

**Ipswich City Council**  
**2009-2010 Budget Speech**  
**Delivered by Mayor Paul Pisasale**  
**June 30, 2009**

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**Ipswich - a city built on pride**

Over the past few years our city has been home to many success stories. The main foundation of this success has been the pride we have generated both within and outside the city.

We have focussed on **job generation, masterplanned communities, heritage and education**, while at the same time providing efficient services for residents.

**Ipswich is a city where people matter.**

**Budget 2009-2010** will continue to keep people as the central point of our decision-making, and at the same time ensure **Ipswich** is moving forward **on the path of sustainable growth**.

**For 2009-2010 we are bringing down another record budget for Ipswich of \$512 million – an increase of 90% since this team of councillors came together in 2004.**

The last 12 months have once again been another exciting chapter in the journey of Ipswich.

We have witnessed a challenging period in the history of Australia and how the whole country is dealing with the impacts of the global economic crisis.

While we have also been overwhelmed with constant bad financial and economic forecasts, **Ipswich has created a steady flow of positive growth and news** with projects such as -

- Australian Pharmaceuticals and Reject Shop distribution centres at CITISWICH \$60 million
- Sekisui House and Payce joint venture at Ripley Valley \$55 million
- Polaris Data Centre Springfield \$230 million
- Springfield Tower \$60 million
- Swift Dinmore expansion \$22 million
- preparation for Super Hornets at RAAF Amberley \$100 million
- construction work for 33 SQN at Amberley \$51 million
- Ipswich Girls Grammar School new facilities \$22 million
- Devine Homes' new Mountview estate at Redbank Plains \$500 million
- council's purchase of Ipswich City Square \$45 million
- redevelopment of East St and Wharf St by Excel \$30 million
- Tower Central \$30 million
- new Ipswich Court House \$110 million
- George Thorn Centre \$31 million, and
- Home HQ, Spotlight and Fantastic Furniture at West Ipswich \$50 million.

There are many more projects planned or underway worth millions of dollars.

There is also a commitment from the **state and federal governments of \$5 billion in major infrastructure funding**, which includes the Ipswich Motorway - Dinmore to Darra upgrade completed by 2012, and the Centenary Highway extension which opened to traffic yesterday.

However, we need to be sensible and acknowledge the city is not totally insulated from world financial slowdown. We are in a **strong position** because of the hard work **council, the State Government, Federal Government and community** have achieved together.

**This year** Ipswich is growing at **152 new residents** each week – up from **78 residents** per week five years ago – **an increase of 94%**.

Personal thanks must go to my fellow councillors who have worked hard, not only in their division but also in their individual committees.

Ipswich City Council staff and councillors have again worked long and hard to create the budget we are bringing down today.

Thank you for your efforts. It has put us in the position we enjoy today.

We were quick to embrace change and saw this as an opportunity for the future of our city and its people.

We will **continue to move forward** and to take advantage of the wonderful growth in south east Queensland, and at the same time maintain outstanding service for the people of Ipswich.

### **Our city finances**

**Ipswich is in an excellent position** heading into the new financial year.

As a response to market conditions, this year council undertook a **Financial Sustainability Review** as a precursor to finalising the budget. This detailed review examined the likely impact on capital works and the current operating budget.

During the past year the **city's population has been growing at 4.1%, nearly double the state average.**

**Ipswich is the fastest growing city in Queensland.**

**This budget** will enable us to manage our finances and growth more efficiently, in line with our vision and masterplanning.

Securing support for further State and Federal Government investment in infrastructure will assist Ipswich to meet the goals of the **South East Queensland Regional Plan** and help to ease congestion in our capital.

**We are part of the solution.**

### **Rates and charges**

In bringing down this budget, the pressures on family incomes have been paramount in our efforts to further improve efficiencies of council without taking away services.

**For Ipswich residential owner/occupiers the average rate charges increase will be \$2.37 per week – which includes water at \$1.38 per week.**

**Excluding water, rates increase an average 99 cents per week for owner/occupiers – a rise of 3.29%.**

**Including water the rise is 5.74%.**

**Budget 2009-2010 has a total of 14 categories for Differential General Rates.**

Category 1 moves from **0.6992 to 0.7128 cents** in the dollar.

