



PAROO  
SHIRE  
COUNCIL  
BUDGET MEDIA  
PACK  
2020/21



# PAROO SHIRE COUNCIL

## 2020/21 BUDGET SNAPSHOT

### WHERE WILL WE GET OUR INCOME?



**FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE  
GRANTS**

**41%**



**OTHER  
OPERATIONAL  
GRANTS**

**5%**



**SALES &  
RECOVERABLE  
WORKS**

**20%**



**GENERAL  
RATES**

**13%**



**USER CHARGE/  
SPECIAL LEVIES**

**9%**



**FUNDED  
COMMUNITY  
PROGRAMS**

**9%**



**FEES & CHARGES/  
RENTAL INCOME**

**2%**



**INTEREST**

**1%**

### DISCOUNT

Discount for prompt payment has been retained and is 10%  
*(general rates only)*



Total budget of  
**\$51.29 million**

Capital works  
program of  
**\$30.92 million**

General rates  
increase of  
**1.8%**

Plant  
replacement  
program of  
**\$1.58 million**

### KEY BUDGET POINTS

**\$17.23 million**  
in flood  
restoration  
works

Mining leases and  
claims minimum  
rates **25% less  
than general rate**

**No new  
borrowings**

Water and  
sewerage, and  
waste services  
charges increase  
of **1.8%**

### COUNCIL PENSIONER RATE SUBSIDY SCHEME

20% off general rates up to \$1,000 is only available to eligible holders of Age, Invalid or Service Pension Cards.

This is in addition to the 20% subsidy the Queensland Government provide to approved pensioners.

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE



The 2020/2021 Paroo Shire Council budget has been prepared to deliver a range of works, services and projects that implement the ideals outlined in our new Mission Statement. We have taken note of the community input received when visiting the towns of Yowah, Eulo and Wyandra during the past year. Unfortunately we

were unable to meet with the Noorama community due to the commencement of the COVID-19 restrictions. These are now starting to ease and Council should be able to resume holding some of their monthly meetings outside of Cunnamulla in the near future.

In setting the budget the Council has endeavoured to maintain a level of services that will meet the needs of the community and in doing this has kept the rate increase to 1.8% which is below the current CPI index. We will continue to offer a discount of 10% for prompt payment of rates and encourage anyone experiencing difficulty meeting their rate payment to contact the Council and discuss payment plans available under our Financial Hardship Policy. A concession on rates for pensioners will also continue to be available.

The coming twelve months will see Council enter into one of its busiest years for projects and works. Completion of the \$9m State Government funded project to upgrade the Cunnamulla sewer reticulation system and replace

the sewerage treatment plant will occur. Construction will commence on the \$6.3m new Civic and Community Enterprise Centre and this project is scheduled to be completed within the 2020/2021 financial year. We have also received advice of further grant funding to continue expanding digital connectivity throughout the Shire which will be of great benefit to the rural businesses.

On the tourism front, work has commenced on obtaining a design for the Hot Springs & Riverwalk Project to take to the community for consultation and input. This project when completed will be a world class facility for visitors and locals alike to use and enjoy. In the meantime promotional work and planning is being undertaken by the tourism office to help our local economy recover from the effects of the coronavirus restrictions.

In addition to the yearly road maintenance programme, the budget contains allocations for the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme of \$1.95m, Roads to Recovery funding of \$1m and flood damage re-instatement funding of \$2.23m for road damage incurred during 2019. Council has submitted details to QRA of the road damage sustained in February this year and it is estimated this work when approved could total approximately \$15m. We will also be carrying out an upgrade to the rest area on the Balonne Highway and this work will be 50% subsidised by TMR.

This budget shows the results of extensive work carried out during the past twelve months by Council staff to achieve the financial ratio measures indicated and place the organisation in a more sustainable position, something the Council had prioritised. The newly elected Council of Deputy Mayor Rick Brain, Cr. Joann Woodcroft, Cr. Patricia Jordan, Cr. James Clark and myself as Mayor look forward to a productive and progressive twelve months for the Shire through delivery of this budget.



