

Annual Business Plan 2024-25 Summary

The Annual Business Plan 2024-25 shows our services, programs and projects for the next financial year. It shows how we will allocate Council's resources to achieve the goals developed from community consultation that are set out in our Strategic Plan 2020-24 – A Brighter Future, while ensuring Council remains financially sustainable over the long term.



"This year's Annual Business Plan reflects our commitment to enhancing our community's wellbeing, preserving our natural beauty, and advancing our sustainability goals.

Amidst our planned priorities outlined in the highlights below, we are continuing to navigate a challenging economic landscape with far reaching community impacts. Our efforts to deliver a responsible budget and minimise organisational costs have been important in ensuring that we maintain financial sustainability while continuing to invest in projects that benefit our residents and uphold our commitment to service excellence.

As we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, let us embrace this journey together, inspired by our collective commitment to a prosperous and sustainable future."

Dr Jan-Claire Wisdom - Mayor Adelaide Hills Council

Our Focus for 2024-25

Council's focus for the year is on supporting and strengthening our community, environment and region by developing a responsible budget which recognises our unique constraints and is geared towards delivering essential services, prudent resource management, and sustainability.



- Setting goals and a pathway to achieving net zero corporate carbon emissions
- Implementing technology upgrades with a new Customer Relationship Management System to improve the customer experience
- Extending the Amy Gillett Bikeway from Mount Torrens to Birdwood
- Installing a splash park at the Adelaide Hills War Memorial Swimming Centre, Woodside
- Developing a new Biodiversity Strategy and Tree Strategy
- Continuing to implement actions from the Our Watch's "Prevention Toolkit for Local Government"
- Activating the Fabrik Arts and Heritage Hub following its completed redevelopment
- Delivering road safety initiatives under the federally funded black spot program
- Implementing further actions in the Towards Community Led Resilience Program
- Increasing community connections through forums
- Collaborating with Adelaide Hills Tourism to promote and support tourism across our region
- Advocating for key economic development issues in the region with other levels of government
- Reviewing the outcomes of our rural areas organics waste collection trial
- Conducting a legislated representation review to determine whether the Adelaide Hills Community would benefit from an alteration to its composition or ward structure

A Message From the CEO

I am pleased to present the Adelaide Hills Council's Annual Business Plan for 2024-25, outlining our strategic initiatives and priorities as we continue to serve and support our community. As we look ahead, our focus remains on enhancing service delivery, fostering community engagement, and ensuring responsible governance.

In response to the evolving needs of our residents, we are embarking on a comprehensive review of our organisational services. This initiative aims to identify areas for enhancement and innovation which will assist us in streamlining operations, improving service delivery, and optimising our resources to better meet the expectations of our community.

One of our key priorities this year is maintaining a responsible budget that balances the needs of our community with sound financial management. Our commitment to financial sustainability drives every decision we make, ensuring that we can continue to deliver essential services, key infrastructure projects and invest in the future of our region. This plan will guide Council members, volunteers and staff to work together in delivering those strategic initiatives and activities that will benefit everyone across our region.

Greg Georgopoulos - Chief Executive Officer

2023-24 Key Achievements



A Prosperous Economy

- Conducted the bi-annual Business Survey which received 106 responses from businesses across the region.
- Facilitated three Home Based Business networking events across the region attended by 70 businesses.
- Advocated for the delivery of business support training resulting in five courses being run by the Polaris group.
- Held networking events including a Digital and Creatives Industry Networking session in collaboration with Mt Barker District Council attended by 40 businesses, and two First Nations Business Events with 50 attendees.
- Sent out four business e-newsletters which are being read by 4,000 businesses.
- Held a *Doing Business with Council* procurement workshop attended by eight businesses.



Community Wellbeing

- Provided support to Santos Tour Down Under 2024.
- Delivered a range of community events including Hills Harmony Picnic, Discover Play Bikeway, Volunteer end of year celebration, and ROAR Talent Tour: Battle of the bands.
- Installed and unveiled the Coolamon Sculpture at Federation Park, Gumeracha.
- Refurbished the Gumeracha library.
- Delivered a number of community-led emergency resilience workshops supporting communities to prepare for natural disasters.
- Implemented activities from the "Our Watch Toolkit for Local Government" including a gender equity audit process, and staff training.
- Supported the Woodforde community to hold a community picnic in March with 30 attendees, as part of the wider strategy to assist communities in building better connections.



A Functional Built Environment

- Significant works completed at the Fabrik Arts and Cultural Heritage Hub as part of the redevelopment project.
- Developed a Natural Burial Ground at Kersbrook Cemetery.
- Installed Electric Vehicle chargers in Woodside, Garrod and Stirling offices.
- Completed upgrades for a cat and dog holding facility allowing animals to be held for a longer period of time.
- Upgraded the Mount Torrens Coach House Public Toilets.



