

2026/27

Rates Benchmarking Summary

Cairns Regional Council delivers community infrastructure and services to more than 179,000 residents in the region. We are focused on shaping a tropical future by nurturing a community where people love to live, invest, work and play.



Rates are Council's primary source of revenue and help fund the essential services and infrastructure our community relies on every day, including roads, water and wastewater networks, waste and recycling collection, parks, community facilities, libraries and community safety initiatives.

Every dollar collected is reinvested into maintaining and improving the services, facilities and infrastructure that support our lifestyle and future growth.

This report compares residential rates and utility charges across comparable Queensland councils, providing transparency and context around the value delivered to Cairns' ratepayers.



\$786m
Total budget



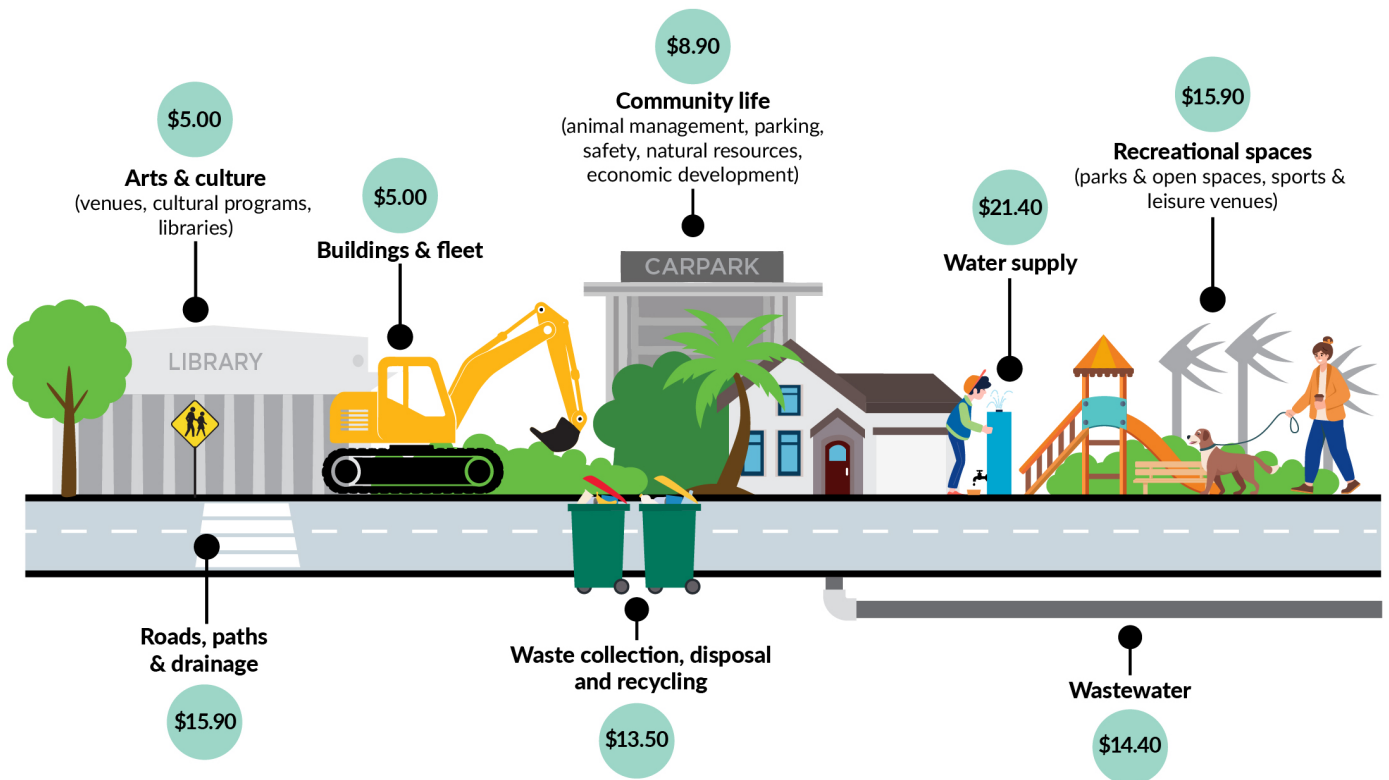
\$65.6m
Cairns Water Security
Stage 1 project (CWSS1)



\$41.6m
To maintain
community assets

Every Cairns ratepayer plays a role in that shared future

For every \$100 collected in rates, Council invests in essential services and infrastructure that support our community.