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Council delivers nearly 150% increase in 2020/21 budget with minimum rate rise of only 1.8%

On Tuesday 30 June 2020 Paroo Shire Council handed down its 2020/21 \$51.29 million budget, whilst keeping rate rises to a minimum for the community's benefit during these challenging times of drought and COVID-19.

Cr Suzette Beresford, Paroo Shire Mayor, has confirmed that a 1.8% increase will be applied from the 1st July.

"The past year has been tough on everyone in our community whether you are battling drought, or more recently the pandemic which is causing economic havoc across Australia," Cr Beresford said.

"The Council has listened to community concerns and kept any increases to rates, fees and charges at an absolute minimum whilst ensuring our Council remains financially sound.

"The bulk of the increase in our 2020/21 budget is from external funding and grants for major infrastructure works."

This coming year will see a large focus on the delivery of capital works projects, with works to continue on the new Cunnamulla Sewerage Treatment Plant, commencement of the Civic and Community Enterprise Centre (CCEC) and an extensive flood restoration program on Councils rural local roads. Overall Council has committed \$30.92 million in capital expenditure for 2020/21.

"We have also continued with mining leases and claims minimum rates being 25% less than the general rate, even through the current economic hardships that our Shire is facing," Cr Beresford explained.

"Our new Council have been fully supportive of the 10% rates discount for prompt payment of rates, so this initiative will continue into the next financial year."

Cr Beresford expressed that she is extremely proud of the efforts and cooperation between Councillors and staff in developing this budget, and is confident that the community will embrace the new initiatives and projects that have been carefully selected for delivery across the region.

"It has been a challenging year for us all however this budget places Council in a very strong position, with a significant increase to our sustainability and a program of work that will benefit our entire community including Council staff and contractors."

**END**

**For more information contact Kelly Schmidt on 0472 870 774 or [kelly.schmidt@paroo.qld.gov.au](mailto:kelly.schmidt@paroo.qld.gov.au)**





## MEDIA RELEASE

### Capital works program of \$30.92M a win for Council, local contractors and community

Following a strong program of delivering capital works projects in 2019/20, the coming financial year is set to be no different with an extensive program of works included in Paroo Shire Council's budget.

Council has forecast to spend \$30.92 million in capital funding in the 2020/21 financial year, which is an increase of \$11.12 million from last year. This is generally due to a significant flood restoration program as a result of flooding and storms in March 2020.

Paroo Shire Mayor, Cr Suzette Beresford said that coming off the back of last year's substantial works program, Paroo Shire is going from strength to strength by sourcing funding and delivering projects for much needed infrastructure for the community.

"It is essential that Council continue to identify priority areas of our infrastructure for maintenance and improvement, and this year's capital works program is a very welcome addition to the targeted expenditure over recent years," Cr Beresford explained.

"This program will ensure that not only will we have adequate funding for the continued employment of all of our Council staff, but significant opportunity to offer projects to our local contractors and suppliers.

"It has been some time since we've had this size road works program, and it has been encouraging to see the extensive planning going into the delivery of these important works over the past two to three months."

A snapshot of forecast projects for the coming year include:

- Construction of the new Civic and Community Enterprise Centre (CCEC) - \$4.79 million
- Completion of a new Sewerage Treatment Plant - \$2.81 million
- Flood restoration projects on rural local roads - \$17.23 million
- Commencement of Hot Springs and Riverwalk Project - \$1.25 million
- Completion of the Deep Creek Bridge (west of Wyandra) - \$390,000
- Construction of a new rest area on the Balonne Highway (towards Bollon) - \$338,425

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### *Capital works program of \$30.92M a win for Council, local contractors and community cont..*

Council's Acting CEO Sean Rice commented that the Operations Department has worked very hard in the last quarter to develop a sound road works program for the coming year, which included finding the right balance in delivering projects using Council's internal resources, and our local contractors in the Paroo Shire.

"We have projects including Transport and Main Roads (TMR), Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS), Roads to Recovery (R2R) and flood restoration, and between each of these funding sources we should all be busy for the next 12 to 18 months," Sean said.

