



Brimbank
City Council

**FINAL DRAFT COMMUNITY
GRANTS POLICY 2026
Community Engagement Report
December 2025 – January 2026**

Acknowledgement of Country and Council Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation

Acknowledgement of Country

Brimbank City Council respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future.

Reconciliation in Brimbank

Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands where our municipality sits. Council recognises the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who contribute to our community. We pay our respects to the wisdom of Elders past, present, and future.

We recognise their continuing spiritual connection to this land and renew our commitment to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander beliefs, values and customs.

The Country in which Brimbank is located is under the statutory care of its Traditional Custodians, the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation to the south and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to the north of the municipality. For the Traditional Custodians, the lands in the City of Brimbank have always been a significant trading and meeting place.

Aboriginal people lived on these lands for over 65,000 years before European settlement. The rich history and continuous culture of our Traditional Custodians are woven throughout Brimbank, in its people, in significant sites and in murals recognising this history. Brimbank has about 440 registered sites of significance. The artefacts found are more than 30,000 years old. Some of these sites are in Brimbank Park, Yaluk Barrington (former Sydenham Park) and Organ Pipes National Park.

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Project Report

Project Overview

Project Name:	Draft Community Grants Policy 2026
Brimbank Directorate, Department, Team:	Community Wellbeing, Community Strengthening and Social Planning, Connected Communities
Project Purpose:	To support the development of Draft Community Grants Policy by gathering insights from internal and external stakeholders, ensuring that the Community Grants Program: 1) is fair, inclusive, efficient, transparent, and beneficial to the Brimbank community, 2) remains relevant, aligns with 'We are Brimbank', and is responsive to community needs 3) reflects the VAGO fraud control measures in local council grants and 2025 community grants audit recommendations.
Engagement Purpose	The primary goal of this engagement was to gather meaningful input from community members and stakeholders to ensure the Draft Community Grants Policy reflects Brimbank's diverse needs, experiences, and priorities. Community input was necessary to ensure that the people impacted by the policy had influence in shaping the policy.
Report Date:	20/01/2026
Report Version:	1

Engagement Outcomes

We listened to all ideas, concerns, and priorities across the key themes of this project. The community's input has been important and has directly influenced the final recommendations and actions as outlined below.

Mostly positive feedback was received on the draft Community Grants Policy, with respondents indicating it will improve inclusivity, equity and fairness and remains strongly community focused. The policy was also seen as aligning with Council's strategic goals, including We Are Brimbank and the Social Justice Framework which collectively reach long-term outcomes for the Brimbank community. Feedback from the Your Say community consultation largely focused on the implementation of the Community Grants Program rather than changes to the policy, with many constructive suggestions provided to inform how the Community Grants Program should be implemented and delivered.

The following themes have been noted in their feedback:

- Data privacy and integrity
- Supporting youth programs
- Assessment criteria, including Community Benefit
- Assessment process to ensure fairness, transparency and equity
- Barriers for new or less established applicants
- Multilingual guidelines
- Better support during the application process
- Probity and financial integrity

These suggestions will be considered in the implementation of the Community Grants Program.

Feedback from the consultations from the Community Grants Review and Councillor consultation helped inform and develop the draft Community Grants Policy. The feedback gathered was considered when developing the community grant principles and eligibility criteria.

We thank everyone who contributed to ensuring this project reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

What we asked	What you said	What we will do
Do you feel that the draft Community Grants Policy will help deliver real benefits for the Brimbank community?	• Mostly positive sentiment • The Policy will help improve inclusivity and equality in the Brimbank community • Ensuring that youth programs are also considered as a priority • Asking for better communication to reach diverse communities and having information available in multiple languages • Asking for a quick response stream • A small number of respondents expressed concerns about perceived exclusivity and value for money	We are glad to hear that the draft community grants principles are meeting the needs of the community. Council acknowledges the importance of equity and inclusion which aligns with Council's existing strategic work, including the We Are Brimbank Council Plan 2025- 2029, Community Vision 2040 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Community Grants team has noted the