Capping remains for categories 1 and 8. Should there be a change of ownership capping will be removed.

Also -

- **A 10% discount** on General Rate and Special Charges if paid in full and by the due date;
- Discounts and remissions for those on the full aged pension remain;
- **Weekly garbage and fortnightly recycling services will be 62 cents a day or \$224 per year**, up from \$214 last year.

### **Streets Ahead program**

This is the fourth year of the **Streets Ahead** program which allocates funding to target older areas of the city for kerb and channelling upgrades and rehabilitation.

Projects are scheduled across all divisions. Streets Ahead was created to bring older areas up to the standard of newer suburbs.

**In the coming 12 months a budget of \$2.2 million has been allocated for Streets Ahead.**

## **Major city works**

The Works Program of council includes roads and drainage infrastructure and maintenance.

**Capital expenditure for 2009-2010 will be \$48.8 million.**

**Included in this amount –**

- **\$10.3 million for major road network improvements;**
- **\$16.4 million for local street rehabilitation;**
- **\$3.2 million for flood mitigation and drainage improvements;**
- **\$2.5 million on road safety and operational improvements; and**
- **\$15.5 million for asset rehabilitation.**

**Key projects in the coming 12 months include –**

- detailed planning for a new traffic and pedestrian crossing of the Bremer River - the Norman Street bridge and Jacaranda Street extension - **\$250,000;**
- upgrade of Edwards Street and Whitehill Road intersection - **\$2.3 million;**
- commence construction of the expected \$10 million Kerners Road deviation – **\$3 million this year, with the balance in 2010-2011;**
- safety upgrades for Ripley Road - **\$1 million;** and
- safety upgrades for Jones Road, Bellbird Park - **\$1 million.**

## **Planning for the future**

The population of Ipswich has reached **160,000**. The Ipswich Planning Scheme guides our sustainable growth. We cannot ignore the challenges of growth and we must make further improvements to the way we deliver services and always strive to give the best possible customer service.

The budget provides for an ongoing review of the **South East Queensland Regional Plan** and the **Integrated Planning Act**.

Importantly, Ipswich City Council will finalise key forward planning projects – including the **Ripley Valley Structure Plan**, which along with Springfield is a key driver in the future growth of Ipswich.

My congratulations to Springfield Land Corporation on winning the UDIA masterplanning award for excellence.

Amendments to the **Ipswich Planning Scheme** will allow for a masterplan accelerating the **Swanbank and New Chum business and employment area**.

Council will undertake a joint masterplanning project with the Queensland Government for the regionally significant **Ebenezer/Willowbank business and employment area**.

We are encouraging private developers to continue to offer a wide range of housing styles, options and affordable housing designs.

It is important we **keep Ipswich affordable for our children and families** and at the same time **create jobs**.

We will be undertaking further detailed masterplanning west of Ipswich Central to deliver more housing options along the existing public transport corridor to Rosewood.

Planning will include the development of business opportunities in the Rosewood-Thagoona-Walloon area.

**Heritage** will continue to play a major role in the development and planning of our city.

Successful programs will be maintained and enhanced including –

- free **Heritage Adviser Service**;
- Cultural Heritage Master Plan;
- Heritage Trail Brochures;
- the annual **Awards for Excellence** featuring -
  - Design;
  - Heritage;
  - Environment; and
  - Student categories.

**New in this budget** – A \$150,000 Ipswich transport feasibility study to create an **Ipswich rapid transit system**.

This study will examine and make recommendations for a preferred public transport mode and routes between **Ipswich Central, including Riverlink, UQ Ipswich, the hospital and medical precincts** and will include the masterplanned community of **Ripley Valley**.

Funding for this important public transport study has been secured from the State Government, Ipswich City Council, and Sekisui House and Payce joint venture at Ripley Valley – **with each contributing \$50,000**.

Council will work with the State Government, through TransLink, to ensure this investment will continue to strengthen our relationship when it comes to future growth in **public transport services and infrastructure** in our region.

**Ipswich** is rapidly maturing into the **main regional centre for the western corridor** and fast reliable public transport will be a major factor in building the Ipswich of the future.

