



ANNUAL SHIRE PLAN

2026-2027

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A message from our President.....	3
About the Wagait Shire area	5
Acknowledgement of Country	6
Our Council.....	7
The legislative framework	7
Legislative compliance.....	8
Strategic Plan 2025 - 2035	10
Our Vision for Wagait Shire.....	11
Our Mission	11
Our strategic focus areas.....	12
Priorities for this year	13
Our service delivery	15
Community wellbeing and access to services	15
Environmental management and protection.....	18
Amenities and infrastructure	21
Sustainable local economy	22
Partnerships and advocacy for Wagait Shire	24
Council Governance and Sustainability.....	26
Our Councillors	29
Elected member allowances	29
Organisational structure.....	30
Our finances	31
Annual budget overview.....	31
2026-27 Detailed Budget	32
Rating Policy.....	33
Appendices.....	35
Annual budget 2026-2027.....	35
Long-term Financial Plan 2026-2031	38
2026-2027 ANNUAL BUDGET	39
Rates Declaration 2026-27	41
Fees and Charges 2026-2027	42

Introduction



A message from our President

As President of Wagait Shire Council, I am pleased to present the 2026–27 Shire Plan on behalf of Council. This Plan outlines Council's priorities, projects, and strategic direction for the year ahead as we continue working towards a sustainable and resilient future for our community.

During development of the 2026–27 budget and Shire Plan, Council was required to make several difficult but necessary decisions relating to Council's long-term financial sustainability. For many years, Council has attempted to minimise the impact of rate increases on residents wherever possible. While this approach was well intentioned, it has also contributed to a growing gap between Council's income and the increasing costs associated with delivering essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and meeting legislative obligations.

Over the past 18 months, Council has also experienced a reduction in available grant funding opportunities and external financial support programs that small councils have historically relied upon to assist with projects, service delivery, and operational pressures. This changing funding environment has further contributed to the challenges faced in balancing Council's income and expenditure while continuing to meet community expectations and operational responsibilities.

As a small remote Council with limited revenue streams, it is important that we now take a more strategic and sustainable approach to financial planning to ensure Council remains financially viable into the future. Council's focus throughout the budget process has been not only on the 2026–27 financial year, but also on the long-term sustainability of services, infrastructure, and operations for the broader benefit of the community.

Council understands that not everyone will agree with every decision made during this process. However, these decisions were made following detailed discussions, careful consideration of relevant financial information, and a strong commitment to responsible governance and long-term planning. The goal is to place Council in a more stable position moving forward, allowing better management of operational costs, future infrastructure demands, and unexpected external pressures.

At the same time, Council recognises that external factors beyond local control—including economic conditions, rising operational costs, natural disasters, and broader world events—can continue to impact small regional councils significantly. While it is impossible to predict every future challenge, Council remains committed to prudent financial management, strong advocacy, and ongoing review of priorities to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Wagait community.

Council would also like to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Chief Executive Officer for her dedication and hard work during her time with Wagait Shire Council. Her commitment to the community, support for staff, advocacy for Shire, and focus on strengthening Council's long-term sustainability have been greatly appreciated. On behalf of Council and the community, I thank her for her contribution and wish her every success for the future.

Despite the challenges, Council remains committed to progressing important community priorities, improving local infrastructure and services, strengthening partnerships, and advocating strongly on behalf of residents. On behalf of Council, I would like to thank the community for its ongoing support, feedback, and involvement as we continue working together towards a sustainable future for Wagait Shire.

