



Mareeba
SHIRE COUNCIL

Community Partnerships Program Policy

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1 POLICY INTENT

The Community Partnerships Program Policy enables Council to respond in a fair, transparent and consistent manner to the requests for community assistance that are best conceptualised as a "community partnership", with Council as one of the member partners.

It is directly linked to the following Corporate Plan Community Strategy (COM 3):

"Encourage the building of strong partnerships with community, private sector and government so as to build community capacity and develop strategies to encourage and support leadership and self-responsibility in the community."

The Community Partnerships Program Policy is aligned with the Community Leasing Policy and the Rate Rebate and Remission Policy and collectively they outline Council's policies for a wide range of assistance to eligible not for profit community groups.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Partnerships Program (CPP) is to enhance community wellbeing and prosperity by contributing to community partnerships for events, projects and activities that deliver significant community benefits in towns, districts and the whole shire. The community benefits could include social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits.

The Community Partnerships Program is an efficient and effective means of harnessing Council and community resources to achieve community benefits, especially those that are community driven as it reinforces contributions to the event, project or activity as a shared responsibility by community partners.

3 WHAT IS A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP?

A community partnership is an agreement between Council and another partnership member or members to do something together that will benefit all involved, often resulting in achievements that might not have been possible alone.

The Community Partnerships Program is about *contributory* partnerships where partnership members co-contribute to the event or activity.

Council is one partnership member and other partnership members could be individuals, community groups, sporting clubs, service clubs, and not for profit organisations.

The partnership work is most often *in addition* to the regular work of the parties involved in the community partnership.

4 THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

The Community Partnerships Program manages community requests for council assistance for community partnerships.

The Community Partnerships Program Policy clearly sets out the types of assistance Council can contribute to the partnership and the process for negotiating the terms and conditions of the partnership with Council.

5 PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND ASSESSMENT

5.1 PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Priority will be given to requests for community partnerships:

- By not-for-profit organisations that rely on volunteers.
- That demonstrates contributions by other partnership members.
- That has a plan in place to become self-sustaining, if it is not a one off activity or event.
- That demonstrates the contribution by Council cannot be provided by any other partner and is crucial to the success of the event/activity/project.
- No other Council assistance is already provided and the level of historical assistance provided by Council is low.
- That demonstrates significant community benefits will be achieved by the partnership.
- That is financially viable.
- That aligns closely with the Mareeba Shire Council Corporate Plan.

5.2 HOW WILL THE REQUEST BE ASSESSED?

To apply for assistance under the Community Partnership Program, individuals and organisations should firstly contact the Community Wellbeing Officer to discuss their community partnership. A letter of request or email should then be lodged with Council detailing the community partnership and the contribution requested of Council.

Requests for community partnerships will be assessed on how well the request aligns with the Program Purpose and Priorities.

5.3 WHEN CAN A REQUEST BE SUBMITTED?

Requests for a Council contribution to a community partnership will be considered throughout the year, but must be submitted to Council at least six weeks before the contribution is required to allow quotes to be obtained and, where necessary, work to be scheduled.

Requests requiring a significant Council contribution that are greater than \$5000 will be considered during the annual budget planning process and must be received by Council no later than 1 February each year.

6 TYPE OF COUNCIL CONTRIBUTIONS

6.1 CASH DONATIONS

Council will consider contributing a cash donation to a community partnership. This includes cash for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses incurred by a community partner for approved activities.

6.2 MAJOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Council will consider contributing to major community partnerships especially for major community events, festivals and exceptional projects which demonstrate significant community, economic and /or environmental benefits and impacts and have high alignment with the Corporate Plan.

Special requests for major contributions by Council to community works programs on Council owned land and reserves, that are not included in Council's Land and Facilities budget, may also be considered.

Council Officers will liaise with major community partnership members to reach agreement on specific ways that they will acknowledge Council's assistance. Discussions will also be held to ensure effective and efficient use of Council funds and to settle on a planned approach towards decreasing reliance on Council assistance.

These requests will be considered on an annual basis, during the budget planning phase. Letters of request must be received at Council by 1 February of the financial year before the contribution is required.

6.3 IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Council will consider requests for in-kind contributions regarding the use of Council's tables, chairs and other event equipment on the basis that the community partner agrees to collect, clean and return the equipment to Council during normal Council business hours. Council will not deliver these items and any damages must be paid for by the other community partner/s.

Requests for in-kind contributions by Council to a community partnership, such as a community event or project, will be considered throughout the year, but must be received at least 6 weeks before the in-kind contribution is required.