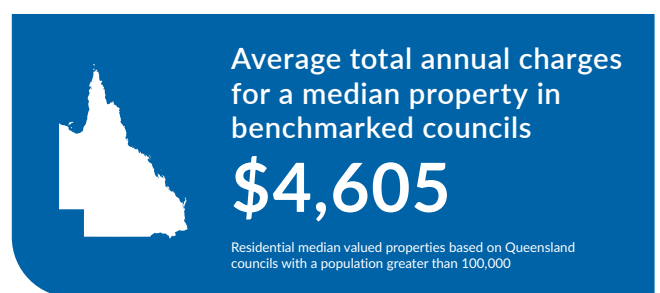
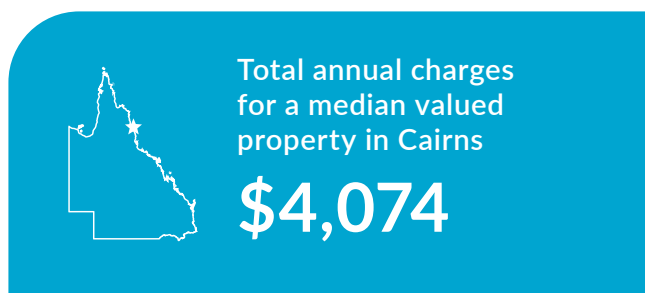
Benchmarking

Each year, Cairns Regional Council benchmarks its rates and utility charges against Queensland councils with populations over 100,000 to ensure they remain fair and competitive.

The latest benchmarking shows Cairns ranks among the state's most affordable councils for residential minimum-rate properties, strata properties and homes with median land values.

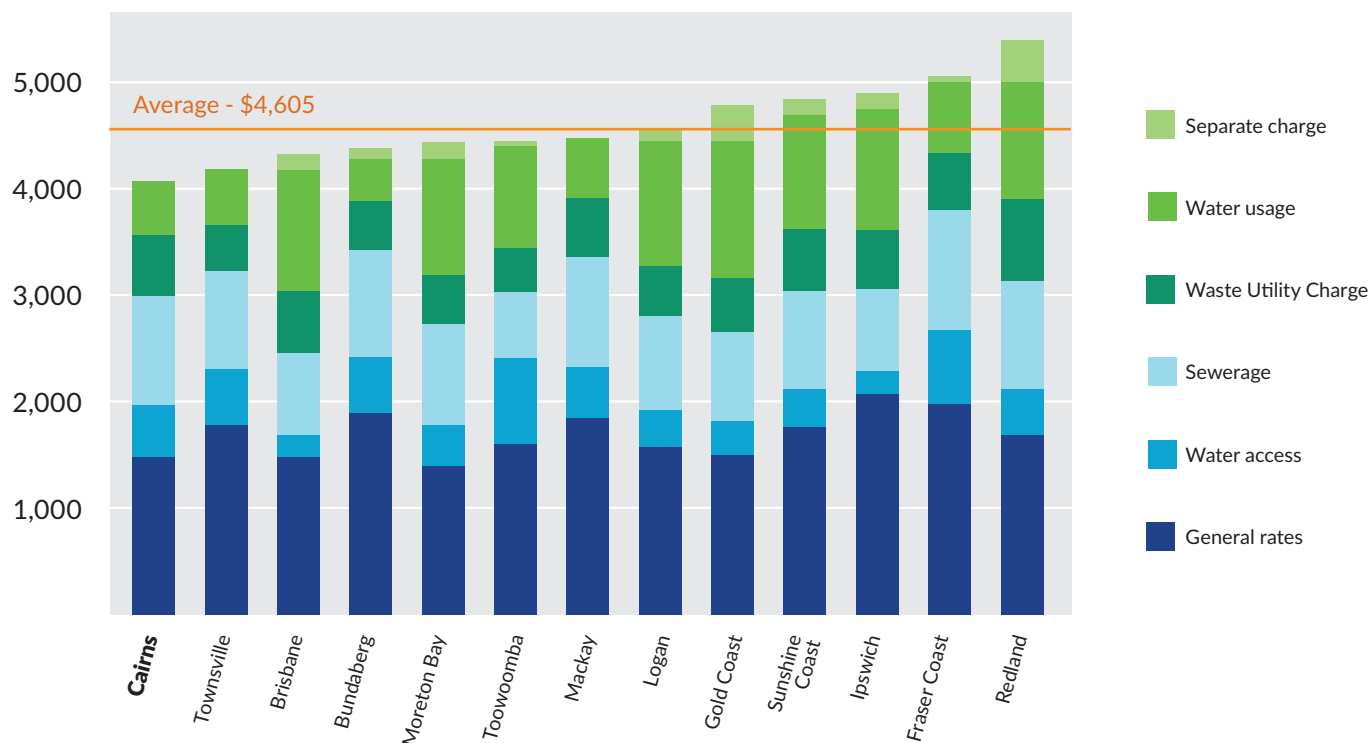
Comparisons include all applicable charges, typical water use and, where relevant, separately charged water and sewerage services to ensure a like-for-like assessment.

These results confirm Cairns' residents continue to benefit from competitive rates and utility charges while Council delivers the infrastructure and services the community relies on.



Rates Benchmarking | Residential | Median Valuation

The graph below shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for a ratepayer with a median valued property in each Local Government Area – **Cairns comes in lowest in the State.**



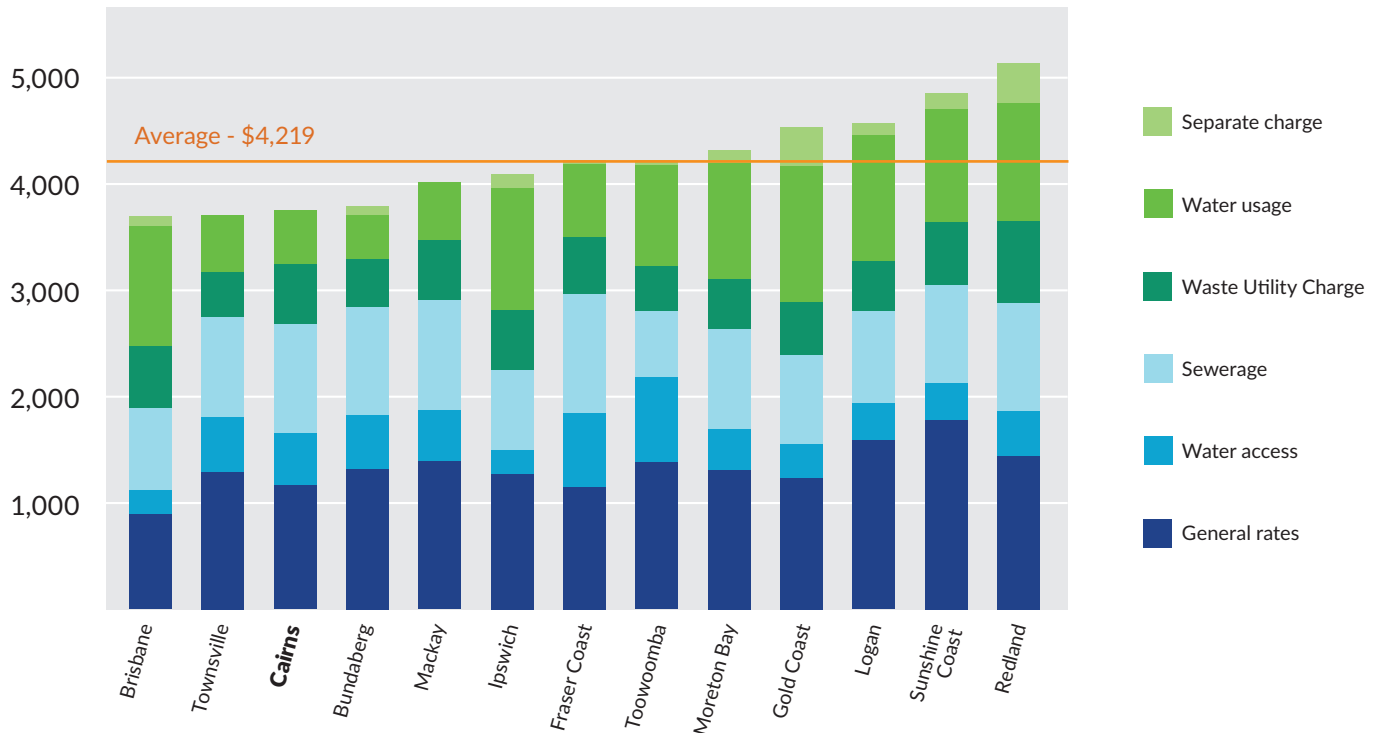
The table below shows the total annual rates charges (including water usage) for a ratepayer with a median valuation.

