

2025/2026 ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

Summary



CEO'S Message

Wattle Range Council's Annual Business Plan for 2025/26 provides an overview of the services, programs and strategic projects Council plans to deliver to the community.

In 2025/26 the business plan has an increased focus on renewal of existing assets and the implementation of strategies that capitalise on building a stronger community.

One of these strategies is to advocate for improvements in the state roads within our district. Over the past year, Council has developed stronger collaboration with State Government, assisting with the upgrade of the Southend turn-off. In 2025/26, Council will reconstruct 13.8KM of the Southern Ports Highway from the Southend turn-off through to the outlet at Beachport as part of this collaborative approach.

This project will be delivered in conjunction with Council's ongoing initiatives for the 2025/26 financial year, these include:

- Increased investment and extension of services on Council's road network,
- Investment in the upgrade of major plant and equipment,
- Increased focus on the repair of Council's building assets,
- Continued renewal of coastal infrastructure,
- Furthering Council's tourism and marketing strategy including direct management of the Beachport Southern Ocean Tourist Park,
- Continuing implementation of the wayfinding signage strategy across the district.

In addition, Council will continue a number of initiatives that were implemented in prior years:

- Focus on generating economic stimulus to the greater community through major infrastructure projects,
- Continuation of the grant program for community groups to access a \$100,000 fund for major infrastructure projects, and
- Preparation of "Shovel Ready" strategies that can be utilised to leverage future grant opportunities for major infrastructure projects.

In developing this Annual Business Plan, Council encountered many competing demands. Community projects, cost increases,

and the ongoing requirement for asset renewals all need to be prioritised.

A significant challenge to Council is the cost of waste management. The cost of waste disposal at Mount Gambier's Caroline facility is set to escalate by a further 11% in 2025/26. In order to cover this additional cost, the waste management charge payable by ratepayers is set to increase.

The challenge for Council is to deliver a budget that meets current and future community expectations whilst limiting any rate increases and minimising the impact to ratepayers.

Council is set to raise rates by 4.2% (plus growth of 0.28% from new properties). The forecasted rate increase is in line with Council's Long-Term Financial Plan objective of returning to a break-even financial position in the longer term. It should be noted that inflation will continue to cause pressure on the operations of Council.

For the 2025/26 financial year, Council is seeking to deliver an operational budget of \$44.6 Million and a capital expenditure budget of \$10.73 Million. Within this budget, Council will continue to focus on increasing asset renewals. \$6.79 Million has been allocated for the renewal of a wide range of facilities and infrastructure. Council has also committed \$3.94 Million for the upgrade and acquisition of new assets.

A strong focus of the capital budget is the funding of roads. \$1.2 Million has been allocated to the re-sheeting of unsealed roads and a further \$1.25 Million for sealed roads across the district. In addition, Council is expending funds to purchase \$3.87 Million of plant and equipment.

For the forthcoming year, Council is focused on delivering services, programs and major projects to make Wattle Range a 'Great Place to Live and Work'.

Ben Gower Chief Executive Officer

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Council capital expenditure for 2025/26 is set to be **\$10.73M** and key projects include:

- Southend rock armouring and groyne realignment **\$1.8M**
- Various renewal projects for the Southern Ocean Tourist Park, Beachport **\$95K**
- Millicent RSL Hall toilets and carpet renewal **\$115K**
- Stage 2 installation of wayfinding signage **\$100K**
- Lions Park Millicent footpath **\$137K**

OTHER CONSTRUCTION

Major sealed road reconstruction 13.8KM of the Southern Ports Highway on behalf of Department of Infrastructure and Transport **\$11.3M**

OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Council operating expenditure for 2025/26 is set to be **\$44.59M** and key projects include:

- Detailed design for the Surf Beach, Beachport toilets and changerooms **\$40K**
- Telstra Mobile Tower - Contribution to the South East Australia Regional Connectivity Program **\$138K**
- Penola Visitor Information Centre refurbishment design **\$50K**
- Southern Ocean Tourist Park Strategic Master Plan **\$30K**
- Millicent Depot office and toilets refurbishment design **\$50K**
- Hatherleigh Entrance Statement (welcome sign) design **\$5K**

