



NEWPORT BEACH

City Council Staff Report

June 23, 2026
Agenda Item No. 5

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Tara Finnigan, Assistant City Manager - 949-644-3001,
tfinnigan@newportbeachca.gov

PREPARED BY: Brian Cordeiro, Recreation Manager - 949-644-3156
bcordeiro@newportbeachca.gov

Lorig Harutunian, Management Analyst, 949-644-3028
lharutunian@newportbeachca.gov

TITLE: Community Programs Grants, Community Event Assistance and
Strategic Sponsorship Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2026-27

ABSTRACT:

Pursuant to City Council Policy A-12, the City of Newport Beach (City) annually awards Community Grants for Newport Beach based programs or events to local organizations that serve Newport Beach residents and are beneficial to the Newport Beach economy or residents' quality of life. Based on recommendations from the Finance Committee, staff is providing funding recommendations based on the proposed Resolution (Resolution) to update City Council Policies A-12, A-13 and B-12 to reorganize and provide clarification on purpose, intent, criteria and administration for each funding type.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly;
- b) Adopt Resolution No. 2026-44, *A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach , California, Repealing City Council policies A-12 and B-12 and Adopting Council Policy A-12 (Community Program Grants and Community Event Assistance Policy), Council Policy A-13 (Discretionary Grants Policy) and Council Policy B-12 (Strategic Sponsorship Policy), regarding Public Benefit Funding Programs;*
- c) Authorize City Manager or designee to allocate \$544,197 to recipients identified in the staff report for Community Program Grants, Community Event Assistance and Strategic Sponsorships subject to the approval of Resolution No. 2026-44; and,
- d) Approve Budget Amendment No. 26-084, increasing expenditure appropriations in the total amount of \$217,697 from the General Fund unappropriated fund balance, allocated as follows: \$52,697 to the Special Event Support account under the City Council (01005005-821016), and \$165,000 to the Strategic Sponsorship account under the City Manager's Office (01020202-821017).

DISCUSSION:

In April of 2026, information regarding the City Council's intent to award Community Programs Grants and Special Event Grants for FY 2026-27 was posted on the City's website and social media channels. In addition, an email was sent out to interested parties and previous recipients. These applications are available for the City Council's and public's review per request at the City Clerk's office at the Newport Beach Civic Center, 100 Civic Center Drive, Bay 2E.

Staff presented preliminary Signature Event recommendations at the Finance Committee meeting on May 14, 2026. The Finance Committee was provided with all Signature Event applications as well as financial documentation from each applicant including event budgets, profit and loss statements and 990 tax forms.

Based on recommendations from the Finance Committee, staff have updated their funding recommendations based on the attached Resolution revising City Council Policy A-12: Community Program Grants and Community Event Assistance Policy, A-13: Discretionary Grants, and B-12: Strategic Sponsorship Policy. The revisions made under the draft Resolution aim to modernize and reorganize the City's funding policies to improve transparency, accountability, consistency, public understanding and administrative efficiency while preserving the City Council's discretion regarding the expenditure of public funds.

The updates to City Council Policy A-12 provide clarification between monetary awards for Community Program Grants and non-monetary Community Event Assistance, previously called Community and Charitable Event Grants, which are generally awarded as a waiver of fees. City Council Policy A-13 also provides distinct separation between City Council discretionary funds and community program or event assistance. The updates to City Council Policy B-12 provide a clear function and criteria for Strategic Sponsorship support, previously called Signature Event grants.

Community Programs Grant

A staff committee reviewed and evaluated each of the applications. Attachment B lists the recommendations for monetary grant funding totaling \$26,500.

A brief summary of each grant application, including each organization's client base, the intended use of the grants, the amount requested by the applicants, and the funding recommendations are included in Attachment B. The attachment also details the applicants not currently recommended for funding and the reasoning behind the denial of funding.

Community Programs Grant (Monetary Assistance)	Recommendation
Balboa Island Museum Newport Beach	\$10,000
Coastal Corridor Alliance	\$5,000
Corona del Mar Residents Assn	\$5,000
Newport Beach Historical Society	\$2,500
Scouting America Orange County	\$4,000
Total	\$26,500

Community Event Assistance

Community Event Assistance are events that serve or benefit locally based organizations and causes and/or provide recreational, cultural, or social benefits to Newport Beach residents. Newport Beach or Orange County based non-profit organizations and events that serve the Newport Beach community specifically, receive priority in funding. Assistance is generally in the form of a waiver of City fees. If a recipient incurs fees higher than the fee waiver, they owe the City the difference.

A committee comprised of staff from the Recreation & Senior Services Department reviewed and evaluated the applications received. The applications were evaluated based upon how well each fit the program's eligibility, qualifications and evaluation criteria. A summary of the applicants, the amount allocated last fiscal year, and the staff funding recommendations are included in Attachment C.

