



ANNUAL SHIRE PLAN

2025-2026

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Introduction



A message from our President

Hello and welcome to the Wagait Shire Plan for 2025–2026.

We are now one year into delivering on our new ten-year Strategic Plan, and while progress has been steady, we remain acutely aware of the financial constraints that continue to limit the pace and scale of development across the Shire. Despite these challenges, Council is committed to making the most of every opportunity to improve local services, infrastructure, and wellbeing for our community.

Over the past year, we've taken meaningful steps forward. We've been successful in securing a **fortnightly health clinic visit**, helping to address long-standing access issues for residents. At **Cloppenburg Park**, key upgrades have been delivered, including the installation of a **new fitness station**, the **ReDiscovery Hub**, and a **new fence around the sports court**. These enhancements support our goal of making the park a true community hub, and we will continue working towards the full realisation of the **Cloppenburg Park Masterplan**.

Looking ahead, we will also continue with the **development of a Masterplan for the Council Grounds**, to ensure that these facilities meet the evolving needs of the community. While projects like these are dependent on external funding, we are actively pursuing grant opportunities to make them a reality.

Drainage maintenance has also been a focus, and we've made progress in cleaning out key stormwater channels—an essential step toward addressing flooding and erosion risks across Wagait Beach. We will continue to work toward long-term solutions, including road improvements and infrastructure resilience, within the limits of available resources.

Council's strategic priorities remain centred around:

- **Community wellbeing and access to services**
- **Environmental management and protection**
- **Amenities and infrastructure**
- **Sustainable local economy**
- **Partnerships and advocacy**
- **Governance and sustainability**

These priorities guide our planning and decision-making, supported by input from our local community.

Council acknowledges that with rates contributing to only a quarter of our income, our ability to deliver large-scale projects is largely reliant on successful grant applications. Nevertheless, we continue to deliver essential services and community programs—especially for youth and seniors—with a focus on equity, resilience, and sustainability.

As we move forward, we are excited by the opportunities ahead—including the completion of the construction of the **Mandorah Marine Facility**, which marks a new chapter for our region. We thank our residents for their ongoing support and engagement as we navigate

the complexities of local government in a small but thriving coastal community.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected Wagait Shire.

Warm regards,

Neil White

President, Wagait Shire Council



A message from our CEO



As CEO of Wagait Shire Council, I present the 2025–26 Shire Plan with a deep sense of responsibility and concern. Council is currently facing a significant operational deficit of - \$573,776 (including \$396,000 in depreciation) and -\$123,054 when excluding depreciation. These figures highlight an ongoing and unsustainable structural imbalance in our finances, particularly for such a small Council like ours.

Council has endorsed a 5% rates increase for the upcoming year. This equates to an average rise of \$35.31 per property—just over 65 cents per week. While any increase is a burden we do not propose lightly, this modest rise will generate an additional \$13,630 in revenue—an amount that falls far short of meeting unavoidable cost increases in areas such as insurance, superannuation, election costs, and mandated Councillor Allowances, which collectively total around \$78,000.

With no control over these rising expenses and limited flexibility in other income streams, the shortfall will need to be covered from Council's reserves. At this rate, approximately \$123,000 will be drawn from these reserves—an approach that is clearly unsustainable and places the long-term viability of Council services at risk.

While Council continues to seek grant funding, we must acknowledge that this reliance on external funding alone cannot address the core financial challenges we face.

Now more than ever, an honest conversation is needed within our community about the value of local government services and the resources required to maintain them. Sustainable operations may require difficult decisions—including a reassessment of rating levels—to ensure we are not just preserving the present but protecting the future of the Shire.

Alas it is not all doom and gloom as we head into 2025-26.

Despite these financial pressures, Council continues to deliver on key community priorities and build a resilient future for the Shire. Some highlights include:

1. **Strengthening Community Health and Wellbeing:**
Council is actively advocating for improved access to critical services—including healthcare, aged care, and transport—by working closely with government and service providers.
2. **Supporting Youth and Seniors:**
We plan to working towards targeted Youth and Seniors Action Plans in collaboration with community members to ensure all residents feel supported, connected, and empowered to thrive.
3. **Caring for Our Environment:**
A focus on education and active community involvement, including the upgrade to the Hard Waste Facility.
4. **Improving Infrastructure and Public Spaces:**
Council is progressing with projects under the Cloppenburg Park Masterplan, and enhancing pathways to promote active lifestyles and connectivity.

Together, these efforts show that while the financial situation requires honest conversation and strategic change, Council remains committed to delivering strong outcomes and advocating for the needs of our community.

About the Wagait Shire area

Wagait Shire is a local government area in the Northern Territory known for its welcoming community spirit, spectacular beaches and unique natural environment. First established in the early 1960s, the township is located on the Cox Peninsula across the harbour from the Darwin Central Business District and can be accessed from Darwin by a 15-minute ferry ride or a 90-minute (129 kilometre) drive on sealed roads.

Facing the Darwin Harbour, the area has several significant coastal sites, including sites holding sacred meaning for the traditional owners, the Larrakia people, as well as historical military sites that were built after the Bombing of Darwin in World War II.



5.62km²

Land area

286

Private dwellings

14.1km

Of internal roads

387

Rated properties

4242021 Census
population**463**2022 Estimated
Resident
Population***16%**Population aged
between 0 and 17
years**36.1%**Population aged
60 years and over**52**

Median age

2.1Average number of
people per
household**81.5**Estimated
population density
per square km**7.9%**Indigenous
population**3.7%**Unemployment
rate**\$1,355**Median weekly
household income**56.8%**Of the population
aged 15 years and
over hold
educational
qualifications

Demographic data presented above has been drawn from the 2021 Census.

* The 2022 Estimated Resident Population has been drawn from Regional Development Australia's Wagait Shire Community Profile.

Acknowledgement of Country

Wagait Shire Council acknowledges the Larrakia people as the traditional owners of the land and waters of Wagait Shire. To the Larrakia, the Cox Peninsula area is known as Kenbi.

Wagait Shire Council pays respect to Larrakia elders past, present and emerging and is committed to continuing to work together to build a bright and strong future for all, including through our ongoing collaboration with the Larrakia representative organisations.

Our Council

Wagait Shire Council is the local government body responsible for the local government area of Wagait Shire. Wagait Shire Council was first established in 1995 as the Cox Peninsula Community Government Council and was renamed to Wagait Shire Council in 2008.

The Council consists of five Councillors, who are elected by public vote and serve a four-year term. The Council President and Deputy President are elected by the Council Members at the first meeting of the Council following an election.

The legislative framework

Wagait Shire Council performs its functions under the *Northern Territory Local Government Act 2019*, which sets out the role of a council as:

- a) to act as a representative, informed and responsible decision maker in the interests of its constituency; and
- b) to develop a strong and cohesive social life for its residents and allocate resources in a fair, socially inclusive and sustainable way; and
- c) to provide and coordinate public facilities and services; and
- d) to encourage and develop initiatives for improving quality of life; and
- e) to represent the interests of its area to the wider community; and
- f) to exercise and perform the powers and functions of local government assigned to the council under this Act and other relevant legislation and regulatory guidelines.

Under the *Local Government Act 2019*, each council must have an annual plan for its area. For Wagait Shire Council, this is called the Shire Plan. The Shire Plan must contain a service delivery plan and the Council's budget for the relevant year. It must also contain or incorporate any long-term community or strategic plan adopted by Council.

This Shire Plan has been developed in accordance with the requirements of Part 3.3 of the *Northern Territory Local Government Act 2019* and outlines how the direction and vision set out in the Strategic Plan will be implemented for this year.



