



Shopfront Improvement Program Guidelines 2024-2025

Shopfront Improvement Program Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Program

The Growing the Cassowary Coast Shopfront Improvement Program seeks to support the revitalisation of commercial building facades and shopfronts across designated areas within the Cassowary Coast Region. By partnering with commercial property and business owners, the program aims to enhance the aesthetic appeal of town centers, fostering vibrant communities and creating an attractive place to do business.

This initiative aligns with the goals of the Council's 2033 Growing Stronger Together Economic Strategy.



2. Program Objectives

- Enhance the appearance of shopfronts and building facades to improve streetscape aesthetics.
- Promote economic growth by making town centers more inviting for residents, tourists, and investors.
- Stimulate local business activity by encouraging property owners to undertake shopfront improvements that generate interest and activity into their commercial property.
- Support local tradespeople by ensuring that improvements are carried out by businesses and licensed contractors based in the Cassowary Coast region.

3. Eligible Areas

This program applies to existing commercial buildings within the following designated areas:

- Innisfail, Tully, Mission Beach, and Cardwell Central Business District (CBD) Precincts, Business Fringe Precincts, and Local Business Precincts as defined by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Planning Scheme 2015.
- Commercial buildings with frontage to the Bruce Highway or Tourist Routes identified within the Scenic Amenity Overlay Mapping of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Planning Scheme.



4. Funding Arrangement

The program offers dollar-for-dollar matching grants of up to \$5,000 per project. The applicant's financial contribution must be in cash (not in-kind) and will be matched by Council's grant. If applicants wish to contribute additional funds beyond the \$5,000 match, they may do so.

Special Provision for Renew Cassowary Coast Program Participants

Applicants who have signed a license agreement under the Renew Cassowary Coast Program are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 in funding without a co-contribution requirement:



5. Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for funding, applicants must:

- Be the owner or tenant of a commercial building within the eligible areas, with the owner's consent if applicable.
- Propose improvements visible from the street that enhance the appearance of the building's facade.
- Obtain any necessary building or planning permits before commencing work, ensuring compliance with WorkSafe Queensland regulations where applicable.
- Use licensed contractors and tradespeople who are physically based within the Cassowary Coast region.
- Have or obtain appropriate insurances (e.g., public liability insurance).
- Complete the improvement works within six months of signing the funding agreement with the Council.



6. Eligible Improvement Works

The following works are eligible for funding:

- External repainting of shopfronts.
- Improvements to signage, branding, and advertising.
- Repair or replacement of awnings and under-awnings.
- Window treatments and external lighting installations.
- Adding greenery, such as planter boxes or green walls.
- Accessibility improvements (e.g., ramps).
- Industrial cleaning of shopfronts and facades.
- Other improvements that enhance interaction with the street or align with the program's objectives.

7. Application Process

1. Submit an application through the Council's SmartyGrants platform, including:
 - Detailed project proposal and cost estimates.
 - Photos of the existing shopfront.
 - Quotes from local, licensed contractors
2. Assessment: Applications will be assessed by a panel against the program's objectives and eligibility criteria. Successful applicants will be notified and required to enter into a funding agreement.
3. Execution: Upon completion of the project, applicants must submit:
 - Photos of the completed work.
 - Signed confirmation that the project has been completed.
 - Invoices from contractors. Consent for Council to use before and after images for promotional purposes.
4. Acquittal: If the project is not completed within the agreed timeframe, applicants will be required to return the grant funding to Council.



8. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following:

- Alignment with program objectives: The extent to which the proposed improvements contribute to the visual appeal of the streetscape and support economic revitalization.
- Financial commitment: The applicant's contribution and the overall cost-effectiveness of the project (not applicable to Renew Cassowary Coast Program participants).
- Use of local resources: Preference will be given to projects using local contractors and materials.

9. Funding Conditions

- Grants are discretionary and subject to Council approval. Not all applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be funded.
- Applicants must ensure all necessary permits and insurances are in place prior to receiving funding.
- Acquittal requirements: All grant recipients must submit an acquittal report, including financial documentation and photos of the completed works, within 90 days of project completion.

10. Structural Changes and Council Support

All applicants are encouraged to seek Council support if considering any structural changes, such as the installation or modification of awnings or other external fixtures. Council recognizes that these types of improvements may require additional approvals and technical advice.

