

# MEDIA STATEMENT

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7 July 2020

## **COUNCIL ANNOUNCES BUDGET TO PUT COMMUNITY FIRST**

Cassowary Coast Regional Council has today adopted a budget designed to put community first.

Representing savings worth \$1.78 million to the ratepayer, the 2020/21 budget announced by Mayor Mark Nolan continues to offer residents the lowest general rate increase in twelve years (seven percent in 2008: 1.23 percent 2020).

“At every step of developing this budget we have put community first, it is a caring and compassionate budget,” he said.

“Maintaining our debt-free status was of paramount importance to future-proof the viability of Council while continuing to minimise rate increases to residents, I’m confident that no stone was left unturned in ensuring that every possible consideration was made,”

Of the 1.23 percent general rate increase for the coming financial year, one percent is to supplement loss of income incurred by Council to accommodate the COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy, with the remaining 0.23 percent to supplement the expected CPI increase which would ordinarily be 1.8 percent.

Additional to the COVID-19 Financial Relief Package which includes discounted fees and utility charges until December 2020, key savings to the ratepayer were achieved by the implementation of a new council structure, saving approximately \$1.1M, rationalising Council assets representing \$400,000 in depreciation savings and business efficiency savings of up to \$275,000.

Nolan said Council’s investment in the region will continue through 20/21 with \$36.6 million worth of capital works slated for the year, almost half of which is dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of roads (\$16 million).

“It is imperative at times of economic recovery that Council continues to invest in the region which is demonstrated in our capital investiture, a vast amount of which will be spent maintaining and improving our roads and ensuring our water security,”

Investment in water security is Council’s second highest priority for the coming financial year, including boil water mitigation with the completion of the Bulgun reservoir and water loss management at a cost of \$5.16 million.

Future proofing our region with CBD upgrades and master planning is also an established priority for Council with \$1.5 million budgeted for the year.

With a focus on economic activation, Council will also invest \$110,000 in tourism and economic development including destination representation, Art Deco activation, a business networking forum and continuing to build on its status as an adventure destination of choice.

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The budget maintains a \$0 debt position while also demonstrating savings to the ratepayer, investment in the region and a budgeted surplus of \$8,625.

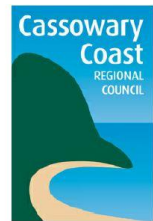
## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Regional	
Bridge Renewals	\$1.85M
Building Renewals	\$125K
Culvert Renewals	\$1.9M
DRFA - Restoration of Essential Public Assets 2019 Disaster Event	\$8.38M
Marine Facilities Renewals	\$650K
Recreation & Natural Areas	\$375K
Regional Reseals	\$1M
Road Improvement Program	\$1.25M
Sealed Roads Renewals	\$1M
Stormwater Drainage	\$430K
Swimming Pool Renewals	\$290K
Unsealed Roads Renewal	\$1.1M
Cardwell	
Balliol Street	\$290K
Cardwell Disability Access	\$65K
Cardwell Transit Centre	\$140K
Water Main Renewals	\$200K
Silkwood/Kurrimine/Cowley/El Arish	
Jacobs Road Upgrade	\$1M
Water Main Renewals	\$475K
Innisfail	
Innisfail CBD Masterplan	\$1M
Pease Park Grandstand Renewal	\$140K
Rankin St Footpath Improvements	\$450K
Sewer Rehabilitation	\$700K
Water Main Renewals	\$1M
Mission Beach	
Clump Point Boat Ramp Car Park	\$390K
Mission Beach CBD Upgrade	\$500K
South Mission Beach Shared Path	\$600K
Tully	
Bulgun Creek Reservoir	\$350K
Sewerage Treatment Plan Upgrade	\$900K

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Sewer Rehabilitation	\$290K
Water Main for Hyatt Street Reservoir	\$700K
Water Main Renewals	\$520K

Media contact 0417 721 754 | [comms@ccrc.qld.gov.au](mailto:comms@ccrc.qld.gov.au)