Legislative compliance

Under s34, s35 and s201 of the *Northern Territory Local Government Act 2019*, the Annual Shire Plan and Annual Budget must include:

Reference	Shire Plan	Page
34(a)(i)	Service Delivery Plan for the period of the plan	12
34(a)(ii)	Annual Budget	20
34(b)(i)	Long-term, community or strategic plan adopted by Council and relevant to the period of the Municipal Plan	8
34(b)(ii)	Long-term Financial Plan	27
35(1)(2)	Must adopt between 1 March and 30 June each year and forward copy to the Agency by 30 June each year	Comply
35(3)(a)	Must, at a meeting of the council, approve a draft of the plan	Comply
35(3)(b)	Make the draft accessible on the council's website and make copies available for public inspection at the council's public offices	Comply
35(3)(c)	Publish a notice on council website and in a newspaper circulating generally in the area, inviting written submissions on the draft plan within a period (at least 21 days) from the date of notice.	Comply

Reference	Annual budget	Page
201(2)(a)(i)	Council's objectives for the relevant financial year	10, 20
201(2)(a)(ii)	The measures the council proposes to take, during the financial year, towards achieving those objectives	12-16
201(2)(a)(iii)	The indicators the council intends to use as a means of assessing its efficiency in achieving its objectives.	12-17
201(b)	Projected statement of income and expenditure for the financial year, differentiating between operating and capital expenditure	23-27
201 (c)	List the council's fees for services and the estimates of revenue from each of those fees	31
201(d)	State the amount to be allocated to the development and maintenance of infrastructure for the financial year	27
201(e)	State the amount the Council proposes to raise by way of rates, and set out the rates structure, for the financial year	30
201(f)	An assessment of the social and economic effects of its rating policies	22
201(g)	State the allowances for members of the council for the financial year and the amount budgeted to cover payment of those allowances	17, 21

Strategic Plan 2025 - 2035

The Wagait Shire Strategic Plan 2025–2035 outlines our long-term vision and priorities for the Shire over the next ten years. It provides a clear, high-level framework that guides the development of Council's annual Shire Plans and ensures our efforts are aligned with community aspirations, legislative obligations, and the broader regional context.

This Strategic Plan sets the direction for Council operations, decision-making, and resource allocation—helping us work consistently towards a shared vision for Wagait Shire. It defines key focus areas and goals, enabling us to respond effectively to current challenges while preparing for future opportunities.

Developed in partnership with our residents, Councillors, staff, and key stakeholders, the plan reflects the values and priorities of the Wagait Beach community. It also considers existing strategies and regional plans in which Wagait Shire Council plays a leadership or collaborative role.

To remain responsive and relevant, the Strategic Plan will be formally reviewed every five years - or sooner if required - to ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of our community.

The full [2025-2035 Strategic Plan](#) is available on our website.

The development of our Strategic Plan was guided by Wagait Shire residents, key stakeholders, Council staff and Councillors. The plan was further shaped by considering our regional context and existing plans and strategies where Wagait Shire Council takes either a leading or partnership role in delivery.

Our Vision for Wagait Shire

Our vision is for Wagait Shire to:



Continue to be a friendly and safe local community, fostering a welcoming, cohesive and inclusive place for residents to call home



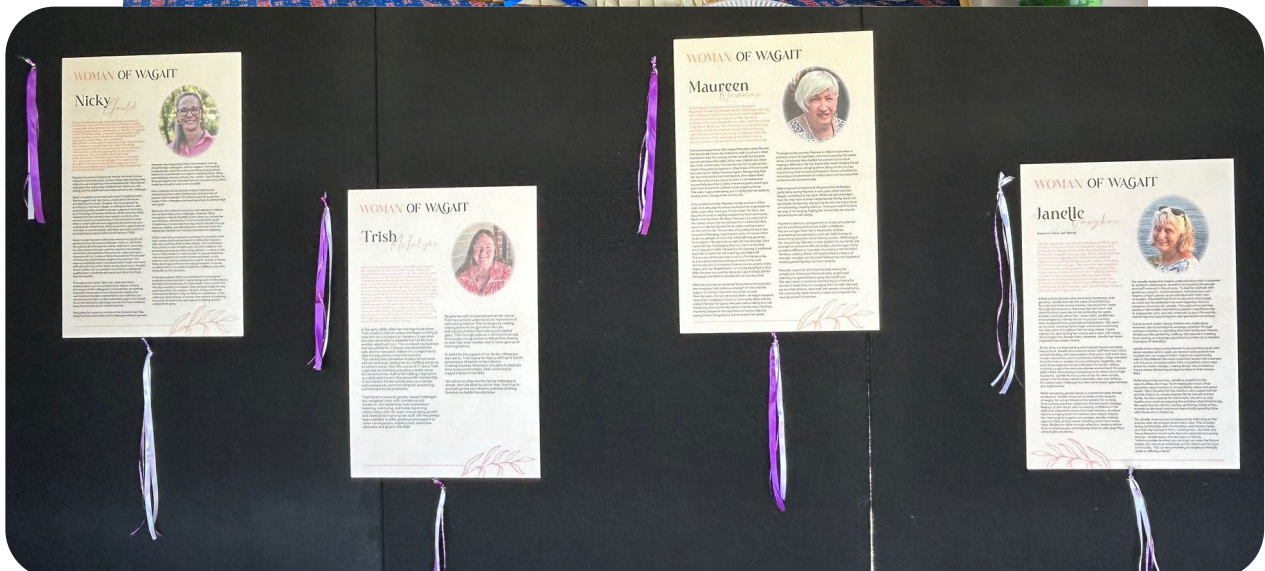
Boast amenities, services and infrastructure that support the existing population to thrive, as well as attract new residents and businesses



Sustainably protect and enhance our serene and pristine natural environment, and the unique lifestyle enjoyed by residents

Our Mission

In pursuit of our vision, we will work in collaboration with partners and residents and be an active advocate. We will maintain and develop amenities and infrastructure and deliver services that are inclusive, meet the needs of the community and encourage opportunity through stability and growth, while protecting the unique lifestyle and natural environment of Wagait Shire.



Our strategic focus areas



Our strategic focus areas lay the foundation for achieving the long-term vision for Wagait Shire. They guide Council's planning and service delivery over the next decade, ensuring that our efforts remain focused on meeting the needs of our community while fulfilling our core responsibilities as a local government.

We recognise that realising this vision and addressing the complex challenges facing our Shire cannot be achieved by Council alone. In areas beyond our direct control, we are committed to advocating strongly on behalf of our community and fostering meaningful collaboration with government agencies, stakeholders, and partners to deliver better outcomes for all residents.



Priorities for this year

Council will continue to run community programs for both the Youth and Seniors throughout the year and will also focus on the roads, drainage and access infrastructure.

Focus areas	Priorities for this year
Community wellbeing and access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for and facilitate improved access to critical services (health, aged care, transport) in collaboration with government and service providers• Develop and implement targeted Youth and Seniors Action Plans in partnership with the community• Lead the delivery of inclusive, high-impact community events that support wellbeing and attract visitors• Coordinate and strengthen the Emergency Management Committee and plans with active community involvement• Provide venue, admin and logistics support to empower local organisations and enhance community spirit• Engage with the community to identify and address evolving safety priorities while continuing core service delivery
Environmental management and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement and promote the Waste management Strategy 2022-2031 through active community engagement and education• Review and update the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan in consultation with stakeholders• Collaborate with stakeholders to manage fire hazards and advocate for protection of coastal and culturally significant areas• Partner with key stakeholders like Kenbi Rangers to manage and protect local wildlife and educate the community• Enforce companion animal by-laws and address feral animal issues in collaboration with the relevant NTG sectors• Work with NT Weed Management Branch and local stakeholders to identify and control problem weeds
Amenities and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement recommendations from the completed Local roads Safety Audit in partnership with stakeholders to improve road safety and infrastructure• Continue to implement the Cloppenburg Park Masterplan while maintaining recreational spaces and protecting environmental values• Enhance community connectivity by maintaining footpaths and bike paths and engaging residents to understand movement needs• Continue to develop the Council Grounds Masterplan and optimise existing assets like the Community Centre and Library• Advocate for the improvements to essential infrastructure like water supply and access

Sustainable local economy

- Engage proactively with local businesses and organisations to ensure they feel supported and can operate compliantly within a transparent environment
- Facilitate opportunities for new businesses that meet community needs and align with Council's vision
- Work with Tourism NT and local stakeholders to grow sustainable tourism
- Collaborate with businesses and residents to identify and address barriers to employment and increase local job opportunities
- Support initiatives and advocate for changes that enable diversified land use and encourage economic growth aligned with the Shire's goals

Partnerships and advocacy for Wagait Shire

- Proactively advocate for Wagait Shire's priorities at all levels of government and with key stakeholders
- Build and maintain trusted relationships with strategic stakeholders and neighbouring councils to align on shared goals and joint priorities
- Pursue collaborative partnerships and funding opportunities with key stakeholders to maximise resources and support Council objectives

Council governance and sustainability

- Maintain strong financial sustainability through responsible budgeting, risk management, and by securing alternative funding sources
- Build staff and Councillor capability through professional development and robust internal systems that support effective operations and risk management
- Ensure ongoing compliance with legislation through regularly reviewed policies, procedures, and reporting frameworks
- Advocate to ensure any proposed boundary or amalgamation changes reflect community interests and Council's strategic direction
- Foster transparent, inclusive, and effective communication with residents, staff and stakeholders, while actively seeking feedback to improve engagement



Our service delivery

As we shape our service delivery strategy and allocate resources for the upcoming year, the Council closely evaluates our progress towards realising our vision for Wagait Shire as outlined in our Strategic Plan 2025-2035. The direction for the services the Council will deliver throughout the year, alongside the programs, initiatives, and projects within our resource and capacity scope, will be established.

