



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Council, in this 2015/2016 Budget, continues with a significant capital works program totaling \$96.5 million. Listed below are some of the highlights of the vital community infrastructure Council has pleasure in providing on behalf of the region's community.

2015/2016 Project Highlights

Rubyanna Wastewater Treatment Plant Stage 1 (\$93 million) over several years	\$34,700,000
Rubyanna Wastewater Treatment Plant Burnett River outfall and outlet works (also part of the \$93 million project)	\$2,500,000
Road projects – Reconstruction overlays, road reseals	\$14,180,000
Footpaths and bikeways	\$1,155,000
Childers Streetscape – Stage 6	\$700,000
Visitor Information Centre refurbishment	\$150,000
Park Improvements including Christsen Park (Stage 1 - \$350,000) and Gin Gin Nature reserve (\$200,000)	\$1,340,000
Salter Oval fence and gate replacement	\$90,000
Bundaberg Multiplex Facility – Stage 1	\$9,500,000
Stormwater drainage	\$2,339,000
Bundaberg Regional Library new book checkout and tracking project	\$110,000
Amenities	\$265,000
Bucca Rowing reserve upgrade	\$90,000
Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery (BRAG) lighting upgrade	\$50,000
Innes Park new sewerage pump station and pressure main	\$1,600,000
Gin Gin Water Treatment Plant upgrade	\$900,000
Water main – Kalkie transfer main, Mellifont Street	\$800,000
Branyan Water Treatment Plant upgrade – Automation Stage 2	\$425,000
Water upgrades and sewerage connections to the Port	\$950,000
Water reticulation hydrant renewals at Bundaberg and Gin Gin	\$677,000
Closed circuit television (CCTV) upgrades	\$100,000
Information technology replacement and upgrades	\$3,160,000

Rates and Utility Charges

The rate increase for an average property is 4.63%. This results from an increase in the:

- General Rate by 4% for Urban Residential Category 1, and by 4.5% across all other rating categories. This represents a \$37.00 per year (or \$0.71 per week) increase to the minimum general residential ratable property. The minimum General Rate is now \$951.00.

- Collection and processing of a 240 litre refuse bin weekly and a 240 litre recycling bin fortnightly by 5.86%, or \$0.35 per week. This equates to \$325.00 per annum (from \$307.00 last year).
- Wastewater pedestal charges to \$678.00 per annum, equating to an increase of \$0.85 per week.
- Water access charge by 3.03% or \$0.23 per week (\$408.00 per year).

Property Valuations

Property valuations are determined by the State Government's Department of Natural Resources & Mines (DNRM) – State Valuation Service. The Department has not conducted a revaluation for the 2015/2016 year and property valuations are generally unchanged.

Pensioners Assistance

Council has provided a concession to the general rate for pensioners of up to \$140.00 per annum. The State Government remission to pensioners for the 2015/2016 year is 20% of rates and charges up to a maximum of \$200.00 per annum.

Efficiencies

The Mayor and Councillors again this year gave a directive that every section of Council find further efficiencies in its operating expenditure. Council's staff have implemented a range of initiatives to deliver further savings to already constrained budgets and have achieved the savings required.

With constantly increasing costs of materials and services and massive increases in electricity pricing, Council continues to be proactive in finding ways to reduce its expenditure. These cost increases continue to impact heavily on Council's Budget. Electricity expenses currently cost Council around \$5 million per annum, with the major consumption areas being street lighting and the treatment and pumping of water and sewerage. Other key areas of high electricity consumption include community facilities such as pools and halls, service centres and depots.

Council has implemented key aspects of its Clean Energy Strategy, including the installation of low consumption lighting, and other cost saving initiatives where proven cost benefits can be realized.