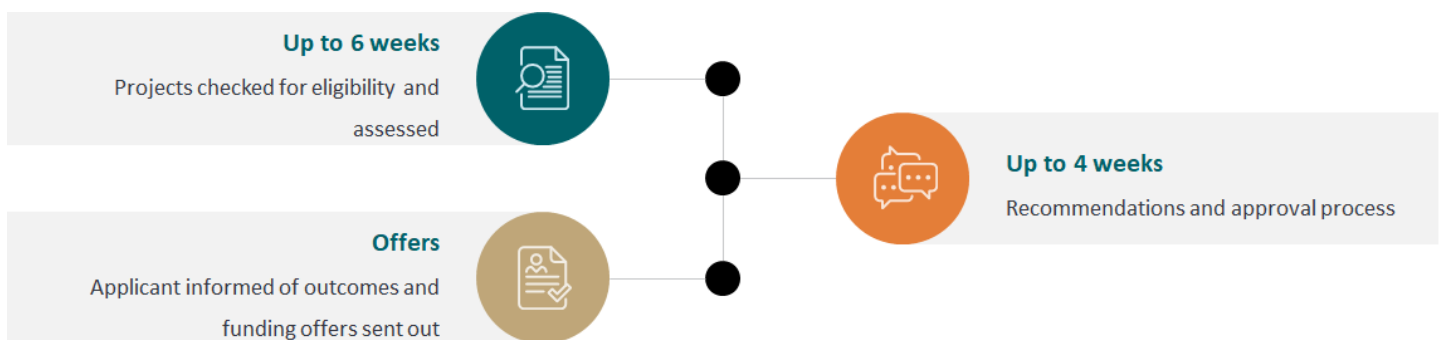
What kinds of projects can receive funding under the program?

Examples of projects that may be eligible to receive funding under the program include:

- improving road safety including the realignment of roads, shoulder sealing, rumble strips, safety barriers and median changes
- widening and sealing roads for heavy vehicle access
- construction of new or upgraded heavy vehicle rest areas
- replacement and/or strengthening of bridges, culverts, and causeways
- upgrading/raising of roads to improve flood resilience
- additional road linkages between communities to reduce risk of isolation during an emergency.

When can I apply?

Applications can be submitted at any time, but will be assessed in tranches up to 3 times a year. When submitting an application, please consider the assessment and approval timeframes.



Find out more

Visit: <http://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/SLRIP>

Program guidelines: <http://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/SLRIPguidelines>

Email: SLRIP-applications@infrastructure.gov.au for general enquiries or questions related to applications

Email: SLRIP-Projects@infrastructure.gov.au for matters related to approved projects