The CEO will oversee the implementation, delivery and performance reporting to the Council and community throughout the year, aligning with both the Annual Plan and broader goals set out in the Strategic Plan.

Community wellbeing and access to services

It is crucial that Wagait Shire residents and visitors have access to essential services and feel a sense of belonging and social connectedness.

We will achieve this by maintaining existing services, proactively seeking and securing required funding, where funding allows, expanding the range of activities and services available to residents and visitors, and advocating for the needs of the community.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Access to key services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host quarterly stakeholder roundtables with health, transport and aged care providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 meetings per year• Minimum of 3 stakeholder reps per meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit at least two formal advocacy submissions to NT Government or relevant agencies on service gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 submissions lodged with govt depts or service providers• At least 1 response or engagement from targeted agency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate one pilot initiative or partnership to improve a priority service (e.g. Youth workshop or Seniors workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 pilot program implemented• Feedback collected from 75% of participants
Community programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-design and publish Youth and Seniors Action Plans by Q3 with measurable objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 actions plans published and accessible• Minimum of 20 residents engaged during development (through forums, surveys)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver at least four new initiatives or events from each action plan in the first year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 new youth programs and 2 new seniors initiatives delivered • Average attendance of 8+ per event
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure at least one grant or funding stream to support program sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum \$8,000 in external funding secured for community programs • Funding confirmed and aligned to deliverables within the financial year
Social and recreational community activities and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a minimum of four major community events across the year (e.g. National Days, Markets) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4+ events delivered with proper risk assessment and promotion • Total attendance across all events exceeds 200
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a community feedback loop (survey or forum) post-event to assess impact and improve future activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback collected from at least 30% of event attendees • Minimum 70% positive feedback rating (satisfaction, enjoyment)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a promotional plan to increase local and regional attendance at events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing materials developed for each event and shared via 3+ channels (social media, newsletter, noticeboard) • Website/event page traffic increases by 20% compared to previous year
Emergency preparedness and response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review and update of the Local Emergency Management Plan with stakeholders by mid-year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised plan approved by Emergency Committee and published • Plan reviewed by minimum of 3 external stakeholders for feedback
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a communication strategy for real-time updates (SMS alerts, social media, notice boards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency SMS/Email system trialed and rolled out to 60%+ households • Real-time updates posted on 3 platforms during emergencies (social, website, noticeboards)
Support for local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a simple application process for groups to access Council support (venues, printing, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 page support request form developed and available online/in-office

groups	equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests processed within 10 business days
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular check-ins or networking opportunities (e.g. biannual forums) for local group leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 forums or networking events held annually
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer at least 50 hours of in-kind support services (admin, setup, promotion) annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracked and logged in-kind support totaling 50hrs per year
Community safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a community safety survey annually and publish findings with an action response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 survey completed and distributed with 30+ responses • Summary report published with follow-up actions listed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with NT Police or other agencies to deliver two safety education sessions or campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 sessions or campaigns completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve key safety infrastructure as per feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 3+ safety improvements identified

Environmental management and protection

Wagait Shire boasts a unique natural environment, and it is important for Wagait Shire Council to work together with residents and key partners to ensure this is maintained and protected for future generations.

We will achieve this by actively listening to the concerns of residents and others, working collaboratively with traditional owners and other landowners on the Cox Peninsula, taking a proactive approach to manage climate change issues, and respecting and protecting our natural flora and fauna through a range of initiatives and programs, where funding allows.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute educational materials to residents on waste services and practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 types of materials produced and distributed (e.g. flyers, social media posts, newsletter inserts) reaching 80% of households
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host community education workshops or clean-up events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 2 events held annually with at least 15 participants at each event

Climate Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a stakeholder workshop to gather input on climate risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 workshop delivered with representation from 5 or more stakeholder groups and 60% participation satisfaction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a draft updated Adaption Plan for consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft updated plan published by Q4 with at least 4 new or revised actions informed by consultation
Land and Coastline Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual fire hazard reduction program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire hazard reduction activities completed on at least 2 priority sites with stakeholder collaboration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an advocacy statement on coastal and cultural protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy document submitted to at least 1 relevant government department with follow-up conducted
Local Wildlife Protection and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a community wildlife education campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign reaches at least 60% of residents through digital and print channels, with signage installed in 2 key locations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a joint initiative with Kenbi Rangers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 joint project or monitoring event conducted, with documented outcomes and shared reporting
Feral Animal Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a pet ownership awareness campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of registered households receive information, and registration compliance increases by 20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct feral animal hotspot assessments and controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 2 assessments annually with action plans implemented for all identified hotspots
Invasive Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a joint weed management action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan completed and endorsed by NT Weed Management Branch by end of Q2, covering at least 2 priority weed species or areas

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver weed education and removal days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 events delivered annually with a combined participation of 10 residents and removal of at least 1 truck load of plant material
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Amenities and infrastructure

To preserve and enhance the liveability and quality of life for the residents of Wagait Shire, it is important to provide access to thoughtfully designed amenities and infrastructure that cater to the needs of the community.

We will achieve this by maintaining, consulting on and, where funding allows, expanding the range of fit-for-purpose amenities and infrastructure that meet the needs of Wagait Shire and its residents.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Roads and Related Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise and implement critical safety upgrades identified in the Road Safety Audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete at least 2 high-priority safety upgrades (e.g. signage, speed controls, line marking) by Q4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage stakeholders (residents, NT Government, contractors) to review implementation progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold 2 formal review meetings during the year, with documented outcomes and action updates
Parks, Gardens and Open Recreational Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to lobby for funding opportunities to work through the stages of the Cloppenburg Park Master Plan works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete at least 2 funding applications to cover the cost of improvements to be carried out in line with the master plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain all existing parks and gardens to a consistent standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly maintenance schedule achieved with 70% compliance; quarterly inspections logged with photos and checklists
Community Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a community mobility and connectivity survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey distributed to 60% of residents; minimum 15% response rate achieved with results analysed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair or upgrade priority sections of footpaths and bike 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete improvements to at least 1 section identified

	paths	in audit feedback by Q4
Council Owned Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop a Council Grounds Masterplan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host 2 consultation events and achieve at least 60% satisfaction in feedback on the process and progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate a joint initiative with Kenbi Rangers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 joint project or monitoring event conducted, with documented outcomes and shared reporting
Major Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a formal advocacy statement and distribute it to relevant agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy document submitted to at least 2 government agencies or partners, with follow-up tracked and logged
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host or attend strategic meetings with NT Government and stakeholders on infrastructure priorities like water supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a minimum of 2 formal meetings or forums related to future planning for water supply and access

Sustainable local economy

Wagait Shire will need to maintain its local economy and take advantage of opportunities where appropriate to ensure future sustainability and to support liveability, self-sufficiency and amenity.

