

Replacement Report

REPORTS THROUGH THE GENERAL MANAGER

REPORTS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

11 [GM-CM] Stronger Country Communities Funding

SUBMITTED BY: Financial Services

mhm



Making decisions with you
We're in this together

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK:

2	Making decisions with you
2.2	Engagement
2.2.2	Communications - To inform, educate and engage the public about Council and community activities.

ROLE: **Collaborator**

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The Stronger Country Communities Fund will see \$200 million made available for applications over the next two years, with \$100 million available through the first round of funding. Each local government area in regional and rural NSW will have access to the funds, and every community will have the opportunity to receive their fair share.

They will support projects that involve:

- **building new community facilities** (such as parks, playgrounds, walking and cycle pathways)
- **refurbishing existing local facilities** (such as community centres and libraries)
- **enhancing local parks and the supporting facilities** (such as kitchens and toilet blocks).

Council has been advised that the available funding level for 2017 is \$198,202 in the Lismore State electorate area and \$992,145 in the Tweed State electorate area within the Tweed Shire Local Government Area.

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RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. Council submits the following as preferred projects for 2017 (round 1) funding under the Stronger Country Communities Fund:

LISMORE ELECTORATE

Tweed Regional Aquatic Centre – 145kW Solar System with a co-contribution of \$102,000 from the Revolving Energy Fund.	\$198,202
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TWEED ELECTORATE

Tweed Heads Civic and Cultural Centre Plaza and Social Enterprise Café with a contribution of up to \$7,500 from Council’s Community Facilities Asset Management Reserve	\$992,145
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2. Council submits the following reserve option projects for 2017 (round 1)

LISMORE ELECTORATE

Knox Park Revitalisation Stage 2 (new amenities block only) with a contribution of up to \$300,000 from Council’s Public Toilet Capital;	\$198,202
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Murwillumbah Community Centre design improvements with a co-contribution of \$50,000 from Council’s Community Facilities Reserve.	\$198,202
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Upgrade Murwillumbah Auditorium precinct (lighting, equipment and technology upgrade components)	\$198,202
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Tweed Regional Art Gallery Disabled Toilet and walkway	\$136,000
Queen Street Toilet block reuse conversion	<u>\$ 62,000</u>
Total	<u>\$198,000</u>

TWEED ELECTORATE

Beach accesses Casuarina Beach (Kingscliff to Cabarita Beach)	\$300,000
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Upgrade and expansion of Pottsville Beach Community Hall and market	\$500,000
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Beach accesses Casuarina Beach (partial project)	<u>\$192,145</u>
Total	<u>\$992,145</u>

Tweed Regional Accessible Park and Playground (Partial Stage 1)	\$992,145
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Fingal Headland boardwalk and whale watching platform	\$600,000
Coastal beach accessibility upgrades (Ambrose Brown Park, Casuarina Beach, Pottsville Beach)	<u>\$390,000</u>

Total	<u>\$990,000</u>
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Fingal Headland boardwalk and whale watching platform	\$600,000
Upgrade and expansion of Pottsville Beach Community Hall and market (partial project)	<u>\$392,145</u>

Total	<u>\$992,145</u>
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Philp Parade walkway and boardwalk (South Tweed Heads)	\$800,000
Beach accesses Casuarina Beach (partial project)	<u>\$192,145</u>

Total	<u>\$992,145</u>
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Philp Parade walkway and boardwalk (South Tweed Heads)	\$800,000
Upgrade and expansion of Pottsville Beach Community Hall and market (partial project)	<u>\$192,145</u>

Total	<u>\$992,145</u>
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2. **The Mayor and General Manager consult with the Local State Members on the preferred and reserve projects.**

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REPORT:

The Stronger Country Communities Fund will see \$200 million made available for applications over the next two years, with \$100 million available through the first round of funding. Each local government area in regional and rural NSW will have access to the funds, and every community will have the opportunity to receive their fair share.