Warm regards,

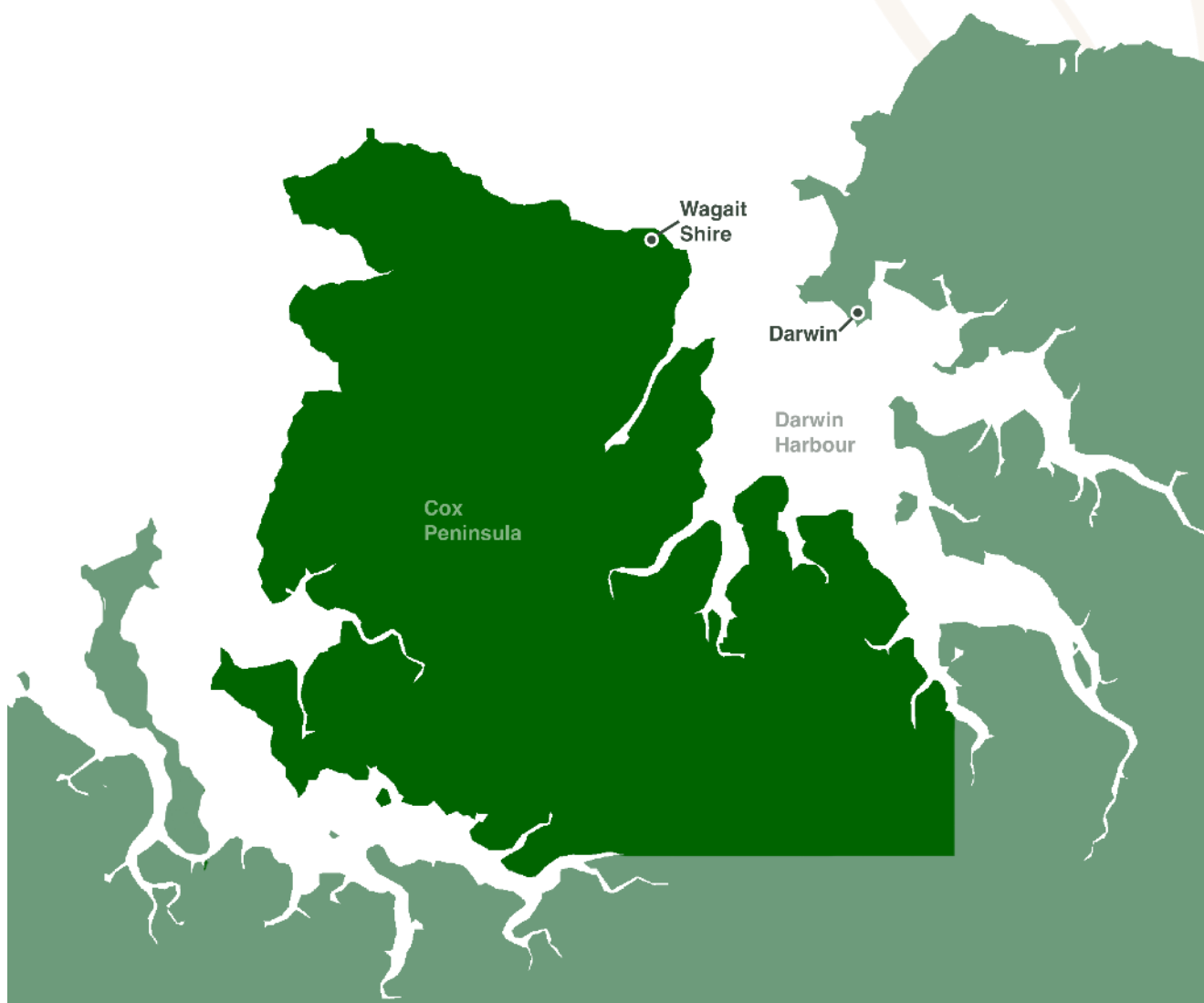
Neil White

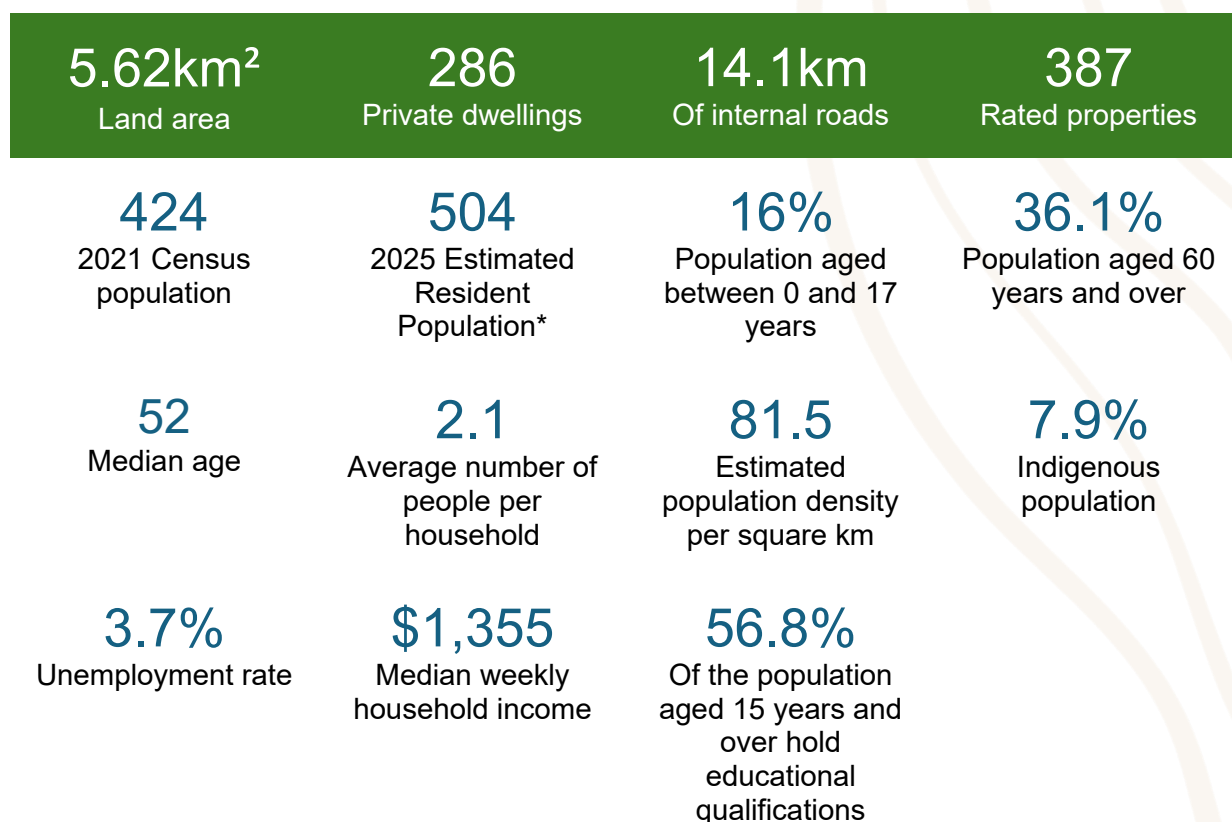
President, Wagait Shire Council



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.





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

* The 2025 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 current (10th) council was elected in August 2025.

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.

Regulations made under the [*Local Government Act 2019*](#) include:

[*Local Government \(Electoral\) Regulations 2021*](#)

[*Local Government \(General\) Regulations 2021*](#)



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(1)(a)(i)	Service Delivery Plan for the period of the plan	15-28
34(1)(a)(ii)	Annual Budget	35,39-40
34(1)(b)(i)	Long-term, community or strategic plan adopted by Council and relevant to the period to which the plan relates	10
34(1)(b)(ii)	Long-term Financial Plan	38
34(1)(d)	Define indicators for judging the standard of the council's performance.	15-28
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 inviting written submissions on the draft plan within a period (at least 21 days) from the date of notice.	Comply
35(3)(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.	Comply

Reference	Annual budget	Page
201(2)(a)(i)	Council's objectives for the relevant financial year	13-14
201(2)(a)(ii)	The measures the council proposes to take, during the financial year, towards achieving those objectives	15-28
201(2)(a)(iii)	The indicators the council intends to use as a means of assessing its efficiency in achieving its objectives.	15-28
201(2)(b)	Projected statement of income and expenditure for the financial year, differentiating between operating and capital expenditure	35-36
201(2)(c)	List the council's fees for services and the estimates of revenue from each of those fees	42-43
201(2)(d)	State the amount to be allocated to the development and maintenance of infrastructure for the financial year	32,36-37
201(2)(e)	State the amount the Council proposes to raise by way of rates, and set out the rates structure, for the financial year	41
201(2)(f)	An assessment of the social and economic effects of its rating policies	33-34
201(2)(g)	State the allowances for members of the council for the financial year and the amount budgeted to cover payment of those allowances	29,32
201(2)(ha)	Include any other information required by any guidelines that the Minister may make or as prescribed by regulation.	Comply
201(2)(i)	In a form required by any guidelines that the Minister may make or as prescribed by regulation.	Comply

Strategic Plan 2025 - 2035

As Council enters the third year of the Wagait Shire Strategic Plan 2025–2035, the Plan continues to provide the long-term direction for the future of our community. The Strategic Plan Outlines Council's vision, priorities, and objectives over a ten-year period and serves as the foundation for the development of Council's annual Shire Plans, operational activities, and decision-making processes.

The Plan provides a clear and consistent framework to guide Council's operations, service delivery, advocacy, and resource allocation, ensuring that Council remains focused on achieving outcomes that reflect the aspirations and needs of the Wagait Beach community. It also assists Council to balance current priorities and challenges while planning responsibly for future growth, sustainability, and opportunities.

Developed through consultation and collaboration with residents, Councillors, Council staff, and key stakeholders, the Strategic Plan reflects the shared values and priorities of the community. The Plan has also been informed by the broader regional context, including relevant strategies, legislative requirements, and partnership arrangements where Wagait Shire Council has either a leadership or supporting role in delivery.

As we progress into the third year of implementation, Council remains committed to reviewing and monitoring the priorities identified within the Strategic Plan to ensure they continue to align with community expectations, financial capacity, legislative obligations, and emerging community needs. The Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document that supports continuous improvement, accountability, and informed decision-making across all areas of Council operations.