We will achieve this by providing support to existing business, and new business and industry that aligns with the vision and goals set out in this Strategic Plan. We will focus on opportunities that create local employment and that complement the existing ecosystem.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Supporting Existing Businesses and Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular business check-ins and support sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 business engagement forums or individual check-in rounds held per year with 80% participation rate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear regular information on funding opportunities and support resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute updated information and publish online
Attract New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote priority sectors for business development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sector opportunities brief and distribute to at least 2

Businesses		partners/investors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host or participate in business attraction activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend or host 2 networking or investment-related events with post-event reports including contact follow-ups
Sustainable Tourism Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host and facilitate collaboration with Tourism NT and local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 meeting with Tourism NT and local stakeholders with a minimum of 6 attendees
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Wagait Shire through coordinated tourism campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch at least 2 promotional initiatives annually (e.g. digital campaign, local tourism event) reaching 250+ people
Local Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a local employment needs survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey completed by at least 20 local residents /businesses; summary of key barriers and solutions published
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and promote employment or training initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner to deliver at least 1 local training or employment support session, with a minimum of 10 participants
Facilitate New Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the NT Government on land use and coordinate an information session for local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate communication with the NTG on land use and coordinate an information session with the development of a brochure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote at least one new business initiative aligned with diversification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with 1 new business development by providing information and support

Partnerships and advocacy for Wagait Shire

Delivering on our vision for Wagait Shire and addressing the Shire's challenges isn't the responsibility of Wagait Shire Council alone.

Where matters are not within Wagait Shire Council's control or responsibility, we will strongly advocate for the community and its needs and make sure there is close collaboration between all stakeholders including Northern Territory and Australian

governments, local businesses and organisations, other local governments and representative bodies and residents.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver an annual Advocacy Priorities Document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document completed and distributed to at least 3 key stakeholders/agencies with confirmation of receipt and at least 1 follow-up meeting logged
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct community consultation to inform of Council's advocacy efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 community forum conducted with a minimum of 10 participants and findings integrated into advocacy materials
Strategic Stakeholder Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold regular engagement meetings with neighbouring councils and key agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 formal meetings per year with Belyuen, Coomalie and other stakeholders with agendas and minutes recorded
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a shared priority initiative with at least one regional partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One joint project or advocacy campaign initiated or formalised with a partner council documented in MOU or similar
Partnership Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit funding applications in partnership with external organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 joint funding application submitted during the year with value of funding requested tracked and success rate monitored
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate a partnership project or resource project or resource-sharing initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 1 formalised partnership implemented (e.g. shared service or facility), with outcomes reported in Council's annual report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and promote at least one new business initiative aligned with diversification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with 1 new business development by providing information and support

Our governance and sustainability

Wagait Shire Council needs to have strong foundations to ensure it can deliver on this Strategic Plan and achieve its vision for Wagait Shire.

We will achieve this by having the appropriate processes and systems in place, supporting our staff, managing our financial sustainability and securing alternative funding sources when required, effectively engaging and collaborating with all stakeholders and making sure we are compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations.

Work streams	Our deliverables for FY 2025-26	Measures
Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and adopt the annual budget in alignment with strategic priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget adopted by 30 June with 80% alignment to strategic focus areas and monthly financial reports delivered on schedule
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for external grants to support strategic projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a minimum of 3 grant applications annually
Internal Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide targeted training for staff and Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each staff member and Councillor to attend at least 1 professional development session annually; 80% post training satisfaction rate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and implement internal systems and risk processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 1 annual internal audit and 2 risk assessments, with outcomes documented and 70% of recommendations actioned within the year
Compliance and Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review key Council policies and procedures for currency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update all policies due for review this FY, with Council approval and documented version control
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet all statutory reporting obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of Local Government Act and other regulatory reports submitted on time, with zero compliance breaches
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and promote at least 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with 1 new

	one new business initiative aligned with diversification	business development by providing information and support
Boundary Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a community position paper on boundary/amalgamation issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position paper prepared and endorsed by Council and shared with relevant authorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the community on reform proposals to ensure local views are represented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct at least 1 consultation event or survey with a 20% response rate from residents
Internal and External Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a consistent communication schedule across platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish at least 6 community newsletters or updates per year across print and digital channels, reaching 60% of households
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek and review stakeholder feedback on communication practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct annual communication effectiveness survey with at least 15 responses

Our Councillors

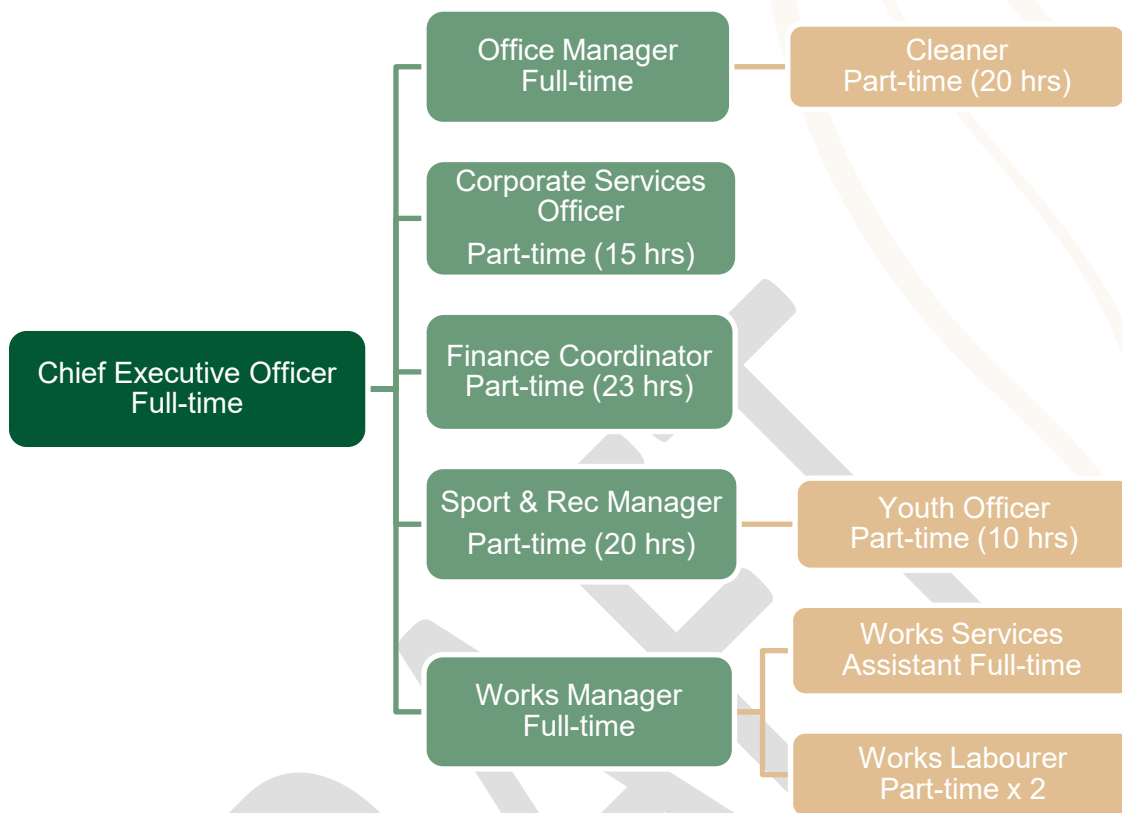
President Neil White	Vice-President Tom Dyer	Councillor Peter Clee	Councillor Sarah Smith	Councillor Michael Vaughan
Elected 2021	Elected 2021	Elected 2021	Elected 2022	Elected 2021
				

Elected member allowances

A summary of allowances included in the budget are as follows. Some elected members may choose to forgo all or some of their allowance.

