7.15. COMMUNITY GRANTS RECOMMENDATIONS ROUND ONE 2026 2027

REPORT AUTHOR	Community Development Officer
EXECUTIVE	General Manager Corporate and Communities
DEPARTMENT	Corporate and Communities
TEAM	Community Services
DATE	27 October 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Approve the allocation of $14,091 from Council's Community Grants Program 2026/27 to fund two (2) recommended applications, as detailed in this report.**

2. **Approve the opening of a second round of Council's Community Grants Program 2026/27 in February 2027.**

3. **Delegate authority under Section 257(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to negotiate, finalise and execute all matters associated with the recommendations (1) and (2).**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council's Community Grants Program 2026/27 was delivered in two (2) 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 21 August 2026.

A total of nine (9) EOIs were received. Following assessment, seven (7) submissions were deemed eligible to proceed to the formal application stage. Of these, two (2) applications are recommended for Council funding, representing a total allocation of $14,091 from the available funding pool of $75,000 detailed in Table 1.

This report presents the assessment outcomes and funding recommendations for the 2026/27 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 February 2027.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

There are no previous Council considerations in relation to this report.

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
- All projects need to demonstrate good value for money and can be delivered within the timeframe proposed

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

The assessment panel's recommendations are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

Project Name	Organisation	Activity & Intended Outcome	Amount Recommended
Mossman Youth Centre Kitchen and Site Upgrade	Douglas Shire Community Services Association Limited	Upgrade the kitchen and improve the outdoor area through edging and levelling. Provide a safer, more functional space to support daily meals, cooking and life-skills programs, school-holiday activities and community events for young people aged 12–21, while strengthening food security, practical skills and community participation.	$4,091
Resilient Spaces: Port Douglas Neighbourhood Centre Upgrade Project	Port Douglas Community Service Network Inc	Install custom-built cabinetry and secure storage, and enclose the rear deck to create an additional air-conditioned multi-purpose space. Increase the Centre's capacity to provide flexible community space, improve storage and functionality, and strengthen its preparedness to support the	$10,000

		community during and following disasters.	

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Funding for council's Grant Program is provided for in the 2026/27 operational budget with a total allocation of $75,000. The assessment panel have recommended funding applications to the value of $14,091.

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.*
1.4 - *Promote inclusivity, connection and accessibility for individuals/people of all abilities.*
1.6 - *Create and maintain parks and open spaces to preserve, protect and sustain our natural assets.*

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.*

Operational Plan 2026-2027 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- Community Grants and Support Policy

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation:

- Assessment panel
- Organisation-wide email

External Consultation:

- Council's website
- Facebook page
- Local media
- Posters displayed at Council venues
- Community Agency Network (CAN)

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 February 2027.

This approach ensures continued access to funding opportunities and supports a diverse range of community organisations across the Shire.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil