



Mayor Councillor Shaun Radnedge Budget Speech 2025-26 Financial Year

It is with much pleasure that I commence this Special Budget Meeting of Murweh Shire Council.

Today we will look to adopt the 2025-26 Budget for the of Murweh Shire Council.

Today's budget adoption is the culmination of many months of work by both our team of Councillors as well as our staff.

Following several workshops with staff and Councillors it is a privilege to be here with the relevant documents completed ready for adoption.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Councillors for the manner that you have approached the budget process over these last few months through the 2025-26 Budget Workshops.


I would also like to thank the Council officers for your work and discussion to provide us with the information that we require to move forward and adopt a budget which is the financial plan for the year ahead.

Over the past few years Council has been fortunate to be successful with several grants as well as Queensland State and Commonwealth Government programs that have enabled the expansion and renewal of the asset base in our communities.

Through this budget process we have identified the need to focus our efforts on the critical assets that enable our community to function – for example town, shire and rural roads; airports; town water and wastewater assets.

In turning our attention to Council's critical assets, we have identified the need to look after these assets and plan for their renewal and replacement to ensure the reliability, safety and regulatory compliance of these services to the Murweh Shire communities.

To that end – in the coming years residents will see Council has a more of a focus on looking after the important assets that we already have, in



preference to building the popular new things that will definitely increase our asset base, but have a negative impact on Council's over all finances and ability to service what we already have.

We want to see the public use assets in our communities (parks, gardens, sporting venues) in good condition and utilised to help provide the western Queensland lifestyle that we are fortunate to enjoy here in the Murweh Shire.

We are also acutely aware that Council needs to make sure that the delivery of community services is in line with the expectations of our constituents. Your Council is committed to continual improvement in the way in which we do business for you and on your behalf.

The budget for the 2025-26 financial year has a distinct flavour of renewal of critical infrastructure, future planning for long-term sustainability and liveability, and consolidating the goals of Council along with securing our financial longevity.

The 2025-26 budget highlights include:

Operational spend of \$38.5 Million - including depreciation and flood damage

Capital spend of \$17.8 Million

Capital Grant Revenue of \$12.1 Million

No new borrowings

Key projects include:

Augathella CED & Charleville Sewerage Treatment Plant:

Council has been funded to deliver a new sewage treatment plant in Augathella that will enable Council to safely treat the towns common effluent and remain compliant with Council's Environmental Authority.

Council will also be conducting a refurbishment of the Charleville Sewage Treatment Plant, so this asset remains functional and compliant under the Murweh Shire Council's Environmental Authority.

Charleville Airport Masterplan

Council is very aware of the importance of the Charleville Airport to our communities and surrounding areas as the enabler for the Regular Passenger Transport Services, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, regional and local aviation services, and recreational flying. To keep the Charleville Airport safe and functioning, Council needs to understand the costs and logistics associated with the renewal of runways, taxiways and parking aprons – and to achieve this, Council will require very careful financial, engineering, planning and aviation industry advice to move this asset renewal forward in a considered and fiscally responsible process.

Aurora Estate Stage 2 and Residential Housing

As the community is aware, there is a critical shortage of housing in our communities for families as well as for the persons providing medical, teaching and social services in our communities. To this end, Council has started the planning for the development and construction of a new 65 lot housing estate in Charleville. The new estate will add to the current Aurora Estate that joins Partridge St in the north-eastern end of the town. The cost of providing this development is in the order of \$13.2m, and Council hopes to deliver these residential lots over the next 3 years.

Highlights

Charleville Sewerage Treatment Plant Upgrade	\$ 4,709,847
Alfred Street Renewal	\$ 1,500,000
Augathella CED Scheme	\$ 1,051,348
Water renewals	\$ 1,000,000
Rural Road Reseal – Biddenhan & Mount Tabor	\$ 640,126
Charleville Airport Reseal	\$ 600,000
Construct amenities Multi-sport Charleville	\$ 551,534
Resheeting & Reseals – Rural	\$ 437,843
Resheeting & Reseals – Urban	\$ 437,842
Augathella CED Scheme Design	\$ 334,282
Aurora Estate Stage 2	\$ 336,078
Town Street Rehabilitation Program	\$ 300,000
Council Facility Infrastructure Program	\$ 300,000



Rates

We are well aware of the financial challenges that many are facing in the current environment.

With that in mind Council has decided that the residential rates and charges increase for the 25-26 year will be 5%.

This increase is in line with the increases in the costs of services and goods Council has identified that is needed to carry out Council's day-to-day business on behalf of the communities.

For a standard house block on the minimum rate using 700kL of water represents an increase of \$149 per year or less than \$3 per week in Charleville, \$122 per year or \$2.35 per week in Augathella and \$99 per year \$1.90 per week in Morven.

With the Valuer-General's recent revaluation of the shire, we have seen the unimproved capital value increasing by an average of 239% across the shire for 2025.

To manage the impact on rural rate payers, Council has adjusted the rate in the dollar levied to provide for only an average of a 10% increase in rural rates.

Increase in Maintenance on Rural Roads

This change will enable Council to significantly increase the rural roads maintenance budget and shows that Council is listening to its rural constituents when they discuss the condition of their access roads. For this budget, we will see a spending increase of 50% on Rural Roads which is an increase of \$750,000 in the 2025-26 year and complement the significant flood damage repairs following the March/April Surface Trough Rain and Flood event. Council is also committed to see a continual improvement to this road network with further budget allocation in the coming years.



Tourism and Commerce

Council continues to invest significantly in driving the visitor economy of the region through the operation of many of the tourism assets and events of the Murweh Shire. This provides an economic uplift through the visitor spending to support the viability of our local businesses.

To enable Council to continue this support to the commercial sector across Murweh Shire, business owners will see a moderate rate increase above that of the residential sector.

Council Business and Fiscal Responsibilities

After a successful 2024-25 financial year Council continues to work hard to find efficiencies within the organisation. These efficiencies will allow us to build the necessary financial reserves, including a minimum of 4 months operating cash buffer and funds for the future needs of the community.


Community Engagement

Council continues to be mindful of the need to be working with the community and investing support into our not-for profit, sporting, cultural and the arts groups. With the investment of time, in-kind and financial support to community groups in excess of \$250,000 – Council shows that it supports the volunteers in our communities who give their time in the community to provide a better and nicer place to live and provide the many opportunities to advance through these many sporting and cultural disciplines.

This continues to build on the significant investment over the last 3 years of more than \$600,000, as Council continues to encourage our local groups to remain active and work with Council on your organisations goal, service delivery and enhancing the liveability of our communities.

Disaster Management and Community Safety

Disaster management and community safety continues to be a major focus for Council. Apart from continuing to provide community messaging on disaster management, road conditions, flood warning advice, and general safety, Council has applied for funding to repurpose the old Bureau of



Meteorology weather station at the Charleville Airport precinct into a Local Disaster Coordination Centre that will be used as the command centre if Murweh Shire was experiencing a natural or manmade disaster. Council is also investing in the integrity of the flood levees in Charleville and Augathella, early warning systems, and a local road network flood height monitoring network.

Council Commitment to the Community

As a Council, my fellow Councillors and I are committed to be working towards achieving the outcomes set down in the 2025-26 Murweh Shire Council Budget and the Operational Plan. Throughout this financial year, we will continue to be setting and adjusting the foundations that will lead Murweh Shire into a solid financial position in both the short and the longer-term, continue with strong financial and corporate governance, ensure transparency and probity, and most importantly - be your strongest advocate.

Fellow Councillors - I commit to you for your consideration the Murweh Shire Council 2025-26 Financial Year Budget.

Yours faithfully

Shaun Radnedge

Mayor

Murweh Shire Council