



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

---

Record of Proceedings, 15 July 2020

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Cairns Electorate, Works for Queensland Program**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (7.03 pm): As part of the Queensland government's economic recovery strategy—unite and recover for Queensland jobs—on 19 May this year the Premier announced \$200 million for a COVID Works for Queensland program to be delivered this year and next. Last week in Cairns I had the pleasure of accompanying the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Stirling Hinchliffe, whilst he announced a wide range of works that will be undertaken by the Cairns Regional Council and funded from the Palaszczuk government's Works for Queensland program. The \$200 million program was allocated among all Queensland councils to support the delivery of job-creating new infrastructure, maintenance or minor works projects, including the bringing forward of planned/budgeted maintenance or capital works, that are focused on: one, essential services; two, economic development; and, three, community wellbeing outcomes. In Cairns, the Cairns Regional Council received an allocation of \$7,420,000 towards shovel-ready and ready-to-go projects expected to support or create around 70 jobs.

The planned projects include remediation of sewerage pump stations, refurbishment of water reservoirs, replacement of water mains, footpath construction and, very importantly, the installation of drainage and turf surface treatment to Fogarty Park in the centre of the Cairns CBD which will allow for its all-weather use for markets and other very important community events. The long-term economic benefits these projects will deliver will go a long way to helping Queensland unite and recover. With regional council workers not being covered by the federal government's JobKeeper payments, this investment guarantees jobs and potentially new ones.

Across Queensland there are 520 projects being funded under the COVID Works for Queensland program, which is expected to create or support more than 4,600 jobs, which is fantastic in the current environment. In addition to this, I also had the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development in Cairns, not just meeting with key stakeholders and small business owners, but announcing some of the recipients of grants as part of the first round of the Small Business COVID-19 Adaptation Grant Program. I congratulate the owner of—and I need to stipulate this—Prawn Star, Danny Moore, who was one of the thousands of small business operators who shared in the \$96 million from the first round of grants, which are fantastic. Small businesses in Cairns have been doing it tough and the small business grants are helping them keep their doors open.

It is absolutely vital that people are acutely aware that this initiative, along with the Works for Queensland program, is part of the overall strategy that the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to roll out in particular in regional Queensland to support jobs and businesses in not just my city of Cairns but across the great state of Queensland.