To ensure the Plan remains relevant and responsive, it will continue to be formally reviewed every five years, or earlier if required due to significant changes affecting the community or local government environment.

The full Wagait Shire Strategic Plan [2025-2035 Strategic Plan](#) is available on Council's website.



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 through to 2035 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

Focus areas	Priorities for this year
Community wellbeing and access to services	• Advocate for improved access to essential services including health care, aged care, transport, communications, and emergency support services • Focus on facilitating locally accessible aged care and wellbeing support services • Support community-led programs and activities. • Continuing development of Council's emergency management framework to strengthen emergency preparedness, response, and recovery arrangements • Communicate and engage with the community through timely, accurate and accessible information sharing, transparent communication, effective representation and positive stakeholder engagement.
Environmental management and protection	• Retain existing waste management services, whilst identifying opportunities for improvements and efficiencies • Review and update the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan • Continue enforcement and education activities relating to companion animal management, responsible pet ownership, and feral animal issues in collaboration with relevant authorities • Work with the NT Weed Management Branch, landholders, and community stakeholders to identify, monitor, and manage priority weed species and support environmental protection initiatives across the Shire
Amenities and infrastructure	• Implement priority recommendations from the Local Roads Safety Audit in collaboration with stakeholders to improve road safety, traffic management and support infrastructure • Continue to progress delivery of the Cloppenburg Park Masterplan while maintaining recreational spaces and protecting environmental and community values • Maintain community infrastructure including footpaths, bike paths, parks and public open spaces to support accessibility and connectivity • Plan and prioritise infrastructure renewal and maintenance activities to improve asset sustainability, service delivery and community amenity

Sustainable local economy	• Improve legislative compliance and encourage transparent communication • Facilitate and advocate for business opportunities and services that meet community needs and align with Council's strategic vision • Advocate for initiatives, infrastructure and policy improvements that support economic diversification and sustainable development opportunities within the Shire and surrounding region.
Partnerships and advocacy for Wagait Shire	• Proactively advocate for Wagait Shire's priorities, needs and future opportunities with all levels of government and key stakeholders • Collaborate with stakeholders (including the community) to identify and progress shared priorities, regional initiatives and partnership opportunities • Pursue grant funding, partnership opportunities and external resources to support Council projects, services and long-term sustainability
Council governance and sustainability	• Prioritise financial sustainability through responsible budgeting and financial management, long-term financial planning, risk management and the pursuit of external funding opportunities • Comply with relevant legislation, policies, governance frameworks and reporting obligations through regular review and continuous improvement • Ensure transparent reporting, accountability and strong administrative practices • Foster open, inclusive and effective communication with residents, landholders, staff and stakeholders while actively seeking feedback to improve community engagement and service delivery



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, advocating for the needs of the community, proactively seeking and securing required funding, and, where funding allows, expanding the range of activities and services available to residents and visitors.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Advocate for improved access to essential services including health care, transport, communications, and emergency support services	Advocate on identified community service gaps through formal correspondence, submissions, and meetings	- Number of submissions, letters, or representations made to government agencies - Evidence of ongoing engagement with service providers - Progress achieved on identified service access issues

Focus on facilitating locally-accessible aged care and wellbeing support services	Identify and engage with potential aged care and wellbeing service providers	- Number of meetings held with service providers or stakeholders - Community feedback regarding access to support services - Funding opportunities identified or pursued
	Explore partnerships and funding opportunities for local wellbeing services	
	Facilitate information sharing with residents regarding available support services	
Deliver programs and activities to the community that support healthy lifestyles, social inclusion and community wellbeing across all age groups	Coordinate and support community events and recreational activities	- Regular program of activities delivered - Minimum of 4 key events held (such as Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Senior's Week) - Participation levels at events and activities - Community satisfaction and feedback
	Promote healthy lifestyle and wellbeing activities through partnerships and local programs	
Support community-led programs and activities	Encourage and promote community participation in community-led programs and activities	Number of community-led activities supported

Continue development of Council's emergency management framework to strengthen emergency preparedness, response, and recovery arrangements	• Review and develop Council's emergency management framework and supporting procedures	• Emergency management documents reviewed and updated • Number of emergency preparedness activities undertaken • Participation in emergency management meetings/exercises • Evidence of ongoing coordination with relevant agencies
	• Facilitate emergency preparedness education and awareness activities for the community	
	• Participate in local and regional emergency management meetings and exercises	
	• Maintain coordination arrangements with emergency service agencies and stakeholders	
Communicate and engage with the community through timely, accurate and accessible information sharing, transparent communication, effective representation and positive stakeholder engagement	• Maintain regular community communications through newsletters, website updates, notices, and social media	• Frequency of community communications issued • Number of consultation and engagement activities undertaken • Community participation levels • Increased accessibility and availability of Council information
	• Facilitate community consultation sessions and engagement opportunities	
	• Improve accessibility of Council information and decision-making processes	
	• Encourage community participation in Council initiatives and activities	

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.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Retain existing waste management services, whilst identifying opportunities for improvements and efficiencies	• Deliver kerbside waste collection services	• Weekly kerbside waste collections • Hardwaste and greenwaste facilities made available to residents • Waste Management Strategy review completed • Operational improvement opportunities identified and progressed (within available resources) • Community education activities undertaken
	• Provide access to hardwaste and greenwaste facilities	
	• Undertake a review of the Waste Management Strategy 2022-2031	
	• Review waste facility operations and identify opportunities for improvement	
	• Promote community awareness and education relating to waste management, recycling practices and circular economy initiatives	

Review and update the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan	• Undertake a review of the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan	• Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation Plan review completed • List of priorities identified • Funding opportunities identified or pursued
	• Identify a list of priorities for action	
	• Seek partnership and funding opportunities to support climate change initiatives	
Continue enforcement and education activities relating to companion animal management, responsible pet ownership, and feral animal issues in collaboration with relevant authorities	• Undertake companion animal management and compliance activities in accordance with Council by-laws and legislation	• Number of compliance and enforcement activities undertaken • Community education activities delivered • Animal management requests responded to within service standards • Collaboration activities undertaken with relevant agencies
	• Promote responsible pet ownership through community education and awareness activities	
	• Work collaboratively with relevant agencies regarding feral animal management issues	

Work with the NT Weed Management Branch, landholders, and community stakeholders to identify, monitor, and manage priority weed species and support environmental protection initiatives across the Shire	• Participate in weed identification, monitoring, and management activities across the Shire	• Weed management activities undertaken on lands owned/managed by Council • Stakeholder collaboration and participation in weed control initiatives • Community education activities delivered • Priority weed issues identified and reported/actioned
	• Collaborate with NT Weed Management Branch and stakeholders on priority weed control initiatives	
	• Support community awareness and education relating to weed management responsibilities	



