

1 Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2025/26

Avalon Beach, Careel Bay, Coasters Retreat, Greater Mackerel Beach, Palm Beach and Whale Beach

This document features some of the key highlights of the draft 2025/26 budget, capital works program and operational projects.

This year's proposed budget will deliver important services and facilities for our community while navigating increasing costs, maintaining and renewing ageing assets and addressing essential core system upgrades.

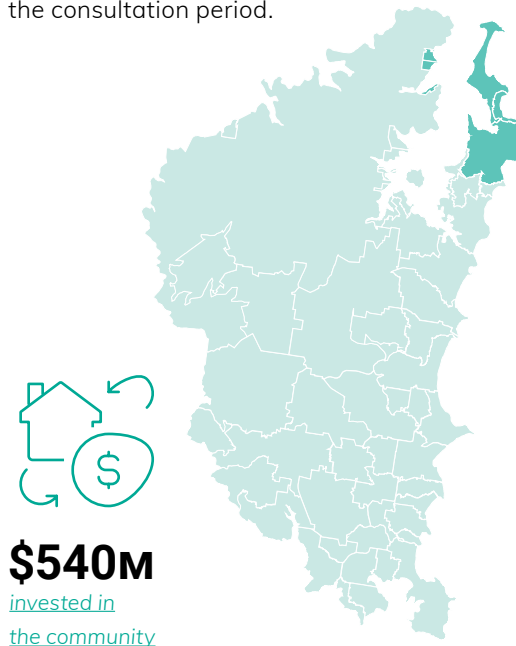
The works program invests in health and recreation facilities, roads and footpath improvements, new cycleways and playgrounds and in spaces that bring our community together. We will also continue to implement initiatives to protect the environment and prepare for the increasing incidence of emergencies like floods and storms.

Council has applied to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Variation to rates over the next three financial years to address the shortfall in funds required to meet the needs of our community. The draft 2025/26 budget incorporates this Special Variation and may be amended depending on IPART's decision, expected in May/June 2025.

The draft budget also includes approximately \$2m in efficiencies and cost cutting measures to ensure we continue to deliver good value to ratepayers (see [Productivity and Improvement fact sheet](#)).

You can review the highlight projects planned across the whole Northern Beaches area as well as those specific to your local area in the next 12 months (page 3).

We welcome your feedback throughout the consultation period.



Our draft 2025/26 budget

We've developed a balanced budget, focused on building a safe, resilient and connected Northern Beaches. The budget is based on the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) approving Council's Special Variation to increase rates. IPART's decision is expected in May/ June 2025. The budget snapshot below includes the Special Variation funding and expenditure program.

Budget snapshot 2025/26

Operational

\$472.3m

Income from continuing operations

-

\$444.1m

Expenses from continuing operations

-

\$24.3m

Capital grant income

=

\$3.9m

Operating surplus

Capital Works

\$38.1m

New works

+

\$58.1m

Renewal works*

=

\$96.2m

Total works

Loans repayments

\$2.4m

*Renewal works are those that return an asset to its 'as new' condition. For example, this may include resealing the road surface.

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Rates income

Your rates fund the works that maintain and improve our area – the local roads, footpaths, sportsfields, playgrounds, pools, libraries, public toilets, town centres and much more.

Each year the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) set a rate peg, which is the maximum amount that any council can raise rates. This is 3.8% for the 2025/26 financial year.

In recent years, the rate peg has been much lower than inflation, causing rates income to increase at less than half the pace of rising costs. This has caused a significant and growing funding gap and is placing pressure on our ability to deliver the services and infrastructure our community expect and keep our assets maintained to an acceptable level.

That's why Council has applied to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Variation to rates.

In 2025/26, Council's alternative proposed Special Variation increase is 12.1% inclusive of the 3.8% rate peg.

Further budget information

To see how your rates are invested into the community, see the fact sheet titled [Your Dollars at Work](#).











[We're here to support you](#)

Please speak with our Rates Team if you are experiencing difficulties in paying rates and annual charges.

3 Investing in community infrastructure – 2025/26

The proposed \$96m capital works program for 2025/26 prioritises renewal of assets in poorer condition including roads, footpaths and stormwater assets. Other projects create opportunities for health, recreation, and connection within the community.

