

SHLGA LATEST NEWS



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Member Update



SHLGA State Budget Response

The 2026–27 South Australian State Budget delivers several welcome investments for Southern and Hills communities, but falls short of addressing the infrastructure and service demands facing one of the State's fastest growing regions.

SHLGA welcomed funding for key regional priorities, including the \$80 million Adelaide Road and Hawthorn Road intersection upgrade in Mount Barker, a new vocational training workshop at TAFE SA Mount Barker, environmental resilience initiatives at the Murray Mouth, support for Kangaroo Island's feral cat eradication program, and improvements to the Heysen Trail.

However, the Budget contained no significant new commitment towards SHLGA's long-standing call for dedicated community-ready growth funding. As population growth continues to place pressure on roads, community facilities, transport connections and essential services, SHLGA will continue advocating for investment that ensures communities remain liveable, connected and prosperous.

See our full media release [here](#).

STATE BUDGET 2026-27



Budget Overview | Budget Paper 1

Latest News



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Advocating for practical improvements to ESCOSA Advice Scheme

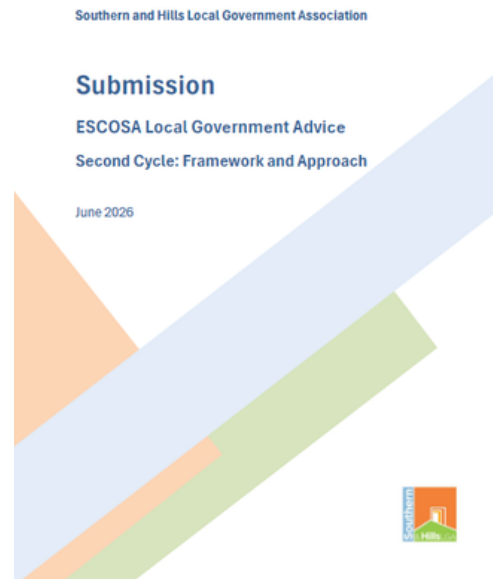
SHLGA has lodged a submission to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) on the future of the Local Government Advice Scheme. SHLGA supports the continuation of the Scheme and recognises the improvements made during its first four-year cycle.

The submission highlights the importance of ensuring ESCOSA's advice is practical, proportionate and tailored to the diverse circumstances of South Australian councils. SHLGA has called for advice that provides clear, actionable recommendations and helps councils engage their communities in conversations about long-term financial sustainability.

Key recommendations include stronger engagement between ESCOSA and councils during assessments, recognition of differing council capacities and local circumstances, better alignment with existing sector frameworks, and a continued focus on delivering value for money.

SHLGA also emphasised the need to minimise duplication, contain costs and concentrate effort on areas of genuine financial risk and materiality.

Read more about the SHLGA submission [here](#).



Draft SHLGA Business Plan and Budget

SHLGA has commenced consultation with constituent councils on its draft 2026-27 Business Plan and Budget.

The consultation provides councils with an opportunity to review proposed priorities, activities and funding arrangements before adoption.

Feedback will help ensure SHLGA's program continues to reflect regional priorities and deliver value to member councils.

Council feedback is requested by 30 June 2026.

Advocating for Multi-Year Local Road Funding

SHLGA has written to the LGA South Australia President seeking support for reforms to the Special Local Roads Program (SLRP) that would provide greater funding certainty for large and complex road projects.

The proposal responds to growing concerns from SHLGA councils that annual funding arrangements can create challenges for the delivery of major transport infrastructure, resulting in project staging inefficiencies, increased construction costs and delays to important safety and freight upgrades.

SHLGA has requested continued advocacy to the State and Commonwealth Governments for multi-year funding agreements, alongside a review of SLRP guidelines to explore conditional, risk-managed pathways for recognising multi-year projects.

Importantly, SHLGA's proposal seeks to maintain the program's core principles of equity, probity and annual accountability while enabling councils to plan and deliver strategic road infrastructure more efficiently. SHLGA has offered to work collaboratively with the LGA and LG Transport Advisory Panel to further develop these concepts.



Red Tape Reduction Creates New Opportunities

SHLGA welcomes the State Budget's renewed focus on reducing red tape and improving regulatory efficiency across South Australia. The initiative, to be managed by the SA Productivity Commission, presents an opportunity for State and Local Government to work together to identify regulations, processes and administrative requirements that can be simplified, modernised or removed.

Councils are well placed to identify practical reforms that make it easier, quicker and cheaper to invest, build, operate businesses and access services, while maintaining important community, environmental and public safety outcomes.