

Late Item

Ordinary Meeting

Thursday, 24 August 2023

commencing at 9:00am

Sunshine Coast City Hall Chamber, 54 First Avenue, Maroochydore

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8 REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL**8.13 REPRESENTATION AT INTELLIGENT COMMUNITIES FORUM, GLOBAL SUMMIT, NEW YORK CITY****File No:** Council Meetings**Author:** Acting Group Executive
Economic & Community Development Group

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council's approval for Councillor Terry Landsberg to undertake overseas travel from 21-27 October 2023 to represent Council and the Sunshine Coast at the Intelligent Communities Forum (ICF) Global Summit in New York City from 25-26 October 2023. This opportunity has arisen as a result of Council putting forward the Sunshine Coast's nomination as a global Top7 Intelligent Community and its candidacy for Intelligent Community of the Year for 2023.

This report is being presented for consideration at this time as the Councillor's participation in the ICF Global Summit cannot be confirmed until approval to undertake the overseas travel has been provided by Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of the Sunshine Coast being named in the global Top7 Intelligent Communities for the fourth consecutive year, the region is expected (among other criteria) to send at least one representative to the Intelligent Communities Forum (ICF) Global Summit and Intelligent Community of the Year award announcement in New York City on 25-26 October 2023.

The Top7 represent models of economic and social transformation in the 21st Century which demonstrate best practices in broadband deployment and use, workforce development, innovation, digital inclusion and advocacy that offer lessons to regions, cities, towns and villages around the world.

Top7 representatives participate in panel discussions, charrette workshops and networking events throughout the conference, and are a focal point in the lead up to the announcement of the Intelligent Community of the Year for 2023.

As a Portfolio Councillor for Economic Development, it is proposed Councillor Terry Landsberg attend the 2023 ICF Global Summit on 25-26 October 2023 where the Intelligent Community of the Year for 2023 will be announced. If the Sunshine Coast is named as the Intelligent Community of the Year, Councillor Landsberg will be required to accept the award and provide a short speech and participate in media opportunities as a result.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled “Representation at Intelligent Communities Forum, Global Summit, New York City”
- (b) approve overseas travel from 21-27 October 2023 to enable Councillor T Landsberg to participate in the Intelligent Communities Forum Global Summit in New York City from 25-26 October 2023 and
- (c) note that costs incurred in association with participation in the Intelligent Communities Forum Global Summit in New York City will be reported in Council’s 2023-2024 Annual Report.

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

The estimated cost for Councillor Landsberg and an accompanying Council officer to attend the Intelligent Communities Forum (ICF) Global Summit and Intelligent Community of the Year award announcement would be approximately \$10,000 per attendee, totalling \$20,000 (excluding GST).

This includes:

- Participation costs, which includes accommodation, meal allowance, and on-ground transport costs in New York City;
- the cost of economy class airfares;
- allowance for any other incidental costs incurred which are directly related to travelling as an official representative of Council.

This does not include the ICF Summit registration fees, which are waived for the first two delegates from a Top7 Community.

While every effort will be made to contain the cost to within the \$20,000 threshold, it is possible that this may be exceeded due to the higher cost of travel and accommodation in the United States and/or the impacts of foreign exchange variations. It is considered, however, that the total cost of travel and accommodation associated with the proposed business mission to New York City will not exceed a maximum of \$25,000.

The Councillor Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities and Support Policy states: “*economy class travel is the standard, unless otherwise approved*”.

Funding can be sourced from Council’s current operational budget to cover expenditure of up to \$25,000 (excluding GST) to support attendance at the ICF Global Summit.

CORPORATE PLAN

Corporate Plan Goal: *Our resilient economy*

Outcome: 3.3 - Investment and growth in high value industries, innovation and entrepreneurship

Operational Activity: 3.3.2 Work with key stakeholders to identify investment and industry development opportunities, undertake marketing activities and support aligned projects across the region’s high value industries.

CONSULTATION

Councillor Consultation

All Councillors have been consulted in relation to the Intelligent Communities Forum (ICF) Global Summit and availability of this opportunity to attend.

Internal Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the following Council officers in the preparation of this report:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Group Executive, Civic Governance
- Manager, Executive Management and Support Services.

External Consultation

No external consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

Community Engagement

There has been no Community Engagement undertaken in relation to this report.

PROPOSAL

As a result of the Sunshine Coast being named in the global Top7 Intelligent Communities, the region is expected (among other criteria) to send at least one representative to the Intelligent Communities Forum (ICF) Global Summit and Intelligent Community of the Year award announcement in New York City on 25-26 October 2023. Top7 representatives participate in panel discussions, charrette workshops and networking events throughout the conference, and are a focal point in the lead up to the announcement of the Intelligent Community of the Year for 2023.

Each Top7 delegation is also required to designate one individual to accept the Top7 Award on behalf of their community during the Top7 Reception on 25 October, and to be prepared, if named, to accept the Intelligent Community of the Year Award and give remarks during the Intelligent Community of the Year Awards ceremony on 26 October. Summit registration fees are waived for the first two delegates from a Top7 Community, and heavily discounted for any additional delegates.

As a Portfolio Councillor for Economic Development, it is proposed Councillor Terry Landsberg attend the 2023 Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) Global Summit and Intelligent Community of the Year Awards to represent the Sunshine Coast region.

