

Ipswich City Council

Media Release

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Future focused 2025-2026 Budget puts service delivery front and centre

A future focused approach that continues to deliver for a growing city is the clear focus in Ipswich City Council's \$678 million 2025-2026 Annual Plan and Budget.

Ipswich Mayor Teresa Harding said it was a responsible Budget that balanced cost-of-living pressures facing residents with choices that would deliver for the city today and for the next 20 years.

"Council continues to offer value for money, a sensible approach and a range of discounts that ensure we maintain one of the lowest general rate and charges in South East Queensland," Mayor Harding said.

"We've done this by finding operational efficiencies of around \$4.5 million which we can redirect to the delivery of essential services and keeping our rates and charges low.

"Council's ongoing commitment to financial sustainability means we will deliver another Budget surplus, this year around \$8 million."

The average general rate rise in the 2025-2026 Budget is 4.98 per cent, lower than last year's 5.45 per cent.

"The average increase in total rates and charges is \$3.78 per week per household," Mayor Harding said.

"We understand any increase is difficult for ratepayers to find, but we believe we are finding the right balance between minimising the extra ask on ratepayers and keeping our city moving forward.

"We've maintained the discount for early payments of \$132 per year as well as the full pension concession of \$258 per year and part pension concession of \$127 per year for eligible pensioners.

"Other Budget initiatives aimed at reducing the impact on residents include freezing the cost for metered street parking and the cost for registering an entire dog, while also maintaining introductory dog registration fees at the discounted rate of \$20."

The 2025-2026 waste utility charge will be set at \$513, Enviroplan Levy at \$63, Infrastructure Levy at \$55 and the Rural Fire Levy (separate charge) at \$3.

Major budget highlights include:

- \$62.3 million for resource recovery
- \$54.7 million for maintaining, upgrading and expanding our road network
- \$24.6 million for environment and sustainability
- \$23.6 million for sporting and other community facilities
- \$15.3 million for libraries
- \$8.1 million for arts and cultural services
- \$6 million for sustainable transport and road safety.

Mayor Harding said this year's budget included \$165 million in capital works, projected to grow to almost \$200 million in 2026-2027 and \$211 million the year after.

"We are proud to continue committing to the delivery of some of the biggest road projects our city has ever seen, in our effort to ensure the local road network grows alongside our population," Mayor Harding said.

"Council is getting on with the job of critical road upgrades such as Ripley and Fischer roads, Ripley, and Redbank Plains and School roads, Redbank Plains, as we look to the Australian and Queensland governments to do the same with our major arterials."

Highlights of the 2025-2026 capital works program include:

- \$9 million for Stage 1 of the Ripley Road upgrade as part of \$113.8 million over four years
- \$7.3 million to replace the Purga School Road Bridge with up to \$5 million of that being contributed under the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program
- \$7 million to continue Stage 2 of Springfield Parkway road upgrade as part of \$42.3 million over five years
- \$4.5 million to progress the North Ipswich Sport and Entertainment Precinct Stage 1 Western Grandstand as part of \$40 million project
- \$2.5 million for rehabilitation to Adelong Avenue, Thagoona
- \$2 million to progress expansion of Tivoli Sporting Complex as part of \$8.5 million over two years
- \$750,000 for upgrade of Augusta Parkway and Sinnathamby Boulevard as part of \$51.5 million over five years.

"It's not just about roads though, we are also delivering essential social and community infrastructure including major upgrades at North Ipswich Reserve, Tivoli Sports Complex and Redbank Plains Recreation Reserve," Mayor Harding said.

Popular programs and events which promote community connectedness will also continue.

"Our welcoming libraries, vibrant major festivals and events, free plant program, energising Active and Healthy Ipswich program, free kerbside collection, art gallery and civic centre will all continue to entertain and support our community," Mayor Harding said.

"There will also be a major upgrade of the popular Ipswich Nature Centre – South East Queensland's only council-run zoo – with improvements to its animal husbandry and biosecurity area, which will help protect the centre's 200 animals and wildlife from diseases and pests."

Mayor Harding said throughout Budget deliberations the city's councillors had carefully considered the impact of all decisions on ratepayers.

"Each choice we have made to keep our city progressing, keeps costs down and deliver great services, we do with the community at the heart of those decisions. We continue to put residents first while maintaining a sensible and sustainable budget for our future," Mayor Harding said.

For more information about the 2025-2026 Annual Plan and Budget visit ipswich.qld.gov.au/budget

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Ipswich City Council media unit - media@ipswich.qld.gov.au, 0448 457 258