City of Busselton
Geographe Bay

2026/27 Annual Budget

Executive Summary

The 2026/27 annual budget is presented herewith for formal consideration by the Council.

The budget is informed by underpinning strategic planning documents and has been guided in its development by Elected Member workshops in May, June and July, ensuring it is aligned to community's key goals and objectives.

Through the budget, the City will continue to provide a broad range of services and facilities to a growing and diverse community, providing for the integration of environmental, economic and social advancement opportunities across the district.

The annual budget not only considers short term financial obligations but is developed in a manner that recognises and makes provision for long term financial commitments. As such the budget presented encapsulates the anticipated priorities and desires for the City and its residents over the next twelve months, whilst also continuing to provide a solid platform by which the City's future financial sustainability can be further built upon.

Some key items of note are:

- $1.5M for upgrade works at the City's Leisure Centres;
- $500K for continuation of planning and design on a squash facility;
- $300k towards progression of improved facilities at Dunsborough Districts Country Club;
- $520K for various renewal and upgrade works to public ablutions;
- $740K for various renewal and upgrade works to the City's Aged Housing assets;
- $20M in respect of the City's road network;
- $4M in parks, gardens and public open space reserves work including $330K for the playground renewal program;
- $3.1M for the continuation of various coastal stabilisation works;
- $9.5M in footpath and cycleway construction, including $5.9M for the progression of works on the Wadandi Track, all grant funded;
- $2.3M in various new and upgrade works at the Airport;
- Funding to undertake a Youth Needs Analysis across Vasse and Yalyalup
- Funding to develop a Community Safety Action Plan
- Funding to commence a service review program aimed at continuous improvement

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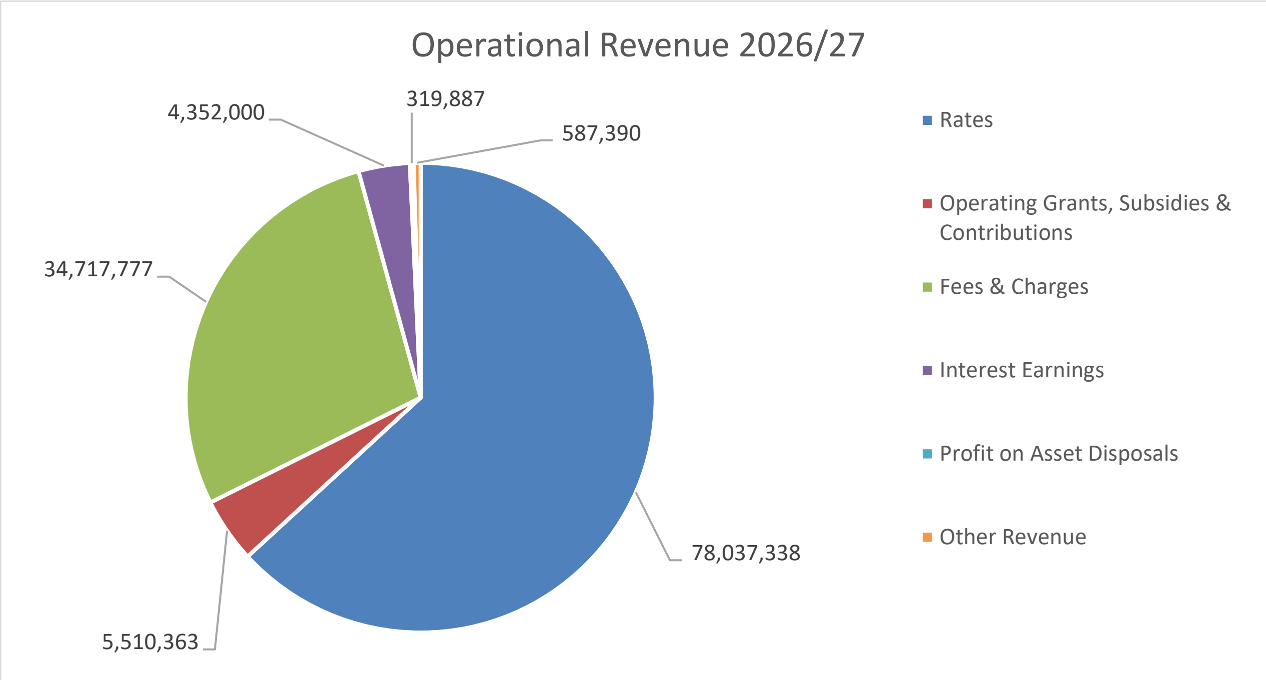
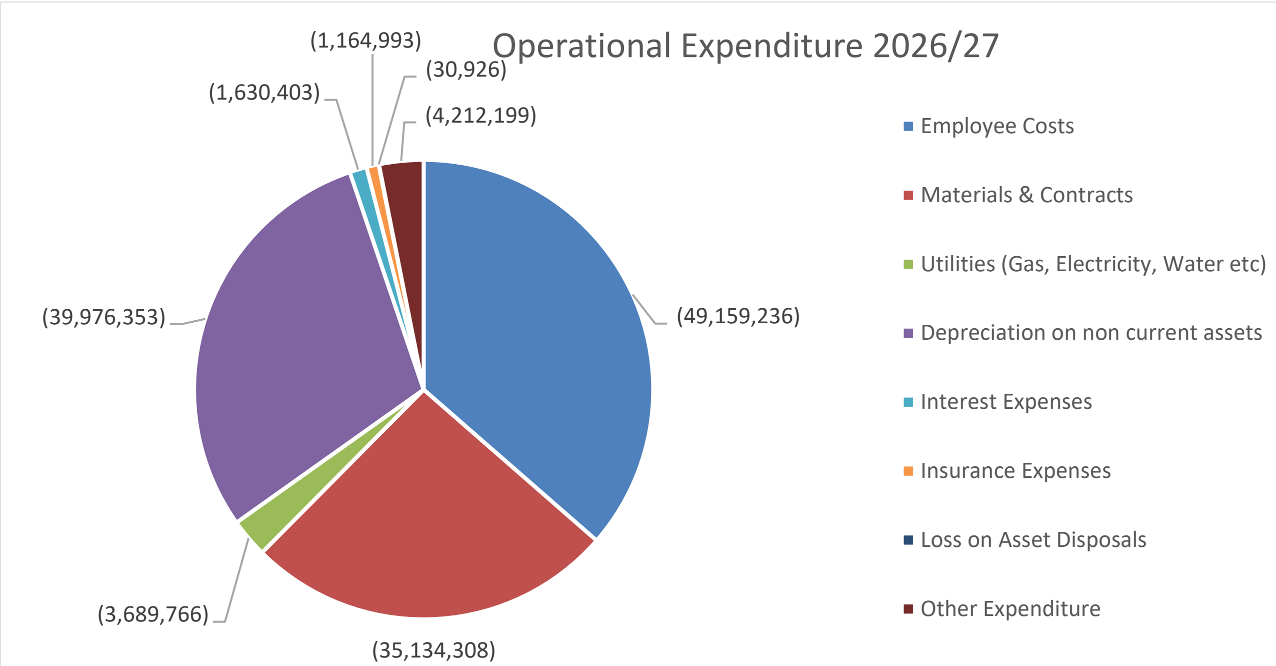
Operations

The following provides a high-level overview of operational Revenue and Expenditure included in the 2026/2027 Budget:





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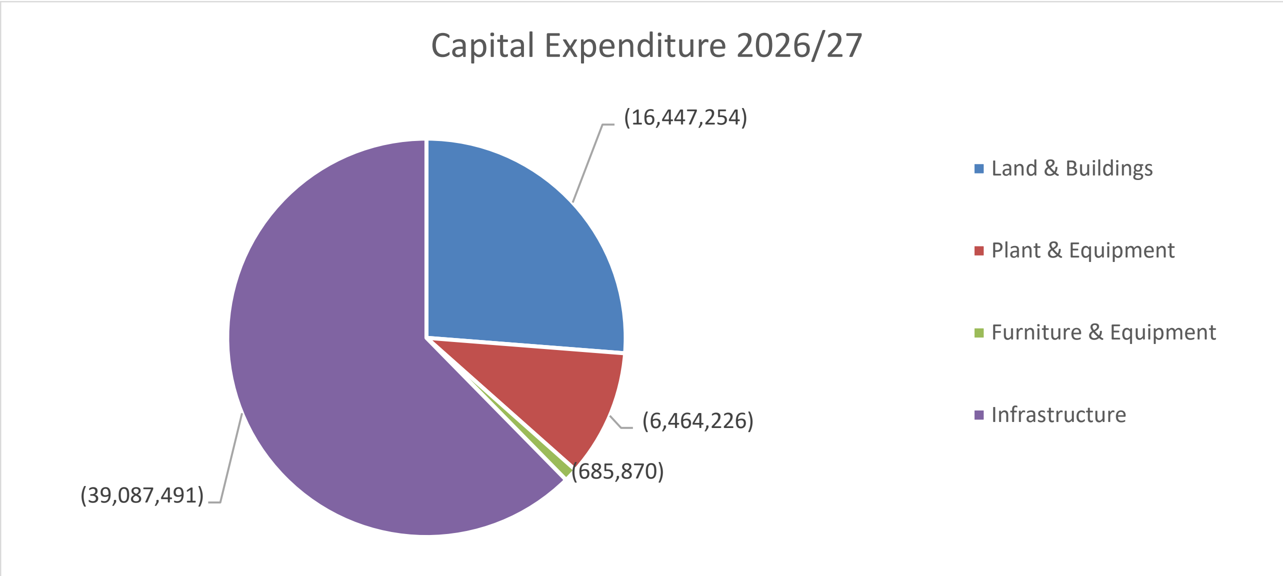
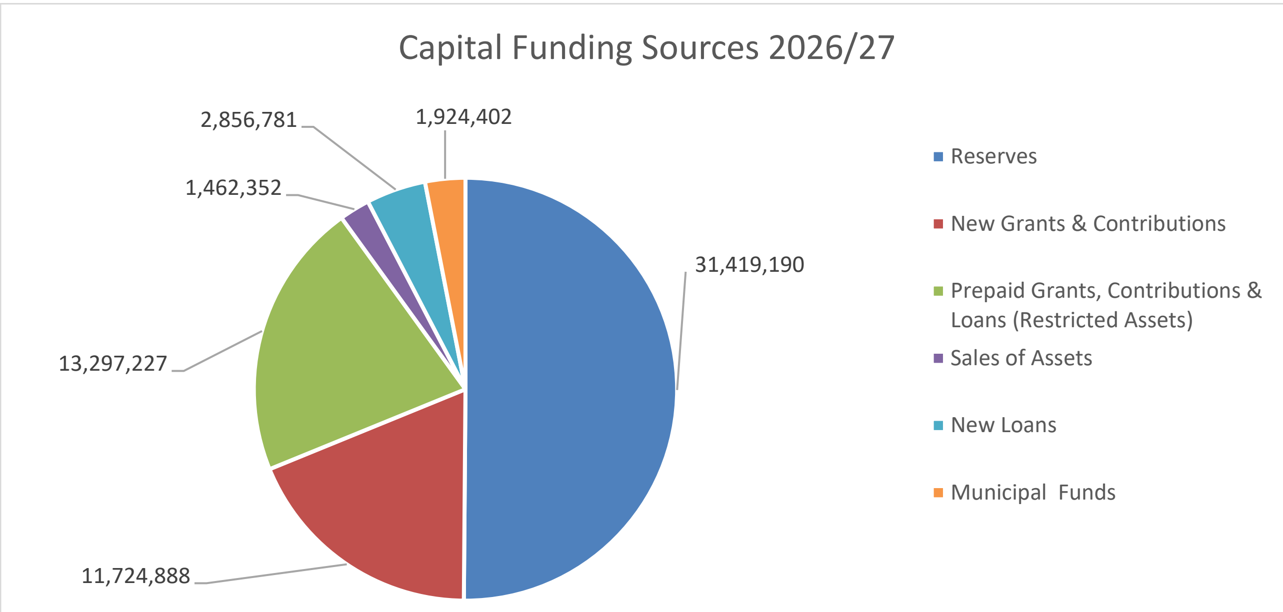
2026/27 ANNUAL BUDGET

Capital Acquisitions and Construction

In addition to budgeted operating expenditure of $135M, a further $62.7M has been earmarked for capital investment in 2026/27. This is summarised by asset class as follows:

• Infrastructure	$39.1M
• Land and Buildings	$16.4M
• Plant and Equipment	$6.5M
• Furniture and Office Equipment	$686K
TOTAL	**$62.7M**





A detailed listing of the capital acquisitions and construction projects is provided within the budget document.

