

Ipswich City Council

Media Release

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Council budget boosts city's green credentials

Council's 2023-2024 Budget will feature Ipswich's green credentials - a liveable and sustainable city that has a focus on improving natural areas, reducing waste and promoting resource recovery, increasing community resilience to natural disasters, reducing our carbon emissions and preparing for climate change risks.

Environment and Sustainability Committee Chairperson Deputy Mayor Russell Milligan said council had committed about \$14 million to green projects in the upcoming budget, encompassing emergency management and sustainability, natural environment, land management and resource recovery.

"For more than 25 years, council has been working towards a better environment for Ipswich, and now with the establishment of a dedicated Environment and Sustainability Department, there will be even stronger focus to build on the legacy of our Enviroplan," Deputy Mayor Milligan said.

"Council has also adopted a new Natural Environment Strategy, and our first ever Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Strategy, in the period since this council was elected in 2020.

"We will also be focusing on climate resilience and sustainability for a growing, green city.

"Council will be implementing a rooftop solar program on council-owned assets to reduce council's carbon emissions – we have committed \$480,000 to this project. We also have an Ipswich Art Gallery lighting energy efficiency project, costing \$75,000.

"We will be adopting Climate Risk Management for council and the community, which is a project to understand the impacts of climate change to guide planning and future investment."

Deputy Mayor Milligan said there would be a focus on implementing the new Natural Environment Strategy, Enviroplan levy review and future focus on getting the most out of funding to council. About \$960,000 had been committed from the Enviroplan in the budget.

"The Enviroplan levy continues to support and fund the management and maintenance of our conservation estates including Flinders Goolman, White Rock Spring Mountain Conservation Estates and others," Deputy Mayor Milligan said.

"The estates are still recovering from the rain event last year, with paths and tracks still being brought back up to standard.

"Bushfire risk management remains a priority focus as after three wet years, the fuel loads are quite high. Conservation works remain focussed on managing weeds at important habitat areas of our estates which are home to rare or threatened species such as the Flinders Plumb and Brush Tailed Rock Wallabies.

“Our popular conservation partnerships with local land-owners provide grant and land management support to maintain our strategically important local and regional habitat corridors.”

Deputy Mayor Milligan said \$50,000 had been committed for detailed design to work in Bundamba Creek to stabilise bank erosion, as part of an overall project cost of \$237,000.

“This is a priority catchment for stabilisation post-flood. We will be looking to draw up a design to include earth works, planting and riverine habitat improvement. The initial investigation will focus on and around Jack Barkley Park, North Booval,” Deputy Mayor Milligan said.

“Last year saw council finalise the first citywide urban greening plan and the establishment of priority sites and projects on ground.

“We have committed a further \$291,000 in the budget for tree planting and root barrier works, which will enable us to increase shade and habitat as well as decreasing urban heat stress in areas such as Marburg and Redbank through community planting days.

“We will also look at sites for urban greening in Raceview, Rosewood, Booval, North Booval, Yamanto and Springfield Central.

“We will continue environmental recovery post-2022 floods, moving towards a more resilient landscape through waterway stabilisation, bush fire risk management and establishing resilient landscapes through extension of protected land and water.

“We remain focused on leveraging alternative funding and revenue streams to stretch the community dollar further, through State and Federal government grants, developer contributions and partnerships.”

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