"We are very thankful for the efforts of our Finance Team who have been able to pull all this together and present a budget with such clear goals and outcomes."

In addition to road infrastructure works are continuing on the construction of the new Sewerage Treatment Plant in Cunnamulla following commencement on-site in May 2020.

Contracts have been signed with DJ Buckley Builders for the new CCEC Building, and also for new change rooms at John Kerr Park. Both of these building projects will provide substantial opportunity for local contractors and suppliers to get involved.

In addition to this year's capital works program, Council will continue to deliver a planned maintenance program for road, stock grid and drainage infrastructure.

**END**

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### \$1M in drought funding going straight to Paroo community

The \$1 million Australian Government funded 'Drought Communities Program - Extension' is being funnelled straight into a range of community groups and projects.

Paroo Shire Mayor, Cr Suzette Beresford said that approval for the projects Council submitted as part of the program has come through and there are some fantastic community projects across the shire that will be taking place.

"All these projects will use local contractors and businesses as much as possible so it's a huge boost of money direct into our local economy," Cr Beresford explained.

"As part of the submission process Council approached community groups across the shire for what projects needed to be completed in their townships. We thank those who contributed their ideas and feedback, we are excited to see all the benefits and changes these projects will bring."

Township	Funding	Description
Cunnamulla	\$100,000	Shire Hall courtyard and local footpaths
Cunnamulla	\$50,000	Fences and rejuvenation of entrances to town
Cunnamulla	\$100,000	Streetscaping of main area in town
Cunnamulla	\$60,000	Paroo Progress Association Railway Project
Cunnamulla	\$65,000	Cunnamulla Golf Club (Sand Green Championships preparation)
Cunnamulla	\$50,000	Cunnamulla Aerodrome reserve water tanks and piping
Cunnamulla	\$80,000	Cunnamulla Fella Visitor Information Centre exterior painting
Cunnamulla	\$80,000	Cunnamulla Fella Visitor Information Centre climate control system for the museum
Eulo	\$40,000	Main street beatification
Eulo	\$30,000	Signage and banners for town entrance
Wyandra	\$100,000	Town beautification
Wyandra	\$30,000	Signage and banners for town entrance
Wyandra	\$100,000	Exclusions fencing of town and airstrip
Yowah	\$25,000	Yowah SES water storage
Yowah	\$30,000	Signage and banners for town entrance
Noorama	\$50,000	Noorama toilet block and secretary's office
Shire-wide	\$10,000	Adverse Events Plan (mandatory allocation as part of grant funding)

**END**

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Great improvements made to Council's Financial Management (Sustainability) Index

With the adoption of the 2020/21 budget, Paroo Shire Council is pleased to confirm that its projected sustainability index for the coming year is -1.85%, a marked improvement over recent years with indices in 2019/20 and 2018/19 being -10.95% and -34.93% respectively.

Paroo Shire residents can be assured that Council is working very hard to improve its financial and asset management practices Cr Beresford, Paroo Shire Mayor explained.

"The adoption of our budget this week is confirmation that we are heading in the right direction," Cr Beresford said.

"Paroo Shire Council currently owns and maintains assets valued at \$242 million, so it is paramount that long-term financial and asset management planning is undertaken to ensure Council can continue to provide the desired levels of services to residents now and into the future, within the confines of our financial capacity."

Local governments across Queensland are responsible for directly providing residents in their regions with a wide range of public services and access to essential utilities and community facilities. This requires Council to hold and maintain a significant base of infrastructure assets, which necessitates not only substantial initial investments, but also continued expenditure to maintain and renew assets over the course of their respective useful lives.

Acting CEO Sean Rice added that the Sustainability and Reporting process for Queensland local governments commenced in 2009 with the implementation of the National Frameworks for Sustainability.

"These Frameworks seek to ensure that all local governments in Australia adopt long-term financial and asset management planning processes," Sean said.

"This huge improvement in our sustainability index is the result of a lot of work and careful budgeting across the whole of Council and although the work continues, it really sets Paroo Shire Council up for a sustainable future long-term."

Further information on sustainability can be found by visiting the Department of Local Government website at [www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au](http://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au)

**END**

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