The ICF is a global network of cities and regions with a think tank at its centre. Its mission is to help communities use information and communications technology (ICT) to create inclusive prosperity, tackle social and governance challenges and enrich their quality of life.

Intelligent Communities are defined as those which have – whether through crisis or foresight – come to understand the challenges of the Broadband Economy and have taken conscious steps to create an economy capable of prospering in it.

The ICF presents an annual awards program for Intelligent Communities and the public-sector and private-sector partners who contribute to those communities. The awards program has two goals:

- To salute the accomplishments of communities in developing inclusive prosperity on a foundation of information and communications technology

- To gather data for ICF's research programs.

The Top 7 Intelligent Communities represent models of economic and social transformation in the 21st Century. Each exemplifies best practices in broadband deployment and use, workforce development, innovation, digital inclusion and advocacy that offer lessons to regions, cities, towns and villages around the world.

Councillor Landsberg will, as the Sunshine Coast's ICF Global Summit representative be required to:

- Officially represent the Sunshine Coast in the panel discussion "Designing an economy that attracts investment and grows businesses", moderated by the President of the Economic Developers Association of Canada
- Participate in other official instances of activity as the Top7 Community representative for the Sunshine Coast during the Global Summit (these may include site visits, functions, networking and presentations)
- Present and explain Council's utilisation of data synthesis technology to create an interactive 'map' of the Sunshine Coast Top7 submission, which demonstrates how each of the ICF focus areas are linked to each other and our regional strategies
- If the Sunshine Coast is named as the Intelligent Community of the Year, accept the award and provide a short speech, and participate in media opportunities as a result.

An opportunity to further leverage the visit will be the potential scheduling of meetings during the two days preceding the Summit, aligning to Councillor Landsberg's portfolio duties. This could include the opportunity to meet with key stakeholders to generate interest in the region, establish an awareness of the international broadband submarine cable and other region shaping projects, and to encourage interest in considering the Sunshine Coast as a potential location for future investment.

These activities are consistent with Council's commitments in the Sunshine Coast – The Natural Advantage: Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033 in that they seek to strengthen Local to Global connections and encourage new investment in the Knowledge Industries and Professional Services – one of the seven high-value industries identified in the Strategy.

In assessing whether Council should participate in the Intelligent Communities Award and the ICF Global Summit, and meetings with key stakeholders, the following objectives and areas of interest have been considered:

1. Identifiable economic benefits may potentially develop
2. Provides an opportunity for the region to promote its competitive strengths and export capability
3. Enhances business, industry and government connections
4. Clear potential exists to establish new trade opportunities for Sunshine Coast businesses
5. Provides an opportunity to promote the region as a competitive destination for visitation and investment
6. Is relevant to developing and generating investment in the high-value industries identified in the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy
7. Facilitates the region's learnings from international best practice and locations of excellence
9. The destination has a government structure and/or an allocated representative to maintain and further international relationships and/or

10. There is strategic importance, global positioning and learnings that could be acquired through Council's participation.

Legal

The proposal contained in this report does not give rise to any additional legal issues or risks for Council.

Under section 188 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, the purpose and costs associated with any international travel undertaken by a Councillor or a Council officer as part of an international mission will be reported in Council's annual report for the relevant financial year.

Policy

Representation of Council by the Councillor at the ICF Global Summit is consistent with his portfolio responsibilities under the adopted 2020 Councillor Portfolio System and Protocols.

The Councillor Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities and Support Policy states that:

- a resolution of Council is required for non-personal overseas travel under this policy where such travel falls outside of Council's adopted International Relations Policy
- economy class travel is the standard, unless otherwise approved.

The Council officer's travel and attendance at the ICF Global Summit will be conducted in accordance with Council's Overseas Travel Organisational Policy and Procedure.

In line with Council's International Relations and Trade Policy, a report will be provided to the Chief Executive Officer at the end of the financial year providing an assessment of Council's annual international missions program.

Risk

There is a risk of a negative public reaction to expenditure associated with Council's participation in international activities. In this context it should be noted that:

- the costs associated with this report can be covered by Council's operational budget
- the pursuit of global recognition and strengthening of international relationships is necessary if the region is to improve its local to global connections and future workforce mix, strengthen the regional economy and achieve a more sustainable and prosperous community
- the insights afforded through visiting the 2023 ICF Annual Summit in New York City will potentially inform Council's approach to developing best practices in workforce development, innovation, digital inclusion and advocacy in addition to facilitating investment in the knowledge and professional services industry in the region.

Previous Council Resolution

There is no previous Council resolution relevant to this report.

Related Documentation

- Sunshine Coast Council Corporate Plan 2023-2027
- Sunshine Coast – The Natural Advantage: Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013–2033
- International Relations and Trade Policy
- Councillor Expenses Reimbursement and Provision of Facilities and Support Policy

- Councillor Portfolio System and Protocols

Critical Dates

Given the relatively short lead time to the proposed departure date of 21 October 2023, a decision on this report is sought so that appropriate logistical arrangements can be implemented.

It should also be noted that the 2023 ICF Annual Summit will be conducted on the same day as the Sunshine Coast Council October 2023 Ordinary Meeting and Councillor Landsberg will be required to advise of his absence from this meeting.

Implementation

Should the recommendations in this report be accepted by Council, the Chief Executive Officer will approve international travel for a Council officer to support Councillor T Landsberg travel to New York, so that arrangements can be made to secure appropriate air travel and accommodation and confirm proposed meetings.