Borrowings

The 2026/27 annual budget includes $3.1M in proposed new borrowing, for the following purposes:

⇨ Community Groups Self Supporting Loans ($250K)
$250k has been included in the budget for provision of loan funding to other community groups, enabling them to borrow funds at lower interest rates through support of the City. Liability for the repayment of the loans remains with the community group. These loans are considered on request.

⇨ Dunsborough Lakes Sporting Precinct ($1.66M)
Along with developer contributions, prepaid grant funds and reserves, part of the forecast cost of the project is proposed to be funded by loan borrowings. Most of this budget has been carried over from the 2025/26 financial year, with a revised plan agreed by council during various workshops and briefings, following extensive community consultations throughout the 2024/25 and 2025/26 years. The project is on pause pending further council deliberations, and it is proposed to apply and then drawn down on the loan funds once these further decisions are finalised.

⇨ Saltwater ($1.19M)
A further loan is proposed to assist with the finalisation of the auditorium and AV equipment installation. This will ensure facility is functional and able to be used in the manner originally intended and promoted to the community.

Rating

The Council endorsed its Long-Term Financial Plan 2025 – 2035 in January 2025, at which time a rate increase of 7% was forecast for 2026/27. While keeping in mind the underpinning strategic objectives of the LTFP, it is important that the City remains agile and able to respond to changing economic and community circumstances when adopting its budget. Having considered all factors including the desire for continued infrastructure investment (particularly associated with sport and recreation), the City’s growing asset base and renewal requirements, service levels and community concerns around affordability and cost of living, a rate increase of 6.2% has been applied to the City’s rates revenue.

This will continue to provide for the City's ability to maintain its existing facilities and infrastructure, uphold current service levels, and invest in future infrastructure and asset renewal to meet the demands of a growing population. It will importantly provide for an increase in the level of investment into the new sport and recreation infrastructure reserve (up to 3% of total rates revenue) something the community continues to communicate is a key priority.

The increase also helps with continued recovery from years of previous lower rating from 2020/21 to 2023/24 and the compounding adverse effect on the rates base of the 0% increase in 2020/21.

The budget maintains the differential rating categories. These are established in accordance with section 6.33 of the *Local Government Act 1995*. The budget predicts an amount of $78M will be raised via rates.

Revaluations

The standard annual revaluation of Unimproved Valuations (UV) has been completed by Landgate Valuation Services (LVS) and will be effective from 1 July 2026. Also, Gross rental Values (GRV) remain the same for the 2026-27 rating period with the last 3 yearly review completed by LVS in 2024-25.

For the 2026-27 rating period, where a properties UV valuation has increased then the overall rate may increase above the proposed 6.2% increase. Conversely where a properties UV valuation has decreased then the overall rate increase will usually be less.

Further valuation information can be obtained www.landgate.wa.gov.au/valuations

Waste Charges

Increases in waste charges have been kept to a minimal amount. Below are details of this increase:

Charge Type	2025/2026	2026/2027	Increment
Refuse Removal Commercial	$195.00	$197.00	$2.00
Refuse Removal Domestic	$195.00	$197.00	$2.00
Recycling Fees - Domestic	$95.00	$96.00	$1.00
Recycling Fees - Commercial	$95.00	$96.00	$1.00

Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act Charges (WARR Act)

There has no increase in the WARR Act charge, which remains at $110.

This charge is applied to ensure fees adequately cover the requirements to manage and remediate landfill sites.

In conclusion it is considered that the budget represents value for the ratepayers of the district and is attentive to the desires and aspirations of the community, advancing initiatives important to our natural environment, lifestyle and place, and the creation of opportunities across the District. It maintains our commitment to the delivery of improved infrastructure and continues investment in planning for the future priorities and desires of residents. As such, the budget is recommended for approval.

Dr Garry Hunt PSM
Chief Executive Officer (Temporary)