They will support projects that involve:

- **building new community facilities** (such as parks, playgrounds, walking and cycle pathways)
- **refurbishing existing local facilities** (such as community centres and libraries)
- **enhancing local parks and the supporting facilities** (such as kitchens and toilet blocks).

All councils are eligible for a base amount of \$750,000. This amount may increase if the council has been recently amalgamated. Funding is also adjusted to account for population size and the cost of construction in that region.

Council has been advised that the available funding level for 2017 is \$198,202 in the Lismore State electorate area and \$992,145 in the Tweed State electorate area within the Tweed Shire Local Government Area.

If a council does not use its full funding allocation in 2017 the allocated funds will be available to that council in Round 2 in 2018.

Local councils must consult with their communities and local MPs to identify project proposals that best meet community needs and aspirations. Priority will be given to projects that provide local jobs and support local businesses. Evidence of consultation activities and findings will need to be provided. However, if a council has recently completed a consultation process as part of a strategy or master planning process, this can be provided as evidence. The projects put forward for submission fall into this category.

Councils can apply for one project or a suite of projects, as long as the total stays in the range of funding (minimum \$100,000, generally between \$250,000 to \$1 million, or more than \$1 million where there is a significant financial co-contribution).

2017 KEY DATES

There are three application tranches scheduled for 2017 in round one. Tweed Shire Council has been advised that it is part of Tranche B.

The schedule is:

Tranche A applications open 7 July, close 9 August 2017

Tranche B applications open 16 August, close 13 September 2017

Tranche C applications open 20 September, close 18 October 2017

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Councils that are unable to meet the closing date of their application tranche may ask to be moved to the next available tranche in the same funding year.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The Stronger Country Communities Fund is available to all 92 regional local government areas, Lord Howe Island and the Unincorporated Far West. Regional local councils are those outside Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

State government agencies and non-government organisations can submit eligible community infrastructure projects, in partnership with local councils.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following information will be required.

- Clear definition of project, purpose, scope, costs and who it shall benefit.
- Evidence or data on how the project will help boost the liveability of the local community. This might include consideration of how it will build more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities.
- Supporting information could include estimated take-up numbers, survey feedback or direct community feedback.
- Additional evidence could include how the proposal aligns with the Council Community Strategic Plan.
- Projects of at least \$100,000 and typically in the range of \$250,000 to \$1 million. Larger projects will be considered where there is significant financial co-contribution.
- Deliverability. Evidence that the project can commence within 12 months and ideally be complete and funds acquitted within two years of funding approval.
- Evidence the project is cost effective will be required including a clearly defined budget. At least two quotes should be provided. Projects must give consideration to the processes and procedures outlined in the capital expenditure review guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government.
- Details about co-contribution. Organisations will need to contribute if the project chosen is a planned upgrade of existing infrastructure in their forward program of capital works project proposals.
- Details about the use of local suppliers. Supporting data might include competitive quotes, how it will contribute to local employment and local skills development.
- The capacity to maintain any new infrastructure funded. Projects must be sustainable and be able to be operated and maintained beyond the funding period.

Examples include:

- building new community facilities to be shared by all within the community — such as parks, playgrounds, walking or cycle pathways
- refurbishing existing local facilities — such as schools and health centres, community centres, libraries
- enhancing local parks and the supporting facilities — such as

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INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The Stronger Country Communities Fund is not to be used for:

- projects in ineligible locations
- maintenance that local governments already propose to fund in their forward programs of capital works, unless a co-contribution is proposed
- retrospective funding for work undertaken (funding is for new projects)
- ongoing staff or operational costs
- implementation costs of new councils
- marketing, branding, advertising, or product promotion
- projects less than \$100,000
- projects with exclusive private benefits
- maintenance of roads and bridges, water or sewerage
- projects previously receiving funding under other government programs
- projects that do not meet the eligibility requirements above (for example, if they cannot be completed within the funding period or are not well defined with a clear budget, and so on).

ASSESSMENT

A “Choice Modelling” process will be completed in addition to the evidence of community consultation provided by councils.

