



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, May 27, 2025

TO: CITY COUNCIL

WRITTEN BY: PRINCIPAL MANAGEMENT ANALYST ZAVALA

RECOMMENDED BY: CITY MANAGER VIDES

APPROVED BY: SOCIAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANTS CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBJECT: FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SOCIAL AND
COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANTS

RECOMMENDATION:

The Social & Community Services Grant Subcommittee recommends that the City Council approve by resolution the funding recommendations for the Social and Community Service Grant for the 2025-2027 funding cycle.

BACKGROUND:

The Watsonville City Council allocates annual General Fund resources to support local community-based organizations in addressing the needs of Watsonville residents. The Social and Community Service Grants are awarded on a two-year funding cycle to align with the City's biennial budget process.

To facilitate the grant process, a Council Subcommittee—appointed by the Mayor—is tasked with setting application guidelines and funding priorities, reviewing proposals, and making funding recommendations to the full City Council. For the current grant cycle, the Subcommittee is comprised of Mayor Maria Orozco, Council Member Eduardo Montesino, and Council Member Vanessa Quiroz-Carter.

Application Review Process:

In March 2025, the Subcommittee convened to discuss the application process, overall funding level, and evaluation criteria for the upcoming grant cycle. At its meeting on March 25, 2025, the City Council approved a minimum annual funding request of \$6,000 and a maximum of \$24,000 per organization. The

Council also approved an annual allocation of \$235,000 to \$300,000 for the Social and Community Service Grants Program. The following evaluation criteria were approved for use during this cycle:

- 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

DISCUSSION:

New and previously funded agencies were invited to submit applications for the 2025–2027 funding cycle, with a deadline of April 23, 2025. The City received 31 applications: 16 from returning agencies seeking continued funding and 15 from new applicants. In total, agencies requested \$599,850 in funding.

In consideration of citywide budget constraints, the Subcommittee recommends an annual allocation of \$235,000 for this grant cycle. The City of Watsonville remains committed to supporting community-based organizations that provide essential services to local residents. The Social and Community Service Grants Program is one of several mechanisms through which the City invests in core services. In addition to this grant program, the City contracts annually with various nonprofit organizations to deliver vital programs that enhance the well-being of the community.

On May 7, 2025, the Subcommittee reviewed and ranked all eligible applications. As a result of this process, the Subcommittee is recommending funding for 19 organizations that directly serve Watsonville residents. The table below summarizes funding requests and recommended allocations by program category. A detailed list of recommended awards by organization is attached.

Program Category	# of Applications Received	Amount Requested	# of Applications Funded	Amount Funded
Drug & Alcohol	1	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Food Insecurity	3	\$64,000	2	\$25,000
Housing	6	\$140,000	4	\$60,000
Mental Health	5	\$103,000	3	\$30,000
Community Engagement	9	\$197,500	7	\$89,500
Immigration	0	\$0	0	\$0
Job Training	1	\$10,000	0	\$0
LGBTQ	0	\$0	0	\$0
Recreation and Wellness	6	\$75,350	3	\$20,500
Total	31	\$599,850	20	\$235,000

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DETERMINATION:

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Social and Community Service Grant Program is consistent with all the City Council Strategic plan goals.

Economic Development

Infrastructure & Environment

Housing

Fiscal Health

Public Safety

Community Engagement & Well-being

Efficient and Well-performing Government

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The proposed funding for the Social and Community Service grants in the amount of \$235,000 per year from the General Fund will be included in the FY 2026-2027 budget.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The City Council may propose a different distribution of funds.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (IF ANY):

1. Proposed Social Service Grant Funding Recommendations by City Council Subcommittee

2025-2027 Social and Community Service Grants		
Organization	Program Category	Recommended Annual Funding
Activities4All	Recreation and Wellness	\$12,000.00
Arte del Corazon	Community Engagement	\$18,000.00
Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County	Housing	\$24,000.00
Community Bridges	Food Insecurity	\$10,000.00
Court Appointed Special Advocates	Mental Health	\$6,000.00
Gardenia Amor Y Bienestar	Recreation and Wellness	\$6,000.00
Grey Bears	Food Insecurity	\$15,000.00
Jacob's Heart Childrens's Cancer Services	Mental Health	\$18,000.00
MENTors Driving Change for Boys	Mental Health	\$6,000.00
Monarch Services	Housing	\$10,000.00
Pajaro Valley Arts	Community Engagement	\$6,000.00
Pajaro Valley Shelter Services	Housing	\$20,000.00
Raices y Carino	Community Engagement	\$4,500.00
Save our Shores	Community Engagement	\$6,000.00
Senior Citizens Legal Services	Housing	\$6,000.00
Senior Network Services	Community Engagement	\$10,000.00
Special Events Sponsorships	Community Engagement	\$35,000.00
Ventures	Community Engagement	\$10,000.00
Watsonville Community Band	Recreation and Wellness	\$2,500.00
Watsonville Film Festival	Drug & Alcohol	\$10,000.00
	Total	\$235,000.00