

Federal Government pre-budget submission 2026/27

COLLABORATION & CONNECTION



Securing the Region's future
to 2032 and beyond

WHERE AMBITION MEETS OPPORTUNITY

Federal Budget Funding Partnerships

The Toowoomba Region is one of Australia's most dynamic and fast-growing regional economies, strategically located at the intersection of national freight routes and regional growth corridors. Home to more than 180,000 residents, the Region serves as a major service centre for the Darling Downs, South West Queensland, and northern New South Wales, while increasingly becoming the solution for growth in

South East Queensland. Adequate housing is essential to support our growing population and workforce.

Toowoomba Regional Council welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Federal Government to prioritise investment in projects that deliver real impact, at scale and pace, and help realise the future potential of Australia's leading inland city.

CRESSBROOK DAM SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

FUNDING ASK **\$80 MILLION**

For spillway completion. State Government has made a contribution of \$54 million to raise the dam crest.

Cressbrook Dam is one of the most critical pieces of infrastructure in the Toowoomba Region, and one of the most significant dam safety projects ever undertaken by a Queensland local government. Mandatory upgrades for the \$270 million project are required to meet updated safety standards, with early construction scheduled to begin mid-2026, including a widened spillway, raised dam crest and downstream flood mitigation works.

A catastrophic dam wall failure at Cressbrook would be devastating. Lives in Toogoolawah and communities all the way downstream would be at immediate risk. The resulting impacts on Wivenhoe Dam and communities along the Brisbane River, would be severe and far reaching. It would also wipe out one of Toowoomba's primary drinking water sources, undermining regional water security and resilience. Reliable water security is also essential to maintaining the operational readiness of Oakey Army Aviation Centre and Borneo Barracks, two Defence installations critical to Australia's national security.



Senator Corinne Mulholland visits Cressbrook Dam with Mayor Geoff McDonald, Deputy Mayor Rebecca Vohhoff and Council staff.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Improving Cressbrook Dam will:

- Protect and maintain our Region's water for businesses and residents
- Improve dam safety for downstream communities during major flooding events
- Provide better dam monitoring and data inputs to assist us to make decisions during weather events
- Comply with State regulation and best practice objectives
- Provide opportunities for local growth.

SCOPE OF WORKS TO BE COMPLETED



TOOWOOMBA REGION SPORTS PRECINCT – STAGE 1

FUNDING ASK **\$30 MILLION**

Matched with \$30 million ask from State Government



The Toowoomba Region Sports Precinct is estimated to cost a total of \$315 million. Stage 1 is expected to cost approximately \$84 million with Council contributing \$24 million and seeking \$30 million from the State Government, to be matched by a further \$30 million request to the Federal Government to commence delivery.

The Toowoomba Region Sports Precinct is a transformative project that responds to the acute shortage of community sporting facilities across the Region. Planning undertaken for Council's draft Local Government Infrastructure Plan shows the Region is currently short around 16 playing fields, and even with this project delivered, the deficit is projected to grow to approximately 32 hectares by 2036. Council has proactively planned for this growth, and the identified shortfall reflects the region's rapid expansion. This shortfall is already affecting families and local clubs, children are missing out on training opportunities, clubs are capping enrolments, and demand is outstripping available facilities. This is the opposite of what State and Federal Governments seek to achieve in building active, healthy and connected communities.

Located in the Western Growth Corridor—expected to welcome 30,000 new residents by 2050—the Precinct will deliver flexible, multi-use sporting and recreation facilities for people of all ages and abilities. It will also create a lasting Olympic and Paralympic legacy for Queensland and position Toowoomba as a regional hub for major sporting and community events.

Federal investment of \$30 million will:

- Immediately unlock Stage 1 delivery of a high-impact, ready-to-go project
- Address significant shortages in community sporting facilities
- Ensure local kids and families can participate in sport without club caps or waitlists
- Promote healthier, more active communities in line with State priorities
- Support population growth in one of Queensland's fastest-growing regions
- Deliver enduring Olympic and Paralympic legacy infrastructure
- Attract regional and state-level sporting and cultural events.

Growth Opportunities

Toowoomba Regional Council is committed to leveraging Federal Government grant and funding programs to deliver infrastructure that strengthens our Region and supports our community. These programs invest in the Toowoomba Region providing the opportunities to address critical needs, unlock growth, improve liveability, boost productivity, and drive regional activation. Targeted Federal investment in enabling infrastructure and regional housing initiatives is essential to address housing shortages, support

workforce attraction, and ensure the region can accommodate current and future population growth. Strategic investments will support agriculture, resources, and manufacturing sectors, strengthen supply chains, and create jobs, ensuring the Toowoomba Region remains connected, competitive, and ready for future opportunities.

Toowoomba Regional Council will actively pursue Federal funding opportunities throughout the year, including the programs listed below, and any additional initiatives that align with our strategic priorities:



Water and Waste Infrastructure Funding

To secure long-term water resilience and modern waste systems that protect public health and enable sustainable growth.



Disaster Ready Funding

To build resilience against floods, fires, and extreme weather, safeguarding communities and reducing recovery costs.



Housing Infrastructure Funding

To unlock housing supply and improve affordability, supporting population growth and liveability across the Toowoomba Region by assisting in the delivery of enabling infrastructure.



Housing Support Program

To provide the enabling infrastructure and planning capacity necessary to facilitate increased housing supply that matches the Region's growth.

Advocacy Support

Toowoomba Regional Council is advocating, on behalf of our community, for continued Federal Government commitment in the 2026 Budget to nationally significant infrastructure projects that strengthen Australia's freight network and regional connectivity:



INLAND RAIL: CONTINUED COMMITMENT

“Council calls for continued Federal investment to deliver Inland Rail Border to Gowrie (B2G) in the Toowoomba Region as planned.”

Delivering Inland Rail as planned is not just a transport initiative, it is a nation-building investment that will unlock unprecedented economic opportunities for regional Australia. This critical link will transform the Toowoomba Region into a premier inland logistics hub, driving productivity gains across South East Queensland and beyond. By enhancing freight efficiency, reducing transport costs, and strengthening supply resilience, Inland Rail will deliver lasting benefits for agriculture, resources, and manufacturing sectors — industries that underpin Australia's prosperity.

Why Funding Matters Now:

- **Catalyst for Growth:** Inland Rail will generate significant economic uplift, utilised available industrial land, creating jobs and attracting new investment to the Toowoomba Region and Darling Downs.
- **National Competitiveness:** Lower transport costs and faster, more reliable connections will improve the global competitiveness of Australian producers.
- **Supply Chain Security:** Strengthening resilience for critical sectors ensures Australia can withstand future disruptions and maintain export performance.
- **Strategic Alignment:** This project directly supports Federal priorities for productivity, regional activation, and infrastructure investment, delivering measurable outcomes for the national economy.
- **Export Enablement:** Inland Rail will connect regional producers to ports and interstate hubs, accelerating access to international markets.
- **Housing activation:** Trunk infrastructure enabling serviced lots brought to market sooner.
- **Economic impact:** Inland Rail delivers a positive BCR > 1.5 and generates uplift in GVA and export throughput, contributing directly to national GDP and long term productivity improvements.
- **Safety & resilience:** Fewer heavy vehicle/local traffic conflicts; improved flood immunity.

Where Ambition Meets Opportunities

Toowoomba Regional Council looks forward to partnering with the Federal Government to deliver the essential projects that will keep our services strong and communities supported. These investments will ensure the Region remains connected, competitive, and ready for the opportunities ahead.

Together, let's ensure that where ambition meets opportunity, communities thrive — towards 2032 and beyond.