Rates due by

QUARTER 1

17 September 2025

QUARTER 2

3 December 2025

QUARTER 3

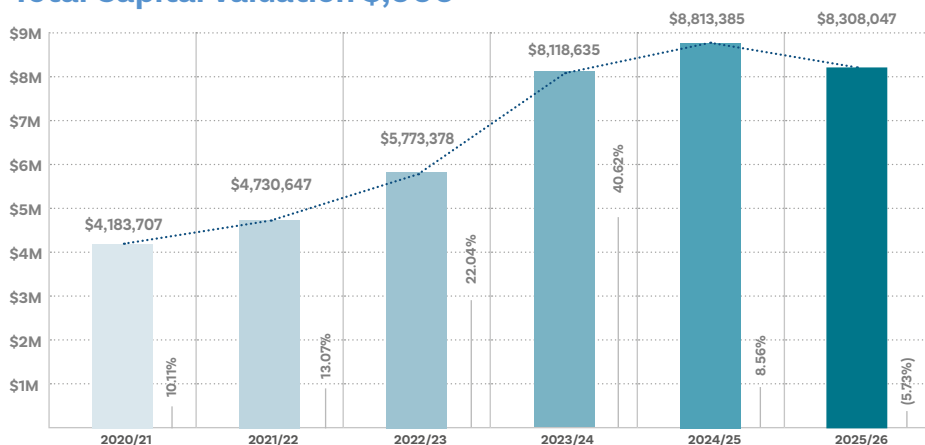
4 March 2026

QUARTER 4

3 June 2026

RATES *in summary*

Total Capital Valuation \$,000



RATE CODES	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Primary Production	Vacant Land	Other
RATE IN THE \$	0.2992	0.2992	0.2992	0.2184	0.4485	0.4485
% CHANGE	3.98% ↓	3.98% ↓	3.98% ↓	16.85% ↑	3.96% ↓	3.96% ↓

Minimum Charge \$731 (applicable to 22.2% of rateable properties).

Other Charges

Waste Collection			Community Waste Water Management Scheme (CWMS)				
	3 BIN	2 BIN		PENOLA	SOUTHEND	KALANGADOO	BEACHPORT
Full Rate	\$414	\$321	Occupied	\$768	\$768	\$768	\$871
Pensioner	\$294	\$231	Vacant	\$573	\$573	\$573	\$653

Regional Landscape Levy (State Government Tax)

Residential, Vacant & Other	Commercial	Industrial	Primary Production
\$98.50	\$145.20	\$226.50	\$416.30

For an explanation of the Landscape Levy, please contact the Limestone Coast Landscape Board via their website lc.landscape.sa.gov.au

Operating Income

Council has budgeted to receive operating income of \$46.9M in 2025/26. This income is derived from a number of different sources including rates and charges, statutory and user charges, grants, subsidies and contributions, investment income and other income.

Rebates for Pensioners

Council will continue to provide a pensioner rebate for the waste collection service charge. The rebate will be provided to eligible pensioners who have either an Aged or Disability Pension or a Department for Veteran Affairs Card.

Ratepayers who had previously received this rebate in 2024/25 will continue to receive this rebate during 2025/26.

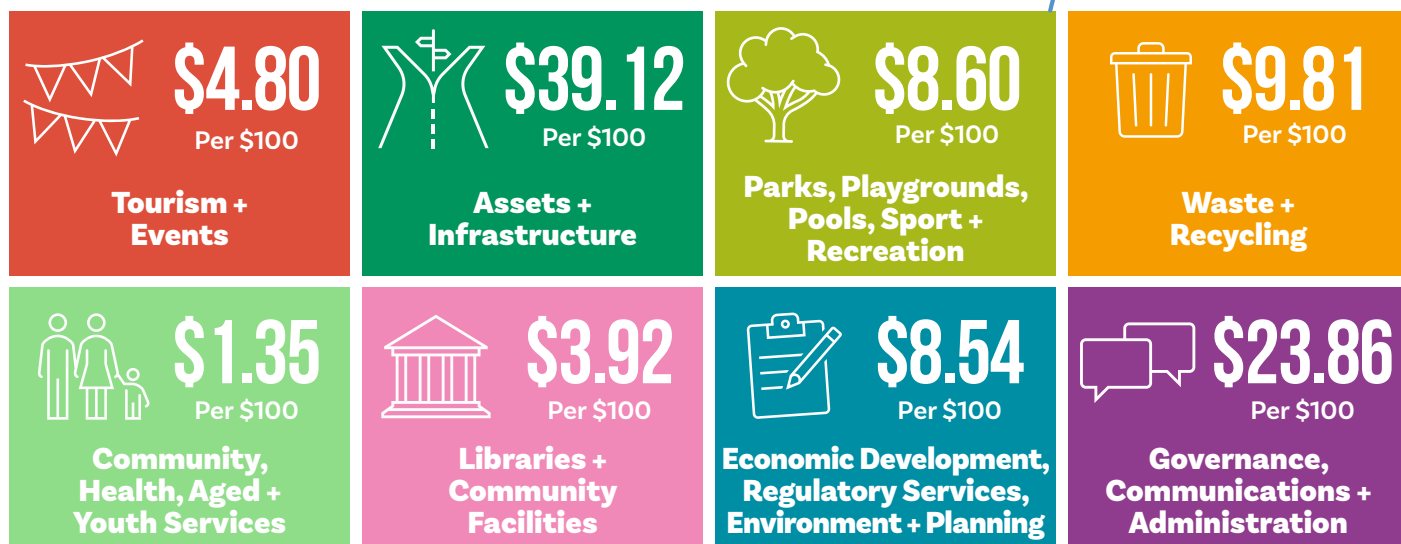
However, if you are eligible and did not receive this rebate during the 2024/25 year, you will be required to fill out an application form and show proof of the appropriate pension card to Council staff. Applications will be received up to September 30, 2025.

