

7.8. COMMUNITY GRANTS ROUND TWO 2025 26 FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT AUTHOR	Community Development Officer
MANAGER	Manager Community Services
DEPARTMENT	Corporate and Communities
DATE	16 June 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the allocation of \$25,574 (excl. GST) from Council's Community Grants Program 2025/26 to fund three (3) recommended applications, as detailed in this report;
2. Approve the opening of the next round of Council's Community Grants Program in July 2026, subject to 2026/27 Annual Budget adoption; and
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 any and all matters associated with the grants.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council's Community Grants Program 2025/26 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 15 May 2026.

A total of eight (8) EOIs were received. Following assessment, six (6) applicants were deemed eligible to proceed to the formal application stage. Of these, one (1) applicant withdrew prior to assessment, resulting in five (5) applications being assessed in the final round.

Three (3) applications are recommended for Council funding, representing a total allocation of \$25,574 from the available funding pool of \$32,428, detailed in Table 1.

This report presents the assessment outcomes and funding recommendations for the 2025/26 Community Grants Program, assessed in accordance with Council's Community Grants Policy, Grant Guidelines, and assessment criteria.

The report also seeks Council approval to open the next round of the Community Grants Program in July 2026, subject to 2026/27 Annual Budget adoption.

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 made in accordance with Council's Community Grants Policy and Grant Guidelines and were based on eligibility requirements and assessment criteria.

Applications were assessed against the following criteria:

- 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 proposed timeframe

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

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

Table 1.

Project Name	Organisation	Activity and Intended Outcome	Amount Recommended
Re-roof Clubhouse	Mossman Boat & Fishing Club	Removal and replacement of the existing clubhouse roof.	\$10,000
Port Douglas Maritime Museum Pop-up Display	Low Isles Preservation Society (LIPS)	Mobile exhibition of historic maritime artefacts, artwork, and display panels for use across venues.	\$10,000
Mini Hoopers & Mini Ballers Expansion	Douglas Heat Basketball Club	Expansion of junior basketball programs (ages 2–7).	\$5,574

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Funding for Council's Community Grants Program is provided within the 2025/26 operational budget with a total allocation of \$75,000.

The assessment panel has recommended funding allocations totalling \$25,574 (excl. GST) from the available remaining budget of \$32,428.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

All applicants and proposed projects must meet eligibility criteria outlined in the eligibility checklist and program guidelines.

Risks associated with the allocation of public funds through Council's grants program include assessment panel conflict of interest, disputes, and failure to appropriately acquit funding. These risks are mitigated through established assessment processes, eligibility screening, and acquittal requirements.

Panel members apply Council's policies and procedures in the consideration and management of these risks during the assessment process.

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's Community Grants Program are to provide financial and non-financial (in-kind) support to eligible organisations, groups, and individuals to deliver community programs, events, and activities.

These initiatives contribute to positive social outcomes by supporting arts, culture, sport, and recreation, and by promoting social participation, inclusion, and community connectedness.

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 Program 2025/26 was publicly advertised via Council's website, Facebook page, Douglas Gazette, and through Council's local networks.
- Prospective applicants were encouraged to engage with the Community Development Officer prior to submitting an application. This provided an opportunity to clarify eligibility requirements, ensure compliance with program guidelines, and support the preparation of competitive applications.

CONCLUSION

Approval of the recommended funding allocations will support the delivery of a range of community-focused projects that provide social, cultural, and recreational benefits across the Douglas Shire.

The recommended projects demonstrate strong community value and alignment with Council's strategic priorities, contributing to more inclusive, connected, and active communities.

Opening the next round of the Community Grants Program in July 2026 will ensure ongoing opportunities for local organisations and groups to deliver initiatives that strengthen community wellbeing and participation.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil