2026/27 Budget Overview

How your rates help fund roads, services, facilities and community outcomes

Message from the Shire

The 2026/27 Budget continues to fund everyday services while delivering a significant capital works program across the district. A strong focus is being placed on sealed road widening and reconstruction, external grant leverage, townsite services, parks and community facilities. Importantly, the budget reflects investment across the district, with a significant share of road capital works located on agricultural distributor roads. These works support freight movement, safety and long-term asset renewal across a road network that is large relative to the Shire's population. At the same time, the budget also recognises the need to maintain townsite services, coastal amenities and community facilities that support residents, visitors and local businesses.

1. Budget Overview

Category	2026/27 Budget	Summary
Rates revenue	$8.95M	Increased by 4.5% across general, minimum and other rates categories used to help fund services and infrastructure.
Capital program	$23.7M	Gross infrastructure and asset investment offset by grants, reserves and other funding.
Employee costs	$6.13M	Workforce cost for asset development, administration, compliance, works and community service delivery.
Projected reserve balances	$11.41M	Restricted funds held for future renewal, infrastructure, plant and community needs are increasing.
Budget surplus / deficit after adjustments	$0	Balanced budget position projected at financial year end.

Budget Direction and Investment Priorities

The 2026/27 Budget builds on a substantial 2025/26 capital program. Last year's capital investment totaled approximately $7.02M of expenditure, with several projects still underway and carried forward into the next budget. This year's program continues that investment pipeline, with a strong emphasis on inland and agricultural road networks. As future programs are developed, it will also be important to keep planned renewal in the coastal townsites visible balancing the comparative demands of asset consumption, population growth, visitor and commercial service role.

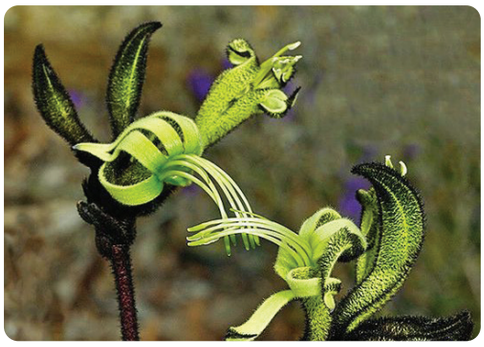
Budget Focus Area	What residents should know
Road Network Improvements	In 2025/26, major road expenditure included Dandaragan Road, Rowes Road, Muthawandery Road, Gillingarra Road, Cataby Road and Cockleshell Gully. Around $2.5M of this related to the Dandaragan Main Street upgrade, which was a townsite project but also supported the surrounding agricultural area, freight movement and regional road function. In 2026/27, the road capital program continues to show a strong emphasis on agricultural distributor roads east and west of Brand Highway. Our undertaking this year is significantly escalated by the Shire undertaking major road construction projects on behalf of two renewable energy projects. This will require extensive support from our local contractor network.
Non-road capital remains important	The 2026/27 program also includes major non-road projects such as Dandaragan changerooms, Dandaragan Residential Land Development, Shire building roof repairs and renewal, CBD ablutions/ rest area upgrades, recreation facility renewals, public amenity improvements and a significant plant replacement program.
Commercial revenue support	Sandy Cape and coastal commercial leases are now shown as important revenue streams that help support the wider Shire budget.
Plant replacement supports delivery	Replacing graders, loaders, trucks, trailers and other operational plant is critical to delivering the Shire's road maintenance and capital works program. Without reliable plant, the Shire would be more exposed to contractor availability, higher hire costs and delays in completing the larger road program now being planned.

2. Rates and Revenue

Rates are an important funding source, but they do not fund the whole budget on their own. The budget forecasts $8.95M in rates revenue, while the expenditure within the capital program alone is approximately $23.7M. The Shire also uses grants, fees and charges, lease income, reimbursements, reserves and carryover funds to deliver services and projects.

