

**2023-24 Budget Speech
16 June 2023
Strathpine Chambers**

- Our 2023-24 budget converts our values into investments.
- While economic conditions are tough, we are optimistic about the opportunities ahead and our role in delivering them to create the newest and best city in Australia.
- The way we move forward, needs to reflect the city we want to be.
- Through responsible financial management, Council is well positioned to meet coming challenges.
- Today I announce an \$861 million budget including a \$264 million capital works program.
- Creating better communities starts with our fundamental job of delivering the infrastructure we need.
- We welcome over 10,000 new residents every year.
- Importantly, our capital works program also creates local jobs and improves the long-term wellbeing of our communities.
- On top of our business-as-usual investment we will invest:
 - \$90 million on road and transport networks

- \$25 million on parks and the environment
- \$16 million on sustainable waste management
- \$46 million towards 222 projects including road resurfacing, construction and rehabilitation.
- \$31 million on waterways and coastal areas.
- \$33 million on libraries, arts, history and community facilities.
- \$22 million on sport and recreation.
- 99 footpath projects.
- \$1.3 million to continue to convert gravel to sealed roads.
- \$2.5 million to commence a green bin roll out.
- 52 festivals and events including 47 FREE community events.
- And one of the cheapest kerbside collection charges in SEQ and the continuation of free tipping up to 3 tonnes or 26 visits.

Rates

- Before I highlight some of our other key initiatives in this year's budget, I want to talk about rates.
- As Mayor, I have always wanted to be transparent and open with you.

- And I want to be upfront about this year's rate rise.
- We know that the rising cost of living is impacting households' budgets.
- We have tried to keep any increase as low as possible because we know that even the cost of milk and bread has risen.
- The reality is, the cost of goods and construction materials required by Council is projected to increase by 15% this coming financial year.
- We need to balance this reality with our ambition to continue to deliver high quality services and infrastructure for our communities.
- With all of this in mind, the rise in the **minimum general rate** is 4.45%.
- Because we want to be transparent, open and up front with you, let's talk about total impact to your household.
- The total average increase is 5.85% for an owner-occupied residential property in Moreton Bay.
- This equates to \$1.96 per week increase or an additional \$25.44 on average per quarter on your rates bill.
- I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for ensuring we keep our rate rise as low as possible and well below CPI.

Capital Works

- Our \$264 million capital projects budget **will deliver** for Moreton Bay.

- It is as important as ever that Council continues to invest in our communities.
- We are one of the fastest growing regions in Australia.
- Some of the largest investments this year include:
 - Youngs Crossing Bridge Construction will commence this year
 - With over \$32 million contribution from the Federal Government.
 - We also welcome the State budget announcement this week of an additional \$15 million towards this project.
 - White Patch Crossing - Renewal and Upgrade Works will be completed this year with \$6.5 million with help from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
 - Moreton Bay Central Sports Complex, Burpengary design and construction of three soccer fields with \$5.25 million with help from the Federal Government.
 - South Pine Sporting Complex Upgrade will be completed this year. The scope of works includes construction of four (4) multipurpose fields, including field lighting, a high-performance club facility, local level clubhouse, paths and landscaping, road upgrades and car parking.
 - Sylvan Beach Boat Ramp Park upgrade new foreshore improvements including BBQ, picnic areas, playground, path, road and boardwalk renewal, pedestrian crossings for \$1.8 million with help from the State Government.

- We have committed funding to rebuild the Suttons Beach Pavilion. This project is a perfect candidate to be delivered through the City Deal. And I am proud to advise that Moreton Bay has secured an additional \$30 million to be invested in projects over the next two years through the Liveability Fund within the City Deal.
- This is only a small portion of Council's significant Capital works program and the investment we continue to make in our region.

Advocacy

- Over the last 4 years, we have secured an extra \$155 million from State and Federal Governments to ensure continued investment in Moreton Bay because of our partnership approach.
 - This has included projects such as;
 - The \$13 million Henry Road/Dohles Rocks Road upgrade in Griffin nearing completion,
 - \$5 million Boardman and Klingner Road intersection upgrade in Kippa Ring,
 - The brand-new Nolan Park BMX precinct construction in Brendale,
 - The brand-new Deception Bay Community Centre,
 - The brand-new Peterson Road Sportsgrounds and Clubhouse Redevelopment in Morayfield,
 - The Aurora Boulevard Netball Development in Mango Hill,
 - \$1.6 million Skate Park upgrade in Deception Bay,
 - The \$800,000 Tennis Court renewal at Wahminda Park in Ferny Hills,
 - \$5.7 million Private Percy Cash Pedestrian Bridge in Samford,

- \$4 million Harris Avenue Sports Complex clubhouse, Tennis Courts, and Car Park development in Narangba,
 - \$1.2 million PCYC Building Upgrade in Redcliffe,
 - The \$400,000 Foreshore Fitness Equipment Renewal at Banksia,
 - The \$550,000 park upgrade at Carramar Reserve, Dakabin,
 - \$1million building upgrade at Clontarf Beach Scout Group.
- This is just a sample of some of the projects we have jointly delivered by working together.
 - We know there is a lot more to do and we will not take the foot off the accelerator.