Together with council's recent purchase of Ipswich City Square, we are now in the best position to create the kind of city centre we want and need for the future.

Masterplanning now will ensure we meet the needs of population growth which will more than double by 2025.

**Also new for 2009-2010**, funding has been allocated for stage one of a new **Rosewood Community Park** which will include a landscaped **Town Square** and become a major asset for the community.

Rosewood is being primed for **tourism** with the prospect of new cafes and **unique shopping options** set to attract day-trippers to stop and enjoy the **charm of the township**.

### **Economic Development – leading the recovery**

The **Office of Economic Development** will continue to work to establish key employment areas around the city and work in partnership with existing businesses.

We will continue our **10-point plan** and grow as a **destination for employment in south east Queensland**.

### **Ipswich Water**

The State Government's south east Queensland water grid is essentially completed. Further drought-proofing measures are being undertaken.

From December, the south east will have uniform water restrictions across all councils.

The **water grid** has **drought-proofed south east Queensland**, but has come at a cost which is now being passed on to all councils.

The cost of bulk water for Ipswich City Council has **increased by 34.4 % to \$15.47 million** for 2009-2010.

The State Government's water reform has put Ipswich in a better position to manage growth.

For **average residential customers using 150 kilolitres per year**, the **water bill rises 13.75%**. The new charge will be **\$1.63 a day or \$595.50 per year**.

This budget has also allocated **\$47.8 million** to capital expenditure for further improvements to water supply and sewerage services.

Major projects include -

- **\$3.1 million** for new water works;
- **\$2.9 million** for water infrastructure rehabilitation; and
- **\$39.8 million** for new sewerage works including -
  - Stages 4 and 5 of the upgrade to the Goodna Waste Water Centre – a five-year project with a budget allocation of **\$7.8 million** this year;
  - Stages 4 and 5 of the upgrade to the Bundamba Waste Water Centre – also a five-year project with **\$2.8 million** this year; and
  - **\$8.2 million** for new sewerage trunk mains.

### **Responsible pet ownership**

Council has been actively promoting responsible pet ownership for a number of years and will continue the successful **Operation Dog Safe**.

**\$1.8 million has been allocated for animal management and includes operation of the pound and animal registration services.**

The State Government has legislated the introduction of cat registration in 2009-2010.

For the period of July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2010 all cats will be allowed to be registered at an introductory fee of **\$20 per cat**.

This will include all classes of cat owners and cats, including desexed cats.

The Hooper Street Pound will undergo a three-year upgrade and refurbishment. **\$500,000** has been set aside in this budget.

## **Ipswich community pride**

Pride in our city is one of the great strengths of Ipswich. Our program of community engagement which includes **chat times, external council meetings** and **business forums** will continue in the next 12 months.

It is important that we continue to engage the broader community in the many social, cultural and sporting events which help to give our city heart and soul, and a special place to belong.

This budget reflects the many ideas and discussions that the people and businesses of Ipswich have given us from the community engagement program.

**Popular community events** will continue to be supported by council.

These include –

- **Movies in the Park – 4 major venues;**
- **Ipswich Christmas Lights competition and Santa’s Parade;**
- **The Mayor’s Christmas Carols;**
- **Workshops Museum Open Day for residents;**
- **Ipswich Art Awards;**
- **Ipswich International Tattoo;**
- **Ipswich Festival;**
- **Winternationals at Willowbank;**
- **Jacaranda Festival;**
- **Rosewood Festival;**
- **Ipswich Show;**
- **Grandchester Family Fun Day;**
- **Black Snake Creek Festival; and**
- **Ipswich Cup.**

The annual **Festival of Theatre** at the Civic Hall has broken attendance records for yet another year.

Later this year artists and shows will include –

- Wickety Wak
- Menopause The Musical
- Glenn Shorrock, Doug Parkinson and Wendy Matthews
- Dorothy the Dinosaur

The Civic Hall also hosts a number of **local productions** each year.

We can look forward to –

- Ipswich Musical Theatre Company – Beauty and the Beast;
- Orpheus Chorale – Monty Python’s Spamalot;
- Seniors’ Concert – Heaven Help Us.