A Valued Natural Environment













- Commenced the trial of kerbside bin system collection frequency changes with over 600 households and businesses in Woodside and Lenswood, which includes a new food organics and garden organics bin for rural households.
- Installed informative and attractive signage in Council reserves / playgrounds in several locations.
- Purchased 14 Electric Vehicles for Council's fleet.
- Completed post prescribed burn weed management as part of ongoing partnership to support DEW's burning on private lands program.
- Completed over 19,000 fire prevention inspections on properties and issued 199 105F notices.
- Achieved Council's key goal of 100% renewable energy use by purchasing only renewable energy.



A Progressive Organisation



- Commenced the implementation of the new Customer Relationship Management System to improve the customer experience.
- Commenced the development of the next Strategic Plan for Council.
- Undertook an operational worksite review and future planning.
- Conducted 20 community consultation processes to support Council decision making, including a co-design approach to master plan the Stirling Library Lawns site.
- Developed and implemented the Work Health and Safety Action Plan 2024-25.
- Presented key issues and priorities for the Adelaide Hills Council at the Country Cabinet briefing.

Operating Expenditure Highlights



 Emergency Planning & Community Resilience Support \$807k	 Biodiversity & Sustainability \$1,223k	 Open Space, including Fire Mitigation Works \$4,237k
 Positive Ageing \$1,340k	 Library Services \$2,151k	 Economic Development \$653k
 Community Development & Services \$3,480k	 Public Health \$597k	 Planning & Development \$3,008k
 Waste & Recycling \$5,954k	 Civil Services \$5,928k	 Animal Management \$490k

Budget Summary





 Rates Income	\$51.4m
 All Other Operating Income (including initiatives)	\$8.7m



 Core Operating Expenses (excluding initiatives)	\$57.5m
 Operating Initiatives	\$2.2m



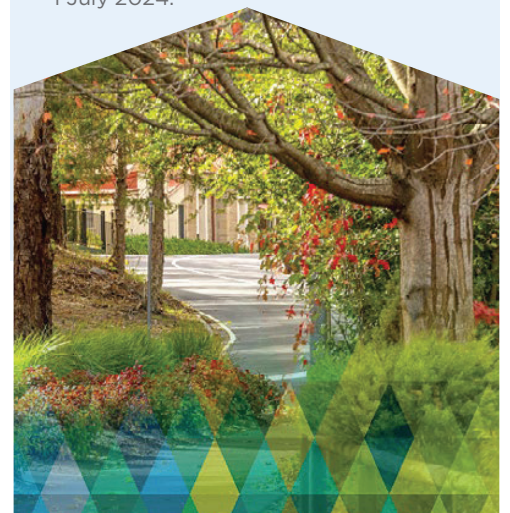
 Gross Capital Renewal Program Expenditure	\$12.0m
 Gross Capital Expenditure on New/Upgraded Assets	\$4.6m

Borrowing	Net borrowings of \$1.3m, resulting in forecast total borrowings at 30 June 2025 of \$25.6m
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Financial Sustainability	Operating surplus ratio of 0.8% which is below Council's target of 1% to 5% surplus
	Net financial liabilities ratio 56% in line with Council's target of 25% to 75%
	Asset sustainability ratio 100% in line with Council's target of 95% to 105%

Community Consultation

The draft Annual Business Plan 2024-25 (ABP) was published for community consultation through Council's Community Engagement Hub over the period 16 May to 11 June 2024. Through numerous promotional activities, we encouraged feedback to be submitted through the online platform, in writing, via phone, and in person at our four information sessions or at the 11 June 2024 Council Meeting. We received 77 responses and a petition with 136 signatures. This feedback was considered at the 17 June 2024 Special Council Meeting prior to Council adopting the ABP on 1 July 2024.



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 2024-25, general rates will increase on average by 5.78% for residential and primary production properties. For a residential property of average value, this equates to an increase of approximately \$142.

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, concessions 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 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 by contacting **8408 0400**.

Capital Works Program

We will spend \$12m on our capital renewal program which helps us maintain and replace our current infrastructure and assets.

We also have nine Capital Strategic Initiatives for upgrading and building new assets and infrastructure costing \$4.6m.

Some of these Initiatives include:

- Upgrade to Uraidla play space (\$220k)
- New and upgraded footpaths (\$292k)
- Road Safety Program including co-contribution to Road Blackspot (grant funded) (\$1.84m)
- Stormwater Projects (\$544k)
- Splash park at the Adelaide Hills War Memorial Swimming Centre (\$750k)

Capital Renewal Expenditure Highlights

						
Sealed Roads	Unsealed Roads	Storm Water	Footpaths	Sports & Recreation	Information, Communication & Technology	Bridges
\$2,342k	\$978k	\$141k	\$668k	\$275k	\$1,309k	\$1,178k

Contact us

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