Highlights of the \$96m 2025/26 capital works program include:

 <p>improving road assets and road surfaces</p> <p>\$25.3m</p> <p>Incl. SV \$2.18m</p>	 <p>priority stormwater management works</p> <p>\$14.9m</p> <p>Incl. SV \$1.7m</p>	 <p>new and improved community facilities</p> <p>\$9.6m</p> <p>Incl SV \$0.75m</p>	 <p>new and improved sports facilities</p> <p>\$9.1m</p> <p>Incl SV \$0.55m</p>
 <p>new and upgraded footpaths, shared paths, cycleways and bridges</p> <p>\$7.2m</p> <p>Incl. SV \$0.18m</p>	 <p>improving foreshores plus rockpools and boardwalks</p> <p>\$5.7m</p> <p>Incl. SV \$0.47m</p>	 <p>new and improved parks, playgrounds and reserves</p> <p>\$4.2m</p> <p>Incl. SV \$0.25m</p>	 <p>town centre and village upgrades</p> <p>\$3.4m</p>

Local projects:

- 250m of road resheeting in Avalon Beach
- 151m of road resheeting in Palm Beach
- 1,579m of road repair and rejuvenation in Avalon Beach*
- Kerb and gutter renewals at Avalon Beach and Palm Beach
- New footpath on Catalina Crescent, Avalon Beach
- Retaining wall renewal Whale Beach Road, Avalon Beach
- Mackerel Beach Wharf accessibility works
- Carpark renewal - Des Creagh Reserve, Avalon
- Water Harvesting - Avalon Golf Course
- Design for streetscapes in line with Avalon Place Plan
- Design for Governor Phillip Masterplan works
- Playground upgrade, Palmgrove Reserve, Avalon
- Upgrade of Whale Beach rockpool
- Design for Avalon Beach rockpool renewal *
- Design for Palm Beach rockpool renewal *
- Design for water access at Shore Brace Road, Avalon Beach
- Plan of management development, Governor Phillip Park, Palm Beach
- Stormwater pipe renewal - Elouera Road, Avalon *
- Design for stormwater renewal, The Strand, Whale Beach
- Design for new stormwater assets Palmgrove Road, Avalon

[Capital projects can be viewed on our draft CAPEX map for 2025/26.](#)

* SV - Special Variation funded initiatives to be delivered if approved by IPART and adopted by Council.

Investing in operations - Special Variation funded projects

Operational projects complement capital works and are designed to improve services and deliver on our Community Strategic Plan. If approved, the Special Variation will be invested in operational programs such as those below, in addition to other operational projects planned for 2025/26.

Additional natural risk reduction, stormwater maintenance and environmental restoration programs - \$2.12m including

- approximately 8,000 additional hours of bush regeneration
- approximately 7,000m of additional stormwater pipe inspections
- designs for creek rehabilitation at Dee Why and works at Forestville
- increased hazard reduction burns and maintenance across 38 fire trails and 303 Asset Protection Zones
- improved management of Council's 65 contaminated sites
- accelerate the implementation of the Narrabeen Lagoon Entrance Management Strategy.

- natural disaster funding to aid recovery and clean up following storms and other unexpected events

Additional maintenance and protection of open spaces - \$0.82m including

- up to 1,200 additional trees planted
- double the amount of proactive tree maintenance
- increase reserve mowing program from 10 to 11 cuts per year over 800+ sites
- increase in tidal pool inspections and frequency of pool deep cleans.

Increased maintenance of roads and transport assets - \$0.68m including

- increased road maintenance including patch repair on 1,770m² and 25,000 lineal metres of preventative crack sealing on sealed roads
- road grading and shoulder maintenance of unsealed roads plus other road assets.

Increased maintenance of over 650 community centres, surf clubs and operational buildings - \$0.85m

Cost savings

The draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan includes \$2m in efficiencies and savings. These include :

- reduction in Hop, Skip Jump bus service routes
- closure of underutilised Vacation Care service
- fleet optimisation plan
- removal of the financial subsidy for the NSW Surf Life Saving Championships
- removal or reduction in frequency of selected Council-run events including;
 - o Picnic in the Park reduced from 2 to 1 per year
 - o Outdoor Cinema reduced from 2 to 1 per year
 - o Christmas markets – removed
 - o Australia Day markets and food truck party – removed
 - o World Food Markets – removed
 - o International Women's Day markets – removed
 - o Citizenship ceremonies – removal of photography service

Have your say

We welcome feedback on our Operational Plan and Budget 2025/26.

Make a submission online or post to Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Budget 2025 (Draft) Northern Beaches Council PO Box 82 Manly 1655

Submissions close 25 May 2025.