Rates income stream	Budgeted amount	Share
UV rates – Agricultural Farmland, Rural Residential (Alta Mare, Marine Fields, Kooringal Vale) and Mining, including minimum rates. The Shire receives updated UV Valuations every year and has applied a 4.5% increase to the total yield of UV rates relative to the 2025/26 financial year. While the overall UV rates yield has increased by 4.5%, individual properties may increase by more or less depending on their updated annual unimproved valuation. (Total number of Assessments = 842)	$4.11M	46%
GRV rates – Townsite Residential, Commercial and Industrial, Rural Residential (Jurien Bay Heights) including minimum rates. The Shire receives updated GRV property valuations every 5 years and has applied a 4.5% increase to the rate in the dollar for this category. The majority of landowners will see a 4.5% increase, provided no building or development improvements have been added to their property since last year. (Total number of Assessments = 2,965)	$4.83M	54%

3. Everyday Operations and Services



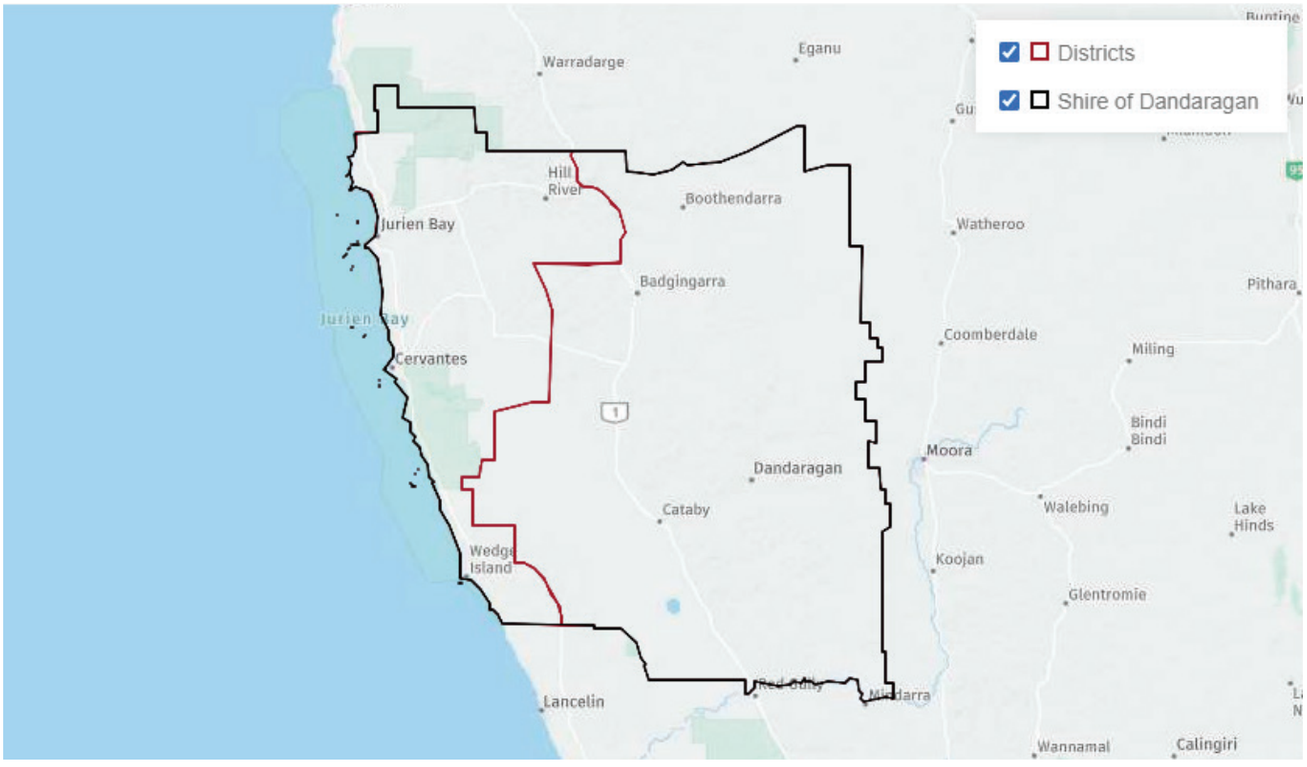
The annual budget is not only about new projects. A large share of the budget funds the everyday operations that keep roads, parks, ovals, waste sites, buildings, compliance services, customer service and community facilities running across a large district. Operating costs fund the everyday services residents rely on each year, such as staff, road maintenance, parks, waste, public amenities, compliance, insurance and utilities. Capital costs fund one-off asset investment such as road reconstruction, buildings, plant, playgrounds and major facility upgrades. Both are important: operating budgets keep services running, while capital budgets renew and improve long-term community assets.