6.4 RATE AND CHARGE REMISSIONS

Another way that Council assists community groups is to grant a remission to Council approved community groups, based on the level of commerciality of the organisation. Council is committed to supporting not for profit community groups to have access to affordable space for community activities but excludes the subsidisation of commercial activity. This assistance applies to eligible community groups in the shire, irrespective of whether or not they occupy Council land or facilities.

Therefore, community groups are assessed according to their level of commerciality and assigned (by Council) to one of two community group types:

- Type A Community Group - limited commerciality
- Type B Community Group - substantial commerciality.

This categorisation not only enables Council to make available fair, reasonable and transparent assistance to each community group, depending on their level of commerciality, but it also recognises that community groups can change over time experiencing increased or decreased levels of commerciality and the group's categorisation can be changed accordingly. Council will offer a higher level of assistance to Type A Community Groups than those assessed as Type B Community Groups.

6.4.1 Rate Rebate and Remission Policy

The Rate Rebate and Remission Policy relates to the granting of rebates and remissions of Council rates and charges for not for profit community groups. To be eligible for rates rebates and charges remissions, applicants must meet the definition of a community group (Section 4.2) and meet the eligibility criteria (Section 4.2.1) of the Rate Rebate and Remission Policy. The Rate Rebate and Remission Policy also outlines the application and continuation processes for the remission. These requests will be considered on an annual basis, during the budget planning phase. Letters of application must be received at Council by 1 February of the financial year before the funding is required.

Community groups wishing to apply for a rate remission are encouraged to read the Rate Rebate and Remission Policy before applying.

6.4.2 Assessing Type A Groups: Limited Commerciality

The group's revenue raising streams are limited to membership fees, community donations, minor event charges, raffles and other fundraising and food canteen. If the group has a bar, then patrons are mainly members and limited profit is made.

6.4.3 Remissions Granted to Type A Groups

The following rebates and remissions are available to eligible Type A Community Groups:

- Rate Remission: One hundred percent (100%) of the general property rates per year;
- Charge Remission: One hundred (100%) per year on Utility Charges (Sewerage and Water Access Charges) and the Waste Management Levy;
- Rural Fire Levy: One hundred percent (100%) of the Rural Fire Levy.

6.4.4 Assessing Type B Group: Substantial Commerciality

The group's revenue raising streams include those of Type A Groups but also include the regular operation of a bar and commercial kitchen, gaming machines, charge industry recognised gate entry fees and commercial sponsorship.

6.4.5 Remissions Granted to Type B Groups

The following rebates and remissions are available to eligible Type B Community Groups:

- Rate Remission: Fifty percent (50%) of the general property rates up to a maximum of \$1,000 per year;
- Charge Remission: Twenty percent (20%) up to a maximum of \$200 per year on total Utility Charges (Sewerage and Water Access Charges) and the Waste Management Levy;
- Rural Fire Levy: One hundred percent (100%) of the Rural Fire Levy.

6.4.6 State Emergency Management Levy

The State Emergency Management Levy is collected by Council on behalf of the state government, so no remission or rebate from Council is available to community groups.

6.5 WATER CONSUMPTION FEES

Council will consider providing a donation towards water consumption costs for eligible community groups, if water consumption exceeds \$100 per annum. To be eligible for financial assistance community groups must also meet the eligibility criteria at Sections 8 and 9 of this policy and meet the definition of a community group as defined below:

- a) A not for profit, incorporated group or association of persons with the primary aim of conducting activities and providing services for community benefit; and
- b) The community group relies predominantly on volunteer labour, community fundraising, membership fees and donations;
- c) The community group does not receive state or federal government operational grants and does not rely on a fee for service business model.

Eligible community groups are classified by Council into three (3) categories depending on water usage and a level of assistance is provided to each category as follows:

Group 1: Community groups watering playing fields and large public lawns/grounds

Assistance: 35% of actual annual water consumption up to a maximum \$2,000 donation

Group 2: Community groups watering for dust suppression eg. Horse and pony clubs, rodeo associations

Assistance: 35% of actual annual water consumption up to a maximum \$1,000 donation

Group 3: Community groups using water for human consumption and gardens

Assistance: 35% of actual annual water consumption up to a maximum \$500 donation

Requests for a donation for water consumption fees will be considered throughout the year and must be made in writing by letter or email to the Community Wellbeing Officer, Mareeba Shire Council. Approved requests will be paid as a donation on the rates notice to offset the costs of water consumption and will apply from the next rating period after approval is granted.

