

Addendum Report

For the Ordinary Council Meeting

Location: Council Chambers, Municipal Offices
62-68 Ovens Street, Wangaratta

Date: Tuesday, 16 June 2015

Time: 6.00pm



RURAL CITY OF
WANGARATTA

Alan Clark
Acting Chief Executive Officer

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OFFICERS' REPORTS**14. COMMUNITY WELLBEING****14.1 MURRAY TO MOUNTAINS RAIL TRAIL - WANGARATTA TO WHITFIELD RAIL TRAIL**

Meeting Type: Ordinary Council Meeting
Date of Meeting: 16 June 2015
Author: Executive Assistant - Community Wellbeing
File Name: MURRAY TO THE MOUNTAINS RAIL TRAIL INFORMATION / ISSUES
File No: 78.030.002

No Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to this report have declared a conflict of interest regarding the matter under consideration.

Executive Summary

This report is presented to Council to respond to the petition submitted by the Moyhu Action Group regarding the construction of the Wangaratta to Whitfield Rail Trail. The report provides additional information regarding the project raised by the petition - Stage 3 of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.

RECOMMENDATION:***That Council:***

- 1. continue to actively participate in the Hume Region Tracks and Trails Committee; and***
- 2. continue to advocate and lobby and seek future State and Federal Government, and external funding opportunities, in order to further progress the construction of the Oxley to Whitfield Rail Trail.***

Background

This report has been presented to respond to requests raised within the petition submitted by the Moyhu Action Group containing 690 signatures. The petitioners request that Council commence the construction of the Wangaratta to Whitfield Rail Trail (Stage 3 of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail).

The Oxley to Whitfield trail has been identified as a trail that will enhance the quality and diversity of regionally significant track / trail experiences within the Hume Region as part of the Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy (HRSTTS) 2013 – 2022. This trail is prioritised fifth on the recommended list of track and trail developments within the Hume Region and whilst it has been

identified as a priority for the Rural City of Wangaratta, indicative costings for construction total approximately \$6.9M.

In order for the construction of the Wangaratta to Whitfield Rail Trail to proceed, Council will require significant partnered funding from external funding bodies, currently of which none are available.

A Hume Region Tracks and Trails Committee, comprising Local Government representatives, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Regional Development Victoria, Hume Regional Development Australia and community representatives, meets regularly to progress the recommendations within the HRSTTS and investigates funding opportunities to further progress the recommended track/trail priorities within the Hume region.

Each Local Government Authority continues to pursue tracks and trails projects in their own municipality, with the HRSTTS adding value through a clearly articulated regional strategic framework, enhancing future funding opportunities.

Implications

Policy Considerations

When Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategies are due for review, they will be updated accordingly to reflect reference and linkages to the HRSTTS.

Financial Implications

Future financial contributions to track / trail developments will be presented as part of the annual budget consideration processes. It is expected that funding would continue to be sought for projects such as the construction of the Oxley to Whitfield Rail Trail, in line with the priority list outlined in the HRSTTS.

Legal/Statutory

Any considerations for legal / statutory impacts on future track or trail development will be reviewed and given consideration according to the prioritisation tool for rating tracks and trails in the HRSTTS.

Social

Any considerations for social impacts on future track or trail development will be reviewed and given consideration according to the prioritisation tool for rating tracks and trails in the HRSTTS.

Environmental/Sustainability Impacts

Any considerations for environmental / sustainability impacts on future track or trail development will be reviewed and given consideration according to the prioritisation tool for rating tracks and trails in the HRSTTS.

Economic Impacts

It is estimated that the trail construction will cost approximately \$6.9M.

Council Plan- Key Strategic Activity/Action

This report supports the 2013-2017 Council Plan:

Key Strategic Activities

3.3.1 Facilitate the promotion of visitor attraction.

Action

2.6.1.1 Continue to plan and develop high quality, accessible pathways that build local and regional connections.

3.3.1.8 Develop the opportunities for economic benefit from outdoor, nature based and recreational activities.

Strategic Links

a) Rural City of Wangaratta 2030 Community Vision

The 2030 Community Vision has strong focus on cycling tracks / trail development and the benefit they provide to the community, these outcomes are:

- Achieve improved public transport and cycling linkages between townships and Wangaratta; and
- Tourism continues to thrive, with visitors attracted to the region's natural beauty, food and wine, cycling tracks, arts facilities, cultural heritage and festivals.

b) Other strategic links

- a) Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trail Strategy;
- b) Tourism North East Strategic Plan;
- c) Hume Region Strategy for Sustainable Communities; and
- d) Victorian Trails Strategy.

Risk Management

There are no risks associated with the subject matter of this report.

Consultation/Communication

Officers believe that appropriate consultation has occurred and the matter is now ready for Council consideration.

Conclusion

Whilst Oxley to Whitfield Rail Trail is an identified priority for the Rural City of Wangaratta on the recommendation list within the HRSTTS, indicative costings for construction total approximately \$6.9M. External funding opportunities are not currently available to allow further progression of the construction of the Oxley to

Whitfield trail. Therefore Council funds have not been allocated for this project as part of the 2015-16 Budget.

Council will continue to actively participate in the Hume Region Tracks and Trails Committee and will endeavour to advocate and lobby to seek available State, Federal and other external funding opportunities in the future to further progress the construction of the Oxley to Whitfield Rail Trail.

Attachments

Nil.