Council	Median Valuation	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns	Variance to Cairns
Cairns	\$280,000	\$4,074	-	-
Townsville	\$192,500	\$4,190	\$116	3%
Brisbane*	\$720,000	\$4,333	\$259	6%
Bundaberg	\$165,000	\$4,383	\$310	8%
Moreton Bay*	\$415,000	\$4,428	\$354	9%
Toowoomba	\$265,000	\$4,451	\$377	9%
Mackay	\$167,500	\$4,470	\$397	10%
Logan	\$375,000	\$4,556	\$483	12%
Gold Coast	\$720,000	\$4,789	\$716	18%
Sunshine Coast*	\$570,000	\$4,848	\$774	19%
Ipswich*	\$430,000	\$4,888	\$814	20%
Fraser Coast	\$227,500	\$5,055	\$981	24%
Redland	\$610,000	\$5,395	\$1,321	32%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

Rates Benchmarking | Residential | Minimum

The graph below shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Residential ratepayer in each Local Government Area – **Cairns ranks 3rd lowest in the State.**



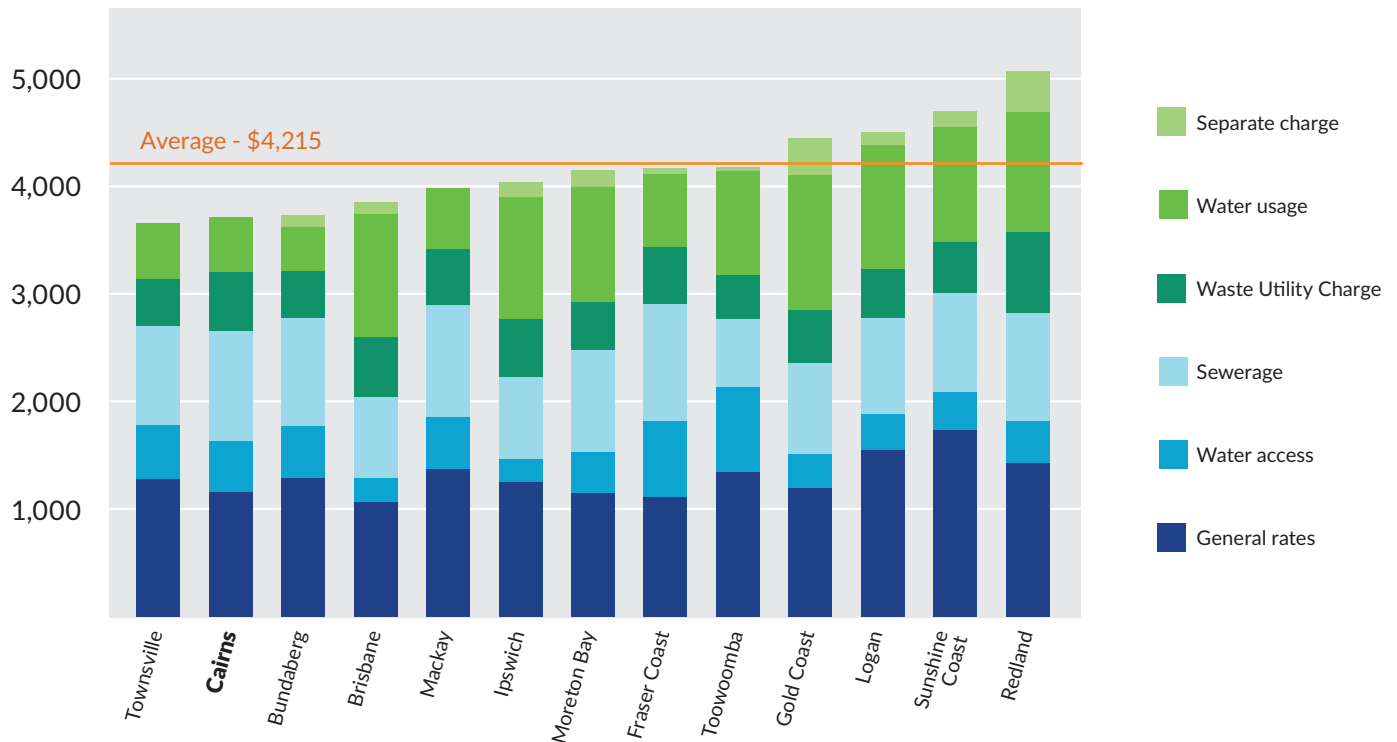
The table below shows the total annual rates charges (including water usage) for a ratepayer with a minimum residential valuation.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns	Variance to Cairns
Brisbane*	\$3,688	-\$65	-2%
Townsville	\$3,691	- \$63	-2%
Cairns	\$3,753	-	-
Bundaberg	\$3,794	\$41	1%
Mackay	\$4,016	\$263	7%
