

# Strengthen and Grow

The Annual Business Plan 2023-24 shows our services, programs and projects for this financial year. It shows how we will allocate Council's resources to achieve the goals developed from consultation that are set out in our *Strategic Plan 2020-24 – A Brighter Future*, while ensuring Council remains financially sustainable over the long term.



*“Our Community and Council are experiencing economic circumstances that have not been seen in a generation. While the cost of living continues to increase, so does the demand and expectation for Council services and facilities.*

*Council has carefully constructed its Annual Business Plan and Budget to continue the provision of much needed services and to respond to community aspirations for environmental and social initiatives in a modest way.*

*The Plan has been designed to keep the average residential rate increase below the cost-of-living increase by adjusting services and identifying operational savings within the Council organisation.*

*We have strengthened the Council's long term financial sustainability by achieving an operating surplus within our target range and keeping borrowings within our established limits*

*The Annual Business Plan 2023-24 will guide us in cherishing our past and embracing our future, while protecting our environment and aiming to leave no-one behind. It is our promise to the Community and I look forward to working with the elected Council Members, staff and volunteers to bring it to fruition so that you can feel safe in, proud of and ambitious for our community.”*

**Dr Jan-Claire Wisdom**  
Mayor Adelaide Hills Council

## Our focus for 2023-24

In addition to continuing our day to day services and programs, we are implementing strategic initiatives to further develop and support our region. Some highlights are included under each of the following long-term goals.

### A prosperous Economy



- Support the Tour Down Under in 2024
- Collaborate with Adelaide Hills Tourism to promote and support tourism across our region
- Encourage and support the continued development of a Home-Based Business Network
- Undertake a biannual business survey
- Advocate for key economic development issues in the region with other levels of government

### A valued Natural Environment



- Undertake a trial on changes to kerbside bin system collection frequency and a trial on increased rural food organics/green organics waste collections
- Local climate adaptations for landscape conservation
- Post-prescribed burn weed management
- Develop a strategy for the management of Council trees across the district

### Community Wellbeing



- Continued development of Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub as a facility offering exceptional cultural experiences, providing social, educational and economic outcomes for the region
- Implementation of the Community and Recreation Facilities Framework and the Play Space Framework
- Implementation of the “Our Watch Toolkit for Local Government” for the prevention of domestic and family violence in our community
- Implementation of the Towards Community Led Resilience Program
- Identification of initiatives to develop community connections within and between the established and newly developed areas of Woodforde

### A functional Built Environment



- Delivering of road safety initiatives under the federally funded Black Spot Program
- Installation of further electric vehicle charging stations
- Stormwater master planning and implementation for the management of stormwater in the Balhannah township

### A progressive Organisation



- Development of a new Strategic Plan which sets Council's goals and objectives over the next four years
- Conducting a representation review
- Further developing Council's new website to provide more streamlined customer services and access to information commonly sought by the community
- Upgrading the GPS units for operational vehicles to run on the 4G network

# 2022-23 Key Achievements

## Goal 1 A Functional Built Environment

- Works commenced at the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub for the upgrade of existing buildings and construction of the Pavilion.
- New public toilets installed at Gumeracha Oval and Torrens Valley Community Centre and refurbishments completed at Federation Park Gumeracha to improve access.
- New cricket nets were installed at Stirling Oval and Mylor Oval.
- Adoption of the Community and Recreation Facilities Framework.
- Undertook a feasibility study for the Adelaide Hills (War Memorial) Swimming Centre (AHWMSC) at Woodside, including a condition assessment of all site assets.
- Safety upgrades were completed along Woods Hill Road, Ashton, including shoulder widening, signage and line marking upgrades, and a reduced speed limit.
- A new footpath was constructed along Glen Stuart Rd, Woodforde, linking the new Hamilton Hill development to the surrounding suburb and adjoining school, greatly improving pedestrian access.

## Goal 2 Community Wellbeing

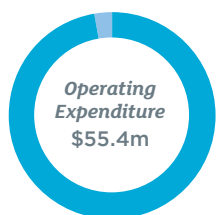
- Delivered a range of community events including Hills Harmony Day Picnic, Discover Play Bikeway, Volunteer Movie Day, and GetStoked BMX event.
- Hills Treasures celebrated over 65s who make a difference in the community.
- Provided an upgraded mobile library van and service.
- Delivered a number of community-led emergency resilience workshops supporting communities to prepare for natural disasters.
- Installed a public art piece in Bushland Park called *Reflections of Home* which was designed with community during the Cuddlee Creek bushfire recovery.
- Produced Reconciliation branded signage and installed Reconciliation decals on the Coventry Library windows.

## Budget summary



● General Rates Income	\$44.583m
● All other Operating Income (incl initiatives)	\$12.060m

● Core Operating Expenses (excluding initiatives)	\$54.050m
● Operating Initiatives	\$1.516m



● Gross Capital Renewal Program Expenditure	\$10.424m
● Gross Capital Expenditure on new/upgraded assets	\$7.485m

<b>Borrowing</b>	Net Borrowings of <b>\$6.4m</b> , resulting in Forecast Borrowings at 30 June 2024 of <b>\$23.0m</b>
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<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	Adjusted Operating Surplus Ratio of <b>2.2%</b> in line with Council's target of 1% to 5%
	Net financial liabilities ratio <b>54%</b> in line with Council's target of 25% to 75%
	Asset renewal funding ratio <b>100%</b> compared with Council's target of 95% to 105%













## Community Consultation

The draft Annual Business Plan 2023-24 (ABP) was published for community consultation through Council's Community Engagement Hub over the period 12 May to 2 June 2023. Through numerous promotional activities, we encouraged feedback to be submitted through the online platform, in writing, via phone, and in person at the 23 May 2023 Council Meeting. We received 17 responses and this feedback was considered at the 13 June 2023 Council Meeting prior to Council adopting the ABP on 27 June 2023.