What we asked	What you said	What we will do
		feedback about youth programs, better communication, quick response stream and assessment process – which will all be considered in the implementation and promotion of the Community Grants Program.
What do you think of the policy principles?	• Mostly positive sentiment • Most respondents agreed with the policy principles and described them as reasonable, clear and helpful in guiding fair, effective and community focused • A concern was raised about the Community Benefit principle and the focus on 'long term' benefit instead of 'short term benefit' • A minority of respondents expressed scepticism about good governance and value for money, preferencing lower rates over Council involvement in community grants.	We are glad to hear that the draft community grants principles are reasonable, clear, fair, effective and community focused. The Community Grants team has noted the feedback about better clarity about the Community Benefit principle which will be further expanded in the materials created during the the implementation and promotion of the Community Grants Program.
Do you agree with the proposed eligibility criteria for grant funding?	• Mostly 'Yes' and 'Unsure' responses • Provided many solutions and suggestions at an operational level including: ○ Suggestions to strengthen probity and financial integrity ○ Concerns were raised that the youth cohort may be overlooked when considering equity ○ Concerns were raised around barriers to making an application including Public Liability Insurance (PLI) and auspice arrangement requirements for less established applicants ○ Questions were asked about grant assessment	We are glad to hear that most feedback is supportive of the eligibility criteria which will be further developed and refined on the implementation of the Community Grants Program. Feedback is also noted on the overall purpose of the community grants. The Community Grants team has noted the feedback about strengthening probity, youth programs, barriers for less established applicants and assessment process. This feedback will be considered in the implementation and promotion of the Community Grants Program.

What we asked	What you said	What we will do
	processes and previous funding outcomes A minority of respondents expressed strong opposition to Council funding community grants altogether, prioritising lower rates and questioning Council's role in funding community programs.	
Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the draft Community Grants Policy?	- Provided many solutions and suggestions at an operational level - Privacy and data protection when handling grant application data - Improve accessibility and user-friendly of application process - Concerns were raised about equity in funding distribution - Assessment and outcomes fairness and transparency - Quicker turnaround of assessments/notification - About the communications and promotion of the Community Grants Program - Multilingual guidelines - Additional support for applicants - Greater collaboration between other western Councils	The Community Grants team has noted the feedback about data privacy, accessibility, assessment process and quicker turnaround time. This feedback will be considered in the implementation of the Community Grants Program. The team has also noted the request for multilingual guidelines and additional support for applicants which the team will continue to deliver and consider during the promotion of the program. The team will continue to discuss about collaboration opportunities at the next Western Community Grants Network.

Engagement Methods

The below table summarises and evaluates the methods used and audiences targeted for input into this project.

IAP2 Spectrum Engagement Category	Date	Methods used	Target Audience(s)	Number of responses received	Effectiveness & Quality Assessment Rating
Involve	22/07/2025	Council Briefing consultation session	Councillors	13	Rating: Strong Key Justification: Allowed Councillors to provide input into the policy by asking questions about their priorities, emerging community issues and suggestions for policy principles.
Consult	19/01/2026	Your Say Page	Community members, grant recipients and stakeholders	14	Rating: Moderate Key Justification: Gave opportunity for community members including grant recipients to provide feedback. Opportunity was promoted via our community grants newsletter. The opening period was during December and January which may have affected engagement levels. Some responses received related to the implementation of the Community Grants Program instead of feedback about the draft policy.
Consult	01/08/2024	Online survey	Online survey of grant applicants/recipients	44	Rating: Moderate Key Justification: As part of our Community Grants review, we sought feedback via an online survey sent to people who had engaged

IAP2 Spectrum Engagement Category	Date	Methods used	Target Audience(s)	Number of responses received	Effectiveness & Quality Assessment Rating
					with the Community Grants Program in the last few years. This provided an opportunity to rate their satisfaction, raise concerns and give suggestions for improvements. This feedback informed the update of the draft Community Grants Policy.
Consult	03/09/2024 04/09/2024	Focus Group Discussion	Community Focus Group Discussion	9	Rating: Strong Key Justification: As part of our Community Grants review, we invited community members who had previously engaged with the Community Grants Program to join a focus group session. The session was facilitated by a consultant who prompted and noted any feedback provided. This feedback informed the update of the draft Community Grants Policy.

Next Steps

Impact of Community Input

All feedback received through the Your Say community engagement process was carefully considered. No significant changes were made to the draft policy as a result of Your Say feedback. Most feedback related to the implementation of the Community Grants Program rather than the policy. The feedback provided will be considered during the program's implementation and delivery.

