

# Annual Business Plan

## 2025-26 SUMMARY



***The Adelaide Hills Council Annual Business Plan for 2025-26 shows our services, programs and projects for this financial year. It also shows how we will allocate our resources to achieve the goals we set out in our Your Place, Your Space Strategic Plan 2024, while ensuring Council's long-term financial sustainability.***

“This year’s Annual Business Plan reaffirms our commitment to sustainability, resilience, and responsible governance. It outlines key investments in people, places, and the environment, while navigating the financial challenges that come with managing a large and diverse region.

As outlined in the planned priorities, we will take important and considered steps to strengthen our long-term financial sustainability, renew aging infrastructure, and deliver new community assets to support resilience and wellbeing. We will also implement environmental initiatives that reduce emissions, improve waste management, and protect natural areas. These actions reflect our commitment to responsible governance and a thriving, sustainable future.

Adelaide Hills Council remains committed to transparency and accountability, ensuring our decisions and actions reflect the needs and aspirations of our community. Together with our residents, businesses, volunteers, and partners, we are building a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive future for the Adelaide Hills.”

**Nathan Daniell**  
Acting Mayor

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# Message from the CEO

“Adelaide Hills Council’s Annual Business Plan for 2025-26 demonstrates our ongoing commitment to a thriving, sustainable future. It outlines key strategic initiatives and investments designed to protect our natural environment, build resilient communities, enhance infrastructure, and evolve our organisation to meet emerging needs.

Building on the foundations of the Your Place, Your Space Strategic Plan 2024, this plan responds to our region’s changing priorities with a strong focus on responsible budgeting, sustainability, and delivering exceptional services. By aligning our efforts under this plan, we ensure that every initiative is purposeful, coordinated, and responsive to the evolving needs of the Adelaide Hills region.”

**Greg Georgopoulos** - Chief Executive Officer



## Our Focus for 2025-26

Council’s focus this financial year is to support our community, environment, and region through a responsible budget that delivers essential services, manages resources wisely, and promotes sustainability. Some of the highlights include:

- Pursuing our adopted pathway to achieving net zero corporate carbon emissions
- Trialing alternate kerbside waste collection models to divert more waste from landfill
- Progressing towards financial sustainability through considered planning
- Revising the Biodiversity Strategy to conserve native vegetation and habitat on Council land, and protect ecological values along natural waterways
- Developing a Stormwater Management Plan
- Expanding the Fabrik Arts + Heritage Hub operations following its redevelopment
- Undertaking a strategic review of all Council owned properties including Council administration accommodation
- Increasing community connections through forums
- Collaborating with Adelaide Hills Tourism to promote and support regional tourism, while also advocating for key economic development priorities with other levels of government
- Commencing the development of a housing strategy that meets community needs and balances character, growth, affordability, and the natural environment
- Upgrading the Customer Relationship Management System to improve customer experience through streamlined online services and faster communication



# Operating Expenditure Highlights



**Fabrik Arts + Heritage**  
**\$1,060k**



**Emergency Planning and  
Community Resilience**  
**\$388k**



**Biodiversity and  
Sustainability**  
**\$1,966k**



**Open Space**  
**\$5,014k**



**Positive Ageing**  
**\$1,468k**



**Library Services**  
**\$2,188k**



**Community Development  
and Services**  
**\$2,788k**



**Environmental Health**  
**\$613k**



**Planning and  
Development**  
**\$3,745k**



**Waste and Recycling**  
**\$6,688k**



**Civil Services**  
**\$6,131k**



**Animal Management**  
**\$551k**



**Sport and Recreation**  
**\$1,128k**

## Budget Summary



● Rates income	\$54.953m
● All other operating income (including initiatives)	\$9.505m



● Core operating expenses (excluding Initiatives)	\$65.381m
● Operating initiatives	\$1.509m



● Gross Capital Renewal Program expenditure	\$14.292m
● Gross capital expenditure on new / upgraded assets	\$3.448m

### Borrowing:

Net borrowings of \$6.395m, resulting in forecast total borrowings at 30 June 2026 of \$35.220m.

### Financial Sustainability:

Operating deficit ratio of 3.8% which is below Council's target of 0% to 10% surplus on average over 10 years.

Net financial liabilities ratio 63% in line with Council's target of 0% to 100%.

Asset sustainability ratio 116% which is above Council's target of 90% to 110%.

## Community Consultation

The draft Annual Business Plan 2025-26 was published for community consultation with residents between 21 May and 11 June 2025.

Through various promotional activities, feedback was encouraged via hardcopy, an online feedback form, email, letter, social media, phone contact and presentation at a public Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 10 June 2025.

A total of 62 participants provided feedback, and three provided a deputation or public presentation at a Council meeting during the consultation period.

This feedback was considered at the 17 June 2025 Special Council Meeting prior to adoption of the Annual Business Plan on 30 June 2025.





# Capital Renewal Expenditure Highlights



Sealed  
Roads

\$4.08m



Unsealed  
Roads

\$800k



Stormwater

\$1.65m



Footpaths

\$425k



Sport and  
Recreation

\$60k



Community  
Wastewater  
Management

\$913k



Bridges

\$143k

## Capital Works Program

Council will spend \$14.292m on Capital Renewal to maintain and replace current infrastructure and assets.

To upgrade and build new assets and infrastructure, Council will allocate \$3.448m to various Capital Strategic Initiatives.

### Some of these initiatives include:

- Redevelopment of the Uraidla Play Space (\$220k)
- Upgraded footpaths (\$425k)
- Stormwater renewal and infrastructure upgrades (\$2.194m)
- Road Safety Program (including co-contribution to road Black Spot Program) and road safety initiatives (\$134k)
- Central irrigation control system: Houghton Square, Lobethal Main Street, and Kersbrook Cemetery (\$130k)
- Access improvements to Woorabinda Bushland Reserve (\$70k)

## 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, so can fluctuate where there has been new development, capital improvements, or other significant changes to the value of a property as determined by the Valuer-General.*

For 2025-26, general rates will increase on average by 6.2% for residential and primary production properties, which will allow for continued financial sustainability, maintain Council's much needed services and fund new initiatives. For a residential property of average value, this equates to an annual increase of approximately \$161.

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

Council provides a confidential and individually tailored approach to ratepayers experiencing financial difficulty. To discuss the options available, please phone 8408 0400 or email [rates@ahc.sa.gov.au](mailto:rates@ahc.sa.gov.au).

### 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](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

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

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