**Ipswich Civic Hall will also receive a major upgrade** to the outdoor patio area with **new shade sails** and **extended catering and beverage options** at a cost of **\$450,000**. The Federal Government is also supporting this upgrade.

This year the **Ipswich Art Gallery** celebrated 10 years of wonderful events and exhibitions.

At Christmas we welcome back a bigger and better **Construction Site** exhibition in the children’s gallery.

Next April we can enjoy a major exhibition of historic Australian quilts.

Plans are also in place for a special display in 2010 to coincide with farewell celebrations for the F-111s.

### **Community building and support**

Ipswich City Council offers small grants funding for hundreds of eligible community organisations and sporting groups.

Last financial year, **31 different groups** and **31 sporting events** were awarded **grants totalling \$72,000**.

The program is extremely successful and will continue to **build community pride and support** and encourage the tremendous work of our volunteers.

The city is fortunate to have the generous support of over **250 volunteers** who provide a welcome smile to many areas of council operations.

We have volunteers at the **Ipswich Art Gallery**, libraries, the new **Queens Park Environmental Education Centre, Ipswich Nature Centre** and **Visitor Information Centre**, and others who perform in seniors' concerts and work as park rangers.

Recently the **Ipswich Advocates** program was also introduced.

**The City of Ipswich thanks our volunteers for a job well done.**

### **Youth and seniors**

Our commitment to supporting our youth and seniors remains stronger than ever.

In this budget, seniors and disability support programs as well as **Seniors Week 2009** will receive funding of **\$32,500**.

Council is also proposing a disability access to public transport study.

The **Ipswich Youth Advisory Council** and programs including a Youth Forum and Youth Transition Expo will receive **\$35,000**.

Council will continue to run the **Home Assist program** with **\$1.8 million** in funding as a partnership with the State Government.

### **Ipswich-150**

In 2010, Ipswich will celebrate **150 years** since the municipality was proclaimed in 1860.

Our celebrations will make sure we share our story with the rest of Australia.

**Ipswich-150** will brand celebrations associated with our 150<sup>th</sup> birthday next year. The community will also celebrate this **important chapter in our history**.

These **celebrations** will be in **partnership** with business, **community groups** and residents to make sure 2010 is not only a celebration of the last 150 years of our city, but the start of a journey for the next 150 years.

As one of the oldest provincial cities in Queensland, it is fitting that a community celebration be planned to mark this significant event in our history.

**Ipswich-150 will acknowledge 150 years of development**, our special character and pay tribute to the past, as well as build on our desires and dreams for the future.

**Ipswich-150 will be a celebration of what we love about our city.**

It is my pleasure to unveil the **new logo for Ipswich-150** for all to use to celebrate Ipswich's journey – past, present and future.

It is important to note that next year, as we celebrate 150 years, we also have a **combined 150 years** of experience from your **elected councillor representatives**.

**Tourism plays an increasingly important role in Ipswich and the western corridor.**

The **Ipswich Visitor Information Centre** in Queens Park attracted almost **19,000 visitors** during the past year. A program of destination marketing includes the Ipswich Visitors' Guide and cooperative marketing with tourism operators, Brisbane Marketing and Tourism Queensland.

This budget will continue to make tourism a vital part of the city's strategy for future economic growth.

## **Nerima and Ipswich - 15 years of friendship**

October 15 2009 marks the **15<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the signing of the **Friendship Agreement with Nerima City in Tokyo Japan**. This has developed into our most successful cultural exchange agreement.

**Nerima Gardens is now regarded as the jewel in the crown in Queens Park.**

It would not have been possible without the financial support and expert advice from Nerima City.

To commemorate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the friendship agreement, a **traditional tea house and reflection pavilion** will be built in Nerima Gardens.

The Japanese Consul and representatives from Nerima City will visit Ipswich in November to coincide with the opening of the tea house.

## **A greener Ipswich**

More than **\$3 million** has been included for the enhancement and management of **parks, reserves and conservation estates**.

They are the lungs of our city and provide many opportunities for walking, exercise and play.

