

ENCL: NO

DARWIN CITY COUNCIL

DATE 24/11/2009 :

REPORT

TO: 2ND ORDINARY COUNCIL/OPEN

APPROVED: BD

FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

APPROVED: AH

REPORT NO: 09TC0075

COMMON NO:

SUBJECT: REGIONAL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (RLCIP) STRATEGIC PROJECTS ROUND 2 - \$120m GRANT FUNDING

ITEM NO:

SYNOPSIS:

On June 25 2009 the Prime Minister announced an additional \$220 million nation-building investment in community infrastructure, such as libraries, community centres, and sports grounds and environmental infrastructure.

The \$220 million injection into the Community Infrastructure Program will be delivered through two streams, \$100 million shared between all of the nation's councils and shires (Darwin City Council's allocation is \$119k); and \$120 million for larger Strategic Projects, provided on a competitive basis

The application process officially opened on 2 November 2009 and will close on 15 January 2010.

The purpose of this report is for Council to approve a suitable project (only one application per Council is allowed) to submit to the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program – Strategic Projects Round 2.

GENERAL:

\$120m is available on a nationally competitive basis with preference given to projects which can demonstrate community benefit. Partnership funding is required and preference will be given to projects with greater co-contributions.

Similar to the conditions outlined above, the projects must :-

- Be additional (*those which have not been included in our 2009/2010 budget*), ready to proceed (*construction can commence within 6 months of signing the Funding Agreement*), or an additional stage of a current project;
- Consider environmental sustainability and promote green building technologies, design practices and operations; and
- Funding can not be used for anything that could be funded through the Roads to Recovery or Blackspot programs.

- Bicycle paths in association with a road covered by Roads to Recovery are ineligible.

Minimum of funding that can be sought is \$1m.

Projects must commence within six months of funding approval and be **completed by 30 June 2011.**

Outcomes of the project must include increased employment, increased environmental sustainability including promoting green building technologies, design practices and operation, improved community services, expansion of infrastructure to service a large proportion of the community or an upgrade to community facilities.

The Chief Officers Group have reviewed all possible scenarios and have identified some potential projects. This report is intended to provide a brief description of those projects considered and all associated pros and cons to enable Council to determine which project to nominate for the Strategic Project funding.

The criteria used by the Chief Officers Group in making this recommendation was:-

- Alignment to the Evolving Darwin, Towards 2020 and Beyond Strategic Plan; and
- Specifically the feedback received from the community consultation which was primarily focussed on Transport (Greener/energy consumption), Climate Change (Proactive in leading change), Native Vegetation (Protection of green areas and vegetation suitable for the region) and Development/Planning (green developments).
- Results of the 2009 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey – 64% of the community advised the ‘creating and maintaining an environmentally sustainable city’ should be Council’s top priority.
- Alignment to other key Council plans and strategies such as the Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee Action Plan 2009-2012.
- Ability to deliver within the grant funding timeline of June 2011.
- Ability to create indigenous employment opportunities.
- Benefits that are spread throughout the whole municipality.

Some suggestions which were put forward were:-

- Cavenagh Car Park
- MY0800City Revitalisation - Knuckey Street (balance) and Cavenagh Street
- Lee Point Road Upgrade
- Youth Space
- Parap and/or Nightcliff Swimming Pool Redevelopment

However, it has been deemed that these projects would not meet all of the criteria as shown above and therefore likely to be unsuccessful.

The projects that did meet all of the criteria were framed around “Energy Efficiencies” and “Water Efficiencies”. It has therefore been determined that a number of key actions from the Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee Action Plan 2009-2012 and existing Council incentives could be delivered by rolling up into one specific project (e.g. Leading the way by Reducing Darwin’s Carbon Footprint).

The focus of the grant submission would be to focus on tangible environmental outcomes on Council owned facilities/properties. This would be a clear demonstration to the community that Darwin City Council is leading by example. Through the efficiencies gained by implementing a variety of initiatives a proportion of the direct financial savings for Council can then be re-invested through a “Climate Change and Environment Revolving Fund” into environmental initiatives.