Operating area	Budget figure	What this helps fund
Employee costs	$6.13M	Works, parks, planning, building, environmental health, ranger services, waste, libraries, finance, governance and customer service.
Infrastructure services and safety	$2.03M	Road maintenance, contract works, plant running costs, engineering support, work health and safety, signage and drainage.
Parks and reserves	$1.11M	Sporting field preparation, mowing, turf, reticulation, trees, playgrounds, verges, reserves, waste site maintenance and townsite presentation.
Utilities	$523k	Street lighting, electricity, water, phones, data and utility charges for public facilities.
Insurance	$354k	Workers compensation, public liability, property, vehicle, plant, cyber and management liability insurance.
Community, library and visitor services	$554k	Youth, tourism, community events, libraries, CRC service agreements, community grants and visitor services.

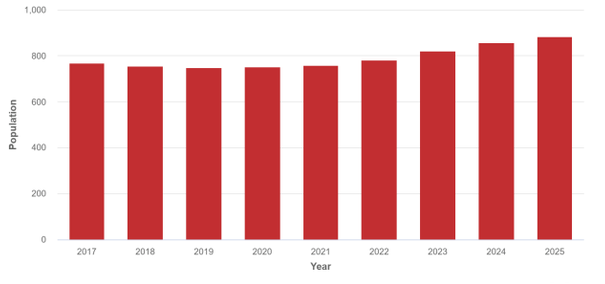
Town Size and Service Context

The Shire's population has grown materially since the 2021 Census, with the latest available Estimated Resident Population showing 4,089 residents across the whole Shire at 30 June 2025. Jurien Bay remains the largest population centre, while Cervantes, Badgingarra and Dandaragan each play important district service, tourism, agricultural and community roles. The latest population estimates below highlight the continued growth being experienced across the region. A fair budget therefore needs to consider both population demand in the coastal townsites and the infrastructure task across inland agricultural areas.



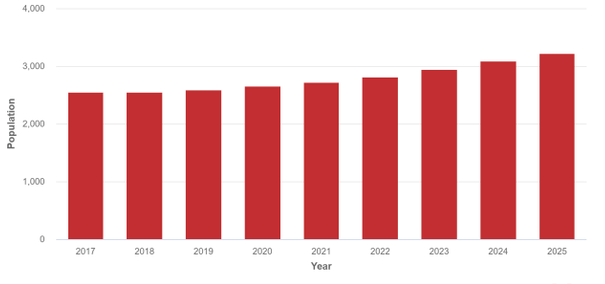


Estimated Resident Population
Dandaragan and District



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions)

Estimated Resident Population
Jurien Bay - Cervantes and District



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions)



Everyday Services Residents Receive

Service area	Examples of what residents see
Road maintenance	Maintenance grading, shoulder works, patching, signage, street sweeping, drainage, guideposts and vegetation control.
Parks and reserves	Sporting field preparation, mowing, irrigation, playgrounds, trees, turf, verges, public open space and BBQs.
Waste services	Kerbside collection, recycling, transfer stations, landfill, green waste, tyre disposal and waste site operations.
Community services	Events, youth programs, community grants, libraries, tourism support, public art and CRC agreements.
Compliance and safety	Ranger services, bushfire mitigation and brigade support, building, planning, environmental health and emergency management.
Public buildings	Public toilets, halls, recreation centres, depots, visitor facilities, community buildings and information bays.



Broader Funding Mix

Rates are important, but they are only one part of the total funding picture. The budget also includes income from grants, fees and charges, refuse charges, commercial leases, private works, investment interest, reimbursements, reserve transfers and carryover funding.

Funding source	Indicative amount	What it means
Rates revenue	$8.95M	The main general-purpose revenue source used to fund district-wide services.
Refuse and waste charges	$1.56M	Dedicated revenue that helps fund the cost of waste collection, refuse sites and transfer station operations, future refuse site planning.
Commercial lease income	$505k	Revenue from commercial assets located in Cervantes and Jurien Bay including caravan parks, club/cafe leases and the DBCA/Civic Centre lease.
Investment interest	$705k	Interest on municipal, reserve and trust funds.
Grants and external contributions	Varies by program	Helps deliver road, building, planning, community and environmental projects that rates alone could not fund. The Shire also receives approximately $819k in untied general purpose funding and $1.473M in untied local roads funding from the Federal Government's Financial Assistance Grants to Local Governments.

