



Federal Election Priorities 2025

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What we're seeking:



Affordable and social housing

Fast-track funding to build more affordable housing through the Housing Australia Future Fund.



Fairer funding for councils

Commit to restoring the value of the Australian Government's Financial Assistance Grants to local government to equivalent of 1 per cent of total Australian taxation revenue



Road funding

Commitment to continue federal government funding for roads program and increase funding pool for local government.



Climate resilience

Increase annual allocation to Disaster Ready Fund and establish a \$2 billion rolling resilience program.



Safeguarding nature

Strengthen Australia's environmental laws and increase investment in the protection and restoration of nature.



Protecting the UNESCO Biosphere program

Additional resourcing and better funding to enhance the ongoing operation of the federally operated UNESCO Man and the Biosphere program.



Wastewater recycling

Develop a National Wastewater Recycling Policy and Strategy and set clear national water recycling targets for a consistent approach across all states.

AFFORDABLE AND SOCIAL HOUSING

Noosa Council is already taking proactive steps to enable and deliver social and affordable housing, including utilising its own land for delivery of social and affordable housing plus partnering with community housing providers such as Coast2Bay.

This is a key deliverable of our Housing Strategy, but like many localities Noosa is in a housing crisis and urgent action is needed by the Australian Government to address this critical issue. It's imperative there is greater housing availability for essential workers, teachers, police, aged care workers and those in important industries.

Proposed Solution:

Ensure local government is represented in the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council. Councils must have an effective voice to accelerate housing supply.

Fast track the Housing Australia Future Fund for social and affordable housing in Noosa and the Sunshine Coast.



FAIRER FUNDING FOR COUNCILS

The current federal funding for local councils was introduced in 1974 when TV screens were still in black and white.

Noosa Council strongly supports the Local Government Association of Queensland's campaign for a better funding deal through the Federal Assistance Grants.

Councils currently receive Financial Assistance Grants worth just shy of 50 cents in every \$100 paid by taxpayers.

With more people hurting in the cost-of-living crisis, it's vital the federal government ensures a fair and equitable process in providing assistance to councils to help service and support our communities. Noosa Council doesn't want to make it any tougher on ratepayers and see our community miss out by cutting services.

Don't leave our community in the 1970s.

Proposed Solution:

Bring the rate to 1 per cent of total taxation revenue to guarantee councils can continue to deliver the services relied on by our community.

Council is best placed to ensure funding is directed to where it is most needed for our community.

Dear Canberra,
It's time for
fairer funding.

dontleaveusinthe70s.com.au

Photo Credit: Queensland State Archives



**Every Queensland
community** deserves
to be a liveable one

Authorised by A Smith, LGAQ, 25 Evelyn St Newstead 4005

ROAD FUNDING

Due to Noosa's popularity with visitors, the shire's local roads are some of the most congested on the east coast of Australia.

Council has adopted its Noosa Transport Strategy, and fundamental to keeping Noosa's residents and visitors moving is the completion of the Beckmans Road duplication.

This road suffers crippling congestion daily, and it is the only available diversion route during natural disasters such as river flooding. Upgrading this road is beyond the financial capacity of Noosa Council, and it is reliant on state and federal government funding to advance the initiative. Despite being a SEQ council, Noosa Council still has about 200 kms of gravel roads throughout the shire. With reconstruction costs being up to \$2 million per km, it is beyond the financial capacity of a council Noosa's size to pursue safer sealed roads for our residents in a timely manner.

Noosa Council supports the federal government "Roads to Recovery" program, the "Black Spot" program and the "Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program" and wants these programs funded and expanded to support local road projects such as the Beckmans Road duplication and reconstruction of gravel roads to a sealed road standard.

Proposed Solution:

Commitment to continue the federal government funding for roads program and expand the funding pool applicable to local government.



CLIMATE READY

Noosa's lifestyle and its iconic status as a destination focuses on our beaches, rivers, everglades and national parks.

These are key reasons why over one million people visit the shire every year. The number is expected to rise significantly in the lead up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Noosa has developed a Coastal Hazards Adaptation Strategy and continually implements coastal protection works to safeguard one of the country's greatest assets.

Noosa is also a regional tier 3 council in the most disaster prone state in Australia, and has a population with a significantly higher median age and proportion of residents with long-term health conditions.

This makes our shire particularly vulnerable to disaster events and the growing impacts of climate change.



CLIMATE READY

Whilst Council continues to help safeguard both our community and our nationally iconic natural assets, the increasing frequency, intensity and duration of extreme events is making it more challenging to prepare, respond and recover effectively.