The types of activities that would be included in our grant submission would be:-

- Finish the Building Energy Audit on all Council facilities (i.e. Chinatown Carpark).
- Review and update the 2007 completed audits (some were completed several years ago and certain technologies and ‘thinking’ has progressed since this time)
- Identify any new issues
- From this new completed audit, start implementing the recommendations such as more energy efficient lighting and air-conditioning through to conversion to alternate ‘green’ power (an ideal candidate would be the Chinatown Carpark).
- Undertake investigations which would look at improving the efficiency of current irrigation practices, and further look into the possibility of using alternative sources with which to irrigate public open space. These alternative sources may include the harvesting of stormwater, aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) and the reuse of treated wastewater. The investigations shall be conducted within the context of increasing the efficiency of current water use within the municipality and increasing service levels (ie. more effective use of current volume).
- Implement more efficient irrigation systems throughout our parks and reserves.

An added benefit of selecting this particular project is Council already has hard data on our energy and water consumption plus:-

- the amount of green space in the municipality;
- the % of automation irrigation versus ‘kangaroo stands’;
- the quantity of water used per hectare of open space; and most importantly
- current greenhouse gas emissions.

This would be a very attractive proposition for the Australian Government as we will be able to accurately record real results that will help achieve the Prime Minister’s key challenge of ‘building sustainable cities’ (as referenced in the Prime Minister’s Building a Big Australia: Future Planning Needs of our Major Cities speech of 27 October 2009).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Positive if we are successful in obtaining this grant funding.

Long term implications could result in an establishment of a 'Environmental Revolving Fund' meaning that a certain percentage (for example 50%) of savings made through more efficient energy and water consumption can be re-invested back into future climate change and environmental initiatives.

It is recommended that the total project amount be \$3.5 million with Council's contribution being \$400,000 from the Water Reserve and Environment Project Funding 2009/2010.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS:

The issues addressed in this Report are in accordance with the following Goals/Strategies of the Darwin City Council 2008 – 2012 as outlined in the 'Evolving Darwin Strategic Directions: Towards 2020 and Beyond':-

Goal

4 Create and Maintain an Environmentally Sustainable City

Outcomes

- 4.1 Be a leader with climate change policies
- 4.2 Improve water conservation

Goal

7 Demonstrate Effective, Open and Responsible Governance

Outcome

- 7.1 Effective governance
- 7.2 Display strong and effective leadership, within Council and across Government

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

Extremely positive outcomes for Darwin should we be successful in obtaining this grant funding. Through this funding Darwin City Council will be able to significantly progress the Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee Action Plan and achieve a reduced footprint for the Darwin municipality.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

The Darwin community has an expectation that Darwin City Council will provide leadership and conduct activities focused on providing positive climate change adaptation and environmental outcomes for the municipality. Through this funding Council will be able to fulfil this expectation.

COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

DELEGATION:

Nil

CONSULTATION:

Chief Officers Group
Manager Climate Change and Environment

PROPOSED PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS:

Nil

APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE

Nil

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A. THAT Report Number 09TC0075 entitled Regional And Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) Strategic Projects Round 2 - \$120m Grant Funding be received and noted.
- B. THAT Council make an application under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) – Strategic Projects for the “Leading the way by Reducing Darwin’s Carbon Footprint” focussing on building energy and water usage efficiency for a total project value of \$3,500,000 funded as follows:
- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| RCLIP – Strategic Projects | \$ 3,100,000 |
| Council contribution | \$ 400,000 |
- C. THAT Council’s funding contribution of \$400,000 for the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RCLIP) Strategic Projects “Leading the Way by Reducing Darwin’s Carbon Footprint” submission, be funded from the Environmental Project Funding 2009/2010 (\$160,000) and the Water Reserve (\$240,000)

ANNE HAMMOND
MANAGER STRATEGY AND OUTCOMES

BRENDAN DOWD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Any queries on this report may be directed to Anne Hammond on 8930 0531 or email: a.hammond@darwin.nt.gov.au