Choice Modelling is a specialised technique to uncover community preferences and is being used so that the Stronger Country Communities Fund delivers projects that communities want and value most highly. The core aim of Choice Modelling is to determine what is important to residents in regional communities and what they value. This methodology has been endorsed by NSW Treasury and reflects best practice.

The survey will be primarily conducted by randomly selecting members of the community that are already associated with existing survey panels, telephone interviews may be required in smaller communities. Survey participants are engaged by independent survey firms to maintain assurances of probity and independence. A minimum of one hundred local residents will be selected in each local government area to undertake the survey. Larger samples will be taken in those areas with bigger populations. These surveys will be used to help clarify how local residents rank the proposals submitted for funding and how much they value each project for their community.

POSSIBLE PROJECTS

Projects nominated to date (by State electorate) for consideration are:

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LISMORE ELECTORATE (\$198,202 available)

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUIRED
Murwillumbah Community Centre design improvements	\$180-\$200,000
Upgrade Murwillumbah Auditorium precinct (includes Canvas and Kettle meeting room) to meet current standards for sustainability, disability access and technology	\$750,000
Knox Park Revitalisation Stage 2	\$650,000
Disabled Toilet & Walkway Art Gallery	\$136,000
Queen St toilet block reuse conversion	\$62,000
Tweed Regional Aquatic Centre – 145kW Solar System	\$300,000

TWEED ELECTORATE (\$992,145 available)

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUIRED
Philp Parade walkway and boardwalk (South Tweed Heads)	\$800,000
Fingal Headland boardwalk and whale watching platform	\$600,000
Beach access upgrades (Ambrose Brown Park, Casuarina Beach, Pottsville Beach)	\$390,000
Tweed Heads Civic and Cultural Centre Plaza and Social Enterprise Café	\$1,000,000
Upgrade and expansion of Pottsville Beach Community Hall and market	\$300-500,000
Tweed Regional Accessible Park and Playground (Stage 1)	\$1,500,000
Cycleways (up to the value of available funds)	\$992,145
Exercise trail stations, such as those installed along Marine Parade, Kingscliff (up to the value of available funds)	\$992,145
Casuarina Beach Rugby Club - upgrade to club house and extend canteen, and/or to have lights fitted on second field.	The value of these works has not been provided by the Rugby Club

OPTIONS:

To utilise the already identified and consulted projects as detailed above to discuss with the State Members, noting Council's preferred projects as detailed in Recommendation 1 (I); or

To utilise the already identified and consulted projects as detailed above to discuss with the State Members, altering the preferred and reserved projects as detailed in Recommendation 1 (I) and 1 (II); or

To commence a new consultation process to identify new projects. Note this would not necessarily adhere to the Community Strategic Plan, or other related IPR framework such as Asset Management. Time constraints would make this process very difficult to accomplish and report back to Council prior to the application closing. It is therefore recommended that projects already identified as a need and having gained support be utilised.

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CONCLUSION:

It is recommended that the General Manager and Mayor liaise with the State Members in regards to Council's preferred and reserved projects.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS:

a. Policy:

Corporate Policy Not Applicable

b. Budget/Long Term Financial Plan:

Will require amendment if Council is successful in obtaining grant funding.

c. Legal:

Not Applicable.

d. Communication/Engagement:

Consult-We will listen to you, consider your ideas and concerns and keep you informed.

Community engagement is a critical focus for Tweed Shire Council and is embedded in the way we do business and how we set our priorities for projects such as this.

Like other NSW councils, Tweed recently reviewed key planning documents including the Community Strategic Plan.

As part of a comprehensive community engagement process in developing the plan, Council distributed a detailed survey to every Tweed household.

Additional community engagement has occurred at events, workshops and stakeholder meetings across the region over an extended period.

The projects to be put forward by Tweed Shire Council for the Strong Country Community Fund directly reflect the priorities put forward by community members as part of this comprehensive community engagement process.

These projects would provide a direct benefit to the lives of Tweed residents and a lasting legacy that reflects their local aspirations.

UNDER SEPARATE COVER/FURTHER INFORMATION:

Nil.
