

I would like to begin by noting how proud I am to be able to continue in the role of Mayor of the Boulia Shire Council and to have the newly elected team of Councillors all here beside me. Each one of the Councillors brings a unique aspect, set of skills and experience to the team. Our Council is focused not only on the present but also has an eye on the future of Boulia, where the contributions of each Councillor are highly valued during this rapidly changing environment.



This budget is all about the future. Not today, or tomorrow but the next couple of years and also think about the framework we set for the future generations next 5, 10, 25 years ahead.

We need to be proactively looking towards our future in tourism, economic development, social amenity and most importantly our people!

In 2024/25 the Boulia Shire Council has attracted a large slice of capital works due to the continued lobbying of the Councillors on the ratepayers behalf.

The following major initiatives will take place during the 2024/25 financial year:-

- 1) The Outback Way, 'Australia's Longest Shortcut', is being sealed at a progressively increasing rate, thanks to continued funding from Federal, State and our Local Government. The road network has only 70 klm left to seal on the Qld side.
- 2) New Flood Warning Infrastructure on Valley Creek (Mt Isa Rd) and Marion Creek (Boulia/Bedourie Rd) funded by Federal and State Governments – Qld Flexible Funding Grants. Scheduled for Sep/Oct 2024.
- 3) The Wills Street (clinic) culverts \$700k improvements funded by Local Recovery and Resilience Grant is due to be completed before the end of 2024.
- 4) Mt Isa Rd safety –TMR funding for:
 - increased funding for roadside slashing as future design for the narrow cuttings near Mt Isa are being completed by TMR.
 - Waverley Creek Give Way widening.
 - Section of the Mt Isa Rd – widening project (two sections).
 - Mt Isa Rd culvert replacement program.
- 5) North Queensland Resilience Program funding \$4.5m (QRA) – 2 projects
 - potential projects in discussion with TMR – raising three identified sections Hamilton Channels (TMR) this will provide 45% improvement in flood immunity.
 - Electronic Road closure signage for the Donohue Highway – Mt Isa intersection and Tobermorey border section.
- 6) Progress the development of the Industrial Estate

Looking towards the future - Council is actively seeking investors to develop the Industrial Estate.

The Council will continue to work toward enhancing all of its current regional partnerships such as:-

- Western Alliance of Councils;
- Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD);
- Outback Regional Roads Group (ORRG);
- RAPAD Water & Sewerage Alliance (RAPADWSA);
- Central West Regional Pest Management Group (CWRPMG);
- The Outback Highway Development Council.

All of these organisations are considered important in assisting in the forward progress of the Boulia Shire Council.



Other initiatives to be undertaken by Council include:-

Road Construction and Maintenance

The requirement to provide trafficable roads across the shire which are linked to intrastate and interstate road networks ensures our ability to provide reasonable transport for livestock and the increasing tourism trade. Boulia has over 1254klm of road networks which is in need of constant maintenance either through too much water (flooding) or not enough water (bulldust holes)... there is never a happy median. Your rates work harder than most city cousins in the 'value for money stakes' when it comes to road building out here.

Council Roads

Council will spend \$12,276,526 in the 2024/25 financial year on Council roads. This expenditure is made of funded programs and Council reserves:-

i)	Shire road maintenance (<i>Council reserves - various locations</i>)	\$1,055,500
ii)	Pave & Seal Donohue Highway - (<i>Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts</i>)	\$6,000,000
iii)	Re-sealing Donohue Highway (<i>Roads to Recovery</i>)	\$1,076,700
iv)	Wills St Floodway/Culvert (<i>QRA Local Resilience Grant</i>)	\$700,000
v)	Re-sealing Donohue Highway (<i>Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS)</i>)	\$300,000
vi)	Urandangi South Road Betterment stage 1 (<i>QRA Betterment</i>)	\$2,074,222
vii)	Urandangi South Road Betterment stage 2 (<i>LRCI stage 4</i>)	\$896,354
viii)	Town Streets (<i>Council reserves</i>)	\$121,250
ix)	Outback Regional Road Group expenses	\$52,500

External funding sources of \$10,220,976 (R2R \$1,000,400/TIDS \$150,000/DITRCA \$6,000,000/QRALR \$700,000/QRA \$1,474,222/ LRCI-4 \$896,354) will be utilised to fund this work with the balance of \$2,055,550 coming from Council revenue.

Flood Damage

Work will be completed on the flood damage repairs for the December 2022 - April 2023 event, approximately \$2,252,400 worth of work will be completed in 2024/25. Pending approval for the recent rain event Kirrily January 2024 – April 2024 will supply further restoration works on Council roads for 2024/25. This is where the work is generated to support not only the Council workforce but also local contractors.

