

March 24, 2021

Residents of Borroloola Town Camps Deserve Urgent Road Upgrades

Roper Gulf Regional Council will be calling on the Northern Territory Government to show some leadership for the urgently needed upgrades to the Borroloola Town Camp Roads.

These roadways are on various tenures and are not on any gazetted road reserve nor on any land owned or otherwise controlled by Council.

Council was of the belief that as the Northern Territory Government has recently funded upgrades and replaced housing in these town camps that the associated roadworks would also be upgraded or replaced.

Council has undertaken some design work previously on its own accord to fix the Town Camp Roads in Borroloola, however is hamstrung by Northern Territory Government legislation in regards to land tenure arrangements of the town camps and the fact that Council cannot charge rates on those properties.

Council only receives a small amount of funding that covers basic repairs to these Town Camp Roads each year, however does not cover the actual replacement of the roads and drainage which is now needed, hence why Council is requesting the Northern Territory Government take a leadership role in this matter.

Roper Gulf Regional Council will be calling on the government's urgent assistance to rectify this long term issue.

For far too long, this problem has been a major concern to the residents that live within the town camps at Borroloola and it is unacceptable that it has been unresolved.

Roper Gulf Regional Council Mayor Judy MacFarlane said "Governments have been handballing responsibility for the Town Camp Roads in Borroloola to the point where the road conditions are so poor that residents can barely drive on them.

"Roper Gulf Regional Council has been advocating for many years to have the Town Camp Roads at Mara, Yanyula, Garawa 1 and Garawa 2 Camps upgraded to an acceptable standard to ensure the safety of the residents living there".

Now is the opportunity to normalise the planning and ownership of these roads, however ownership of the process needs to commence with the Northern Territory Government, not Council which has no legislated capacity to overturn the inherited legacy of poor decision making.

The matter requires a combined, whole-of-stakeholder approach involving the Northern Territory Government to take its inherited and default ownership of this matter.

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Attachment 1: Poor Road Conditions on Garawa 1 Roads

Photo taken on Tuesday 16 March 2021 at Garawa 1 Camp

