

## Introduction

This 2025/26 Budget Snapshot provides a quick overview of the rationale behind and basic details of Council's 2025/26 Budget.

## Background

Previous COVID-19 Response arrangements have seen a significant amount of emphasis by the State and Commonwealth Governments to advance maintenance and capital spending on projects that benefit the community. Council responded proactively with an expanded program of capital expenditure on roads in part leading to the construction and sealing to a 7.2m seal width of the remaining 35.42km section of the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road between the Murchison Settlement and our south shire boundary. Council has been able to secure additional funding to assist from Main Roads WA for this band other roads projects, but this is also supplemented by additional Council contributions.

Council has also been upgrading a range of projects in and around the Murchison Settlement.

## 4-Year Indicative Budget – Long Term Financial Management

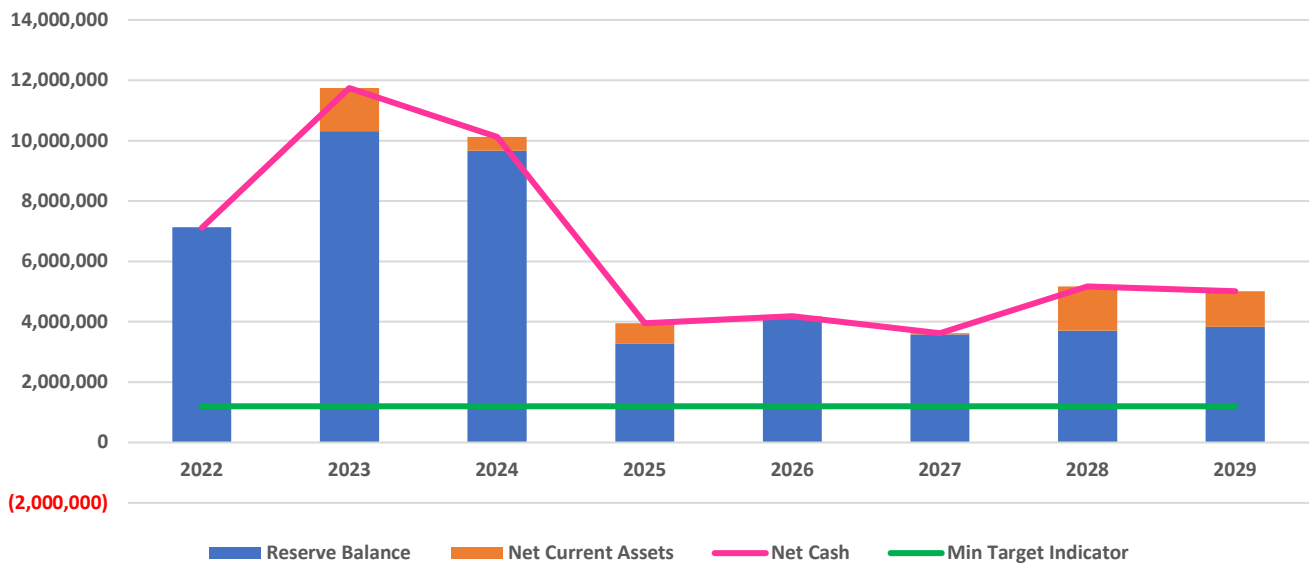
Obviously, Council's works program will be carried out in a financially responsible manner and to this end whilst budgets are set and delivered on an annual basis, in reality works and services are delivered on a continuous basis with the financial year merely a point in time.

It is also considered prudent and now standard practice to look at the situation for a 4-year period. During 2023/24 Council also looked longer term, as also required under the provisions of the Local Government Act and updated its Corporate Business Plan, Asset Management Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan, a situation which is now repeated annually.

The Budget Reserves Net Current Assets Summary Graph shown below highlights this approach. As indicated, Council is well placed to manage all of the competing priorities in the next few years but does need additional revenue if it is to minimise being financially stretched in the future and to ensure existing ratepayers make some contribution for the use of assets and facilities today, and not leave all of the financial burden to future generations.

## Budget Reserves Net Current Assets Summary

The following Budget Cash Summary is a graphical representation of the summary of our Reserves (Restricted Cash) and Net Current Assets (Unrestricted Cash) highlighting the now, recent past and into the future. Revenue from potential growth in Council's rates base has not been factored in.



## Murchison Settlement Redevelopment Works

Over recent years Council has been working on the upgrade of the Murchison Settlement Water Supply and Power Supply. The extent and scope of works required on each has significantly increased meaning that some projects previously identified that were unlikely to receive grant funding have been deferred, whilst some with part grant funding have been able to proceed in 2024/25 and 2025/26.