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.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Maintain community infrastructure including footpaths, bike paths, parks and public spaces to support accessibility and connectivity	Undertake routine inspection and maintenance of community infrastructure assets	- Scheduled maintenance activities completed - Infrastructure improvement works undertaken - Public spaces maintained to an acceptable standard
	Prioritise repairs and improvement works based on condition, safety, and available resources	
	Maintain public open spaces and recreational areas to support safe community use	
Plan and prioritise infrastructure renewal and maintenance activities to improve asset sustainability, service delivery and community amenity	Continue implementation and review of asset management and maintenance planning activities	- Infrastructure maintenance and renewal activities completed - Asset planning documents reviewed and updated - Priority projects identified and progressed - Funding opportunities identified or secured
	Prioritise infrastructure renewal and maintenance works based on risk, condition, and available resources	
	Maintain asset registers and condition assessments where practicable	
	Seek funding opportunities for priority infrastructure renewal projects	

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.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Improve legislative compliance and encourage transparent communication	• Maintain regular engagement and communication with local businesses, organisations, and stakeholders	• Number of stakeholder engagement activities undertaken • Evidence of ongoing communication with local businesses and organisations • Community and stakeholder participation in initiatives • Positive stakeholder feedback and relationship outcomes
	• Provide information and guidance relating to Council processes, compliance requirements, and local initiatives where appropriate	
	• Encourage collaborative relationships and community participation in local economic and community initiatives	

Facilitate and advocate for business opportunities and services that meet community needs and align with Council's strategic vision	Identify and support opportunities that strengthen local service delivery and economic activity within the community	- Business or service opportunities identified or supported - Advocacy activities undertaken for local services and opportunities - Community needs and opportunities assessed or progressed - Evidence of support provided to local initiatives - Positive stakeholder feedback and relationship outcomes
	Advocate for new or improved services that address identified community needs	
	Support local business and community initiatives where practicable and aligned with Council objectives	
	Promote opportunities that contribute to local employment, wellbeing, and community sustainability	
Advocate for initiatives, infrastructure and policy improvements that support economic diversification and sustainable development opportunities	Advocate to government and relevant stakeholders regarding infrastructure and policy priorities that support economic sustainability	- Number of advocacy meetings, submissions, or representations undertaken - Participation in regional economic or planning discussions - Funding or partnership opportunities identified or pursued - Economic development initiatives supported and/or progressed
	Participate in regional discussions and planning activities relating to economic development opportunities	
	Identify and pursue partnership and funding opportunities that support sustainable local economic outcomes	

Partnerships and advocacy for Wagait Shire

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.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Proactively advocate for Wagait Shire's priorities, needs and future opportunities with all levels of government and key stakeholders	Advocate to government agencies and decision-makers on identified Council and community priorities	- Number of advocacy meetings and forums attended - Submissions, correspondence, or representations completed - Evidence of engagement with key stakeholders and government agencies - Progress achieved on identified advocacy priorities
	Promote awareness of local challenges, opportunities, and strategic priorities	
Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and progress shared priorities, regional initiatives and partnership opportunities	Identify opportunities for joint projects, regional initiatives, and collaborative service delivery	- Shared initiatives or projects identified and progressed - Collaborative planning activities undertaken - Partnership opportunities explored or established - Evidence of regional cooperation and shared outcomes
	Work with stakeholders to progress agreed priorities and shared objectives	
	Participate in collaborative planning and project development activities	
	Support initiatives that provide regional or community benefit	

Pursue grant funding, partnership opportunities and external resources to support Council projects, services and long-term sustainability	• Identify and monitor grant and funding opportunities relevant to Council priorities	• Grant applications submitted • Funding or external resources secured • Partnership opportunities identified or pursued • Funded projects delivered and reported on
	• Prepare and submit funding applications and partnership proposals where appropriate	
	• Engage with funding bodies, government agencies, and stakeholders regarding project opportunities	
	• Support delivery and reporting requirements for funded projects	

Council 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.

Priority	Work Streams / Deliverables for FY 2026-27	Measures
Prioritise financial sustainability through responsible budgeting and financial management, long-term financial planning, risk management and the pursuit of external funding opportunities	• Ensure responsible financial management, budgeting, and monitoring practices	• Budget monitoring and reporting completed • Long-term financial planning documents reviewed and/or updated • Risk management activities undertaken • Grant and funding opportunities identified, pursued, and/or secured
	• Review and maintain long-term financial planning and sustainability strategies	
	• Monitor organisational risks and maintain risk management practices	
	• Identify and pursue grant funding and external funding opportunities aligned with Council priorities	

Compliance with relevant legislation, policies, governance frameworks and reporting obligations through regular review and continuous improvement	• Maintain compliance with legislative, regulatory, and reporting obligations	• Legislative and reporting obligations met • Policies and governance documents reviewed and updated within required timeframes • Audit and compliance activities completed • Continuous improvement activities undertaken
	• Review and update Council policies, procedures, and governance documents as required	
	• Continue internal monitoring and review processes to support good governance and accountability	
Ensure transparent reporting, accountability and strong administrative practices administrative practices	• Provide accurate and timely reports to Council to support informed decision-making	• Council reports and agendas prepared within required timeframes • Governance and administrative requirements maintained • Council meetings conducted in accordance with legislative obligations • Transparent reporting and accountability practices maintained
	• Maintain effective administrative and record-keeping practices	
	• Support transparent governance processes and accountability measures	
	• Ensure Council meetings and governance activities are coordinated in accordance with legislative requirements	

Foster open, inclusive and effective communication with residents, landholders, staff and stakeholders while actively seeking feedback to improve community engagement and service delivery	• Maintain regular communication with residents, landholders, staff, and stakeholders through multiple communication channels	• Communication and engagement activities undertaken • Community consultation and feedback opportunities provided • Accessibility and transparency of Council information maintained • Service delivery or engagement improvements identified and implemented
	• Facilitate opportunities for community consultation, feedback, and participation	
	• Promote accessible and transparent information sharing regarding Council activities and decisions	
	• Review feedback and identify opportunities to improve service delivery and engagement practices	

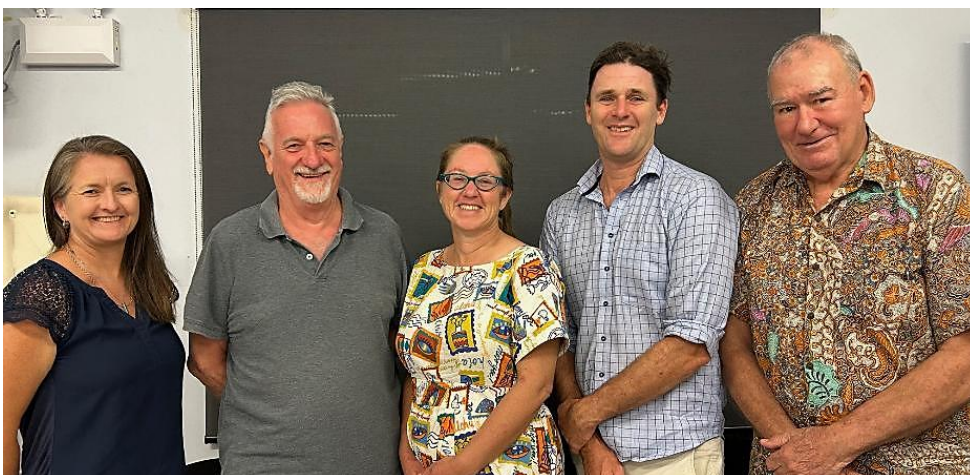
Our Councillors

President Neil White	Deputy President Sarah Manning	Councillor Peter Clee	Councillor Sarah Smith	Councillor Tom Dyer
Elected 2025	Elected 2025	Elected 2025	Elected 2025	Elected 2025
				