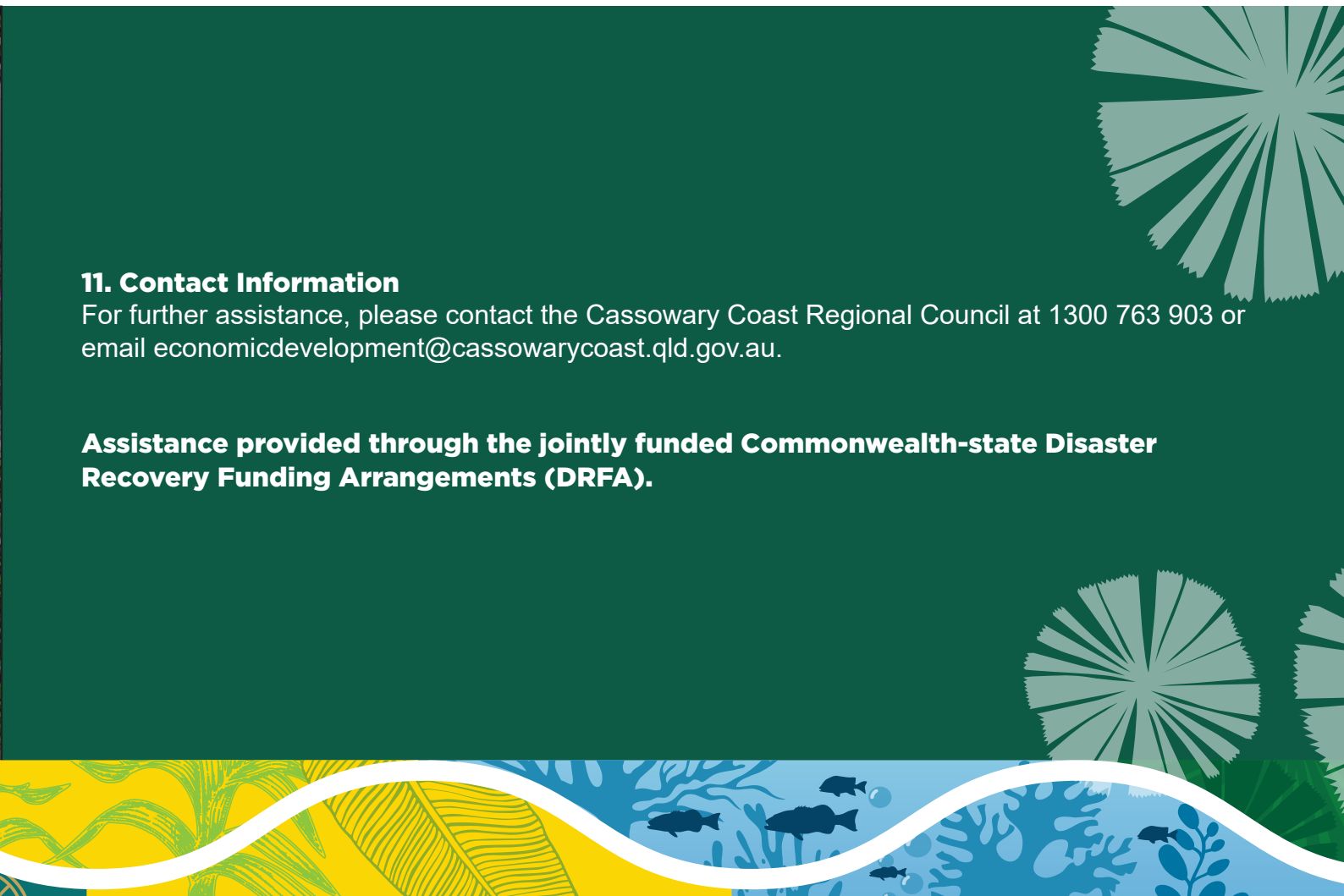
To assist with this process, Council is happy to arrange site visits to better understand the improvements you are planning to undertake and provide guidance on the necessary steps, including any permits or compliance requirements. This service aims to help streamline the application and approval process, ensuring that your improvements align with the regulatory framework while enhancing the overall streetscape.

Applicants are strongly advised to contact the Economic Development Department early in the planning stages of their project to take advantage of this service.

11. Contact Information

For further assistance, please contact the Cassowary Coast Regional Council at 1300 763 903 or email economicdevelopment@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.

Assistance provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).





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