2018/19

BUDGET SPEECH

Address to Council – 1 June 2018

MAYOR ALLAN SUTHERLAND
I am pleased to present Moreton Bay Regional Council’s budget for 2018-19.

This is a budget that is all about lifestyle.

It is a budget that reaffirms council’s commitment to ensuring that Moreton Bay continues to be a region of choice.

Our bold vision is not only for a strong economic future for Moreton Bay - but also to create one of the most liveable communities in South-East Queensland.

A place where people want to live, not a place they have to live.

And already people in South-East Queensland are speaking with their feet and moving to Moreton Bay for the incredible lifestyle on offer.

Over the past 10 years, our population has grown by almost 30 percent.

Each year, 10,000 new residents are choosing Moreton Bay to call home.

And we’re seeing on average, over 7,600 new residential lots approved every year.

This rapid population growth brings with it incredible opportunities for our region.

Opportunities such as strong and sustained economic growth, new investment, new businesses and more local jobs.

But big growth numbers like this also bring with them a big job to do.

As a council, we must make the right investments and deliver the right infrastructure to protect what we love about where we live.

At that heart of that work is strong financial management - which has been a hallmark of this council since amalgamation.
We’ve built Moreton Bay into a powerhouse economy that’s now the fastest growing in South-East Queensland.

Against that backdrop, we’ve framed the 2018/19 council budget as an investment in lifestyle.

This budget is all about - who we are and how we live.

Because Moreton Bay is now a brand that’s selling itself across the country.

So much so that the latest tourism data reflects a big shift in people’s perceptions of the Moreton Bay Region.

We have transformed into one of Queensland’s must-visit destinations!

Three years ago, our tourism base was predominantly visitors aged 55+.

Now the majority are young parents aged 30-39 bringing their family to enjoy our relaxed lifestyle, and colourful festivals and events.

Not only are our visitors younger, they’re also cashed-up, spending close to $1 billion last year.

And I’m thrilled that local businesses are enjoying the spoils of this economic growth.

In fact, the number of tourism businesses in our region have tripled over the last two years.

Not only is visitor spending up, visitation is up a whopping 24 per cent.

Over the past two years we’ve jumped from welcoming 2.9 million visitors to 3.6 million tourists a year.

And they’re now staying four times longer.

Councillors, these results don’t happen by mistake.

It’s taken years of hard work in partnership with Council and MBRT to set the right strategic policies and priorities to deliver these results.
For a long time - the beauty of this region has been somewhat of a secret.

But as you can see from those numbers, our little secret is starting to spread.

As a region, we want to build on this incredible momentum and capture the hearts of a whole new generation.

We want them to relax in Redcliffe, discover D’Aguilar, soak up Samford and enjoy some Bribie bliss.

That’s why this budget commits money to upgrading nature trails through our beautiful hinterland, it invests in beach accessibility and environmental protections and it provides for upgrades to bike networks along our glorious promenades.

And I can’t wait to talk more about that.
But first, I’m excited to announce that council will deliver a record $622 million budget in 2018/19.

This eclipses last year’s budget by more than $50 million.

Moreover, I am thrilled to be able to say that this will be our eighth consecutive budget in surplus!

Surplus budgets have become a hallmark of Moreton Bay’s disciplined fiscal management and it’s proven a winning formula.

That’s exactly why major players like the University of the Sunshine Coast are investing their money here - because they know we’re a safe bet!

And this budget continues to deliver this council’s region-building project at the Mill, which will deliver up to 6,000 jobs, 10,000 university student placements and up to $950 million in economic benefit.

Our fiscal discipline is why both State and Federal Governments backed gutsy projects like the Redcliffe Peninsula Rail Line.

Because they know we can handle it and they know the economic stimulus those projects bring to an upwardly mobile community like ours.

But, Councillors, while we continue to deliver massive infrastructure projects like these I want you to assure your communities that we haven’t lost sight of what makes Moreton Bay the best place to raise a family in South-East Queensland.

And that’s what makes this year’s budget most exciting - putting our money where our mouth is and protecting Moreton Bay’s way of life for generations to come.
Investing in lifestyle

We need to invest now to ensure local infrastructure keeps pace with population growth to preserve our region’s enviable lifestyle.

Last year we completed massive projects like the Kinsellas Sports Complex at North Lakes and this year we’re backing that up with a $51.2 million investment into local parks and playgrounds.

Alongside a $38.9 million allocation to delivering major upgrades to sport and recreation precincts.

Key investment here include:

A massive $6.1 million for Moreton Bay’s first regional soccer precinct in Burpengary
- Once this is complete it will boast our first FIFA-rated synthetic field, two new senior-grade grass pitches, multi-purpose clubhouse and carparking facilities
- We’ve enjoyed enormous success with our AFL precinct in Burpengary, this project will bring that same level of success to soccer

We’re backing this in with a $6 million spend on our region’s largest aquatic centre - the Caboolture Regional Aquatic and Leisure Centre
- This will be the first major refurbishment of swimming facilities at CRALC since it opened more than 17 years ago

We’re investing $5.5 million in the Redcliffe Peninsula’s biggest greenspace project - the 16.6 hectare Nathan Road Sports Precinct
- When this is complete it will have two senior-grade AFL fields, clubhouse, player and official changerooms and more.

The hugely successful Morayfield Indoor Sport and Events Centre will more than double its existing footprint with a $5 million injection to construct two new multipurpose indoor courts.