	Base allowance	Additional allowance	Extra meeting or activity	Professional development	SUBTOTAL per member	TOTAL CLAIM
President	\$ 7,462	\$ 23,000	\$	\$ 5,000	\$ 35,462	\$ 35,462
Vice President	\$ 7,462	\$	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 22,462	\$ 22,462
Councillors	\$ 7,462	\$	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 22,462	\$ 67,386
						\$125,310

Organisational structure



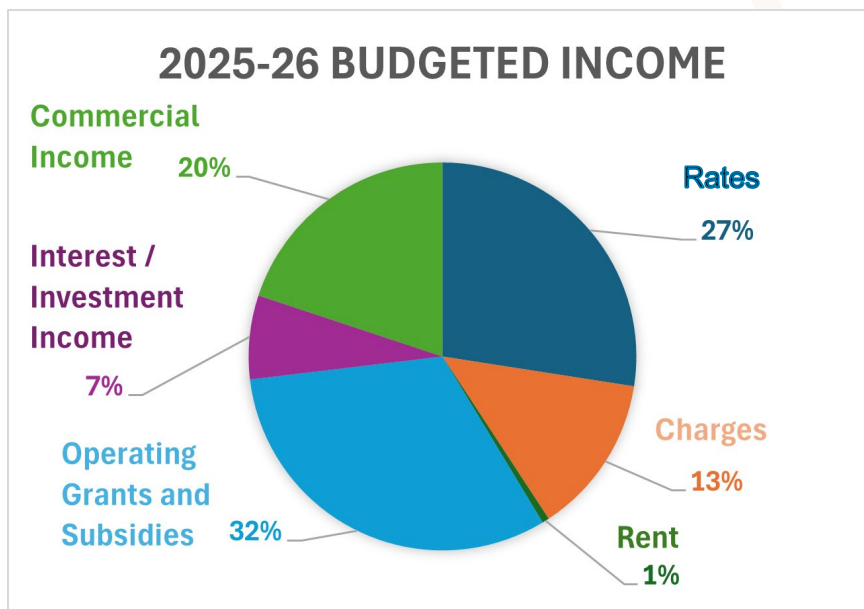
Council policies

Governance
GOV - Appointment of Principal Member
GOV - Caretaker Policy
GOV - Casting Vote of President
GOV - Casual Vacancy on Council
GOV - Code of Conduct - Council Member
GOV - Delegations Manual
GOV - Emergency Communications Policy
GOV - Fraud and Corruption Protection
GOV - Media Policy
GOV - Procedures for Council and Council Committee Meetings Policy
GOV - Rates and Charges Policy
GOV - Risk Management Policy
GOV - Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing Policy
GOV - ToR - Audit Committee
GOV - ToR - Emergency Management Committee
GOV - Use of Council Firearms
Administration
ADMIN - Internal Control Policies & Procedures
ADMIN - Policy Framework
ADMIN - Stocktake Policy
ADMIN - Sufficient Interest in the Records Policy
ADMIN - Travel & Accommodation Policy
ADMIN - Vehicle Use Policy
Human Resources
HR - Code of Conduct - Workplace Participant
HR - Covid-19 & Infectious Diseases Risk Management
HR - Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying
HR - Dispute Resolution, Counselling, Disciplining & Dismissal
HR - Employee Assistance Program Policy
HR - Human Resource Management
HR - Work, Health Safety
HR - Working From Home Policy
Finance
FIN - Asset Disposal Policy
FIN - Authorisation of payments
FIN - Borrowing Policy
FIN - Cash Reserves Policy
FIN - CEO Allowances and other benefits
FIN - Credit Card Policy
FIN - Elected Member Allowances
FIN - Investment Policy
FIN - Procurement Policy
FIN - Statement of Significant Accounting Policy
Services & Infrastructure
SV - Dog Management Policy
SV - Verge Management Policy
SV - Waste Management Policy
Community
COM - Australia Day Awards Deliberations Policy
COM - Community Support and In-kind Assistance Policy

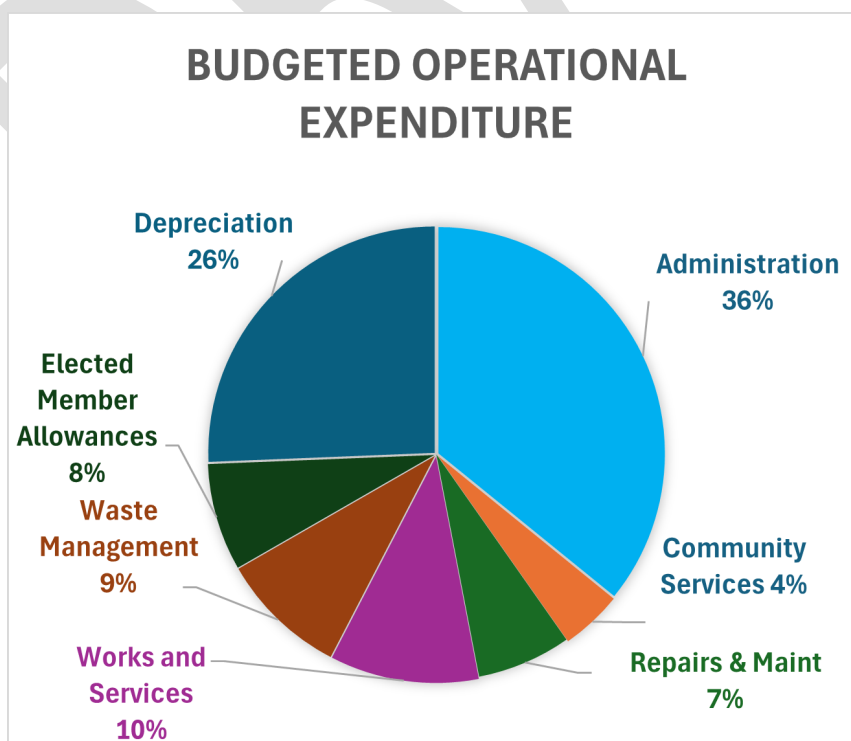
Our finances

Annual budget overview

Council is projecting an increase of 6.5 % in income compared to last year's approved budget.



Overall expenditure is projected to increase by just over 20% compared to last year's approved budget. This increase is due to rises in materials and services costs across the board, aligned with CPI that Council has covered over the past couple of years.



2025-26 Detailed Budget

	2025-26 Proposed Annual	2024-25 Revised Q2 Budget
OPERATING INCOME		
Rates	\$ 288,081	\$ 275,899
Charges	\$ 152,521	\$ 145,168
Rent	\$ 6,700	\$ 6,700
Operating Grants and Subsidies	\$ 363,736	\$ 362,736
Interest / Investment Income	\$ 80,000	\$ 75,000
Commercial and Other Income	\$ 228,101	\$ 209,912
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$ 1,119,139	\$ 1,075,415
OPERATING EXPENDITURE		
Employee Expenses	\$ 675,201	\$ 629,459
Materials and Contracts		
Admin Expenses	\$ 207,300	\$ 154,000
Bank Charges	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,700
Contracts & Materials	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,500
Memberships & Subscriptions	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,700
Telephones	\$ 5,900	\$ 6,000
Project / Activity Expenses	\$ 14,500	\$ 12,500
Service Utilities	\$ 15,900	\$ 13,500
Repairs & Maintenance Expenses	\$ 41,500	\$ 37,500
Vehicle & Plant	\$ 46,304	\$ 40,879
Waste Management Expenses	\$ 140,500	\$ 136,100
TOTAL MATERIALS & CONTRACTS	\$ 483,404	\$ 410,379
Elected Member Allowances	\$ 60,310	\$ 45,625
Elected Member Expenses	\$ 58,000	\$ 60,000
Other Expenses - (Election)	\$ 20,000	\$ -
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	\$ 396,000	\$ 205,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	\$ 1,692,915	\$ 1,350,463
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$ (573,776)	\$ (275,049)

Rating Policy

Wagait Shire Council remains committed to maintaining a low and equitable rates structure, continuing with the assessment method of a flat rate per allotment. While striving to minimise the impact on ratepayers, Council continues to face significant financial pressures, including rising costs of service delivery and limited opportunities to generate new revenue.

In response to the ongoing economic impacts, Council will continue to review future increases in line with CPI and broader economic conditions to ensure it can meet the evolving service expectations and infrastructure needs of the community.

For the 2025–26 financial year, Council proposes a rates increase of **\$13,630**, which equates to approximately **\$35.31** per ratepayer.

In addition, waste management charges—set at a flat rate per allotment regardless of development status—will also rise in 2025–26. An increase of **\$19** is proposed to help offset higher kerbside collection, hard waste freight, and landfill disposal costs. This represents an additional **\$0.135 per week** for ratepayers.