The city manages nearly **5000 hectares of conservation areas** funded by the Enviroplan Levy – owned by the people of Ipswich.

This year, a further **\$60,000** will be committed to the **Cherish the Environment Foundation**.

Council also maintains 864 hectares of urban bushland reserves.

A further **\$9.6 million** has been allocated for the maintenance of **gardens, landscaped areas, playing surfaces and playgrounds**.

The city can boast **530 hectares of parkland**.

We are also proud of the **255 conservation agreements** with private landowners which cover an area of 8452 hectares.

Council's strategic parks attract many thousands of residents and visitors each year.

**\$945,000** will be spent at **Queens Park, Limestone Park and Colleges Crossing** on replacement of playground equipment, pathways, toilets and roadways.

**In a first for Australia** – the **Ipswich Nature Centre** will house the only free exhibit of the rare and endangered Bilby. The new Bilby home opens on July 10.

Council has budgeted \$20 million of contributions from the State Government, developers and council for the completion of stage one of the **Springfield Central Parklands**. This important project for our eastern suburbs was boosted recently by a further \$10 million from the Federal Government.

**Springfield Central Parklands** will ultimately rival the great parks of the world and add to the number of visitor attractions in Ipswich.

Within the 24 hectares, Springfield Central Parklands will offer –

- lakes and water features;
- playgrounds;
- restaurants and kiosk;
- BBQ and picnic facilities;
- outdoor art;
- performance spaces for community events and concerts;
- environmental education and cultural heritage displays; and
- walking trails.

## **Sport and recreation**

Ipswich has a proud sporting heritage. The city will continue to invest in improving and enhancing our sporting facilities covering **442 hectares of sports grounds**.

Over **\$10 million** has been allocated to projects including –

- **\$5.5 million** for major upgrades to **North Ipswich Reserve**;
- **\$1.1 million** for new **clubhouses** at **Redbank Plains Reserve**;
- **\$1 million** for the new **citywide equestrian centre at Rosewood**;
- **\$860,000** for water savings measures and irrigation at a number of sporting grounds;
- **\$500,000** for walking trails;
- a further **\$350,000** on refurbishment of a number of sporting facilities;
- **\$100,000** in funding for sporting events; and
- **\$30,000** for the Ipswich Sports Awards.

## **Ipswich libraries**

Libraries are one of the most treasured assets any city can have. Visitor numbers confirm the ongoing love affair residents have with Ipswich City Council libraries, including the ultra modern mobile library.

More than **10,000 extra people visited the city's libraries last year** – another record.

During the 2008 calendar year, more than **a million items were borrowed**, an increase of 35,000 loans on the previous year and 30,000 new items were added to the collection.

**In 2008** we also launched ***Picture Ipswich***. This website provides access to more than **1200 historical images** providing a unique insight into the local history of Ipswich – its people, families, places and way of life.

The introduction last year of free internet access for library members has been a great success.

This program will continue with **\$45,000** provided in the budget.

**New for this year**, Ipswich libraries will introduce SMS and email alerts for members with overdue items and deliver other important library news.

The annual **Poetry Feast** is now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year. The Poetry Feast enjoys excellent support from the community and sponsors. It also generates Australia-wide positive publicity for Ipswich.

### **Safe City**

**Safe City** is now regarded as the best public safety surveillance program in Australia. Camera coverage was extended recently to include the new Brassall Bikeway with plans already completed to include the new Riverlink footbridge.

Coverage will soon be extended at a cost of **\$335,000** for upgrading and expansion of the camera network.

**Safe City** now has **185 cameras**, monitored around the clock in the Safe City Control Room. The program is unique in Australia, thanks to the strong partnerships developed over many years between council, police and the business community.

It is important to reassure residents that **our city is in sound financial shape** with a very experienced hard-working team in control.

Let me reinforce that 2009-2010 will be a year to manage growth to make sure our plans and vision for the future are on track and in line with community and business expectations.

Ipswich will continue to be a leading city where our vision to live, work and play are words of action.

Today we hand down a **responsible common sense budget that maintains growth and delivers services and new infrastructure expected by residents** and, at the same time, give a clear message to all that people are the most important asset of our city - the place we all call 'home'.

ENDS