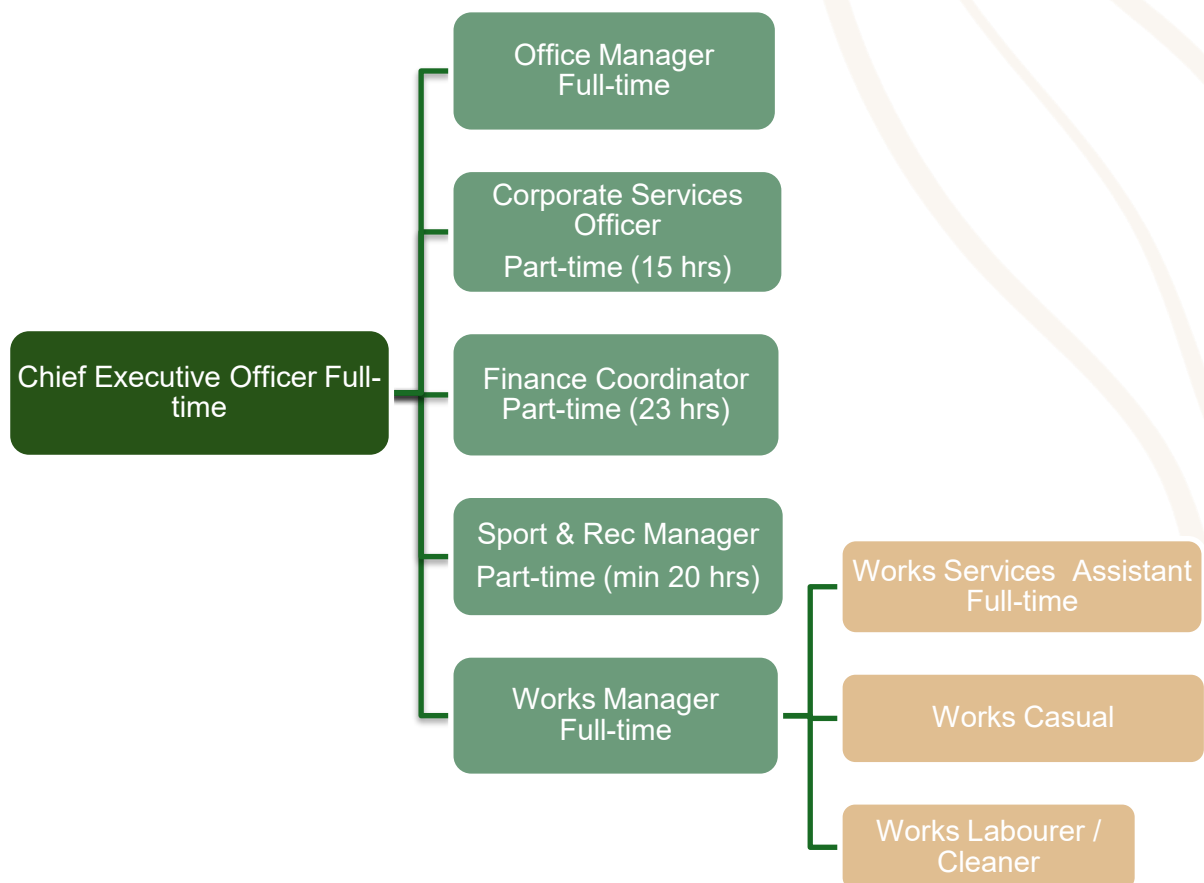
Elected member allowances

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

ELECTED MEMBER ALLOWANCES					
Allowance Type	Amount \$				
	President	Deputy President	Councillor (3 Members)	TOTAL CLAIMABLE	TOTAL BUDGETED
Annual Base Allowance	7,686	7,686	7,686	38,430	38,430
Annual Principal Member Additional Allowance	25,000			25,000	25,000
Extra Meeting Allowance		12,000	12,000	48,000	48,000
Professional Development Allowance	7,500	7,500	7,500	37,500	37,500
Vehicle Allowance (capped at \$10,000)	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000	3,000
TOTALS	50,186	37,186	37,186	198,930	151,930