6.6 COMMUNITY LOANS

Council may contribute to community partnerships with not-for-profit organisations in the form of a low interest or interest-free community loan. Applications will be assessed by Council on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the purpose of the loan and the extent to which the loan is expected to benefit the community.

Requests for a community loan will be considered throughout the year, but must be submitted to Council at least six weeks before the contribution is required to allow time for the assessment process.

7 DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Staff delegations are in place to simplify the process of approving requests for Council contributions to community partnerships that comply with the principles outlined in the policy.

Delegations for staff approved requests are as follows: Manager Community Wellbeing - \$500.

The Mayor and Chief Executive Officer have the delegated authority to make variations to particular circumstances regarding contributions provided under the Community Partnerships Program.

8 ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

Eligible community applications for Council contribution to community partnerships are those where:

- a) The applicant is an incorporated association or has an auspice body.
- b) The applicant or proposed event, project or activity is based within the Mareeba Shire Council boundaries.
- c) The project or activity provides a direct benefit to residents of the Mareeba Shire Council area.
- d) The applicant is able to demonstrate financial viability and competence and the ability to

- achieve stated goals.
- e) Incorporated groups are able to provide a copy of their most recent audited financial statement.
- f) Unincorporated groups are able to provide a copy of their most recent reconciled financial statement.
- g) The applicant is an individual who can clearly demonstrate that the project or activity they propose demonstrates community benefit and the requested Council assistance will be used for community benefit.
- h) Applications from educational providers are made for donations towards initiatives outside of Education Queensland's responsibilities and which contribute to a broader community benefit. Such applications must be lodged by the school's Parents and Citizens Association or a suitable community-based auspice body.
- i) The application clearly demonstrates it meets the Community Partnerships Program priorities at Section 5 of this policy.
- j) The application is not retrospective to recover costs already incurred, unless in exceptional circumstances.
- k) Additional eligibility criteria apply for rate rebates and charges remissions (Section 6.4) and water consumption donations (Section 6.5).

9 INELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

Applications not eligible for Council assistance are those where:

- a) The applicant is a political organisation.
- b) The funds are to be used towards wages/salaries, other operating and administrative costs.
- c) The applicant is a previous recipient of Council assistance who has failed to meet the conditions of financial or in-kind support received.
- d) The applicant is a group or organisation that has an unmet debt to Council at the time of the application.
- e) An application for a cash donation is applied for retrospectively.
- f) The request is for a private business venture or activity.
- g) Projects are under litigation.
- h) The request can be or is being dealt with by other Council provision for support including specific project grants or Council works program.
- i) The funds are to cover subscription or membership fees.
- j) The applicant or event has already received \$2,000 from Council in the financial year and is not classed as a major event.
- k) Incorporated groups are not able to provide a copy of their audited financial statement.
- l) Unincorporated groups are not able to provide a copy of their reconciled financial statement.
- m) An applicant's total expenses are being met through sponsorship.
- n) The community organisation is requesting cash or in-kind assistance for maintenance of community facilities that are owned by Mareeba Shire Council. These types of requests are to be referred to the Facilities Officer.
- o) The community organisation has a lease agreement with Mareeba Shire Council and the request from the organisation is for the Community Partnerships Program to cover part or all of the costs that the community organisation has agreed to meet as part of the terms and conditions of their lease with Council. For example, costs such as contents and public liability insurance will not be paid for by Council under the Community Partnerships Program as it is the responsibility of the community organisation leasing the facility to meet these costs as per the lease agreement.

10 CONDITIONS

The following conditions apply to requests for Council assistance under this program:

- a) The application is made in writing by letter or email and submitted to the Community Wellbeing Officer Mareeba Shire Council.
- b) Two quotes from local businesses are to be submitted with the application where the cost is above \$1,000.
- c) Council donations to community organisations do not include GST.
- d) Any approved grant will lapse if not claimed within three months following the date of approval.
- e) All recipients of \$100 or more from Council through this policy are required to acknowledge the assistance of Mareeba Shire Council. This acknowledgement is to be included in promotional material for the event.
- f) The use of any part of the grant for purposes other than specified in the letter of approval is not permitted without prior approval in writing by Council.
- g) Mareeba Shire Council takes no responsibility for financial losses or physical injury incurred as a result of involvement in the supported event or activity.

11 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information please contact:

Community Wellbeing Officer, Mareeba Shire Council

Tel: 1300 308 461

Website: www.msc.qld.gov.au