Commercial Revenue Opportunities

Coastal communities create higher service demands through population, visitors, tourism assets and public amenities, but they also generate important revenue streams that are not replicated at the same scale inland. This includes Sandy Cape camping income and commercial leases associated with caravan parks, clubs, cafe facilities and the DBCA/Civic Centre lease.

Coastal revenue stream	Budgeted income / net effect	Transparency message
Sandy Cape camping fees	$835k gross income; approximately $500k net contribution after operating costs.	A significant tourism and camping revenue stream that helps support the wider Shire ranger services, environmental works and visitor services after operating costs.
Jurien Bay Caravan Park lease	$105k	Commercial lease income generated from a coastal tourism asset.
Cervantes Caravan Park lease	$120k	Commercial lease income generated from a coastal tourism asset.
Jurien Bay Beach Cafe lease	$75k	Commercial income offsetting operating costs of the Jurien Bay foreshore amenities and public open space.
Cervantes Country Club lease and contribution to utilities	$75k	Commercial income utilised to fund recreation precinct improvements including the recent construction of the new changeroom facilities.
DBCA / Civic Centre lease and contribution to utilities	$130k	A major commercial lease revenue stream associated with a commercial building.

6. Roads and Transport Infrastructure

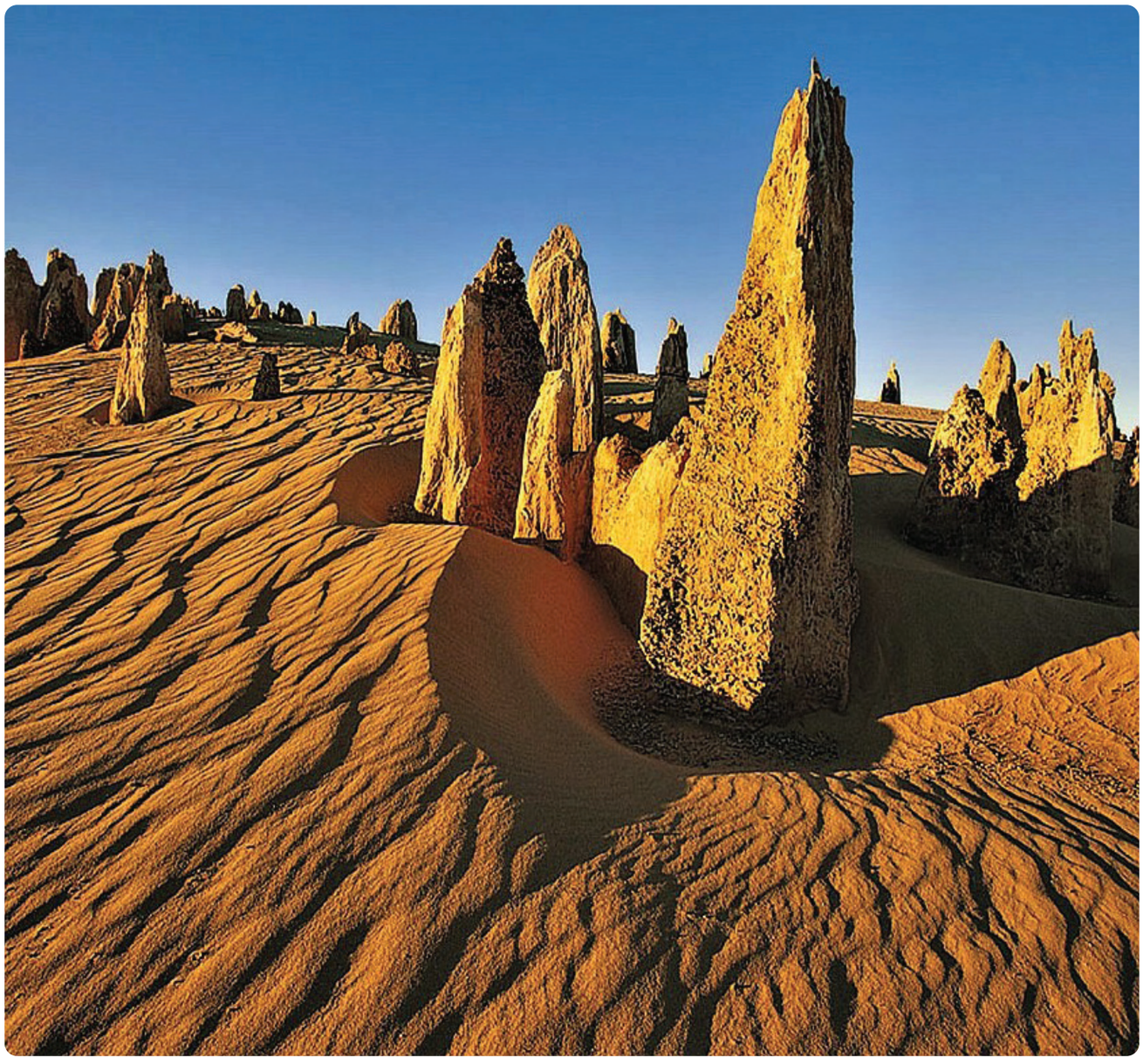
The Shire's core business continues to focus heavily on roads and civil infrastructure. Roads and civil infrastructure represent the largest area of investment in the 2026/27 Budget. The program includes approximately $15.36M in road and footpath capital works, together with substantial operating expenditure on road maintenance, contract works, plant operations, drainage, signage and related infrastructure services.