The Outback Way – Donohue Highway

The Donohue Highway remains the only section of the Outback Way which is controlled, managed and maintained by a Local Government Council. The Donohue Highway - '*The Outback Way - Australia's Longest Short Cut*' will continue into the future as a consideration for Council budget funding as this section is still deemed a 'Council' road.

This is an obligation which is a double edge sword.

- We need to keep our workforce and contractors employed and keep the road in a trafficable state.
- But the ongoing cost to seal the remainder of the road and commence the re-seals is outside of our financial capability as a small Council without assistance from other levels of Government.



We are working together with several departments both State and Federal to work a solution for the ongoing sealing and subsequent reseals which when completed will channel jobs and money into the Queensland economy.

Funds have been allocated through the Federal budget for the initial stage at Chainage 178 to 182 and work has now started on this stage which is valued at \$2,000,000 for paving and sealing.

State Roads

Council will receive funding to complete \$1,757,399 of work on behalf of the State Government in 2024/25. This will include:-

i)	Roads Maintenance Performance Contract (RMPC) – Barcaldine	\$1,481,399
ii)	RMPC – Cloncurry	\$ 255,000
iii)	Declared Pests and Weeds Management (RMPC) – Barcaldine	\$ 21,000

Plant Replacement

Council's Plant Committee have identified the replacement of 'yellow plant' and utilities to ensure the workforce is able to continue with scheduled road work.

New plant replacement is taking some time due to supply and demand in the current economic situation, the Plant Committee will identify requirements. \$628,000 has been allocated for 2024/25.

Housing

Council maintains 27 houses, 15 units and 3 pensioner units. It has allotted \$1,170,450 for upgrades and general maintenance expenses and \$550,000 capital expenditure to construct a new house, from reserves. The capital expenditure includes refurbishing of the houses, garages, construction of staff house.

Information Technology

Provision has been made in the budget to allocate \$563,000 on Information Technology from Council project accounts.

The Information Technology budget allocation includes:-

i)	Renewal of current software licences	\$180,000
ii)	Upgrading of existing technology	\$140,000
iii)	Consultant expenses	\$103,000
iv)	IT Server and Computer Replacements	\$140,000

Council is in the process of receiving funding from Regional Communities Program for implementation of nbntm for fibre to the premises for the Boulia township, \$2,264,083 plus \$718,783 from nbntm Local and the State Government, the entire project is \$3,482,866. This project will run over 2 years, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Environment and Natural Resources

The total budget for Environment and Natural Resources is \$369,100. Major activities include environment management, pest plant and wild dog control and feral pig management, stock route operations and maintenance and animal control.



Grants & Donations to Community Groups

Council will continue to provide assistance to community groups that enhance the sporting and cultural diversity of Boulia through significant financial and in-kind assistance. Council has budgeted \$150,000 for assistance to events including the Golf Club, Camel Races, Campdraft, Races and Rodeo including facility hire.

Financial Assistance Grants

Council's allocation under the Federal Government's Financial Assistance Grants Scheme is \$6,768,815.

Tourism, Cultural Activities & Arts

Council will continue to promote Boulia Shire with \$1,192,100 budgeted for the continued operation and maintenance of the Min Min Encounter and the Heritage Complex.

Recreational Facilities

Boulia has very high standards of recreational and sporting facilities and we will maintain the standard with operational expenditure of over \$1,646,600. Capital works of \$470,000 which is comprised of funding applications of \$150,000 and Council reserves of \$320,000 will be used to upgrade and maintain the facilities.

Works for Queensland 2024/2029 Round 5

A number of projects previously identified in the Corporate Plan are now able to be earmarked for completion thanks to State Government funding received under the 2024/25 Works for Queensland Round 5 Program.

Works for Queensland Round 5 2024-2029		
<i>Project</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Robinson Park	Shade for Skate bowl, play equipment and softfall for under play equipment	500,000
Residential Estate	Release of 4-6 blocks	1,000,000
		\$ 1,500,000



Rates & Charges for 2024/25

Council have decided to increase the Council general rates and services for 24/25 by \$2.57 per week as well as discount will decrease to 2%.

Town Areas

After discount, the total rates payable on an average Boulia residential allotment with general rates, water, sewerage, environment and garbage charges will be \$2,284.00 per year.

After discount the total rates payable on an average Urandangi residential allotment with general rates, water, environment and garbage charges will be \$2,240.70 per year.

Rural Areas

Categories remain unchanged.

Rate in the dollar is tiered with each category and has been increase by CPI.

Boulia Sewerage

There has been an increase to the Boulia sewerage charge. This charge is now \$492.00.

Boulia and Urandangi Water Supplies

Water charges have seen an increase, with the charge now \$711.00.

