



Council announces 4.8% general rate rise

Sunshine Coast Council today endorsed its third budget for the region with a general rate rise of 4.8 per cent.

Mayor Bob Abbot said council has made every effort to keep the increase as low as possible and the final figure is considerably less than earlier predictions in the vicinity of 7 per cent. For a ratepayer on the minimum general rate this will see an increase of \$2.20 per week.

Key features of the \$582 million 2010/11 budget include:

- \$174 million in capital works
- \$76 million towards maintaining transport infrastructure
- \$47 million for waste and resource management
- \$37 million for parks and gardens
- \$16 million in environmental programs.

“Council has tried to balance the need for restraint with our community’s expectation that we will continue to deliver vital capital works, maintain essential services and continue to support and grow our economy throughout the region,” Cr Abbot said.

“This year’s budget had been council’s toughest to date in a harsh economic climate which included falling revenues, rising costs for water and power and the loss of state government subsidies.

“All this forced us to find \$13.5 million in operational savings in 2009/10 that we achieved and we set another target of \$5 million in 2010/11 - which is a realistic considering we are a smaller organisation now that Unitywater has taken over our water and sewerage operations.

“Council has negotiated an outcome with Unitywater that delivers increases in water costs on the Sunshine Coast which are much lower than others in SEQ.”

“Plans are also in place for the development of a region-wide transport strategy to bolster the Sunshine Coast’s case for financial support from the State and Federal Governments.

“We have had to make some difficult decisions but we needed to look ahead, act responsibly and deliver a balanced budget with responsible levels of debt.

“I believe this budget will stand us in good stead for the years ahead.”



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Cr Abbot said that many of the projects outlined in the budget were about moving the Sunshine Coast closer to its goal of becoming Australia's most sustainable region in accordance with the community's wishes as outlined in Council's Corporate Plan.

A full breakdown of the Budget is posted on Council's website www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

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