The Shire manages approximately 1,650 kilometres of road network, including about 800 kilometres of sealed road and 850 kilometres of unsealed road. This is a major infrastructure responsibility for a small population base and explains why roads are a major budget focus.

Named capital projects are only one part of the road task. The operating budget also includes significant external road maintenance costs, in addition to the Shire's own internal staff and plant costs. The Shire preferences the engagement of local contractors to support our own staff to undertake an array of road maintenance treatments.



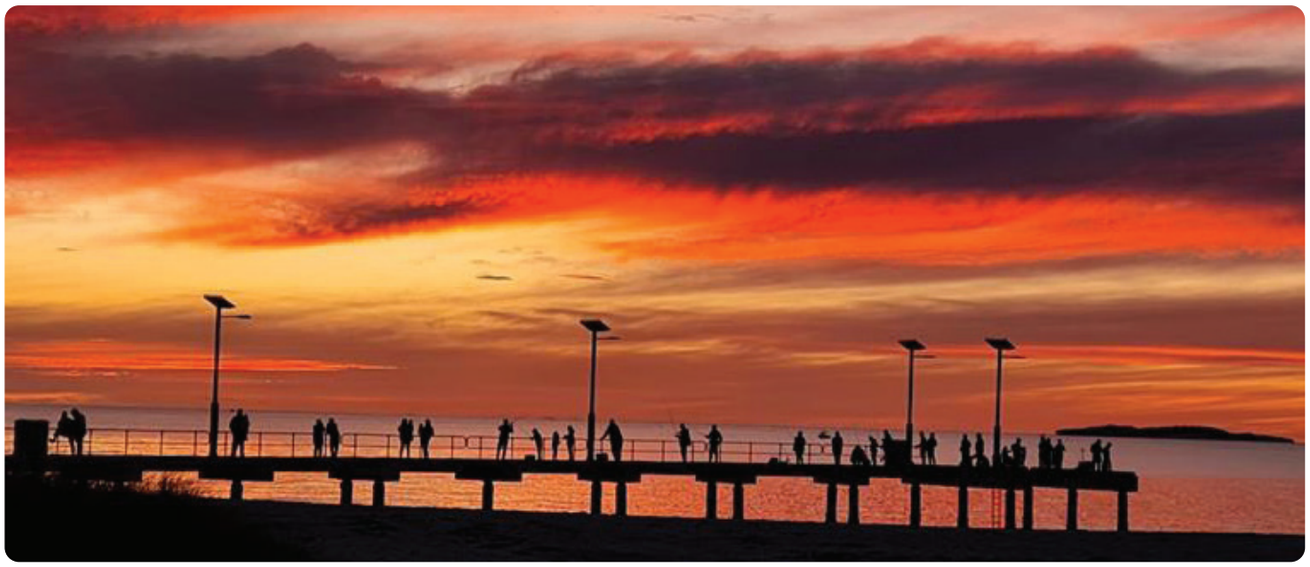
External road maintenance item	Budget	What it supports
Maintenance grading and roller hire for unsealed gravel roads	$509k	Unsealed road maintenance and contractor plant support
Sealed road shoulder grading	$200k	Road edge safety, drainage and surface protection
Roadside slashing and tree pruning	$175k	Roadside clearance, visibility and fire risk reduction
Roadside verge spraying	$106k	Weed control and road shoulder protection
Gravel supply and gravel pit rehabilitation	$150k	Materials for unsealed road renewal and pit restoration obligations
Sealed road patching materials	$68k	Pothole repairs and sealed surface maintenance
Townsite kerb renewal and urban footpath repairs	$114k	Townsite drainage, access and pedestrian infrastructure renewal
Drainage cleaning, street sweeping, guideposts, signage and line marking	$94k	Road safety, drainage function, town presentation and wayfinding



