



## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, March 25, 2025  
**TO:** CITY COUNCIL  
**WRITTEN BY:** ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST RENTERIA  
**RECOMMENDED BY:** CITY MANAGER VIDES  
**APPROVED BY:** COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE  
**SUBJECT:** MOTION APPROVING THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT FUNDING LEVELS AND APPLICATION PROCESS FOR FUNDING CYCLE 2025-2027

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### RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, approve the Social and Community Service Grant funding range and application process for the funding cycle 2025-2027.

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### BACKGROUND:

The Watsonville City Council allocates an annual General Fund amount to support local community-based organizations in meeting the needs of Watsonville residents. It is estimated that for funding cycle 2025-2027 \$250,000- \$300,000 will be available annually to distribute through this program. The Social and Community Service Grants are funded on a two-year funding cycle to align with the City's budget process.

In the 2023 - 2025 funding cycle, 46 applications were received, and 45% of those organizations were funded. The City of Watsonville is proud to work and collaborate with community-based organizations to meet the service and program needs of Watsonville residents. Annual Social Service grants are just one way the City funds core services for the community.

### DISCUSSION:

This year, the Council Subcommittee, appointed by the Mayor, is composed of Mayor Maria Orozco, Council Members Eduardo Montesino and Vanessa Quiroz-Carter. The subcommittee met to discuss the application process, funding level, and evaluation criteria to be used during this funding cycle. The subcommittee is bringing its recommended process to the Council for review and approval before opening the application cycle.

## **Application**

Community-based organizations applying for funding will be expected to complete a simple online application. Over time, the Council Subcommittee has continued to work with staff to create a streamlined application for this program. The application is simple and designed to reduce the administrative burden of applying for this funding. The subcommittee's recommended application process makes applying for funding easy and more accessible and equitable for small, medium, or large organizations.

This year, the Council Subcommittee recommends continuing to allow flexibility in using this funding by community-based organizations, where funding could be used for programs or general admin support. The application process will be open from March 26, 2025, to April 23, 2025.

## **Application Review**

The subcommittee is recommending that applicants be evaluated and ranked utilizing the following criteria:

- Do the program/services align with the City Council Strategic Plan priorities?
- Does the program/service meet a **current** community need?
- Is the organization in good standing with the City and State? (if previously funded)
- Organization serves the Watsonville Community
- Financial need as demonstrated by the organization's overall funding request and annual budget
- Completeness of the application
- Impact on Watsonville residents

## **Funding Range**

During the last funding cycle, applicants were eligible to receive funding in the range of \$5,000 to \$20,000 per year. For this upcoming funding cycle, the subcommittee recommends funding organizations at a minimum of \$6,000 and a maximum of \$24,000. The subcommittee also recommends funding up to six smaller short-term projects for \$1,000 each. This funding will allow organizations to make a more impactful difference for Watsonville residents.

## **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DETERMINATION:**

N/A

## **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The Social Service Grant Program is consistent with the Strategic Plan Goal No. 6 of Community Engagement & Well-being.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact in approving the application criteria and funding levels. Later on, as the City considers the proposed funding for the Social and Community Service grants in the amount of \$250,000 to \$300,000 per year from the General Fund will be included in the FY 2026- 2027 budget.

## **ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

The City Council may propose a different application method, funding range, or evaluation criteria from the one proposed by the Council Subcommittee.

## **ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (IF ANY):**

- 1) Social and Community Service Grant Application 2025