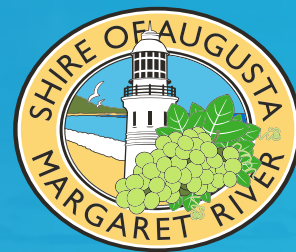


2026-27

RATES AND BUDGET

Investing in our community



A message from our Shire President

Practical, responsible and supporting everyday life across our Shire – that's the focus of our 2026-27 Budget.

This Budget prioritises what matters most to our community. It's the result of months of rigorous planning and reflects Council's ongoing commitment to carefully managing the Shire's finances.

We are continually looking at how we can reduce costs and create efficiencies whilst ensuring we can continue to deliver the essential services, facilities and infrastructure our community relies on.

Budget Focus

- Delivering essential services
- Ensuring our community continues to have access to safe, well-maintained facilities and infrastructure
- Remaining financially sustainable and keeping up with rising costs
- Making the most of every ratepayer dollar

In addition to providing services such as waste collection, ranger services, public health, libraries and recreation facilities, the Shire is responsible for maintaining hundreds of community assets, including more than 1,000 kilometres of roads, 140 kilometres of paths, almost 300 parks and reserves, 27 jetties and boat ramps, two libraries, two cemeteries and two recreation centres.

This year, we'll deliver a \$34 million capital works program to renew or upgrade community assets and have worked incredibly hard to secure around \$16 million of the necessary funding through Federal and State government grants, together with \$2.4 million from property developers. By leveraging external funding, we're able to make the best use of every ratepayer dollar, which makes up around 63% of our total operating income.

On top of that, we'll spend another \$20 million on the maintenance of community assets to keep them safe, functional and fit for the future. This investment is not only essential to protecting these assets, but it's financially responsible, helping

prevent larger and more expensive repairs in the years ahead. A further \$6 million will be allocated to Shire reserves – which is our savings for future projects.

Beyond the essentials, the Budget continues to invest in the things that make our Shire a great place to live. This includes providing almost \$1 million to support local events, community groups and environmental initiatives to strengthen community wellbeing, protect our natural environment and enrich life across our growing Shire.

Guided by our Strategic Community Plan 2025-2035, this is a practical and responsible Budget that balances today's needs with tomorrow's opportunities, ensuring the Shire can continue delivering the services, facilities and infrastructure our community relies on, now and into the future.

Julia Jean-Rice
Shire President

**ONE COMMUNITY STANDING
TOGETHER WITH NATURE**



OUR FINANCES



OPERATING
INCOME:

\$53.575M



OPERATING
EXPENSES:

\$62.253M



RATES
INCOME:

\$33.575M

63% of operating income



CAPITAL
WORKS:

\$34.011M

\$16.33 million from Federal/
State Government grants

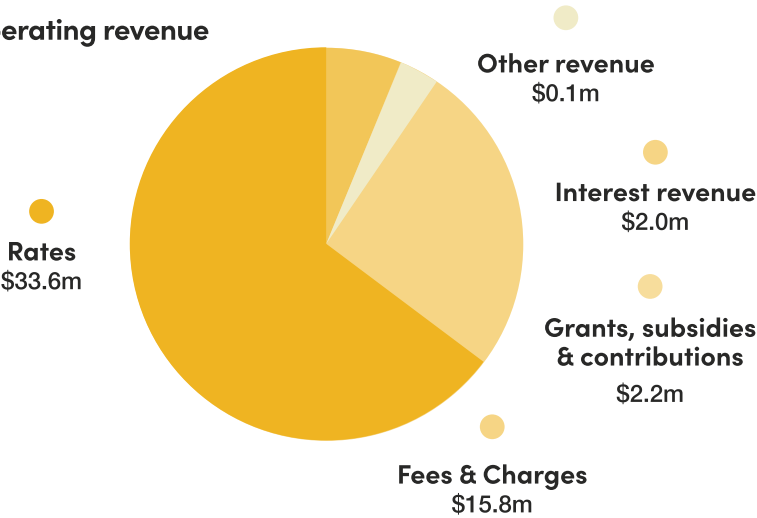
Fees & Charges – Our income includes revenue from our recreation centres and Yiradjinda Holiday parks and fees for other services. Some fees, like planning and building applications, are set by the State, while others are set by the Shire after considering service costs and community affordability.