Road Capital Projects

Many road projects are delivered over more than one financial year, with sections designed, funded and constructed progressively as grant funding, private works contributions, reserves and municipal funding become available. This is why the two-year program view provides a good representation of the Shire's ongoing commitment to improving freight and rural access routes that support the district's agricultural economy and connect communities across a very large road network. It is also important to note that around $2.5M was invested in the Dandaragan Main Street upgrade last year, which is a townsite project but also supports the surrounding agricultural area and freight task. The program therefore provides useful transparency about the balance of investment: much of the road capital is linked to agricultural access and freight movement, while coastal townsite transport renewal remains a smaller but important part of the overall program.

Project	2025/26 actual	2026/27 budget	Works summary
Rowes Road	$1,534k	$1.98M	Multi-year reconstruction, widening and renewal of key agricultural distributor road.
Gillingarra Road	$130k	$0	Final seal works to complete earlier road renewal stages.
Muthawandery Road	$489k	$144k	Upgrade from gravel to seal project continuing across two financial years.
Cataby Road	$81k	$0	Final seal works on a key distributor road.
Dandaragan Road	$2,556k	$280k	Townsite main street upgrade supporting local access and freight movement.
Winjardie Road	$0	$3.9M	Major funded reconstruction project providing widening and reconstruction of a narrow-sealed road.
Mullering Road	$0	$1.63M	Major private works / road user project providing site access to a renewable energy project and improving agricultural freight access.
NorthWest Road	$0	$361k	Targeted renewal and widening works on a key distributor road.
Marchagee Track	$0	$54k	Minor capital allocation for rural access route improvements.
Cockleshell Gully Road	$41k	$0	Reconstruction and treatment works on agricultural and tourism route.
Cowalla Road	$0	$5.25M	Major private works / road user project west of Brand Highway providing site access to a renewable energy project and improving agricultural freight access.
Munbinea Road	$0	$630k	Key distributor road renewal and widening.
Coalseam Industrial Area Footpath Link	$122k	$0	Footpath link from town to industrial area improving pedestrian access and connectivity.
Catalonia Street	$0	$451k	Coastal townsite road renewal funded through Roads to Recovery allocation.
Jurien Bay Heights Footpath Link	$0	$80k	Footpath link improving local pedestrian access removed from heavy traffic between Coalseam Industrial Area and Jurien Bay Heights.



Road network locality grouping	2025/26 actual	2026/27 budget	Two-year total	Two-year share
Agricultural East of Brand Highway	$4.79M	$8.35M	$13.14M	67%
Agricultural West of Brand Highway	$41k	$5.88M	$5.9M	30%
Coastal Townsite	$122k	$531k	$653k	3%
Total listed road / footpath capital	**$4.95M**	**$14.76M**	**$19.7M**	**100%**

Other Capital Works Highlights

Project / program	Budgeted amount	Comment
Dandaragan Recreation Precinct Changerooms	$1.03M	Building capital project supported by renewable energy sector contribution.
Dandaragan Residential Land Development	$2.76M	Development of Residential land in Dandaragan funded by the Federal Government's Housing Support Program
Dandaragan Depot Amenities	$400k	Renewal of works depot administration and amenities area.
Jurien Bay – New CBD ablution facility and sealing of rest area / Transwa bus stop.	$355k	Amenity upgrade due to increasing usage demand.
Snook Playground Redevelopment	$105k	Renewal of playground which has reached end of asset life.
Jurien Bay Jetty Extension – Detailed Design	$165k	Detailed design to address sand accretion and siltation impacts at the Jurien Bay jetty.
Jurien Bay Outdoor Multicourt renewal	$424k	Recreation renewal with partial external funding.