Council has also been in advanced planning for improvements within the Settlement through the Murchison Settlement Redevelopment Masterplan, Murchison Roadhouse Precinct Redevelopment and Murchison Vast Sky Experience Business Case.

Snapshot summary of some projects from the 2025/26 Budget and Corporate Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan are shown as follows.

Project	Est Cost \$	Year
<b>2025/26 Budget</b>		
Staff Housing Cr Kurara Way Mulga Cres (2 no)	980,000	2026
Community Centre Improvements Stage 1	120,000	2026
Caravan Park Non-Ensuite's Cabins Conversion	160,000	2026
Caravan Park New Ensuite Cabins (3 set)	425,000	2026
Roadhouse Staff Accommodation Units (3 No)	1,470,000	2026
Water Supply New chlorinator (Pt Infra Dev Fund)	350,602	2026
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,505,602</b>	

Total funded by \$813,339 (Grants) and \$2,692,263 (Revenue & Reserves)

### Future 3 Years Indicative Projects

Community Centre Improvements Stage 2	20,000	2027
Playground Upgrade (Potential Grant)	459,000	2027
Old Supervisors Shed Artist Conversion	255,000	2027
Roadhouse Conversion & Extension	1,800,000	2027
Staff Housing Extensions (3 No)	306,000	2028

### Other Potential Future Works

As per Asset Management Plan

## Rates

Over recent years a more in-depth analysis of Councils rating strategy has been undertaken. Amongst other things it indicated that Average Pastoral Sector Rates had increased 1.4% per annum since 2016, whilst Mining Average Rates increased 5.5% per annum. Whilst the differential between Mining and Pastoral had reduced was still much greater than the 2.0 limit set under the Local Government where approval of then Minister for Local Government is required.

In 2023/24 Council recognised that by both measures a significant one-off correction was required and this was then actioned, notwithstanding that the difficulties associated with valuations within the Mining sector being some 3 times greater than those in the Pastoral Sector and 6 times greater than the Exploration Sector. In setting differential rates for Council formally adopts as its policy position, that as far as practicable aspects associated with natural growth or decline are ignored.

Also then under consideration was rating of those mining properties who occupied tenure under a Miscellaneous Mining Licence. Since this time when adopting the 2025/26 Budget legal liability associated with rating Miscellaneous Mining Licence has been now confirmed through a successful Supreme Court appeal by the Shire

of Mt Magnet. Future appeals or legislative change may or may not change the situation so Council has indicated that such revenue including back rates will be placed into the Shire's Asset Management Reserve for later use.

As indicated previously a lift in rate revenue to is required.

The 2025/26 Budget provides for an overall **5.0%** increase (excluding natural growth or decline). This is not uniform and varies across each sector as valuations as set by the State Government experienced the following changes. Pastoral (up 5.0%), Mining (up 10.0%) and Prospecting and Exploration (up 5.0%).

The following rates in the dollar and minimum rates have been adopted for 2025/26.

Differential Rate Type	Rate in dollar cents	Min Payment (\$)
UV Pastoral	9.932	1,000
UV Mining	19.830	1,000
UV Exploration	19.830	1,000

Council is always mindful of the impact on ratepayers and if there is anyone facing financial hardship, please contact the Council Office to discuss potential payment options.

## Plant

Major Plant Replacements programmed include a Grader and Settlement Utility.

## Other Capital Works

Snapshot summary of some projects from the 2025/26 Budget and Councils Asset Management Plan is shown as follows.

Project	Ext Cost \$
<b>2025/26 Budget</b>	
Carn-Mul Rd 154.54 – 208.68 reconstruct & widen sections	1,495,332
Reseal Works	223,198
Beri-Byro Rd 69.99 – 87.70 resheet incl floodway	122,749
SKA Route General Construction Works	2,850,947
SKA Route CGG Section Construction Works	167,994
Council Road Construction General	801,276
Errabiddy Bluff Rd Resheet incl Floodways	100,860
Car-Mul Rd Floodway Design over Wooramel River	23,250
Meeberrie-Wooleen Floodway Design over Murchison River	49,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,834,656</b>

Total funded by \$5,393,741 Grants, and \$440,915 Revenue

### Future Years Indicative Road Projects

As per Asset Management Plan

## Summary

Overall, Council aims to responsibly provide a positive Budget and retain the Murchison Shire and Settlement in a sound long-term sustainable position.

## Further Information

Refer Councils Website <https://www.murchison.wa.gov.au/> for details of the 2025/26 Budget (including an indicative 4-years). Also relevant are adopted Corporate Business Plan, Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plan and Rating Strategy Reviews.