Cost of Living

- Councils have limited ability to assist with cost of living, however;
- We will continue the \$250 rates remission for full pensioners.
- We will also continue the \$100 rates remission for part-pensioners we introduced in 2020.
- I am pleased to announce that Council will introduce a \$75 rebate for eligible self-funded retirees in this year's budget.
- Self-funded retirees are not eligible for an age pension or other government-funded income support and are also doing it tough.
- This year's budget also includes an increase spend for sport and recreation.

- We have always invested heavily in sport, and I am proud of the sporting infrastructure that we have delivered.
- Community sport cultivates belonging, inclusion, healthier communities, and engagement.
- Community and sporting groups are the lifeblood of Moreton Bay.
- Our Council is a leader in community sport, and the support we provide to community organisations for low-cost community leasing ensures we help clubs keep membership costs as low as possible for families.
- Council offers our community groups the most generous Community Leasing Policy in Southeast Queensland to cover rates, water, some maintenance and most major capital infrastructure.
- We've benchmarked ourselves against other Southeast Queensland Council's and none of them offer this level of support.
- Council will also continue one of our signature programs, Healthy & Active Moreton.
- It provides an avenue for residents to be more active through an exciting range of fitness, recreation sporting activities and workshops at low cost.
- We've heard you enjoy the community events we deliver in every corner of our region.
- Over the last 12 months we have delivered:

- 17 movies in the park (free)
 - 6 new events
 - 15 signature events
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- Including just last weekend, Moreton Bay's first ever Pride Fest.
 - In this year's budget we will continue to support our communities with 47 free community events as well as our signature events that have low-cost tickets.
 - This is on top of to the many other community organisations who we support financially to deliver other community activities and events.
 - In these difficult economic circumstances, maintaining our investment in community connection and family activities and entertainment is more important than ever.
 - As a Council, we will also ensure that we continue to deliver and maintain community parks and recreation areas that are of exceptional quality.
 - This ensures that our communities continue to have amazing places to relax and socialise in with friends and family.

Accessibility

- In this year's budget, I want us to put an accessibility lens over our planning activities.
- Accessibility goes beyond simple access though, it is about inclusion, for everyone in our communities.
- In this year's budget we are continuing our year-on-year investment in our Accessibility Upgrade Program.

- The objective of this program is to undertake works that progressively improve the accessibility of Council infrastructure for people with a disability.
- I am pleased to announce that we will invest almost \$3 million at Woorim to deliver a Changing Places facility, beach wheelchair storage, showers and change rooms to make the beach more accessible for everyone.
- Council is also continuing to invest in our Accessible Schools Program.
- This program reviews the access and safety needs around both primary and high schools throughout the region.
- It addresses issues such as pathway connectivity, safe road crossing, shade protection, management of vehicle speeds, parking, signs and line markings.
- Accessibility is a priority for Council.

Economic Development and Investment Attraction

- As Mayor, I have been clear that Council needs to be aspirational for our communities.
- Since establishing the Economic Development Strategy, our economy has grown by 9.9 per cent.
- That's an extra \$2.7 billion in gross regional product and \$600 million ahead of our progressive target.

- Our local job numbers are up 10.8% and the total number of businesses are up from 29,000 to over 31,000 in two years.
- Business sentiment in our region is more positive than the Queensland average...
- We know that local business supports 158,000 local jobs in the region. And there is nothing more important than having a job.
- Our city is young and progressive, and we will continue to build it unlike any other to ensure that prosperity is shared equally to all centres as they work together and not against each other.
- Council's continued priority on attracting investment to the Moreton Bay Region brings opportunity for our communities.
- We are no longer a well-kept secret - we are firmly on the radar of businesses looking to grow in South-East Queensland.
- This financial year, we have achieved more than \$700 million in additional investment, engaged over 200 new leads which have resulted in 25 active projects with a potential future investment value of \$1.7 billion and 2,600 jobs.
- In December I said that I want Moreton Bay Council to become a 21st Century Council.
- This budget will set the tone as to how we will achieve this.
- Part of this journey will be the final confirmation of Australia's newest city, The City of Moreton Bay.

- We will continue with our incredibly successful investment attraction journey, with a focus on hotel investment so people can stay longer when they are on holiday, visit their families or when they are here for business.
- We will have renewed efforts towards tourism, particularly setting ourselves apart from Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast as a destination of choice.
- In closing I would like to thank all Council Officers involved in delivering this year's budget, we know it has been a difficult budget.
- I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their ongoing support and commitment.
- While economic conditions are tough right now, we will continue to do all that we can to build a stronger, more resilient and more accessible Moreton Bay.
- I commend to you, the 2023-24 Budget.
- Thank you.