Waste Collection Fees – We’ve made changes to these fees to allow FOGO processing to be reinstated. However, a reduction in the waste facilities maintenance rate will offset this increase for most households.

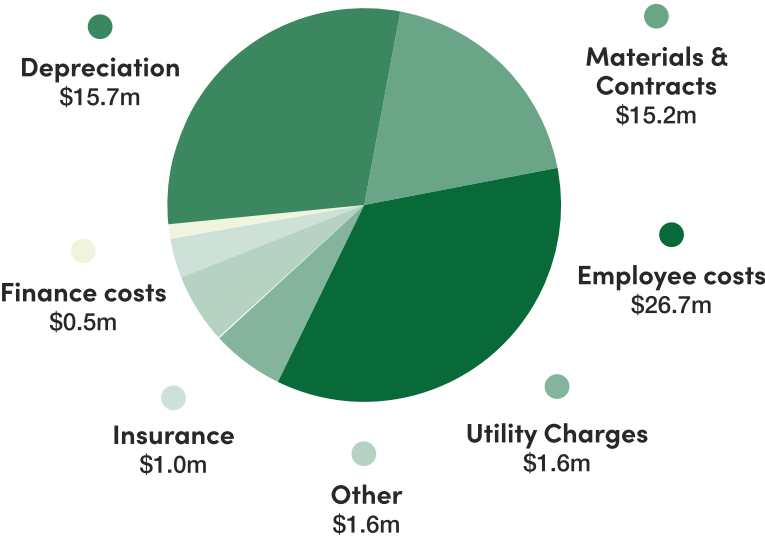
Depreciation – We manage assets with a replacement value of \$650 million+ which lose value over time through wear and tear.

Rating categories – After listening to community feedback, we created a new rating category for hosted short-term rental accommodation (STRA), that sits between residential and tourism properties.

Operating revenue



How operating revenue is spent



We continue to strongly advocate for greater State and Federal Government investment to help meet the needs of our community (and visitors) and protect our natural assets.

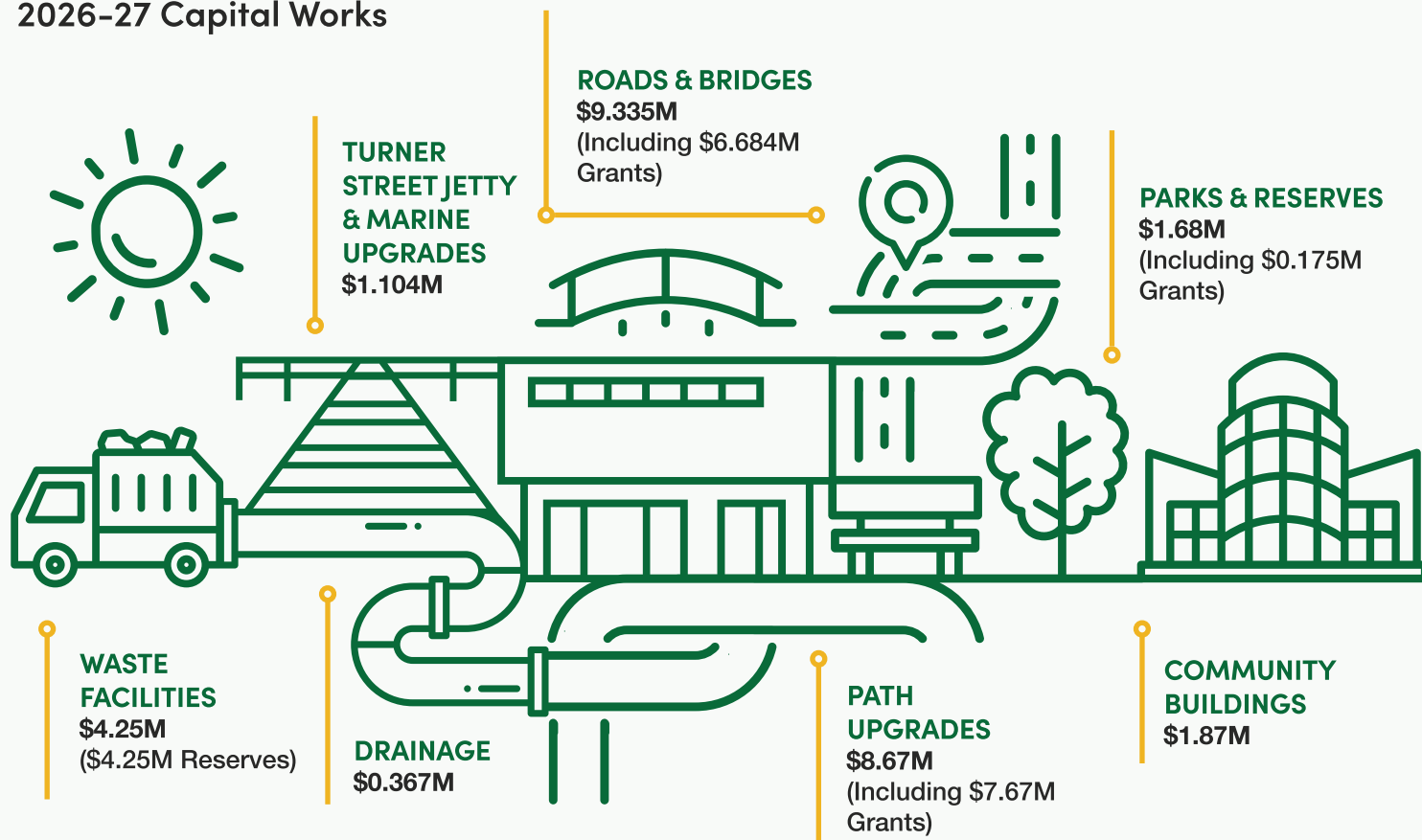
DID YOU KNOW:

Around half of our \$34 million capital works program is funded by State and Federal grants, along with developer contributions.

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY RUNNING

The Shire provides the facilities, infrastructure and services our community relies on every day.

2026-27 Capital Works



Community assets we maintain



Did you know:



Last year we processed 419 new building applications.
(3-year average is 280)



Around 2.5 people move to our Shire every day.



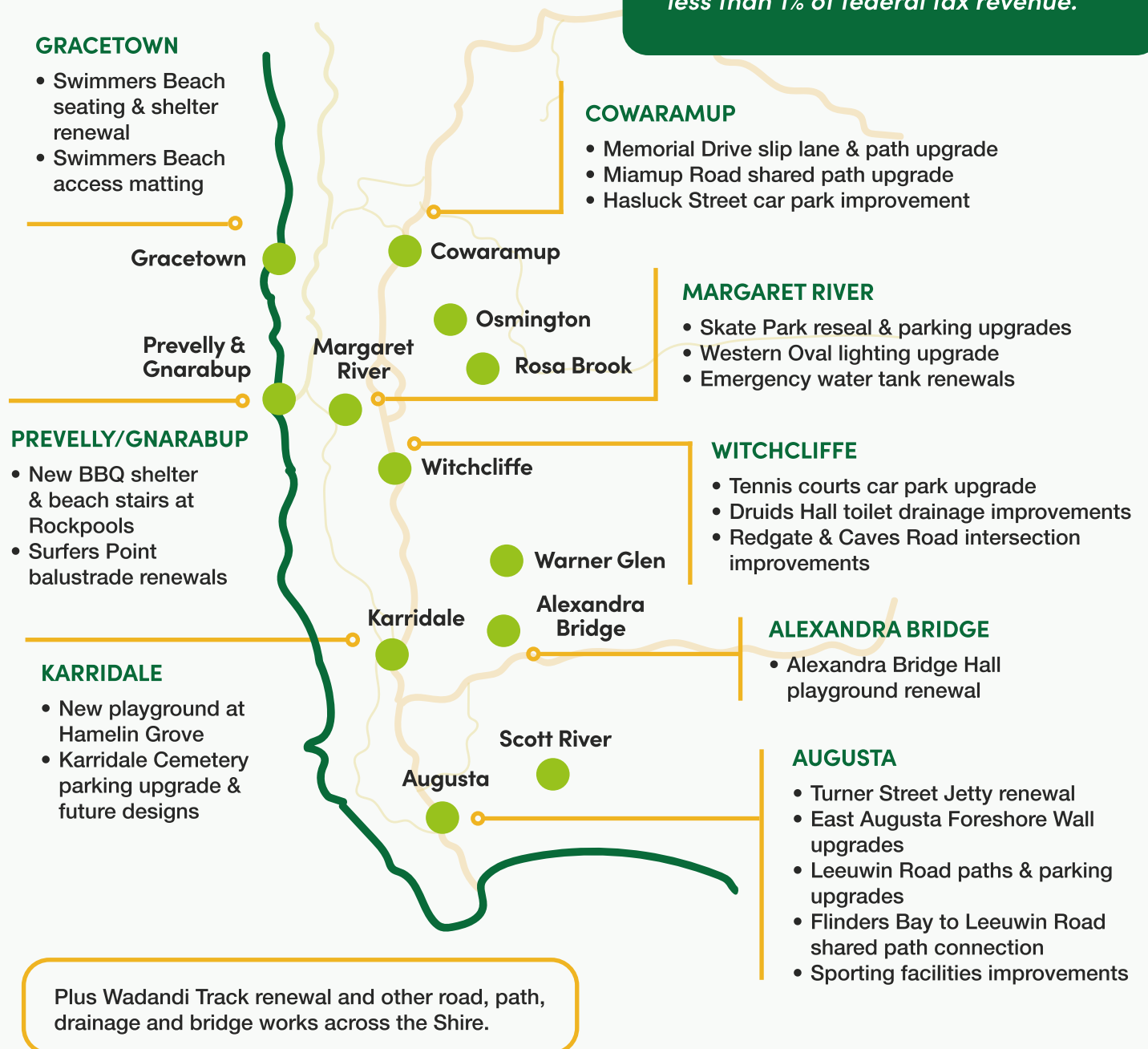
Since 2023 we've inherited \$45m in assets from new developments, including roads, footpaths, parks and public spaces, which we must maintain.