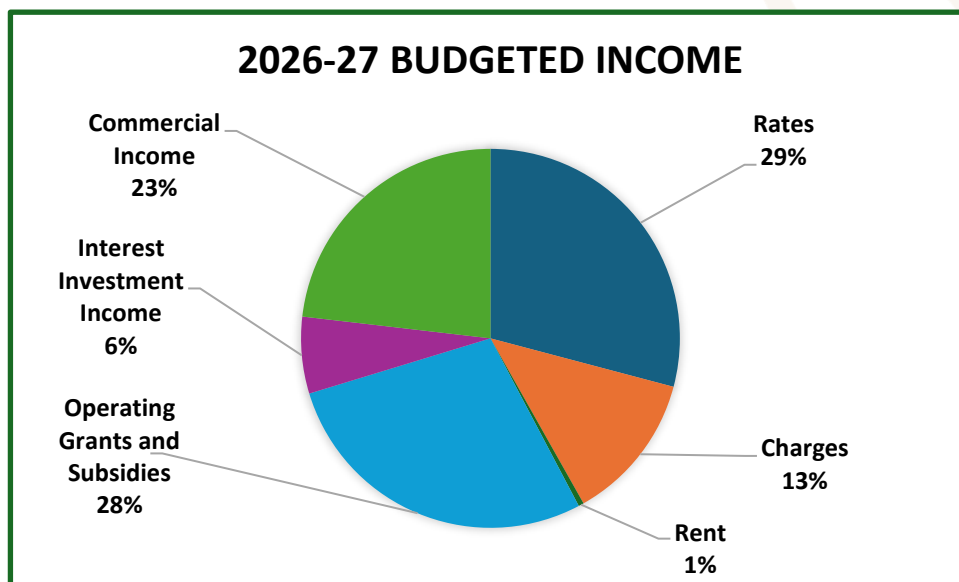
Organisational structure



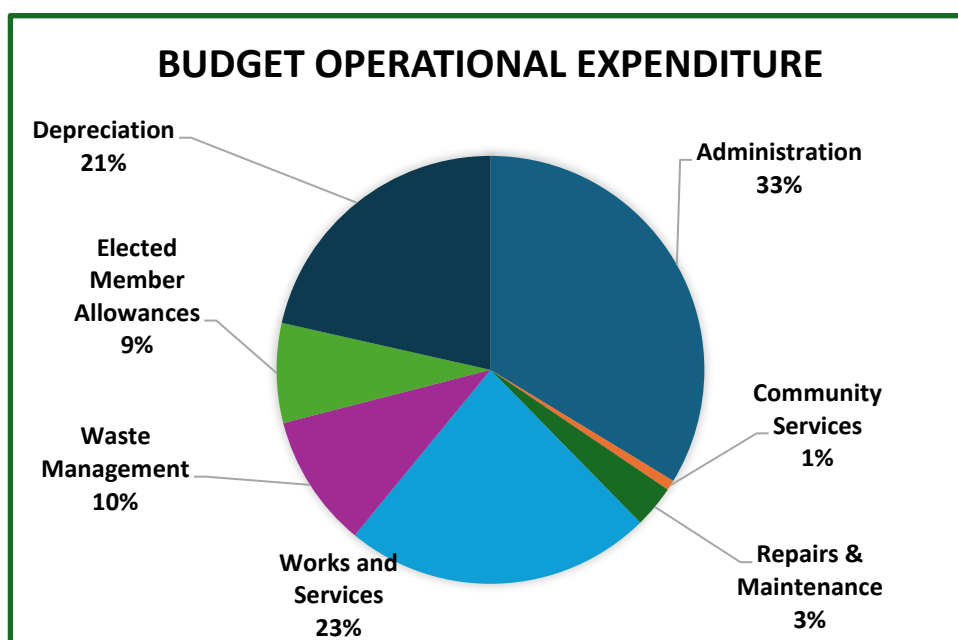
Our finances

Annual budget overview

Council is projecting an increase of 22.5% in income compared to last year's approved budget.



Overall expenditure is projected to increase by just under 3.5% compared to last year's approved budget. This is due to continued cost constraint by council in the face of increasing energy charges.



2026-27 Detailed Budget

	2026-27	2025-26
	Proposed Annual Budget	Revised Q2 Amended Budget
OPERATING INCOME		
Rates		
	\$ 400,517	\$ 290,364
Charges		
	\$ 174,754	\$ 152,521
Rent		
	\$ 6,200	\$ 6,700
Operating Grants and Subsidies		
	\$ 385,300	\$ 399,405
Interest / Investment Income		
	\$ 90,000	\$ 85,000
Commercial and Other Income		
	\$ 318,566	\$ 295,068
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$ 1,375,337	\$ 1,229,058
OPERATING EXPENDITURE		
Employee Expenses		
	\$ 698,067	\$ 682,701
Materials and Contracts		
Admin Expenses		
	\$ 186,136	\$ 182,300
Bank Charges		
	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,200
Contracts & Materials		
	\$ 39,000	\$ 65,000
Memberships & Subscriptions		
	\$ 5,200	\$ 4,700
Telephones		
	\$ 5,750	\$ 5,900
Project / Activity Expenses		
	\$ 13,500	\$ 14,500
Service Utilities		
	\$ 15,900	\$ 17,400
Repairs & Maintenance Expenses		
	\$ 43,900	\$ 46,500
Vehicle & Plant		
	\$ 57,354	\$ 46,304
Waste Management Expenses		
	\$ 176,100	\$ 159,500
TOTAL MATERIALS & CONTRACTS	\$ 545,340	\$ 544,304
Elected Member Allowances		
	\$ 63,430	\$ 60,310
Elected Member Expenses		
	\$ 88,500	\$ 58,000
Other Expenses - (By Election)		
	\$ -	\$ 20,000
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment		
	\$ 376,000	\$ 396,000
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	\$ 1,771,337	\$ 1,761,315
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$ (396,000)	\$ (532,257)

Rating Policy

Wagait Shire Council remains committed to maintaining a fair and equitable rating structure and will continue to apply a flat rate per allotment across the municipality. Council recognises that rates place a financial burden on households and has historically worked hard to keep increases to a minimum wherever possible.

However, over many years, minimal rate increases have not kept pace with the rising costs associated with delivering essential services, maintaining infrastructure, meeting legislative obligations, and responding to increasing operational expenses. At the same time, opportunities for external grant funding have become more limited, placing additional pressure on Council's overall financial position.

As a result, Council has reached a point where a more significant adjustment to rates is necessary to place the organisation back on a financially sustainable path and ensure the continued delivery of core services to the community. Without this correction, Council's ability to maintain existing service levels and respond to future community needs would be increasingly challenged.

For the 2026–27 financial year, Council proposes a rates increase of \$110,153, which equates to approximately \$284.63 per ratepayer. While Council acknowledges this is a substantial increase compared with previous years, it is considered necessary to address the growing gap between income and expenditure and to strengthen Council's long-term financial sustainability.

Waste management charges — which are applied as a flat charge per allotment regardless of development status — will also increase for 2026–27. An increase of \$57.45 is proposed to help offset rising costs associated with kerbside collection, hard waste freight, landfill disposal, and overall waste operations. This equates to approximately \$1.10 per week for ratepayers.

Council understands the current economic climate continues to place pressure on many households and has carefully considered the balance between affordability for residents and the need to maintain responsible financial management. Council remains committed to delivering essential services efficiently, identifying operational savings where possible, and pursuing alternative funding opportunities to reduce reliance on rates revenue in the future.

Council also recognises that, despite the proposed increase, Wagait Shire rates remain comparatively low when measured against the actual cost of delivering services in a remote area environment.

Social and Economic Impacts

When determining rates each year, Council must consider both its Long-Term Financial Plan and the broader social and economic conditions affecting the region. This includes increasing costs of service delivery, infrastructure maintenance, insurance, fuel, utilities, compliance requirements, and contractor expenses, alongside the financial pressures currently experienced by residents.

Council's revenue base remains limited and relies heavily on rates, government grants, and service delivery contracts. With expenditure continuing to rise at a faster rate than income over recent years, Council has identified the need to take proactive measures in order to remain viable.

While Council has worked to minimise the impact of increases over many years, this approach has also contributed to the current financial challenges by limiting revenue growth below the actual cost increases experienced by the organisation. The proposed increase for 2026–27 is intended to begin addressing this imbalance and place Council in a stronger position moving forward.

Council offers payment plans and support arrangements for ratepayers experiencing hardship and encourages residents facing financial difficulty to contact Council directly to discuss available options.



