BREWARRINA SHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Submission for Ordinary Meeting held on 25 July 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE:</th>
<th>FIXING COUNTRY ROADS PROGRAMME</th>
<th>DOC REF: Item 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| REPORT BY: | Ken Wilson Acting Director of Technical Services | DATE: 15 July 2014 |

IP&R REFERENCE:
Theme 1: A Growing Economy - E2.10 Set priorities to improve local roads

PURPOSE:
To inform Council of intentions to submit expressions of interest for funding under the ‘Fixing Country Roads Programme’

RECOMMENDATION:
That Council:
Submit expressions of interest for the full funding of:
1. The Birrie Bridge replacement project, inclusive of the road realignment and;
2. Funding towards the construction and sealing of the balance of the Goodooga Road to the Queensland border.

CONTENT:
Apart from the funding for local roads announced by the Federal Government for the ‘NSW- Bridge Renewal Programme’ the state government released information, during the week commencing 7 July 2014, of details for funding under the programme of ‘Fixing Country Roads- Local Roads and Bridges’.

Funding in the amount of $37.5m has been made available for 2014/15 for the programme with an emphasis for expenditure on heavy freight routes (for high productivity vehicles) to help address pinch points, ‘last – mile’ problem and better connect freight facilities such as rail sidings, saleyards, silos, abattoirs, fuel depots and distribution centres to local road networks.

Only projects that can improve productivity of the transport logistics task to support the NSW economy will be considered for funding.

The funds can be used to repair of to improve bridges or pavements on local roads. In instances, funds will be made available to assess structures.

There is no set matching funding requirement, with each project considered on its merit. However co-funded projects (by Council or a private party) will be looked upon more favourably.

Depending on the scope of a project additional government funding may be sought from the Federal Government Bridges Renewal or other state programmes as may be available.

Application for the funds are conducted in a 2 step process with:
1. The initial application submitted in the form of an expression of interest (EOI)
with particular address to:
  • How the project would solve the transport constraints and;
  • How the project would enable access to the State & National road networks, and;
  • How the project enables access between networks.

Other issues for address include the criteria of:
  a) Improved access and productivity and;
  b) Growth and economic benefits and;
  c) Strategic Alignment and Partnership and;
  d) Deliverability and Project Readiness

Submission for this phase close on Monday 4 August 2014

2. With the application merit based, shortlisted applicants will be contacted and invited to submit a full application. This may, in some cases, be preceded by a site visit by a panel representative.

Potential projects for this programme include;
1. The replacement of the Birrie Bridge, Brenda Road and the associated realignment of the road – on a fully funded basis, and;
2. The construction and sealing of the balance of the Goodooga Road to be Queensland border. (the Alternative Inland Highway) In both instances all criteria could be appropriately addressed with the exception of item 4 ‘Deliverability and Project Readiness’. Also the ‘pinch point’ aspect will be difficult to demonstrate in respect of the Goodooga Road.

In regard to item d a case would be submitted that Council should not be penalised on the basis of ‘non-readiness’ for a project.

Admittedly, if the applications were successful urgent attention would be required in order to provide the necessary support information and documentation. Council may have to incur a cost for this process which would however be worthy if either of the projects were to eventuate.

Given that the NSW Government funding stream has only been announced for 2014/15 with no suggestion, at this juncture of a similar programme for future years, it is not possible to co-ordinate the two streams of potential funding (Federal and State) for the Birrie bridge replacement project.

CONCLUSION:

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Dan Simmons
General Manager

ATTACHMENT:
  • Media Release