<b>Goal 3</b> <b>A Prosperous Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional tree safety work required to support the Tour Down Under.</li> <li>• Installed RV dump point and approved free camping at Balhannah Oval.</li> <li>• Approved two-year pilot for Building Upgrade Finance program to commence July 2023.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted three Home Based Business networking events.</li> <li>• Held World Heritage expert workshop in September 2022 that concluded that the case for a joint nomination with City of Adelaide had merit.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 4</b> <b>A Valued Natural Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed a study that explored the benefits of changing the collection frequency of kerbside bins and providing green organic bins to rural properties.</li> <li>• Audits were undertaken on selected kerbside bins to provide information on community waste and recycling behaviours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed the review of Unformed Public Roads to ascertain connectivity potential &amp; habitat value.</li> <li>• Installed informative and attractive signage in several Council reserves/playgrounds.</li> <li>• Completed post prescribed burn weed management as part of ongoing partnership to support DEW's burning on private lands program.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 5</b> <b>A Progressive Organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisted the Electoral Commission of SA in conducting the 2022 Local Government Election and inducted and trained the newly elected Council Members.</li> <li>• Conducted an external services review on the Development Assessment function to analyse the service quality, effectiveness and efficiency.</li> <li>• Implemented a Cyber Security Framework and associated program and controls to govern and protect information assets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed review of the Long Term Finance Plan incorporating significant ongoing savings strategies to keep rate increases below CPI and ensure financial sustainability is maintained.</li> <li>• Undertook a WHS Training Needs Analysis for all staff to enable development of a detailed training plan as an outcome.</li> <li>• Delivery of a new Council website .</li> </ul>

## Operating expenditure highlights

 <b>Emergency Planning &amp; Community Resilience Support</b> \$653k	 <b>Biodiversity &amp; Sustainability</b> \$1.110m	 <b>Open Space, including Fire Mitigation Works</b> \$3.583m
 <b>Positive Ageing</b> \$1.294m	 <b>Library Services</b> \$2.104m	 <b>Economic Development</b> \$623k
 <b>Community Development &amp; Services</b> \$1.238m	 <b>Public Health</b> \$596k	 <b>Planning &amp; Development</b> \$2.328m
 <b>Waste &amp; Recycling</b> \$5.581m	 <b>Civil Services</b> \$5.659m	 <b>Animal Management</b> \$531k

# Rates Summary

Rates are used to fund services, programs, maintenance and construction of infrastructure to benefit everyone across the Council region. Rates are a form of property taxation determined by the property value and so can fluctuate where there has been new development, capital improvements, or other significant change to the value of a property as determined by the Valuer-General.

For 2023-24, general rates will increase on average by 6.9%, which equates to an increase of approximately \$159 for a residential property of average value.

The rate setting process for 2023-24 has taken into account that currently Council's average Residential rate is high by comparison to other council's whereas the average Commercial, Industrial and Vacant Land rate is low. As a result Council is seeking to phase in higher differential rates in relation to Commercial, Industrial and Vacant Land land use categories across a three-year period. This will allow residential and primary production land use ratepayers to have a lower rate increase than otherwise would have occurred with no differential rate changes.

As a result of considering the changes in land use differentials and the appropriateness of the maximum rate increase Council has set a rate rebate to the residential and primary production land use categories where the increase exceeds 15%.

## Help when you need it

We provide a confidential and individually tailored approach to ratepayers who are experiencing financial difficulty. We can be contacted on 8408 0400 or in writing to discuss the options available to help.

## Rebates, payment options and other information

Important information about rates, payment options, rebates and rate relief are referenced on the front and back of your rates notice, as well as online at [ahc.sa.gov.au/resident/rates-property](http://ahc.sa.gov.au/resident/rates-property) and includes:








- Revaluation Relief Rebate (where your rates have increased over 15%, subject to conditions)
- Primary production rate rebate
- General rebates
- Postponement of rates for seniors
- Available payment options

Rebate application forms are available online or can be requested on **8408 0400**.

# Capital works program

We will spend **\$10.4m** on our capital renewal program which helps us maintain and replace our current infrastructure and assets.

## Capital renewal expenditure highlights

						
<b>Sealed roads</b>	<b>Unsealed roads</b>	<b>Storm water</b>	<b>Footpaths</b>	<b>Sport &amp; recreation</b> <i>(inc playgrounds)</i>	<b>Buildings</b>	<b>Bridges</b>
<b>\$1.995m</b>	<b>\$834k</b>	<b>\$115k</b>	<b>\$421k</b>	<b>\$240k</b>	<b>\$360k</b>	<b>\$310k</b>

We also have 32 Capital Strategic Initiatives for upgrading and building new assets and infrastructure costing **\$7.5m**. Some of these initiatives include:

- Recreation Trails & Cycling Routes Framework Implementation (\$140k)
- New and upgraded footpaths (\$404k)
- Community Wastewater Management System Capacity Upgrades (Birdwood & Woodside gravity mains) (\$120k)
- Road Safety Program including co-contribution to Road Blackspot (grant funded) (\$1.31m)
- Croft Road, Lenswood resealing (\$1.2m)
- New Dog and Cat facility (\$200k)
- Customer relationship Management System upgrade (\$300k)

## Contact us

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