

7.10. COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM 2025-2026

REPORT AUTHOR Community Development Officer

MANAGER Manager Community Services

DEPARTMENT Corporate & Communities

DATE 24 February 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Approves the allocation of \$35,638 from Council's Community Grants Program 2025–2026 to fund five recommended applications, as detailed in this report; and**
 - 2. Approves the opening of a second round of Council's Community Grants Program 2025-2026 in March 2026.**
and
 - 3. Delegates authority under Section 257(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, finalise and execute any and all matters associated with the grants.**
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council's Community Grants Program 2025-2026 was delivered in two stages, commencing with an initial Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Eligible applicants were subsequently invited to submit a formal grant application, with applications closing on Friday, 12 December 2025.

A total of twelve EOIs were received. Following assessment, eight applicants were deemed eligible to proceed to the formal application stage. Of these, five applications are recommended for Council funding, representing a total allocation of \$35,638 from the available funding pool of \$60,000.

This report presents the assessment outcomes and funding recommendations for the 2025 2026 Community Grants Program, which were assessed in accordance with Council's Community Grants Policy, Grant Guidelines and Assessment Criteria.

The report also seeks Council approval to open a second round of the Community Grants Program in March 2026.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

Not applicable.

REPORT/BACKGROUND

The Community Grants program is open to not-for-profit organisations and individuals with an eligible auspice. Assessment recommendations were based on meeting eligibility requirements and assessment criteria in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Policy.

The assessment is graded according to evidence of the following:

- Community benefit which includes social, economic and environmental;
- Evidence of community support and demonstrated a broad range of community diversity and reach;
- Alignment with goals and themes of the Corporate Plan;
- Expected levels of participation and reach during project activities, ensuring that all projects would add value to community events and activities; and
- All projects need to demonstrate good value for money and can be delivered within the timeframe proposed.

Applicants who progressed beyond the Expression of Interest stage were provided with feedback to support the refinement of their final applications, ensuring transparency and a competitive and equitable assessment process.

Project Name	Organisation	Activity and Intended Outcome	Amount Recommended
Desexing Program	Paws and Claws	Delivery of 43 means-tested desexing vouchers for low-income pet owners, in partnership with local veterinarians. The program aims to reduce unwanted litters, discourage backyard breeding and improve animal welfare outcomes through community education.	\$10,000
Repairs to Clubhouse Bar Area	Port Douglas Senior Rugby League Club Mossman	Removal of the deteriorated bar and levelling of the floor at the Mossman Showgrounds clubhouse (44 Grogan Street) to create a safe, flexible multi-use space for club activities, training and wider community use.	\$10,000
Forever Reef Community Open Weeks and Guest Speaker Series	GBR Legacy	Provision of free community guided tours, guest speaker sessions and educational workshops to increase environmental awareness and reef literacy.	\$10,000
Food Safety Compliance	Alexandra Bay Sporting and Social Club (ABSSC)	Purchase of a compliant commercial refrigerator to meet food safety requirements, enabling the organisation to safely prepare and supply food at community events.	\$4,004
Defibrillator	Port Douglas Tennis	Replacement of the club's defibrillator to ensure reliable, accessible emergency	\$1,634

		response for club members and the broader community.	
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FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Funding for council's Grant Program is provided for in 2025-2026 operational budget with a total allocation of \$60,000 (GST Exc). The assessment panel have recommended funding applications to the value of \$35,638 (GST Exc).

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

All applicants and proposed projects must meet eligibility criteria listed in the eligibility checklist and program guidelines. Risks in relation to allocating public funds through Council's funding include disputes and failure to acquit funds although processes are in place to ensure that this risk is minimal. Panel members apply these principles when considering risk management implications.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding can include environmental and sustainability support for programs, projects and activities which align with Council's strategy and policy.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The objectives of Council Grants Program are to support eligible organisations, groups and individuals with financial and non-financial (in-kind) assistance to help deliver community programs, events and activities which will provide positive outcomes in consideration of arts, culture, sporting and recreation enabling social participation and interaction.

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Liveability

To deliver community activities to promote safe, healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities with an environmental conscious.

1.1 - Deliver community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities.

1.7 - Investigate and promote environmental, green, eco-friendly and nature focused initiatives.

Theme 3 - Service Delivery

We deliver Council services effectively and efficiently to meet community expectations, focusing on the wellbeing of both the community and our employees.

3.3 - Focus on safety and wellbeing - of the community and employees.

3.9 - Preserve, protect and improve our unique environment.

Operational Plan 2025-2026 Actions:

2.3.2 - Undertake a review of the Community Grants Guidelines with a view to introducing industry and economic development opportunities and an event sponsorship program.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Local Government Act 2009

CONSULTATION

Council's Community Grants 2025-2026 was advertised on the Council Website, Facebook page and advertised throughout Council's local networks. Potential applicants were encouraged to speak to relevant Officers from the Community Services department before applying, to ensure understanding of the funding guidelines, compliance, and to provide the best opportunity for a successful application.

CONCLUSION

Approval of the recommended funding allocations will enable a range of community projects to proceed while retaining sufficient funds to deliver a second grant round in March 2026. This approach ensures continued access to funding opportunities and supports a diverse range of community organisations across the Shire.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil