

DRAFT BUDGET 2019/20

The Golden Plains Shire Council Draft Budget 2019/20 is now on public exhibition and all residents and ratepayers are welcome to have their say on this year's financial plan.

In May, Council's News page in the Golden Plains Times will break down the budget, detailing how Council will spend this year's rates revenue and highlighting the projects and services that will be delivered across the Shire. We'll also explain how rates are calculated in the State Government's current rating system and what you'll see on your rates' notice this year. All the same information will be shared on Council's social media and available at Council's website: goldenplains.vic.gov.au/budget.

Key Features of the Draft Budget 2019/20 include:

- \$3 million investment into maintenance of Council's assets
- \$1.15 million for resealing local roads
- \$1.1 million for improvements on local roads
- 13 new sport and recreation projects across the Shire
- \$600,000 for gravel resheeting of local roads – up from \$300,000 in 2018/19
- Delivering new infrastructure in the north of the Shire including Linton-Mannibadar Road, Cressy-Pitfield Road Widening, and a new Coopers Bridge over Meredith-Steiglitz Road
- Investment to continue delivering all Council's current services under the rates cap
- The Waste Management charge will increase 2.5 percent in line with the rates cap



MAYOR'S MESSAGE – COUNCIL BUDGET 2019/20



As the Mayor of Golden Plains Shire Council, I'm proud to present Council's Draft Budget 2019/20 to our residents and ratepayers, our farming and business communities, and our government and investment partners.

This Budget is a strong commitment to the people we serve. In our rate-capped environment, it's a responsible budget that respects every dollar of ratepayers' money; it's a smart plan that invests in key infrastructure to build and maintain the people's assets; and it's a fair budget that better balances the collection of rates and delivers the benefits across Golden Plains.

Delivering what residents all across our large Shire want, need and deserve is a balancing act – and Council has committed to an exciting list of Budget projects that serve our smaller communities as well as our larger towns, from the north through the centre to the south of Golden Plains.

We're building more new projects than ever – and Council's success attracting government funding grants means we're able to redirect money and deliver more projects for the people of our Shire.

In 2019/20, Council will deliver 15 significant community projects valued at more than \$19 million, including \$4.68 million in government grants and contributions.

It makes more financial sense to take care of what you have rather than buy new things, so in 2019/20, Council's biggest financial investment is \$3 million for maintenance and asset renewal. Committed to maintaining more than 1,744km of local roads, this year Council is investing more than \$3.5 million into building and maintaining local roads, as well as delivering important new road projects.

Council is a business and we are committed to running our business as efficiently as possible, so we can deliver more of the projects and services you want. With efficiency as the goal, we are proud to report that, even with rising expenses, our staffing costs this year are the same last year. We don't make a profit and there are no shareholders who reap the benefits – every single dollar we collect and every single dollar we save is invested back into building a stronger Shire.

We believe that Golden Plains is a unique and exceptional place to live and we want all our residents and ratepayers to enjoy calling our Shire home. This year's Council Budget delivers the projects, services and infrastructure that support this commitment, now and for the future.

Cr Owen Sharkey, Mayor of Golden Plains Shire Council

HAVE YOUR SAY ON COUNCIL'S BUDGET

Read Council's Draft Budget 2019/20: Visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/budget or pick up a copy at Council's Customer Service Centres: 2 Pope St, Bannockburn; 68 Sussex St, Linton; or The Well, 19 Heales St, Smythesdale.

Ask Your Budget Questions: Council will hold two Drop In Budget Sessions and all residents are welcome to stop by and have their Budget questions answered by Councillors and Council's finance team. Visit a Budget Session at The Well, 19 Heales St, Smythesdale from 5 to 7pm, Wednesday 8 May; or at the Bannockburn Shire Hall, 12 High St, Bannockburn from 5 to 7pm, Wednesday 15 May.

Make a Budget Submission: Written submissions may be lodged by 5pm, Monday 27 May. Post a submission addressed to Director Corporate Services, Golden Plains Shire Council, PO Box 111, Bannockburn, VIC 3331; email enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au; or visit goldenplains.vic.gov.au/budget

Present a Submission to Council: Council will hold a Special Budget Meeting at Bannockburn Shire Hall, 12 High St, at 6pm, Tuesday 11 June, and everyone who lodges a written submission is welcome to present it to Councillors.

The final Budget 2019/20 will be considered for adoption by Council at its Ordinary Meeting in Linton on Tuesday 25 June 2019.

CHANGE TO MUNICIPAL CHARGE

What is the Municipal Charge? This is the same base rate paid by every household in the Shire, prior to the addition of the variable payment calculated on the value of each property. In the Draft Budget 2019/20, the Municipal Charge is set at \$300 per household, up from \$225 last year, so that less of every household's rates payment is subject to variations of the house valuation.

So, why increase the Municipal Charge? The State Government's rates collection system is unfair and the house valuation system makes it more unequal in our Shire. This new initiative of increasing the proportion of rates raised by the Municipal Charge will better manage the growing disparity between the ever-increasing property values in a number of our towns and those towns where property values may even be declining, helping to share the costs more evenly throughout the Shire.

Will Council make more money from the increase? No, the total rates revenue from properties in Golden Plains Shire cannot rise above the rates cap of 2.5 percent. Council will not receive any more rate money by increasing the Municipal Charge - the change will just redistribute the total rates revenue more equitably among the residents of Golden Plains.

Does this mean I'll pay more in rates? The rates payment for each household is made up of different charges so every year, some people pay more and pay less – but this change will make rates more equitable for our residents.

By increasing the base rate everyone pays, less of your rate payment will be subject to fluctuations of the property market – and that's fairer for everyone.