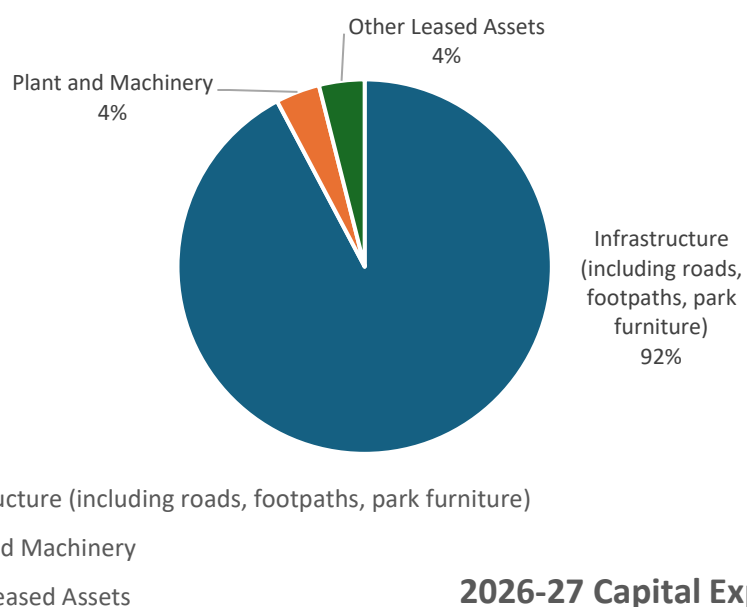
Appendices

Annual budget 2026-2027

Statement 1. Annual Budget	
Table 1.1 Annual Budget Income and Expenditure	
	2026-27
	Proposed Budget \$
OPERATING INCOME	
Rates	400,517
Charges	174,754
Fees and Charges	6,200
Operating Grants and Subsidies	385,300
Interest / Investment Income	90,000
Commercial Income	318,566
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	1,375,337
OPERATING EXPENDITURE	
Employment Expenses	698,067
Materials and Contracts	540,340
Elected Member Allowances	63,430
Elected Member Expenses	88,500
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	376,000
Interest Expenses	5,000
Other Expenses	-
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	1,771,337
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS / DEFECIT	- 396,000

Table 1.2 Annual Budget Operating Position

	2026-27
	Proposed Budget \$
BUDGETING OPERATING SURPLUS / DEFICIT	- 396,000
Remove NON-CASH ITEMS	
Less Non-Cash Income	
Add Back Non-Cash Expenses - Depreciation + Vehicle Lease Fees	392,000
TOTAL NON-CASH ITEMS	392,000
Less ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	
Capital Expenditure	2,840,500
Borrowing Repayments (Principal Only)	11,337
Transfers to Reserves	24,663
Other Outflows (No new borrowings planned)	
TOTAL ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	2,876,500
Add ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	
Capital Grants Income	2,394,000
Prior Year Carry Forward Tied Funding & new funding received	458,500
Other Inflow of Funds - Council Funds	28,000
Transfers from Reserves	-
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	2,880,500
NET BUDGETED OPERATING POSITION	0

**2026-27 Capital Expenditure**

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)	Outer Financial Year 2 Budget \$ (D)	Outer Financial Year 3 Budget \$ (E)	Outer Financial Year >3 Budget \$ (F)	Total Planned Budget \$ (A+B+C+D+E+F)	Expected Project Completion Date
Land and Buildings		-						-	
Infrastructure	Roads Reseal	-		1,300,000	-	-	-	1,300,000	TBA - Pending funding
	Skate Park & Pump Track			935,000	-	-	-	935,000	30/06/2030
	Cox Rd Causeway			40,000	-	-	-	40,000	TBA - Pending funding
	Foot/Cycle Path			375,000	-	-	-	375,000	30/06/2027
TOTAL		-	-	2,650,000				2,650,000	

Capital Priority Projects - Funded**Footpath Project - \$375,000**

This project will extend the existing footpath/cycle path network by constructing a new section commencing at the start of Wagait Tower Road and connecting it to the current path located near the Wagait Beach Supermarket.

Tractor Attachment Stick Rake - \$3,500

This equipment will improve the efficiency of green waste management by enabling the majority of green waste to be pushed and stockpiled with minimal dirt contamination, resulting in more effective burning operations when required.

Mower Deck - \$12,000

A new mower deck is required for one of Council's ride-on mowers. Replacement of the deck is recommended to ensure the equipment remains safe and operational for ongoing use.

Long-term Financial Plan 2026-2031

Council's long-term financial plan provides an overview of what the budget may look like for the next four years.

Income is forecast to increase between 3 and 5% with minor increases or decreases in operational funding allocations from the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments. We forecast an increase in contract income of 20% per annum.

Expenditure forecast increases between 3 and 5% (with the exception of road expenses which we forecast an increase of 25% per annum).

This plan is made based on all operational funding with capital works included in 2026/2027 from existing grants. Additional capital works will need to be predominantly funded by external sources.

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.

ATTACHMENT A

ATTACHMENT 1

Wagait Shire Council 142 Wagait Tower Road Wagait Beach NT 0822							
Long Term Financial Projections							
2026 - 2031							
		Budget 2026/27	Plan 2027/28	Plan 2028/29	Plan 2029/30	Plan 2030/2031	NOTES
OPERATIONAL INCOME							
RATES		\$400,517	\$416,538	\$434,241	\$453,781	\$475,336	1
GRANTS		\$385,300	\$368,006	\$375,366	\$382,873	\$390,531	2
CONTRACTS		\$318,566	\$382,279	\$401,393	\$421,463	\$442,536	3
RENTAL INCOME		\$6,200	\$6,510	\$6,836	\$7,177	\$7,536	
OTHER INCOME		\$90,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	4
WASTE MANAGEMENT LEVY		\$174,754	\$181,744	\$189,468	\$197,994	\$207,399	
Total Income		\$1,375,337	\$1,425,077	\$1,477,304	\$1,523,289	\$1,583,338	
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES							
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSE		\$186,136	\$191,720	\$197,472	\$203,396	\$209,498	
EMPLOYMENT EXPENSE		\$698,067	\$719,009	\$740,579	\$762,797	\$785,681	
ROADS		\$12,000	\$15,000	\$18,750	\$23,438	\$29,297	5
CONTRACTS & MATERIALS		\$215,100	\$223,704	\$232,652	\$241,958	\$251,637	
REPAIR & MAIN TOWN ASSETS		\$31,900	\$33,176	\$34,503	\$35,883	\$37,318	
VEHICLE & PLANT		\$57,354	\$59,648	\$62,034	\$64,515	\$67,096	
GRANT EXPENSES		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
COUNCILLOR EXPENSES		\$151,930	\$156,488	\$161,183	\$166,018	\$170,999	
OTHER OPERATIONAL COSTS		\$21,200	\$22,048	\$22,930	\$23,847	\$24,801	
UTILITIES		\$21,650	\$22,516	\$23,417	\$24,353	\$25,327	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$1,395,337	\$1,443,309	\$1,493,519	\$1,546,205	\$1,601,653	
Net Operational Income		-\$20,000	-\$18,232	-\$16,216	-\$22,916	-\$18,315	
Capital Expenditure		\$406,500	\$40,000	\$90,000	\$69,000	\$2,235,000	
Other Expenditure		\$0	\$0				
Net Income		-\$426,500	-\$58,232	-\$106,216	-\$91,916	-\$2,253,315	

