

15 April 2021

#### TOWARD ZERO COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Council is excited to announce the launch of its Towards Zero Community Grants Program for 2020/21. This funding is offering support to non-profit organisations for community projects to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in community facilities.

Mayor, Cr Lesley Hewitt, said that the Council Plan 2017-21 has a strong focus on creating a sustainable environment, particularly responding to climate change by reducing energy use, emissions and other non-renewable resource use.

“We are also hearing strong feedback in relation to continuing Council’s advocacy and investment in responding to climate change through the Hepburn Together project,” said Cr Hewitt.

The Towards Zero Emissions Roadmap 2017-2021 sets out the initiatives that will help Council achieve the target of zero carbon emissions from within its own operations, and the Z-NET Community Transition Plan provides a 10 Year Masterplan for the Hepburn Shire to reach 100% renewable electricity, zero-net energy and zero-net emissions 2019-2029.

“One of the ways Council supports the community to take action on climate change is through its Towards Zero Grants. Community groups and non-profit organisations are encouraged to apply for innovative and cutting-edge projects that will contribute to reducing emissions and enhancing the liveability of our Shire,” said Cr Hewitt.

Projects can include any activity that will save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in community facilities. This might include (but is not restricted to) renewable energy systems, carbon drawdown, insulation, shading and weather proofing, energy efficient heating, cooling and lighting systems, or energy efficient hot water, kitchen and other fixed appliances.

Projects will be assessed on the amount of energy saved and greenhouse gas emissions avoided. Council encourages applicants to think about multi-beneficial outcomes that could be achieved including social justice and community resilience building.

The first step is to review the Grant Guidelines to make sure your activity is applicable then get in touch with Council’s Sustainability Officer to discuss your ideas.

The grants will be open for a total of six (6) weeks, opening Monday 19 April 2021, closing 31 May 2021.

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