Council acknowledges the financial challenges many households face and remains focused on maintaining core services and long-term sustainability while keeping rates as low as possible.

Social and Economic Impacts

When determining rates each financial year, Council must carefully consider its Long-Term Financial Plan alongside the social and economic conditions of the region. This includes recognising the rising costs of service delivery, infrastructure maintenance, and community development, while also acknowledging the ongoing financial pressures faced by residents.

Council's revenue continues to rely heavily on a combination of government grants, service delivery contracts, and rates. With limited capacity to expand these income streams, setting responsible and sustainable rates is critical to ensure the delivery of essential services and community priorities.

For the 2025–26 financial year, Council has acknowledged the need to strike a balance between affordability for ratepayers and the financial sustainability of Council operations. An increase in minimum rates of just over **\$35** has been proposed, contributing to the funding required to maintain core services and deliver valued projects for the Wagait Beach community.

The rate increases adopted by Council over the past four years remain below historical CPI averages, demonstrating a continued effort to minimise the burden on ratepayers while navigating a challenging economic environment.

HOUSEHOLD DATA	WSC	NT	AUS
Median weekly household income	\$ 1,355	\$ 2,061	\$ 1,746
Households with a mortgage	41%	30%	35%
Median weekly mortgage payments	\$ 400	\$ 500	\$ 466
Households renting	13%	48%	31%
Median weekly rent	\$ 250	\$ 325	\$ 375

CPI Rates vs WSC Rates Increases			
Year	ABS RBA CPI Rates %	WSC Rates Increases %	WSC vs CPI % (+ or -)

2020-21	-0.3	1.8	1.5
2021-22	3.8	3.1	-0.7
2022-23	6.1	3.5	-2.6
2023-24	6.0	3.5	-2.5
2024-25	3.6	5	1.4
2025-26	2.4	5	

The ABS Rates were at June in each previous financial year.

Council offers concessions and payment plans for ratepayers on request and may consider other services that might be extended to reduce hardship.

Appendices

Annual budget 2025-2026

Statement 1, Annual Budget

Table 1.1 Annual Budget Income and Expenditure

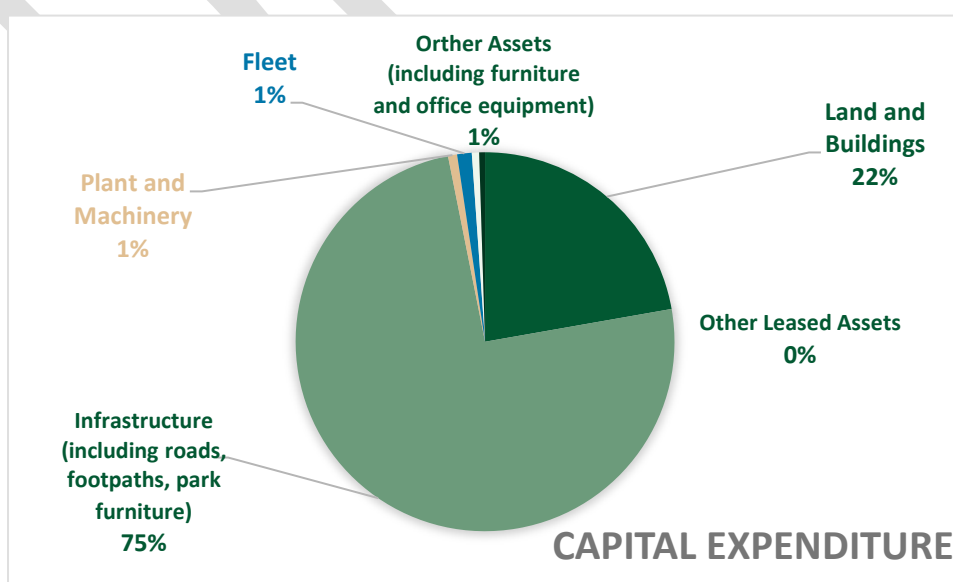
	2025-26
	Annual Proposed Budget \$
OPERATING INCOME	
Rates	288,081
Charges	152,521
Rent	6,700
Operating Grants and Subsidies	363,736
Interest / Investment Income	80,000
Commercial Income	228,101
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	1,119,139
OPERATING EXPENDITURE	
Employment Expenses	675,201
Materials and Contracts	483,404
Elected Member Allowances	60,310
Elected Member Expenses	58,000
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	396,000
Interest Expenses	
Other Expenses	20,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	1,692,915
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS / DEFECIT	- 573,776

Table 1.2 Annual Budget Operating Position	
	2025-26
	Annual Budget \$
BUDGETING OPERATING SURPLUS / DEFICIT	- 573,776
Remove NON-CASH ITEMS	
Less Non-Cash Income	
Add Back Non-Cash Expenses - Depreciation + Vehicle Lease Fees	412,054
TOTAL NON-CASH ITEMS	412,054
Less ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	
Capital Expenditure	3,216,500
Borrowing Repayments (Principal Only)	11,337
Transfers to Reserves	
Other Outflows	
TOTAL ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	3,227,837
Add ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	
Capital Grants Income	2,705,500
Prior Year Carry Forward Tied Funding	490,000
Other Inflow of Funds	50,000
Transfers from Reserves	144,059
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	3,389,559
NET BUDGETED OPERATING POSITION	-

Statement 2. Capital Expenditure and Funding

Table 2.1 By class of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.

	2025-26 Financial Year (Annual) Budget \$	Outer Financial Year 1 Budget \$	OFY2 Budget \$	OFY3 Budget \$	> OFY3 Budget \$
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE **					
Land and Buildings	715,000	0			
Infrastructure (including roads, footpaths, park furniture)	2,400,000				
Plant and Machinery	32,000				
Fleet	33,500				
Orther Assets (including furniture and office equipment)	20,000				
Leased Land and Buildings					
Other Leased Assets	16,000				
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	3,216,500	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDED BY: **					
Operting Income (amount allocated to fund capital items)					
Capital Grants Carried forward from prior year	490,000				
Capital Grants	2,705,500				
Transfers from Cash Reserves	21,000				
Borrowings	-				
Sale of Assets (including trade-ins)	-				
Other Funding					
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	3,216,500	0	0	0	0



Statement 3. Planned Major Capital Works and projected costing

Table 3.1 Budget by Planned Major Capital Works

Class of Assets	By Major Capital Project *	Total Prior Year(s) Actuals \$ (A)	Current Financial Year Budget \$ (B)	Outer Financial Year 1 Budget \$ (C)	Total Planned Budget \$ (A+B+C+D+E+F)	Expected Project Completion Date
Land and Buildings	Roof over Sports Court	-	630,000		630,000	30/06/2026
Infrastructure	Roads Reseal			1,300,000	1,300,000	30/06/2027
					-	
	TOTAL	-	630,000	1,300,000	1,930,000	

Capital Priority Projects - Funded

Waste Facility Upgrade - \$ 75,000

This project is planned to upgrade the Waste Facility to better support the communities recycling efforts.

Capital Priority Projects - Unfunded

Re-Discovery Hub - \$ 24,000

It has been identified that the Re-Discovery Hub requires a fence around the compound to secure the property.

Guttering on Council buildings - \$16,000

Some of Council's buildings have old worn out guttering that needs to be replaced to make them more effective when capturing rainwater.

Roof over Sports Court - \$630,000

A roof over the sports court is identified in the Cloppenburg Masterplan and will allow for the courts to be used in all weather conditions. There is a plan to include lighting to continue the use of the courts after dark.

Road Re-seal - \$ 1,300,000

This is the cost to re-seal all of Council's road network.

RTV Side by side Vehicle - \$33,500

This vehicle will assist with getting into areas that need weed spraying around town and can be used on the Restricted Use Area (RUA) when carrying out works for the Department Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) as required.

Potable Water Tank 5,000 ltr - \$ 19,500

This vehicle will assist with filling council owned facilities.

	Maintenance	Capital Expenditure
Buildings & Property	\$ 15,500	\$ 8,000
Recreation Facilities	\$ 9,000	\$ 842,118
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	\$ 24,879	\$ 25,000
Roads & Infrastructure	\$ 13,000	\$ 744,000

Long-term Financial Plan 2025-2029

Council's long-term financial plan is a very basic delve into what the budget may look like for the next four years. This is with the limited forecast of between 3 and 5% increases annually and without any major increases or decreases in operational funding allocations from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments.

