1. Policy Intent

1.1 The Community Project Request Policy (the Policy) supports community groups and organisations to develop projects that contribute to healthy, active, vibrant, inclusive, connected, resilient and innovative communities within the Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) local government area.

1.2 This Policy sets out TRC's approach to the submission, development, assessment and implementation of Community Project Requests (CPR). It ensures all CPRs are subject to the same TRC Project Management Framework processes and procedures during consideration and assessment, and assists to manage community and stakeholder expectations in relation to CPRs.

2. Scope

2.1 What is a Community Project?

2.1.1 A "Community Project" is defined as any project, the idea or concept for which is neither explicitly requested nor solicited by TRC, and which is received from a source external to TRC. Each community project must have a defined start and end date and result in the development of new infrastructure (whether funded by TRC or a third party), provision of goods or services, or the undertaking of innovative programs in the community for the public benefit. For ease of interpretation, if it isn't TRC's idea, or part of TRC's "business as usual", and it costs $1 outside the adopted budget today or in the future, it's a Community Project.

2.1.2 This definition includes "Special Projects" of TRC, but excludes requests for transport (roads and drainage) and utility (water, wastewater and waste) infrastructure upgrades and renewals, activities conducted routinely, public place activities and projects that are already under consideration or implementation by TRC.

2.1.3 Council encourages submission of CPRs that either:

a. Demonstrate a community need that has not previously been identified by TRC, but which conforms with TRC's stated strategic policies or plans; or

b. Propose innovative solutions to a community need that has previously been identified by TRC in its strategic policies or plans.

2.2 Who does this Policy apply to?

2.2.1 This Policy applies to all Councillors, TRC staff, contractors and committees in the course of performing their respective duties under the CPR process.

2.2.2 Project proponents must comply with this Policy and the associated procedure when submitting a CPR.

3.   Background

3.1   TRC receives a significant number of requests from the community each year to undertake various projects for the benefit of particular groups and/or the wider community. This Policy sets out TRC's approach to the submission, development, assessment and implementation of CPRs. It ensures all CPRs are subject to the same TRC Project Management Framework process during their consideration and assessment.

3.2   This Policy supports the achievement of TRC's Corporate, Operational and Long-term Financial Plans through the development and implementation of community projects that align with this Policy and the procedure.

4.   Policy Statement

4.1   Objectives

The objectives of the CPR process are to:

    a.   Promote consistency and transparency in the way CPRs are received and considered by TRC and Council

    b.   Provide certainty to community project proponents that all CPRs are subject to the same review and assessment criteria and process

    c.   Promote the sustainable development and management of assets, infrastructure and community projects

    d.   Enable meaningful and proactive community engagement in the development of CPRs and, if applicable, their implementation and completion

    e.   Ensure that CPRs that are approved by Council are further subject to full and formal community engagement and consultation before final approval is provided by Council or Council's delegate

    f.   Facilitate budget planning for CPRs and promote effective budget allocation for approved community projects

    g.   Ensure that whole of life costing is factored into community project costs and informs MTRC's decision to endore (or not) the CPR.CPRs fall within category Level 1 of the TRC Project Management Framework and are deemed low risk, low complexity and low cost

    h.   Facilitate management of community expectations, especially in relation to timeframes for the assessment and, if applicable, delivery of Community Projects

    i.   Promotes transparent communication with councillors and promotes responsible Councillor advocacy and championing of Community Project Requests in a considered and informed manner; and

    j.   Reflect good governance practice by Council in accordance with the local government principles set out in the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld).

4.2   Policy Principles

CPRs fall within category Level 1 of the TRC Project Management Framework and are deemed low risk, low complexity and low cost. TRC's consideration and endorsement will be in accordance with the principles of:

4.2.1   <u>Public interest</u> – The CPR must be for the community's benefit and satisfy an identified community need.

4.2.2   Alignment with TRC's Strategic Priorities – All CPRs to be progressed must demonstrate significant alignment with TRC's Corporate Plan, operational priorities and strategies.

4.2.3   Value for Money – CPRs should generate a return on investment from an economic and/or social perspective.

4.2.4   Fiscal Affordability and Long-term Sustainability – TRC must understand the impact of each PCR on TRC's finances, evaluate whether the resulting current and future liabilities are affordable, and if any risk is sufficiently manageable. The approval for any CPR will be subject to TRC's financial and personnel resource capacity to satisfying the requirements of the Project.

4.2.5   Transparency, Accountability and Integrity – All CPRs will be subject to the same consideration and assessment and decision-making process, utilising the TRC Project Management Framework principals to ensure transparency and accountability.

5.   Delegation of Authority

5.1   Under this policy delegated financial authority is provided to Managers and General Managers to approve CPRs up to the value of $10,000 (whole of life cost excl GST) and assessed as Level 1 - that is, low risk, low complexity and low cost.

5.2   CPRs in excess of $10,000 (whole of life cost, excl GST) or Level One Projects assessed as high risk, require the approval of Council.

6.   Responsibility

Council is responsible for the adoption, amendment and repeal of the Policy and the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the development and amendment of any associated procedures relevant to the Policy.

7.   Review

It is the responsibility of the Manager Community Services to monitor the adequacy of this Policy and recommend appropriate changes. This Policy will be formally reviewed every three years or as required by Council.

This Policy is to remain in force until otherwise amended/repealed by resolution of Council.