Can I object to my valuation increase?

Yes, you can object to your valuation by making application to the Office of the Valuer General. Your objection can be made online or by post at the following address:

Office of the Valuer-General
GPO Box 1354
Adelaide SA 5001

EVERY \$100 OF YOUR RATES *is spent on...*



CAPITAL *expenditure*

Capital Expenditure \$10.73M works program for 2025/26
(Key Expenditure Projects/Areas)

OTHER CONSTRUCTION

Southern Ports Highway
Major Road Construction – 13.8KM

\$11.3M

*funded by the State and Federal Governments



Kerb & Gutter (Renewal) **\$284K**

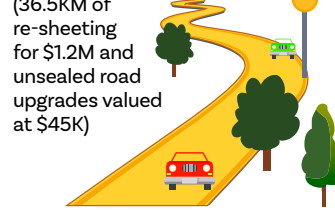
Footpaths (Replacement and construction) **\$373K**



Southend Coastal Management (Rock armouring and groyne realignment) **\$1.8M**



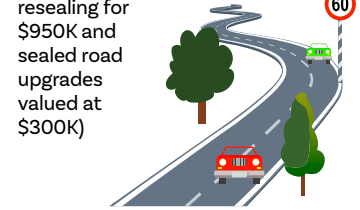
Unsealed Roads (36.5KM of re-sheeting for \$1.2M and unsealed road upgrades valued at \$45K) **\$1.24M**



Other Halls & Buildings (Partial repair and refurbishment) **\$563K**



Sealed Roads (24.4KM of resealing for \$950K and sealed road upgrades valued at \$300K) **\$1.25M**



Plant (New and replacement plant machinery, vehicles & equipment) **\$3.87M**



2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS *highlights*

Council Service Centre **\$9.5M**

Council contracted Mossop Construction & Interiors to undertake the construction of the Wattle Range Council Service Centre. The project was completed ahead of schedule and within budget, the purpose-built facility is now the Council's principal office. The building brings all of Council's teams under one roof so the community can be served more efficiently and effectively. Designed with energy efficiency in mind, the facility features rainwater capture systems and incorporates locally sourced materials such as timber and structural beams showcasing the best the Limestone Coast has to offer.



Civic & Arts Building, Millicent (Roof Renewal) **\$845K**

The entire roof of the Millicent War Memorial Civic & Arts Centre was replaced, with work undertaken by a local contractor. All gutters, flashings, downpipes, rain heads, capping and roofing iron were replaced. Engineers were engaged to inspect the condition of the structure, and all asbestos was also removed in the process.

Tower Road Upgrade **\$598K***

The upgrade of a 1.7km section of Tower Road, Penola is in its final stages. The project involves full reconstruction, widening and sealing of the road. *Project is in progress, total budget \$850K.

Cape Buffon Drive Footpath **\$148K**

A new 400m footpath in Southend was constructed and now extends from the drain bridge to the intersection of Cape Buffon Drive and Bridges Drive, Southend.



Millicent Swimming Lake (Reseal Lining) **\$124K**

The aging floor of Millicent Swimming Lake was refurbished prior to summer 2024/25. The lake was emptied and dried with a new three-layer road seal base applied.