The \$1 billion Disaster Ready Fund and similar programs provide critical funding to undertake several disaster and climate resilience projects.

The Insurance Council of Australia's Building Australia's Resilience report states that a five-year, \$2 billion resilience program could save governments and households over \$19 billion by 2050.

This is nearly a 10-fold national return on investment. Likewise, disaster recovery funding programs should focus on 'building back better' rather than 'like for like'.

Proposed Solution:

Adopt all recommendations from the Insurance Council of Australia's Building Australia's Resilience report.

This includes continuing to fund the Disaster Ready Fund and increasing it to a \$2 billion rolling program.



SAFEGUARDING NATURE

Noosa Council continues to advocate for new 'nature positive' laws.

Noosa Shire is located within a recognised global biodiversity hot spot, with about 66% of the area comprising values that are of high biodiversity significance.

Council is increasingly concerned for the decline of biodiversity in Australia, as highlighted by the State of the Environment 2021 Report: “the state and trend of the environment of Australia are poor and deteriorating as a result of increasing pressures from climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution and resource extraction.”

Being the first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in Queensland, Noosa is considered a regional stronghold for biodiversity. Council has protected over 43% of the local government area in conservation tenure, has 70% of the Shire vegetated and continues to maintain one of the healthiest river systems in SEQ, including one of only two everglades systems in the world.



SAFEGUARDING NATURE

Noosa Shire has a 60-kilometre stretch of pristine waters which includes internationally recognised migratory bird habitats of conservation importance and sea turtle nesting sites; and has been designated a World Surfing Reserve since 2020.

Elements and protections of the natural environment continue to be the two strongest contributors to liveability for our community.

Council wants the government to follow through on the Nature Positive Plan and its national environmental law reforms to overhaul the EPBC Act, develop national environmental standards, partner with First Nations and establish an independent EPA, and protect 30% of Australia's land and seas by 2030.

Proposed Solution:

Strengthen Australia's environmental laws and support recommendations outlined by the Biodiversity Council including:

- Establishing an independent and strong environmental protection agency.
- Empower Indigenous Australians to manage Country and benefit from Traditional Knowledge.
- Increase investment in the protection and restoration of nature.
- Ensure nature is central to decision-making across business and government.

MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE PROGRAM

The Noosa, Great Sandy and Sunshine Coast Biospheres are the only known geographically aligning UNESCO biospheres in Australia. This collective region represents a very significant location in Australia.

The UNESCO Man and the Biosphere program is overseen in Australia by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Currently no funding exists to support this program.

Proposed Solution:

Allocation of funding through the department to assist in the management and delivery of projects for Australia's five biospheres is requested.

Noosa Council currently supports delivery of our biosphere programs, however additional resourcing and the expansion of the efforts of the biosphere management groups would greatly enhance the region and its neighbouring biospheres.



WASTEWATER RECYCLING

Australia is facing growing challenges in wastewater recycling, including ageing infrastructure, increasing water scarcity, and the presence of emerging contaminants such as PFAS, sometimes referred to as 'forever chemicals'. In Queensland alone only 15% of treated wastewater is recycled. Without significant investment and reform, wastewater management risks falling behind global best practices, threatening both environmental and public health. Inconsistent regulations across states further complicate efforts to establish a unified and effective approach to wastewater recycling.

The lack of clear national water recycling targets and a coordinated strategy limits progress in sustainable water management. Ensuring safe and efficient wastewater recycling requires comprehensive regulatory reforms, investment in advanced treatment technologies, and a commitment to transparency. Without these measures, public trust in recycled water remains a barrier, slowing the transition toward a more resilient and sustainable water future for Australia.

Proposed Solution:

The Australian Government must develop a national wastewater recycling policy and strategy that:

- Sets clear national water recycling targets to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach across all states.
- Invests in advanced wastewater treatment technologies to address contaminants like PFAS and improve water quality.
- Prohibits the construction of new ocean and estuarine sewerage outfalls to protect marine ecosystems and coastal infrastructure.
- Provides dedicated funding and legislative support to help local and regional governments transition to 100% treated wastewater reuse, reducing reliance on ocean discharge and improving climate resilience.
- Enhances public trust through transparency and regulatory reforms, ensuring safe and sustainable wastewater management practices.

By prioritising wastewater recycling as a key national resource, Australia can improve water security, climate resilience, protect the environment, and align with global best practices in sustainable water management.



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