



Media Release

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Balanced budget sets foundation for growth and diversity

A new economic development strategy is at the heart of the Mount Isa City Council Budget for 2017-2018, pledging to deliver more jobs and greater diversity.

Mayor Cr Joyce McCulloch said the Budget fulfils a commitment to boost Council efficiency, invest more in services and grow the region's economy.

"This is a budget of renewal," said Mayor Cr Joyce McCulloch.

"Over the past year we've worked hard to find savings and cut costs which now enables us to give back to ratepayers and to look forward."

Cr Joyce said the 2017-2018 Budget is balanced and delivers a modest 2.9 per cent average residential rate increase, down from an average of 5 percent last year.

"The Council is committed to continuously looking to reduce costs and charges," she said.

"While we have increased the average overall residential rates and charges for garbage, water and sewerage, the overall impact on households is less than \$2 a week.

"We're confident we're headed in the right direction to reduce average rates further in future budgets." At the centre of the 2017-2018 Budget is a \$520,000 commitment to begin implementing the city's new three-year Economic Development Strategy.

"This is the critical plan promised in last year's Budget, designed to diversify our economy, create more jobs, more choice and more opportunity," said Cr McCulloch.

"Mining will always be our cornerstone, but to thrive we need to foster new industries around agriculture, education, services, transport, tourism, energy and more."

Mayor McCulloch said the Council has already identified 30 concrete initiatives, with more to come. "After consulting with the community, business, industry and all levels of government, we are now ready to partner and collaborate to deliver this strategy for Mount Isa and its residents," she said. Creating a more liveable city is another key priority for the Council and this Budget.

"We want to offer opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy our great outdoors, spend quality time with our families and friends, to learn and be creative," said Cr McCulloch.

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The Budget commits funds to following projects–

- \$2.7 million to maintain and upgrade the city's parks and gardens
- \$3.3 million to refurbish the Mount Isa City Library and Civic Centre
- \$1.4 million to improve Buchanan Park and enhance the Entertainment Centre
- \$1 million to upgrade family fun park and skate park upgrades.

“We believe Mount Isa deserves a first class Civic Centre and performance space,” said Cr McCulloch.

“We’ve installed state-of-the-art sound and lighting, and are about to upgrade the air conditioning, install a new stage lift.

Spending on critical city infrastructure is also set to be boosted.

Over the next year, Council will invest–

- \$5.3 million into Mt Isa's roads, storm water drainage and footpaths.
- \$2.6 million to improving waste management services
- \$2.6 million is allocated to upgrading water networks.

“The city has made a great leap forward in its reuse of wastewater, which had been previously treated then discarded,” said Cr McCulloch.


“We are now treating wastewater to an A-grade standard and reusing this water to irrigate our parks and gardens.

“The greening of Mount Isa will be further enhanced this year with the laying of another kilometre of irrigation pipes.”

“This an exciting, forward thinking Budget that will bring benefits for years to come,” said Cr McCulloch.

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