Major Initiatives Items proposed

Underlying assumptions

1. Income from rates to increase by 4% in 2027-2028 and 0.25% increments in later years
2. 2026/2027 Grants amount includes unspent grants from previous years
3. Commercial income to increase by 20% in 2027/28 then at 5% per annum
4. Bank interest from reserve funds from unexpended grants
5. Includes 25% annual increase in road maintenance funding each year during the estimate period

2026-2027 ANNUAL BUDGET

OPERATING REVENUE

Council's proposed operating revenue for the 2026-27 financial year has increased compared to the 2025-26 revised budget, primarily due to the proposed increase in rates and charges and continued commercial income activities. The increase in revenue is a necessary step toward addressing the long-term gap between Council's income and expenditure, which has developed over many years of minimal rate increases despite rising operational costs.

Council remains committed to identifying additional income opportunities, advocating for grant funding, and improving operational efficiencies to strengthen long-term financial sustainability.

CAPITAL REVENUE

The majority of proposed capital revenue for 2026-27 is expected to come from external grant funding opportunities. As a small remote council with limited own-source revenue, Council continues to rely heavily on grant funding to deliver significant infrastructure and community improvement projects.

Council will continue to actively pursue external funding opportunities to minimise the financial burden on ratepayers while maintaining and improving community infrastructure.

OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE

Operational expenditure for the 2026-27 financial year reflects ongoing increases in the cost of delivering services, maintaining infrastructure, complying with legislative requirements, and responding to rising material, contractor, utility and waste management costs across all sectors.

Employee costs, contractor expenses and waste management costs continue to place pressure on Council's budget. While expenditure has increased in several areas, Council has worked through the budget in detail to ensure expenditure remains responsible and necessary for the continued delivery of essential services to the community.

Council member allowances have also been budgeted in accordance with determinations made under section 353 of the Local Government Act 2019.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Council's proposed capital expenditure program remains ambitious considering Council's limited revenue base and will continue to depend largely on successful grant funding applications. Priority will continue to be given to projects that improves community infrastructure, service delivery, public safety and long-term asset sustainability.

FINANCIAL RESERVES

A significant focus on the 2026-27 budget development has been improving Council's long-term financial sustainability and reducing reliance on reserve funds to balance operational deficits.

This approach represents an important step toward strengthening Council's financial position and ensuring reserves are retained for future asset renewal, emergency response requirements and unforeseen financial pressures. The proposed increase in rates and charges forms part of Council's broader strategy to gradually bring operational income more in line with the true cost of delivering services to the community in a challenging economic environment.



Rates Declaration 2026-27



Local Government Act Declaration of Rates and Charges 2026-2027

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 29 June 2026, in respect of the financial year ending 30 June 2027.

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 \$393,141 which will be raised by the application of a fixed charge amount of \$1,015.87 per allotment being payable for the financial year ending 30 June 2027. This is an increase of 37% 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 \$170,454 by these charges.

- a. The following charges were declared:
 - A charge of \$440.45 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 2026 OR by four (4) approximately equal instalments on the following dates, namely:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • First instalment, 30 September 2026 | • Second instalment, 30 November 2026 |
| • Third instalment, 31 January 2027 | • Fourth instalment, 31 March 2027 |

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.

Russell Anderson

Chief Executive Officer, Wagait Shire Council

Fees and Charges 2026-2027



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	\$110.00
	Local community groups or NFP per half day or eve	\$55.00
	Non community groups per day/overnight	\$165.00
	Non community groups per half day or eve	\$82.50
	Cleaning fee	\$66.00
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)	\$2.20
	Chairs (per 10 chairs per function/day)	\$5.50
	Dishes/Cutlery (per set of 10 per function/day)	\$3.30
	Eskies (each per function/day)	\$3.30
	Projector (per function/day)	\$22.00
ADMINISTRATION FEES		
Photocopying / Printing	A4 sheet – Black & White (3+ pages)	\$0.25
	A4 sheet – Colour	\$0.35
	A3 sheet – Black & White	\$0.45
	A3 sheet - Colour	\$0.55
Laminating	A4 / A3 sheet	\$2.20
Printing of Council Agenda	Print a council meeting agenda for meeting (B&W)	\$15.00
	Print a council meeting agenda for meeting (Colour)	\$.25.00
WASTE MANAGEMENT CHARGES		
General Waste Charges	All properties vacant and non-vacant	\$440.45
Additional Collection	Additional rubbish bin/quarter	\$110.00
Replacement Bin (240lt)	Allow one week for delivery after order	\$110.00
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 **	\$44.00
	Out-of-hours opening fee**	\$88.00

PLANNING & WORKS FEES				
Reinstatement of damaged road pavement (charged at completion of repairs/works)				At Cost + 20%
Road Openings/Road Closings (deposit of \$5500)				\$265 per application
Abandoned Vehicle Removal, storage and release				At Cost + 20%
DOG MANAGEMENT FEES				
Dog Registration (annual)	Desexed dog	\$22.00	concession	\$11.00
	Entire dog	\$77.00	concession	\$55.00
	Dogs under 6 months (no charge)			NA
	Declared/dangerous dog (no concessions)			\$275.00
	Licence to keep more than 2 Dogs			\$110.00
Other Dog Related Charges	Pound Release Fee – Registered Dog <i>(First time – no charge for registered dogs)</i>			\$99.00
	Pound Release Fee – Unregistered Dog <i>(Dog must be registered before it can be released)</i>			\$198.00
	Pound Daily Maintenance Fee			\$66.00
	Dispose of Dead Animal / Dog			\$176.00
	Surrender Fee – per dog			\$330.00
RATES MANAGEMENT FEES				
Rates Search	Rates information search			\$110.00
Late payment	Interest for late rates payments (per annum)			18%
Reprint Rates Notice	To reprint a rates notice			\$15.00
PLANT & EQUIPMENT HIRE (WET HIRE ONLY)				
Vehicle and Driver	Includes Truck / 4WD (per hour)			\$110.00
Tractor with Attachment	Includes Bucket / Slasher (per hour)			\$220.00
Vehicle with Spray Tank	Includes Weed Spray and operator (per hour)			\$132.00
Ride on Mower	Includes operator & fuel (per hour)			\$143.00
Whipper Snipper	Includes operator & fuel (per hour)			\$110.00
Chainsaw	Includes operator & fuel (per hour)			\$110.00
5000ltr Water Delivery	Potable Delivery to property – local estate only			\$150.00

*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



Phone: 08 8978 5185

Email: council@wagait.nt.gov.au

Address: 62 Wagait Tower Road, Wagait Beach NT 0801

Website: www.wagait.nt.gov.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/wagait

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.