This plan is made based on all operational funding with no capital works included. Any capital works needs to be predominantly funded by external sources.

All asset repairs and maintenance will continue at the same levels and be carried out on a prioritised needs basis over this period and any upgrades and/or renewals will be carried out as funding permits.

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
OPERATING INCOME				
Rates	\$ 288,081	\$ 302,485	\$ 299,712	\$ 311,701
Charges	\$ 152,521	\$ 152,693	\$ 158,801	\$ 165,153
Fees & Charges	\$ 6,700	\$ 6,968	\$ 7,247	\$ 7,537
Operating Grants and Subsidies	\$ 363,736	\$ 378,285	\$ 393,417	\$ 409,154
Interest / Investment Income	\$ 80,000	\$ 83,200	\$ 86,528	\$ 89,989
Commercial and Other Income	\$ 228,107	\$ 237,232	\$ 246,721	\$ 256,590
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$ 1,119,145	\$ 1,160,863	\$ 1,192,425	\$ 1,240,122
OPERATING EXPENDITURE				
Employee Expenses	\$ 675,201	\$ 702,209	\$ 730,297	\$ 759,509
Materials and Contracts				
Admin Expenses	\$ 207,300	\$ 215,592	\$ 224,216	\$ 233,184
Bank Charges	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,872	\$ 1,947	\$ 2,025
Contracts & Materials	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,200	\$ 5,408	\$ 5,624
Elected Member Allowances	\$ 60,310	\$ 62,722	\$ 65,231	\$ 67,841
Elected Member Expenses	\$ 58,000	\$ 60,320	\$ 62,733	\$ 65,242
Memberships & Subscriptions	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,888	\$ 5,084	\$ 5,287
Telephone & Internet	\$ 5,900	\$ 6,136	\$ 6,381	\$ 6,637
Project / Activity Expenses	\$ 14,500	\$ 15,080	\$ 15,683	\$ 16,311
Service Utilities	\$ 15,900	\$ 16,536	\$ 17,197	\$ 17,885
Repairs & Maintenance Expenses	\$ 41,500	\$ 43,160	\$ 44,886	\$ 46,682
Vehicle & Plant	\$ 46,310	\$ 48,156	\$ 50,082	\$ 52,086
Waste Management Expenses	\$ 140,500	\$ 146,120	\$ 151,965	\$ 158,043
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	\$ 396,000	\$ 411,840	\$ 428,314	\$ 445,446
Other Expenses - (By Election)	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,800	\$ 21,632	\$ 22,497
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	\$ 1,692,921	\$ 1,760,632	\$ 1,831,057	\$ 1,904,299
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$ (573,776)	\$ (599,768)	\$ (638,631)	\$ (664,177)

2025-2026 ANNUAL BUDGET

OPERATING REVENUE

Council's operating budget has been increased from last year's original approved budget due to increases in rates and charges and commercial operations. Council will continue to investigate ways to raise the income to at least get it level with the expenditure and reducing the deficit between the two.

CAPITAL REVENUE

The majority of capital revenue for 2025-26 is proposed from grants. Council has two funded capital projects totalling \$490,000 and has budgeted for the expense created by the one leased vehicles, totalling \$15,064. This means there is a need to attract grant funding of \$2,705,500 to cover proposed projects.

OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE

Council's operational expenditure is increased to cater for the rise in materials and services across the board.

Under Section 353 of the *Local Government Act 2019* Council member allowances are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and the increases for the determined have been accounted for in the 2025-26 budget.

Although there has been quite an increase in the operational expenditure budget the majority of areas are still quite conservative.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Proposed capital expenditure for the 2025-26 financial year is quite generous for Council's limited conservative budget so it goes without saying that the majority of funding for these projects will have to be sought through external funding opportunities.

The two major projects are a re-seal project for Council's 13kms of road and to install a roof over the Sports Court.

FINANCIAL RESERVES

The proposal to transfer \$144,059 from reserves for the 2025-26 budget will balance the budget. If Council are going to be conservative with reserves to ensure longevity there is a strong need for more investigation in increased commercial income and external capital grant funding.

Rates Declaration 2024-25



Local Government Act Declaration of Rates and Charges 2025-2026

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Sections 220, 226, 237, 239, 241 and 245 of the **Local Government Act 2019** (*the Act*), that the following rates and charges were declared by the Wagait Shire Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 26 May 2025, in respect of the financial year ending 30 June 2026.

1. Rates

Wagait Shire Council (the "Council") makes the following declaration of rates pursuant to Chapter 11 of the Act.

- 1.1. Council, pursuant to Section 226 of the Act, adopted the fixed charge method as the basis for determining the assessment of all allotments within the Council area.
- 1.2. Council, pursuant to Section 237 of the Act declared that it intends to raise, for general purposes by way of rates, the amount of \$285,482 which will be raised by the application of a fixed charge amount of \$741.51 per allotment being payable for the financial year ending 30 June 2026. This is an increase of 5% from the rates amount agreed in 2025-26.

2. Charges

Pursuant to Section 239 of the Act, Council declared the following charges for the purpose of enabling or assisting Council to meet the cost of garbage collection and disposal services for the benefit of all allotments within the Council area. Council intends to raise \$148,221 by these charges.

- a. The following charges were declared:
 - A charge of \$383 per annum per allotment, regardless of whether it is vacant or non-vacant and whether the services are used or not.
- b. The services are:
 - A kerbside garbage collection service of one garbage collection visit per week, being a maximum of one (1) 240 litre bin per collection.
 - Provision of access to a hard waste and recycling facility; and
 - Provision of access to a green waste facility.

3. Relevant Interest Rate

The relevant interest rate for the late payment of rates and charges is fixed in accordance with Section 245 of the Act at the rate of 18% per annum and is to be calculated on a daily basis.

4. Payment

Rates and charges declared under this declaration may be paid in full by 30 September 2024 OR by four (4) approximately equal instalments on the following dates, namely:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • First instalment, 30 September 2025 | • Second instalment, 30 November 2025 |
| • Third instalment, 31 January 2026 | • Fourth instalment, 31 March 2026 |

Instalments falling due on a weekend or public holiday may be paid by the following business day, without incurring any penalty.

- a. Details of due dates and specified amounts are listed on the relevant Rates Notice.
- b. Variations to those options for payment will be administered according to the conditions outlined on the front and reverse of the Rates Notice.
- c. A ratepayer who fails to abide by such conditions may be sued for recovery of the principal amount of the rates and charges, the late payment and costs reasonably incurred by Council in recovering or attempting to recover the rates and charges. If rates are payable by the owner of the land and are not paid by the due date, they become a charge on the land to which they relate.

Virginnya Boon

Chief Executive Officer, Wagait Shire Council

Fees and Charges 2024-2025



FACILITY FEES		
Cloppenburg Park Pavilion and Community Centre Includes chairs and tables, cleaning, ITC, power & water. Please call council office to book. Hire agreements must be completed prior to use.	Local community groups or NFP per day/overnight	\$ 100.00
	Local community groups or NFP per half day or eve	\$ 50.00
	Non community groups per day/overnight	\$ 150.00
	Non community groups per half day or eve	\$ 75.00
	Cleaning fee	\$ 50.00
Caretaker Site	By CEO appointment only	
EQUIPMENT		
Equipment stored at Cloppenburg Park and/or Community Centre – delivery/collection fee of \$10 per way – charges for commercial event. Community events on approval by CEO.	Table (per item per function/day)	\$ 2.00
	Chairs (per 10 chairs per function/day)	\$ 5.00
	Dishes/Cutlery (per set of 10 per function/day)	\$ 3.00
	Eskies (each per function/day)	\$ 3.00
	Projector (per function/day)	\$ 10.00
ADMINISTRATION FEES		
Photocopying / Printing	A4 sheet – Black & White (3+ pages)	\$ 0.20
	A4 sheet – Colour	\$ 0.30
	A3 sheet – Black & White	\$ 0.40
	A3 sheet - Colour	\$ 0.50
Laminating	A4 / A3 sheet	\$ 2.00
WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGES		
General Waste Charges	All properties vacant and non-vacant	\$ 383.00
Additional Collection	Additional rubbish bin/quarter	\$ 95.00
Replacement Bin (240lt)	Allow one week for delivery after order	\$ 90.00
Green Waste	Included in General Waste Charge	NA
Hard Waste (Sat/Sun 3-6pm) **Fees for items must be paid to council office during office hours & receipts provided at drop-off.	Included in General Waste Charge	NA
	Fridges, freezers, air-conditioners, mattresses **	\$ 35.00
	Out-of-hours opening fee**	\$ 80.00
	Waste Oil (engine oil – residential) up to 50L per property	No Charge
PLANNING & WORKS FEES		
Reinstatement of damaged road pavement (charged at completion of repairs/works)		At Cost + 20%

