



# Mount Isa Budget 2021-22

Mayoral Speech – Tuesday, June 22, 2021

Mayor Danielle Slade

Good morning everyone. I am proud to present the 2021-22 Mount Isa City Council budget.

2020 was a year unlike any other for the Mount Isa community and for the rest of the state, nation and the world. The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it major disruptions to our normal way of life, and impacted economies and businesses large and small.

However, 12 months on, we appear to be turning a corner. COVID vaccines are rolling out across Australia and around the world, and slowly but surely, we are getting back onto our feet.

This budget reflects the measures that were necessary for us to take last year, to ensure the impact on ratepayers was kept to a minimum. It also reflects what will need to be done in the months to come.

To that end, in last year's budget, we kept the overall residential rate increase at 0%. This year, the overall residential rate increase is 3.75%.

It's important to stress that this is an overall increase. There are 68 separate categories within the rating base at Council, and individual categories will vary.

This increase is a necessary step to take.

When averaged out with last financial year's zero overall rise, it is the equivalent increase of less than 2%.

This is less than the 2.5% that we anticipate our costs will go up by this year and in successive years.

To achieve more social equity with this rates increase, we have aimed for a higher rate for mining operations, to carry a bit more of the burden, and to keep residential ratepayers below the 3.75% increase.

At the end of the day, the rates need to be balanced out in order for Council to generate the revenue necessary to not just cover the operations of Council, but to deliver essential services to Mount Isa ratepayers – such as waste management, water and sewer services, and road and asset maintenance and repairs.

We always strive for responsible financial management. I am pleased to announce that, importantly, there are no proposed borrowings this year, so there will be no increase to Council's current level of debt.

This will put us in very good stead for the upcoming financial year.

Our overall capital budget is \$38.5 million, which includes major items such as:

- \$3 million for the rollout of residential smart water meters;
- \$7 million for water and sewer works;
- \$7.5 million for park facilities, including the Family Fun Precinct upgrade and the Gallipoli Park redevelopment;
- \$2.3 million to improve the Lake Julius causeway;
- \$6.1 million for ongoing road maintenance and resealing works;
- \$4 million for the Materials Recovery Facility at the Waste Management Facility; and
- \$1.2 million for Buchanan Park works.

Included in the \$7.5 million allocated for park facilities is \$30,000 in initial funding for the Miners' Memorial.

We will also spend \$300,000 for a major upgrade of the Mount Isa City Lookout; \$50,000 to install playground equipment at Captain James Cook Park; and \$50,000 to install shade structures and undertake landscaping at both Selwyn Park and the Transmission Street Dog Park.

A number of projects from the 2020-21 financial year will run over into the upcoming financial year.



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Council officers will continue to source funding from the State or Federal governments wherever possible, to ensure we can get the biggest bang for our buck out of our capital works funding.

With regard to fees and charges, this year, we have held our general waste disposal fee for people taking their rubbish to the Waste Management Facility in a car, van or ute. There is also a small increase to Splashez Aquatic Centre's entry fees.

We have also introduced a new category for animal registration fees – when you pay for two years of registration for a dog or cat, you get a third year for free.

In closing, we have done our best to build a responsible budget for the upcoming financial year, and Council is in a healthy financial position, which we are committed to maintaining.

I extend my thanks to all of the hardworking Council staff, the Chief Executive Officer, and the finance team for their superb work in putting together this budget.