Ipswich*	\$4,082	\$329	9%
Fraser Coast	\$4,213	\$460	12%
Toowoomba	\$4,226	\$472	13%
Moreton Bay*	\$4,327	\$574	16%
Gold Coast	\$4,518	\$765	21%
Logan	\$4,556	\$803	22%
Sunshine Coast*	\$4,848	\$1,095	30%
Redland	\$5,129	\$1,376	37%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

Rates Benchmarking | Residential | Strata Minimum

The graph below shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Strata ratepayer in each Local Government Area - **Cairns ranks second lowest in the State.**



The table below shows the total annual rates charges (including water usage) for a ratepayer with a minimum strata valuation.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns	Variance to Cairns
Townsville	\$3,691	-\$63	-2%
Cairns	\$3,753	-	-
Bundaberg	\$3,768	\$15	0%
Brisbane*	\$3,896	\$142	4%
Mackay	\$4,016	\$263	7%
Ipswich*	\$4,082	\$329	9%
Moreton Bay*	\$4,197	\$443	12%
Fraser Coast	\$4,213	\$460	12%
Toowoomba	\$4,226	\$472	13%
Gold Coast	\$4,518	\$765	20%
Logan	\$4,556	\$803	21%
Sunshine Coast*	\$4,752	\$999	27%
Redland	\$5,129	\$1,376	37%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

Want more detail?

Check out the full report here:

- [Rates Benchmarking Report 2026/27](#)