7. Capital Investment and External Funding

How external funding reduces the cost to ratepayers.

A key part of the Shire's budget strategy is to use grants, reserves, private works income and road user contributions to deliver major projects while reducing the direct cost to the ratepayer. Many planned projects cannot be delivered from municipal funds alone, so external funding is critical to bringing forward project delivery and reducing pressure on rates. This is why the Shire continues to invest in strategic planning for recreation precincts, the road network and the shared path network, ensuring projects are ready when funding opportunities become available. Examples of this funding strategy are shown in the following table.

Project	Gross cost	External / reserve funding	Net municipal impact
Winjardie Road	$3.9M	$3.12M external grant funding	$780k
Cowalla Road	$5.25M	Private Works – with any surplus invested in Infrastructure Construction Reserve	Approx. net neutral
Rowes Road	$1.98M	$1.32M from Regional Road Group discretionary allocation	$660k
Mullering Road	$1.63M	Private Works – with any surplus invested in Building Reserve	Approx. net neutral
Catalonia Street	$451k	$451k discretionary Roads to Recovery Funding allocation	$0
Dandaragan changerooms	$1.03M	$600k Renewables sector contribution (to be secured)	$430k
Jurien Bay CCTV Renewal and Expansion	$100k	$100k from Crime Prevention Funding	$0

8. Reserves, Waste and Public Amenities

Why reserves matter. Projected restricted reserves are about $11.41M. These funds are not spare cash. They are set aside for known future needs such as plant replacement, building renewal, infrastructure renewal, waste, sport and recreation, aerodrome works, economic development and community facilities.

Using reserves responsibly helps smooth large costs over time, reduce reliance on sudden rate increases, and ensure funds collected for specific future purposes are available when those projects are ready to proceed.

Waste services. Waste services operate with their own major revenue and cost base with the Shire operating a regional waste facility in Jurien Bay that receives waste from transfer stations in Badgingarra, Cervantes and Dandaragan. The budget includes about $1.35M in refuse removal income and $210k in refuse site fees, while major costs include kerbside rubbish and recycling, front-lift bins, transfer station operations, tyre recycling, green waste, site maintenance and licensing obligations.

Public facilities and amenities. A visible part of the annual budget is the ongoing cost of public toilets, BBQs, fish cleaning stations, foreshore amenities, community centres, recreation facilities, depots and visitor facilities. These facilities form part of the Shire's broader operating cost base, including about $1.11M for parks and reserves, $523k for utilities and $354k for insurance, as well as cleaning, pest control, fire equipment servicing, electrical and plumbing inspections, repairs and building maintenance across public buildings and amenities. This means the cost of public facilities is not limited to construction or renewal projects — it also includes the recurring compliance, servicing and presentation costs required to keep facilities safe, accessible and usable.

9. Community Grants



10. Further Information

The full adopted budget, fees and charges, Council agenda report and supporting financial statements provide the detailed statutory information behind this resident summary. This brochure is intended as a plain-English guide to help residents understand the major services, revenue sources and investment priorities in the annual budget.

11. Closing Message From The Shire President

A message from the Shire President

As Shire President, I know residents want to see their rates used carefully, fairly and transparently. This budget has been prepared with that responsibility in mind. It recognises that our coastal towns carry significant population, visitor and commercial activity, while our inland and rural areas support a large road network, agricultural freight task and essential district connections. The challenge for Council is to balance these different needs across a very large Shire while continuing to renew assets, maintain services and keep pressure on rates as reasonable as possible. The 2026/27 Budget is a practical step in that direction, investing in roads, facilities, public amenities, waste services, reserves and community infrastructure so that the whole district can continue to function well and plan confidently for the future.

Cr Tony O'Gorman

Shire President