

## **Council Budget Debate – Motion by Cr Flessler for the provision of funding for a Banyo Suburban Centre Improvement Project**

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

It has been moved by Councillor FLESSER, seconded by Councillor DICK, that the following amendment be made to the Future Brisbane program: that under 4.2.1.1, plans for suburbs and other development areas, there be a new item: projects, Banyo suburban centre improvement program, provide capital funding of \$200,000. Please note that there will be another motion at the appropriate time in the budget debate for the revenue for these expenditures to be found by reducing the transfer to the City of Brisbane Investment Corporation, page 9 of the budget document, by the equivalent amount of the total sum of all amendments. Debate, Councillor FLESSER.

Councillor FLESSER:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I want to assure the Council that, if the Council agrees to this amendment, I certainly will be moving an amendment at the appropriate time to make sure that funds become available for this. My understanding that what we are debating at the moment is the appropriations for program 4; we are not talking about the revenue associated with any amendments we make.

Banyo businesses and the residents have been quietly waiting for their turn for a suburban centre improvement program. They have been very patient. As they have been waiting over the last 10 years, the Council has done SCIPs at Geebung in 1999, at Sandgate in 2001, at Albion in 2002, at Nundah in 2003, and at Clayfield last year. The Banyo residents and certainly the businesses have seen the SCIP works going on across Brisbane. As Councillor COOPER said, there have been about 40 of them so far, and by and large they have been hugely successful.

Banyo shopping centre is looking a bit sad. The shop owners are doing their best, but what is really needed is exactly what the LORD MAYOR promised back in 2004, and I will read from some of the brochures that the LORD MAYOR put out during that election campaign, and also some of the media comments, and I will table them at the end of my speech. The LORD MAYOR stated in one brochure, 'We will get things done.' One of the dot points is, 'Improving the Banyo Village shopping precinct.'

Another one, also specifically about Banyo, states, 'Improving pedestrian and traffic safety at the crossing is just part of one of the Liberal's teams proposed Banyo beautification project. We will build more footpaths in the suburb; we will also upgrade the Banyo shopping village precinct, and we will celebrate the history of the Banyo Nudgee precinct with street art depicting major events and achievements of the area.' It goes on, 'A message from Campbell'. It says that he will 'complete the Nundah shopping centre improvement program and form a plan for a Banyo SCIP.' I will table that one as well. The local Liberal candidate was much more explicit when making the promise in 2004. He was out there getting votes from Banyo residents. I am sure they were listening.

In the *Northern News* on 25 March 2004, he is reported as saying that he pledged \$1 million to upgrade Banyo St Vincent's Street—it should be St Vincent's Road—shopping precinct. So, Madam Chair, that was a very clear commitment from the LORD MAYOR and also his Liberal candidate in 2004. I am sure that a lot of people of Banyo voted for the LORD MAYOR in that election because of the promise. But unfortunately, there has been no money coming in any of the budgets that the LORD MAYOR has brought down since 2004.

As far as the funding of this proposed SCIP is concerned, I am requesting that the Council provide \$200,000 in this year. I think that \$200,000 will certainly be enough to provide a plan and maybe even do some of the capital works on the ground. The sorts of things

that we need to do include providing some street furniture, some street art; there need to be more trees; there also needs to be some fixing up of the pedestrian problems in the shopping centre, which are the sorts of things that happen in all the SCIPs that the Council has done so far.

So, I am asking for \$200,000 this year. I believe that the total project can be done within the budget that the LORD MAYOR proposed in 2004, which was \$1 million. I think the Council does need to be committed to SCIPs. I think that the \$200,000 proposal here is a modest amount that can be used in the upcoming year. I would certainly be offering my services to get all the Banyo businesses, local schools and residents involved to come up with a really good plan for Banyo. I really encourage the Council to support this motion.

Chairman:

Further debate; Councillor DICK.

Councillor DICK:

I seconded this motion because once again it goes to the heart of the issue of the LORD MAYOR's honouring his commitments to the people of Brisbane, and in particular the people of Northgate Ward. This is a serious issue that Councillor FLESSER has been championing in his own local area for some time. As the documents that are being tabled clearly demonstrate, this is also an issue to which the LORD MAYOR and the Liberal team have committed.

We are seeing time and time again the fact that commitments are not being met. It is not acceptable for those opposite to promise one thing and then not honour commitments. The LORD MAYOR himself, and through his candidate, has identified this as a worthy project, and I guess Labor Councillors would be very disappointed, and I guess local residents throughout those suburbs would be feeling cheated that their commitments are not being honoured, that once again through this budget process we are seeing the Administration saying one thing, the Administration going out into the community and promising one thing—and we often hear from Councillor COOPER that talk is cheap—in this case, talk is worth

nothing, because we do not see any funding matching the commitments that they have made.

Today, Madam Chair, those Councillors opposite have the opportunity once again to honour their commitment. Through this motion today, and through this important SCIP project which I fear is fading to grey under this Administration, those opposite have the opportunity to say, 'Yes, the commitments we make will be honoured'. I know that the work of the local community, the business community and a lot of small businesses across the city have benefited since these projects have been rolled out as another great initiative of the Jim Soorley years in this place. As Councillors drive around the city, from one end of their ward to the other, they would recognise through the beautification, the work with the local community and the small business community just how much these projects have benefited our beautiful city.

Councillor FLESSER has been a long term advocate for this project. Apparently the LORD MAYOR and his team have been a long term advocate for this project. Now we have the opportunity to make it a reality.

Chairman: Any further debate; Councillor FLESSER, would you care to respond?

Councillor FLESSER: Madam Chair, I am astounded that there has been no reply from the Administration Councillors. This is a really important program. It is a program that was promised by the LORD MAYOR in 2004. He was out there at Banyo winning votes, saying he was going to do this. Money is available in the surplus, and as the Labor Councillor has already said, we do not believe that we should be borrowing extra money for the City of Brisbane Investment Corporation. There is \$79 million available there. There is almost \$700,000 available in surplus. All we are asking for is \$200,000 in this financial year to start the Banyo SCIP. I support the motion.

Chairman: As there is no further debate, I will put the motion: all those in favour say aye.

*Councillors say aye.*

Chairman: To the contrary, no.

*Councillors say no.*

Chairman: The noes have it.

Councillor FLESSER: Division.

Councillor MacPHERSON: Division.

Chairman: A Division has been called by Councillor FLESSER and Councillor MacPHERSON. Ayes to the right, noes to the left.

The Clerk: The noes have it, the voting being 8 to 16.