Road Openings/Road Closings (deposit of \$3300)				\$220 per application
Abandoned Vehicle Removal, storage and release				At Cost + 20%
DOG MANAGEMENT FEES				
Dog Registration (annual)	Desexed dog	\$ 20.00	concession	\$ 10.00
	Entire dog	\$ 75.00	concession	\$ 50.00
	Dogs under 6 months (no charge)			NA
	Declared/dangerous dog (no concessions)			\$ 250.00
	Licence to keep more than 2 Dogs			\$ 100.00
Other Dog Related Charges	Pound Release Fee – Registered Dog <i>(First time – no charge for registered dogs)</i>			\$90.00
	Pound Release Fee – Registered Dog <i>(First time – no charge for registered dogs)</i>			\$180.00
	Pound Daily Maintenance Fee			\$65.00
	Dispose of Dead Animal / Dog			\$145.00
	Surrender Fee – per dog			\$300.00
For infringement charges and fees please see WSC Dog Management Bylaws 2019 (council website).				
RATES MANAGEMENT FEES				
Rates Search	Rates information search			\$ 99.00
Late payment	Interest for late rates payments (per annum)			18%

*All fees and charges are GST inclusive.

Consideration to waive fees and charges may be given to local community groups, not-for-profit Organisations or other Government services requiring use of Council facilities, equipment, services or infrastructure on application to CEO ceo@wagait.nt.gov.au

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Local Government Act 2019 provides the framework for the development of annual Municipal, Regional or Shire Plans and Budgets.

As per Part 3.3, Section 33 of the Local Government Act 2019, Wagait Shire Council is required to have a Shire Plan for its area.

33 Meaning of municipal, regional or shire plans

- (1) Each council must have a plan for its area.
- (2) The plan for a council is:
 - (a) for a municipality – the municipal plan; and
 - (b) for a region – the regional plan; and
 - (c) for a shire – the shire plan.
- (3) A council's municipal, regional or shire plan:
 - (a) must be accessible on the council's website; and 34 Contents of municipal, regional or shire plan
 - (b) must be available for inspection at the council's public office; and
 - (c) must be available for purchase from the council's public office at a fee fixed by the council.

34 Contents of municipal, regional or shire plan

- (1) A municipal, regional or shire plan
 - (a) must include:
 - (i) a service delivery plan for the period to which the plan relates; and
 - (ii) the council's budget and any amended budget; and
 - (b) must include, or incorporate by reference:
 - (i) any long-term, community or strategic plan adopted by the council or a local authority and relevant to the period to which the plan relates; and
 - (ii) the council's long-term financial plan; and
 - (c) for a regional plan – must take into account the projects and priorities for the area identified by a local authority or authorities; and
 - (d) must define indicators for judging the standard of the council's performance.
- (2) A municipal, regional or shire plan incorporates a plan or assessment by reference if it refers to the plan or assessment and includes a link or reference to a

webpage on which the plan or assessment is accessible.

35 Municipal, regional or shire plans

- (1) A council must, by resolution, adopt its municipal, regional or shire plan between 1 March and 30 June in each year.
- (2) The council must give a copy of the plan to the Agency by the latter date mentioned in subsection (1).
- (3) Before the council adopts its municipal, regional or shire plan for a particular year, the council must:
 - (a) at a meeting of the council, approve a draft of the plan; and
 - (b) make the draft plan accessible on the council's website and make copies available for public inspection at the council's public offices; and
 - (c) publish a notice on its website and in a newspaper circulating generally in the area inviting written submissions on the draft plan within a period (at least 21 days) from the date of the notice; and
 - (d) consider the submissions made in response to the invitation and make any revisions to the draft the council considers appropriate in the light of the submissions.
- (4) A copy of the draft of the plan must be provided to the members of the council at least 6 business days before the meeting referred to in subsection (3)(a).
- (5) Although the council's budget forms part of its municipal, regional or shire plan, this section does not apply to the adoption of the budget or of an amended budget.
- (6) The adoption of a budget, or of an amended budget, operates to amend the municipal, regional or shire plan so that it conforms with the most recent budget of the council.

36 Core services

- (1) The Minister may, by Gazette notice, advise a council as to the services that, in the Minister's view, are services that the council should, as a priority, provide.
- (2) The council must consider the advice when adopting and renewing its plan.

200 Long-term financial plan

- (1) A council must prepare and keep up-to-date a long-term financial plan.
- (2) A long-term financial plan must relate to a period of at least 4 years.
- (3) A long-term financial plan must contain:
 - (a) a statement of the major initiatives the council proposes to undertake during the period to which the plan relates; and
 - (b) the projected statement of income and expenditure for each financial year

of the period to which the plan relates; and

(c) any other matters prescribed by regulation.

(4) The council must provide the Agency with a copy of its long-term financial plan by 30 June in the year preceding the first financial year to which the plan relates.

201 Annual budgets

(1) A council must prepare a budget for each financial year.

(2) The budget for a particular financial year must:

(a) outline:

(i) the council's objectives for the relevant financial year; and

(ii) the measures the council proposes to take, during the financial year, towards achieving those objectives; and

(iii) the indicators the council intends to use as a means of assessing its efficiency in achieving its objectives; and

(b) contain the projected statement of income and expenditure for the financial year, differentiating between operating and capital expenditure; and

(c) list the council's fees for services and the estimates of revenue from each of those fees; and

(d) state the amount to be allocated to the development and maintenance of infrastructure for the financial year; and

(e) state the amount the council proposes to raise by way of rates, and set out the rates structure, for the financial year; and

(f) include an assessment of the social and economic effects of its rating policies; and

(g) state the allowances for members of the council for the financial year and the amount budgeted to cover payment of those allowances; and

(h) separately provide for a budget for each local authority established by the council (if any); and

(i) include any other information required by any guidelines that the Minister may make or as prescribed by regulation; and

(j) be in a form required by any guidelines that the Minister may make or as prescribed by regulation.

202 Budget not to be for deficit

A council must not budget for a deficit except in accordance with the regulations.

203 Adoption of budget or amended budget

- (1) A council must adopt its budget for a particular financial year on or before 30 June in the previous financial year.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), a council may, after adopting its budget for a particular financial year, adopt an amended budget.
- (3) An amended budget must not have the effect of:
 - (a) increasing the amount of an allowance for the financial year for the members of the council; or
 - (b) changing the amount of an allowance for the financial year for members of a local authority established by the council except in accordance with any guidelines made by the Minister.
- (4) As soon as practicable after adopting its budget or an amended budget for a particular financial year a council must:
 - (a) publish the budget or amended budget as adopted on the council's website; and
 - (b) notify the Agency in writing of the adoption of the budget or amended budget; and
 - (c) publish a notice in a newspaper circulating generally in the area informing the public that copies of the budget or amended budget may be downloaded from the council's website or obtained from the council's public office.
- (5) If an amended budget is published on the council's website, the budget as previously adopted must remain published on the council's website clearly indicating that the budget has been superseded by an amended budget.
- (6) The council's budget and any amended budget forms part of the council's municipal, regional or shire plan.



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The Council welcomes and values comments, questions and suggestions regarding this Shire Plan. Please include your details (full name and post or email address) when contacting us.

Wagait Shire Council meets monthly on the third Tuesday at 7pm in the Council Chambers and meetings are open to the public.