INVESTING IN OUR TOWNS

A few examples

DID YOU KNOW:

Local governments are responsible for one-third of Australia's public infrastructure, including 77% of Australia's road network, yet received less than 1% of federal tax revenue.



OUR WORKFORCE

People are at the heart of the services we provide, which is why employee costs are our biggest expense. Our staff bring diverse skills and expertise to deliver essential services, support our community and help make our region a great place to live, work and visit.

INVESTING IN LOCALS



Local Events

From major events showcasing our region to local favourites like the Christmas Street Party, we support events that connect, celebrate and strengthen our community.



Community Development

To build an inclusive and accessible community, we deliver programs that support people of all ages and celebrate diversity.



Libraries & Rec Centres

More than just places to exercise or borrow books, these community hubs are a space for everyone to connect and feel part of the community.



Grants & Partnerships

By working alongside community groups we deliver lasting social, environmental and community benefits.



Nala Bardip Mia – Margaret River HEART

Owned by the Shire and co-managed with Arts Margaret River, this world-class venue enriches our community through arts and entertainment.

RATES FAQs

What are rates?



Rates are an annual property tax paid by house or landowners to their local council to help pay for the services, facilities and infrastructure needed by the community. The way they're calculated is set out in *Local Government Act 1995* and the *Valuation of Land Act 1978*.

What are the other charges on my rates notice?



We charge fees, where appropriate, for the following services:

- Emergency Services Levy – collected on behalf of DFES
- Kerbside waste collection charges
- Waste facilities maintenance charges

I think my rates notice is incorrect. What should I do?



We do our best to ensure your property details are up to date. If something doesn't look right on your rates notice, please contact the Shire by phone or email.

What happens if I'm struggling to pay my rates?



If you're experiencing financial hardship we offer a range of payment options. Head to our website for more info or contact our team.



**FOR MORE RATES
FAQS OR TO SWITCH
TO ERATES:**

Scan the QR code or
head to our website.



SHIRE
PRESIDENT

DEPUTY SHIRE
PRESIDENT

COUNCILLORS



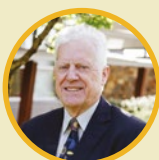
Shire President
Julia Jean-Rice



Deputy Shire
President
Tracey Muir



Councillor
Lisa Bell



Councillor
Greg Boland



Councillor
Melissa D'Ath



Councillor
Joe Forte



Councillor
Kylie Kennaugh



Councillor
Pamela Winter



One community
standing together
with **nature**

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