

# MEDIA RELEASE

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21 JULY 2009

## Budget gives boost to Townsville's clean-green image

This year's City Budget will keep supporting those engaged in future sustainability and active protection of the natural environment.

A total of \$5.68 million has been allocated to the Integrated Sustainability Services budget.

A highlight will be the reconstruction of the Rows Bay foreshore which was battered during this year's king tides and prolonged wet season. Council is allocating \$440,000 to stage one, which will be complemented by an \$880,000 State subsidy.

In addition, funding of \$25,000 from council has been allocated to continue priority access works at the Northern Beaches, with further funding applied for under natural disaster recovery arrangements with the State.

Council is also supporting a range of new and ongoing projects, many of which have grassroots community involvement and government partnerships.

A special feature will be the Rows Bay to Borrow Pits Learnscape, a Together Townsville partnership with Powerlink, which will receive \$390,000. Once completed, this facility will offer boardwalks, bridges, viewing platforms, interpretation stations and eco-education tours for students and other groups.

Council is also allocating \$200,000 to the Solar Cities project (led by Ergon Energy) for community education, schools and the solar technology learnscapes to be matched by \$200,000 of Commonwealth funding (total \$400,000).

Other highlights include:

- More than \$500,000 natural habitat and coastal management from Paluma to Cungulla and Magnetic Island (fire, weeds, habitat rehabilitation, waterways, coastal foreshores)
- \$369,000 for integrated pest management (wild dogs and declared weeds)
- \$224,000 for Creek to Coral water quality improvement projects
- \$190,000 for managing aquatic weeds in waterways and wetlands and fish habitats
- \$240,000 for community greening activities, Schools/National Tree Day, and Landcare partnerships
- \$35,000 for a Climate Change Adaptation project which will be combined with a \$50,000 Commonwealth grant
- \$50,000 for council to purchase green energy from Ergon.

Environment and Sustainability Committee chairman Cr Vern Veitch said council was determined to improve sustainability.

"We're continuing to prioritise sustainability projects and programs, which reflects an expectation from ratepayers that we should protect the natural environment," he said.

"Our programs strive to protect the environment in economically and practically feasible ways that are socially acceptable.

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“At the same time we’re leveraging council funding through partnerships to obtain maximum benefits for the environment and the community.

“For instance, Solar Cities has enormous potential for the promotion and development of renewable energy and eco-efficiency across our community, including support for the Community Carbon Cluster and Centre for Excellence in Tropical Design.”

“I’m delighted the council is getting right behind this project with a big funding allocation in the Budget.”

**Media inquiries >> Cr Vern Veitch 0418 729 496**