Lions Park Playground Upgrade **\$44K**

The Lions Park in Millicent has received a playground upgrade using repurposed play equipment from the Tantanoola Primary School. Council undertook the project which incorporates a variety of play equipment and large soft fall area with timber edging treatments.



Fire prevention is your responsibility

Know your responsibilities, take positive action to prepare for fires by taking simple steps around your home. Fuel reduction is one of the most important preparations you can undertake. Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* it is the responsibility of all landowners to take reasonable steps to prevent the outbreak of fire or the spreading of fire to or from their property.

Council inspect properties for the level of preparedness and height of flammable undergrowth in October. Should it be noted that if fuel hazard reduction works have not been undertaken on your property, Council will take action necessary to ensure it is completed.

**Remember the lives of you
and your family are irreplaceable.**

**CLEAN IT UP NOW
BEFORE A FIRE DOES!**

For further information in relation to bushfire prevention measures, please contact Council's Fire Prevention Staff on 08 8733 0900, SA Country Fire Service on 1800 362 361 or visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au

Did you know you can pay your rates online?

Simply visit our website at www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au and click on the "Make a Payment" button on the home screen.

It's a convenient and easy to use option that's available anytime. Grab a copy of your latest rates notice and try it out today.

For a full list of payment options, see your rates notice.



Join the conversation with Engage Wattle Range

Visit our community engagement page to keep up to date with, and contribute to, key projects planned for the community.

You can help shape your community by sharing your thoughts and ideas and giving your feedback to Wattle Range Council.

'Have your say' on current community consultations, find out more about recent opportunities and subscribe to project updates.

Visit www.engage.wattlerange.sa.gov.au today.

'Your Council Update' direct to your inbox

Our monthly, 'Your Council Update' email brings together the latest Council news, important notices, event highlights, and community updates – including popular features like the latest 'Council Meeting in Summary'.

If you wish to receive the community newsletter direct to your inbox visit www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au/community-newsletter

Register your dog online

Dog registration details are maintained on the Dogs and Cats Online system, a central database of all dogs and cats that reside in South Australia.

All dogs must be registered at three months of age and then annually. Recent Dog & Cat Reforms require all new generations of dogs and cats, (born after 1st July 2018) to be desexed and all dogs & cats to be microchipped.

New registrations, renewals and any changes to registration details can be made at www.dogsandcatsonline.com.au or your nearest Council office.

Please refer to Council's annual Fees and Charges Schedule for a list of fees.

It is the responsibility of the dog owner to advise Council if the dog has moved, been sold, given away or if the dog is deceased. This can also be done online or by contacting Council directly.

Anyone experiencing issues renewing their registration online is encouraged to call in to their nearest Council office for assistance.

Kerbside waste collection hotline

Council's kerbside collection service is provided by Cleanaway. For all missed bins, contamination, lost, stolen or damaged bins, please call Cleanaway on 1300 410 896 or email wrc@cleanaway.com.au

For information on bin collection days/times visit www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au/kerbsidecollectionservice

Council's Kerbside Collection Calendar is valid until the end of August 2026. A copy is also available to view on Council's website.

PLEASE HAVE YOUR BINS AT THE KERB BY 6AM.



Stay informed with the Antenno app for residents of Wattle Range

Stay connected to your community – get updates from Council about what's happening in your area with the Antenno app.

Antenno is free to use and will notify you of rubbish and recycling collections, roadworks and so much more.

Dog on the loose? Graffiti on a fence? With the app you can report local issues directly to Council.

Download the Antenno app from the App Store or Google Play, add your places of interest, and receive the updates that matter to you.



Have you received your waste disposal vouchers?

A waste disposal voucher, along with some form of identification, is required at all our Council Waste Transfer Stations and Resource Recovery Centres.

Your 2025/26 vouchers have been included with your rates notice. eNotice recipients will receive their vouchers in the post shortly.

Ratepayers who have lost their vouchers may apply for replacement vouchers by completing the Request for Waste Disposal Vouchers Form available from any of Council's offices or on the website.

Council's waste transfer stations are operated by Veolia and all enquiries should be directed to (08) 8203 3504 or email sa.vloperations@veolia.com

Council has a number of waste initiatives such as our Community Mulch Days. For more information visit www.wattlerange.sa.gov.au/wasteinitiatives

After hours contact

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN CONTACT COUNCIL 24/7 ON 08 8733 0900?

Council provides urgent after hours assistance in the following areas:



- Animals
- Roads
- Trees
- Council buildings and facilities