Boulia and Urandangi Refuse Service

An increase to the Residential cleansing rate for 2 x 240 litre bins serviced weekly, this charge will now be \$390.00.

No change to additional wheelie bin service charge of \$195.

Commercial – an increase to cost/service. Commercial bins collected 3 times a week, charge is \$1,255.00 per year for 2 bins.

Waste Management Facility Levy

No change to Levy, all unoccupied and vacant land in townships plus for all rural properties within a 30 kilometre radius of the townships is still \$90/year.

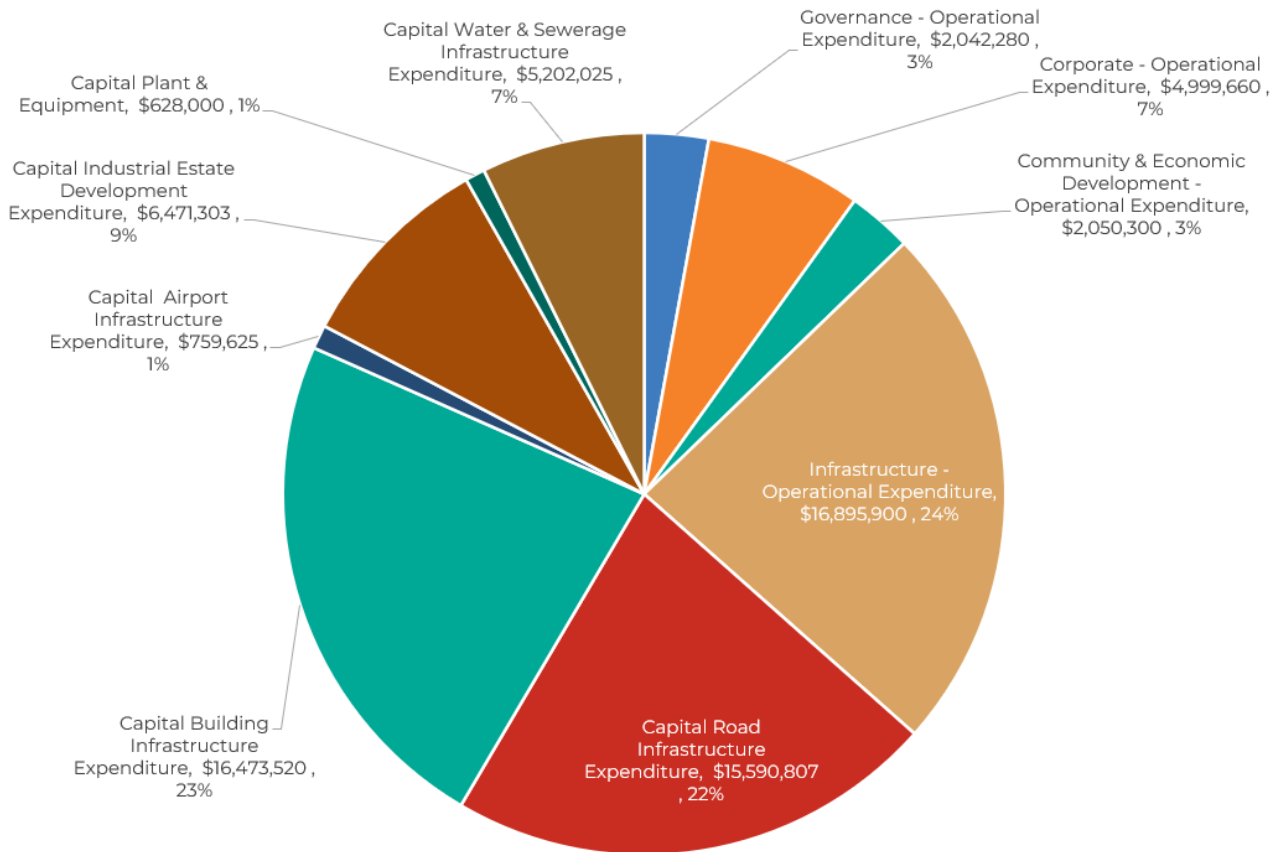
Environmental Levy

No change to Environmental Levy. This is to assist in funding for protection, enhancement and restoration of our local environment. Also includes planning of new waste and recycling opportunities. This levy is \$50/year because at some stage all properties utilise the services from businesses in our townships.

Set out on the following page is a number of graphs showing the break-up of Council expenditure and income for the 2024/25 financial year.

Overall, our Council is performing to an exceptional level and it is with pleasure that I recommend the adoption of the 2024/25 Budget.

Councillor Rick Britton
Mayor



2024/25 Projected Expenditure - Boulia Shire Council

2024/25 Projected Revenue - Boulia Shire Council