Earlier community engagement was conducted as part of the Community Grants review. This feedback has already been incorporated during the creation of the draft Community Grants Policy.

The final draft Policy, once adopted, will be made available publicly on our Community Grants Program webpage. People who made a submission or provided feedback during the consultation process will be able to view. All the Your Say data is provided in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1

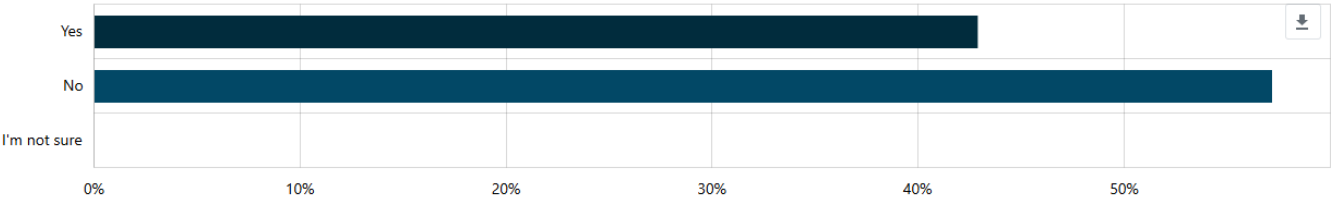


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Have you ever applied for a community grant from Brimbank Council?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 14 (100%)

Hide Question



Glossary

The Act	The Local Government Act 2020
Annual Report	A report of Council's operations of the previous financial year. Contains a report of operations, audited financial statements and an audited performance statement
Appropriateness	Indicators or measures that provide users with sufficient information to assess the extent to which an entity has achieved a pre-determined target, goal or outcome
Budget	A plan setting out the services and initiatives to be funded for the financial year and how they will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives specified in Council Plan
Council Plan	A plan setting out the medium-term strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and resources reflecting vision and aspirations of the community for the next four years
Financial performance indicators	A prescribed set of indicators and measures that assess the effectiveness of financial management in a council covering operating position, liquidity, obligations, stability and efficiency
Financial plan	A plan of the financial and non-financial resources for at least the next 10 years required to achieve the strategic objectives in Council Plan. It is also referred to as a long-term financial plan
Financial Statements	The financial statements and notes prepared in accordance with the Local Government Model Financial Report, Australian Accounting Standards and other applicable standards as they apply to the general-purpose financial reports and a statement of capital works and included in the Annual Report
Financial year	The period of 12 months ending on 30 June each year
Governance and Management Checklist	A prescribed checklist of policies, plans and documents that councils must report the status of in the report of operations, covering engagement, planning, monitoring, reporting and decision making
Indicator	What will be measured to assess performance
Initiatives	Actions that are one-off in nature and/or lead to improvements in a service
Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework	The key statutory planning and reporting documents that are required to be prepared by councils to ensure accountability to local communities in the performance of functions and exercise of powers under the Act
Major initiative	Significant initiatives that will directly contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan during the current year and have a major focus in the Budget
Measure	How an indicator will be measured and takes the form of a computation, typically including a numerator and denominator
Performance Statement	A statement including the results of the prescribed service outcome indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and included in the Annual Report
Regulations	The Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020
Relevance	Indicators or measures that have a logical and consistent relationship to an entity's objectives and are linked to the outcomes to be achieved

Report of Operations	A report containing a description of Council's operations during the financial year and included in the Annual Report
Service outcome indicators	The prescribed service performance indicators to be included in the Performance Statement which measure whether the stated service objective has been achieved
Service performance indicators	A prescribed set of indicators measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of Council services covering appropriateness, quality, cost and service outcomes
Services	Assistance, support, advice and other actions undertaken by a council for the benefit of the local community
Strategic objectives	The outcomes a council is seeking to achieve over the next four years and included in Council Plan
Strategies	High-level actions directed at achieving the strategic objectives in Council Plan
Sustainable capacity indicators	A prescribed set of indicators measuring whether councils have the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of the local community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future. Covers financial performance, capacity, and governance and management

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Hearing or speech impaired?

- TTY dial 133 677
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