Samford Parklands will be transformed with a $3 million expansion for facilities to accommodate growth in local sports like tennis and soccer.

And much, much more
Community

And before you say anything, we haven’t forgotten the recreation component of “sport and recreation”

- We’re spending $2 million for a new art gallery and community space in Redcliffe

- Leis Park in Lawnton will get $660,000 worth of upgraded playground equipment and picnic facilities

- There’s $560,000 this financial year to install new workshop spaces within the Old Bray Road Community Facility

- $375,000 for upgrades to amenities at the Albany Creek Library

- $300,000 for new carparks at the Bribie Community Arts Centre

- And $250,000 for finger pontoon renewal of the Redcliffe Jetty, to maintain this iconic asset for families, fishing and tourism

Environment

Alongside this, the 2018/19 Budget provides for the protection of our stunning environments with investments like:

- $750,000 to improve the water quality at incredible Lake Eden, now home to the new North Lakes Hotel

- We’ve allocated $500,000 towards the Scarborough red cliffs preservation project

- $350,000 has been committed to the construction of a wetland at Bluebell Street Park in Caboolture

- We know remediation works are vital at Buckeys Hole, so we’ve allocated $250,000 for that project.
Waste

This is also a council that is firmly focused on enhancing the sustainability of our own services including vital rubbish and recycling collection.

There is no doubt that China’s decision to stop accepting recyclable waste shocked global markets earlier this year.

A ripple effect of that decision is being felt here in South-East Queensland.

As a Council, we are keeping our eyes firmly fixed on the future and we aren’t shying away from this mounting challenge.

In a Queensland first, we have successfully trialled a new waste cover at our tips, replacing expensive and wasteful tonnes of soil.

In fact it:

- Reduce odours, dust, fire risk by up to 95%
- Reduces vermin by 90%; and
- Has increased the life expectancy of council’s Dakabin and Bunya tips by up to 70%. That’s an extra 20 years-plus!

Council has also been proud to deliver high quality waste management facilities for our community.

In this budget, we’re going to spend $5 million developing a new transfer station at the Dakabin Waste Management site.

We’ve also committed $3.7 million for the construction of three landfill cells at Bunya.

And Caboolture Waste Management Facility will get $425,000 for essential upgrades.
Roads

But none of these investments matter if locals can’t get around our region.

We are enjoying an exciting period of transformation in Moreton Bay, but in order to achieve our goal of making this region a place where you can live, work and play within 20 minutes of home.

We need to knuckle-down on investing in the bridges, road networks and public transport that will make this a reality.

That’s why the 2018/19 budget allocates more than $109 million in major road infrastructure and maintenance activities, to ensure it’s always easy to get the kids to school or simply get around.

- This means a massive $8 million towards Stage Two of congestion-busting works along Old North Road in Warner, from Kremzow Road to Everest Street

- We’re serious about delivering the upgrades needed on Oakey Flat Road in Morayfield and have committed $3 million to the first stage of works

- We’re investing $3 million for the construction of Cundoot Creek Bridge in this budget

- Council’s contributing $2.9 million towards the ongoing upgrade of Dohles Rocks Road and Bruce Highway interchange

- Traffic flows at Brays Road and McClintock Drive in Murrumba Downs will be improved with $1.5 million in works to ease congestion

- There’s also $1.43 million for the upgrade of Samsonvale Road in Bray Park, including drainage improvements

- And that’s just to name a few
**Boosting community resilience**

This budget continues council’s commitment to preparing our region for whatever Mother Nature throws our way.

That means we’re getting right behind those on the frontline - our incredible SES volunteers.

The centrepiece of our investment is the recent awarding of a $2.6 million tender for the construction of a new SES depot in Bunya.

We’re also committing $100,000 funding for a fire trail network within Tyler Reserve to increase protection for houses in the area and enable crews to get their vehicles to access fires safely.

And we’ll spend $150,000 doing the same thing at Webb Road Park in Neurum.

There’s also a $90,000 funding pool for design works to be undertaken at the Deception Bay, Bribie Island and Caboolture SES depots - ready for future expansions.
Conclusion

Councillors, this year’s budget provides a $622 million investment in the future of our great region.

This budget is about investing in lifestyle and making our region healthier, more active and more sustainable.

2018/19 will be our eighth consecutive surplus budget - an achievement that takes discipline, restraint and vision for the future.

So I would like to thank all my fellow Councillors for their strong financial management, while passionately advocating for the wants of your local communities. It has been hard work.

It’s taken perseverance, sacrifice and understanding - but I can say hand on heart that the outcome today is certainly worth it.

I thank you for your dedication to this task and in thanking you, I’d like to make special mention of our remarkable CEO Daryl Hitzman.

By his side is Deputy CEO Tony Martini, who has done much of the heavy lifting in preparing the capital works plan for council.

I also commend the extraordinary efforts of Keith Pattinson, Denis Crowe, Jason Lindsell and the rest of the finance team for their expert work preparing the financial modelling for this budget.

You have truly served our community well and we thank you.

I would also like to thank Corinne Mulholland, Matt Hendry, Scott Forbes, Francis Dela Cruz, Clay Knight and Meera from the media and marketing team for their help preparing the budget materials for today’s adoption.

Now I would now like to invite Councillor Matthew Constance to outline the key financial details of the budget.

(Ends)