Community Event Assistance is awarded at set, not-to-exceed levels that correlate to the estimated amount of City fees the applicant is expected to pay. To determine funding recommendations, staff used historical data from previous years' events to determine what an event is expected to pay in City fees. The committee incorporated the information from the application evaluation and assigned funding recommendations accordingly. The FY 2026-27 recommendations for Community Event Assistance are based primarily on the waiver of City fees with a maximum of \$10,000 per event. The Newport to Ensenada Boat Race does not incur City fees in the operation of their event, but due to historical significance, is recommended for monetary assistance. All qualified applicants for Community Event Assistance who met the program's criteria this year are recommended for funding. As previously stated, any fees higher than the grant award will be the responsibility of the awardee.

Community Event Assistance (City Fee Waivers)	Recommendation
3 rd Thursdays	\$3,724
4 th of July Parade and Picnic - Balboa Peninsula Point Association	\$561
2026 Fourth of July Celebration - American Legion Post 291	\$1,170
Andersen Deans Port of July	\$561
Annual Corona del Mar Christmas Walk	\$6,350
Annual Corona del Mar Scenic 5k	\$8,600
Annual Easter Egg Hunt - Balboa Peninsula Point Association	\$561
Annual Newport Classic Surf Contest	\$1,170
Balboa Island Parade	\$10,000

Balboa Island Tree Lighting and Snow Day	\$561
Baroque Music Festival 46 th Season Fall Preview	\$935
Komen Orange County MORE THAN PINK Walk	\$10,000
Chili Cook-Off & Picnic - Balboa Peninsula Point Association	\$561
Corona del Mar Sandcastle Contest	\$561
Field of Honor	\$1,170
Newport Beach Car Fest	\$4,250
Newport Beach Volleyball Invitational	\$10,000
Newport to Ensenada International Yacht Race*	\$10,000*
Speak Up Newport	\$8,706
Spirit Run	\$10,000
Studio D Fair for Kids	\$935
Wake Up Newport	\$4,655
Walk for Patrick Turner	\$561
Wooden Boat Festival	\$1,170
World Wildlife Day Celebration	\$935
Total	\$97,697

*Event does not incur City fees. Monetary assistance recommended.

Strategic Sponsorships

Strategic Sponsorships function as public-private partnerships in which the City is tied to identifiable public-facing benefits, promotional opportunities, tourism enhancement, community activation, economic impact or other measurable value provided to the City and its residents. Strategic Sponsorship recipients are required to sign a City Agreement with the City's terms and conditions. All agreements include right to audit language and must include measurable objectives and performance measures for evaluating the event's marketing and economic impact.

A committee comprised of staff from the Recreation & Senior Services Department reviewed and evaluated the applications received. The applications were evaluated based upon how well each fit the program's eligibility, qualifications and evaluation criteria. A summary of the applicants, the amount allocated last fiscal year and the staff funding recommendations are included in Attachment D.

Strategic Sponsorships are awarded at set, not-to-exceed levels based upon an evaluation of the anticipated public benefit, economic impact in Newport Beach, community engagement, alignment with City priorities and fiscal responsibility of the organization. Staff considered these criteria and assigned funding recommendations that will provide monetary support tied to event expenditures, which may include City fees. One applicant in this category is not recommended for funding based on not meeting all the program's qualifications, criteria, and historical budget documentation requirements. All Strategic Sponsorship applicants, who met the program's criteria this year, are being recommended for funding. Strategic Sponsorship recipients must be an entity with a direct and primary nexus to the sponsored activity and not for generalized umbrella organizations serving as fiscal sponsors or administrative platforms for numerous unrelated activities or events. To receive funding, recipients are required to sign a City

Agreement with the City's terms and conditions upon verification of compliance with all conditions in Council Policy B-12, subject to the approval of Resolution.

<u>Strategic Sponsorship (Monetary Assistance)</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Hoag Classic	\$140,000
Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade and Ring of Lights	\$140,000
Newport Beach Film Festival	\$140,000
Total	\$420,000

FISCAL IMPACT:

The FY 2026-27 adopted budget includes sufficient funding for the Community Programs Grants. Grant recommendations total \$26,500 and will be expensed to the City Council account, 01005005-821006.

The FY 2026-27 adopted budget includes \$45,000 for Community Event Assistance in the Special Event Support account under the City Council, 01005005-821016. Grant recommendations total \$97,697. The adopted budget is insufficient to cover the full grant recommendation; accordingly, a budget amendment appropriating \$52,697 from the General Fund unappropriated fund balance to account 01005005-821016 is required to fund the difference.

The FY 2026-27 adopted budget includes \$255,000 for Strategic Sponsorships in the Strategic Sponsorship account under the City Manager's Office, 01020202-821017. Grant recommendations total \$420,000. The adopted budget is insufficient to cover the full grant recommendation; accordingly, a budget amendment appropriating \$165,000 from the General Fund unappropriated fund balance to account 01020202-821017 is required to fund the difference.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Resolution – 2026-44

Attachment B – FY 2026-27 Community Grants Recommended Funding

Attachment C – FY 2026-27 Community Event Assistance Recommended Funding

Attachment D – FY 2026-27 Strategic Sponsorship Recommended Funding

Attachment E – Budget Amendment