

2024/25 RATES BENCHMARKING

17/25/4-01 | #7452774

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council note the 2024/25 Rates Benchmarking report.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Nil

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides a comparison of rates and utility charges for a selection of property types in the Cairns Regional Council area against the charges which would be applicable in other local government areas. Two benchmarking comparisons are included in this report:

- 1) Queensland Local Government Areas with a population greater than 100,000; and
- 2) Neighbouring local councils.

The results of the comparison indicate rates and utility charges within the Cairns Regional Council area are at the lower end of the comparison to other local government areas. Since the “Local Government Areas over 100,000 population” benchmarking began in 2016/17, Cairns has been the lowest in the Residential by Median Valuation category.

The “neighbouring local councils” benchmarking, which began in 2021/22, shows Cairns Regional Council has the lowest charges for the Residential Minimum, Strata Minimum and Residential by Median Valuation categories.

COMMENT:

The graphs and tables included in the attachments provide a comparison of rates and utility charges for a selection of property types in the Cairns Regional Council area against the charges which would be applicable in other local government areas.

The other local governments used for comparison are:

- 1) Queensland Local Government Areas with a population greater than 100,000; and
- 2) Neighbouring local councils.

The sample property types chosen were:

- A residential property (excluding strata and flats) paying the minimum rate – this represents 25% of residential properties in the Cairns Regional Council area;
- A residential property (excluding strata and flats) with the median valuation within its own local government area; and
- A strata title property paying the minimum rate – this represents 89% of strata title properties in the Cairns Regional Council area.

Care has been taken to ensure a “like-with-like” comparison due to the differing rates and charges structures applicable in other councils. The comparison included in the attachments represents a “like-with-like” comparison and takes into account all property related charges paid to the local government / water utility on an annual basis and includes a level of water usage consistent with the average for a Cairns ratepayer. The councils who do not provide water and sewerage services and where the relevant water utility charges have been provided are Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Ipswich and Moreton Bay.

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence;
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown; and
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: 2024/25 Rates Benchmarking – QLD Councils with Population > 100,000
Attachment 2: 2024/25 Rates Benchmarking – Neighbouring Councils



Jason Ritchie
Executive Manager Finance



Lisa Whitton
Chief Financial Officer

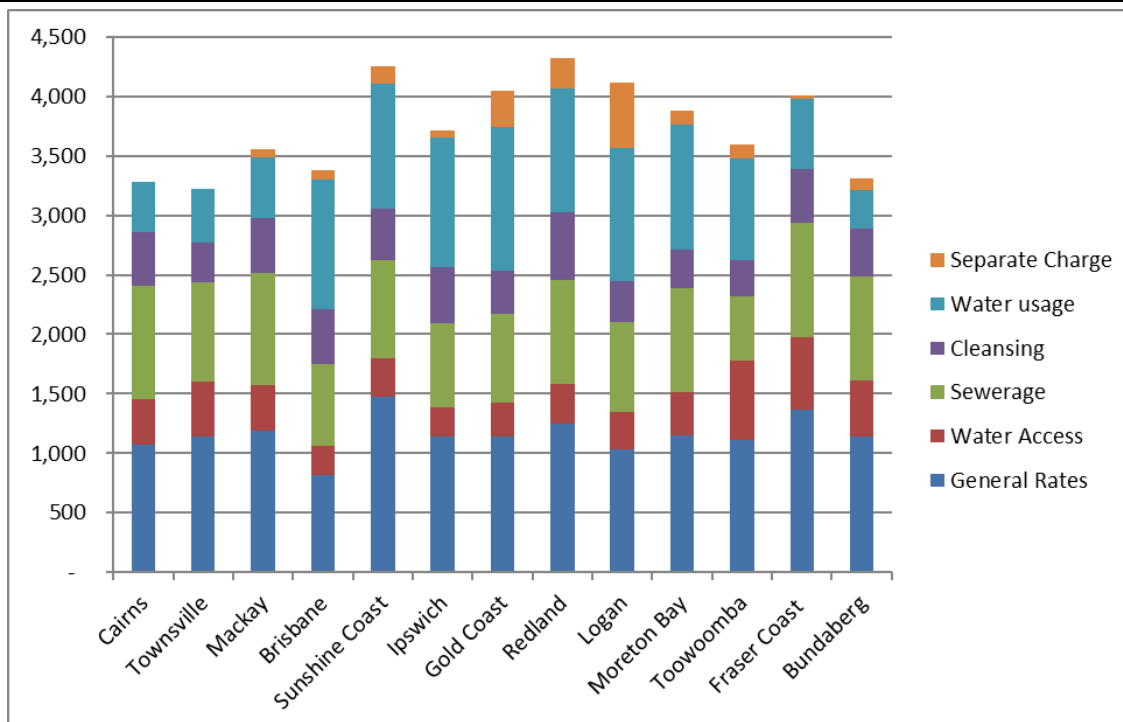
Attachment 1: 2024/25 Rates Benchmarking – QLD Councils with Population > 100,000

ASSUMPTIONS

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence;
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown; and
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MINIMUM

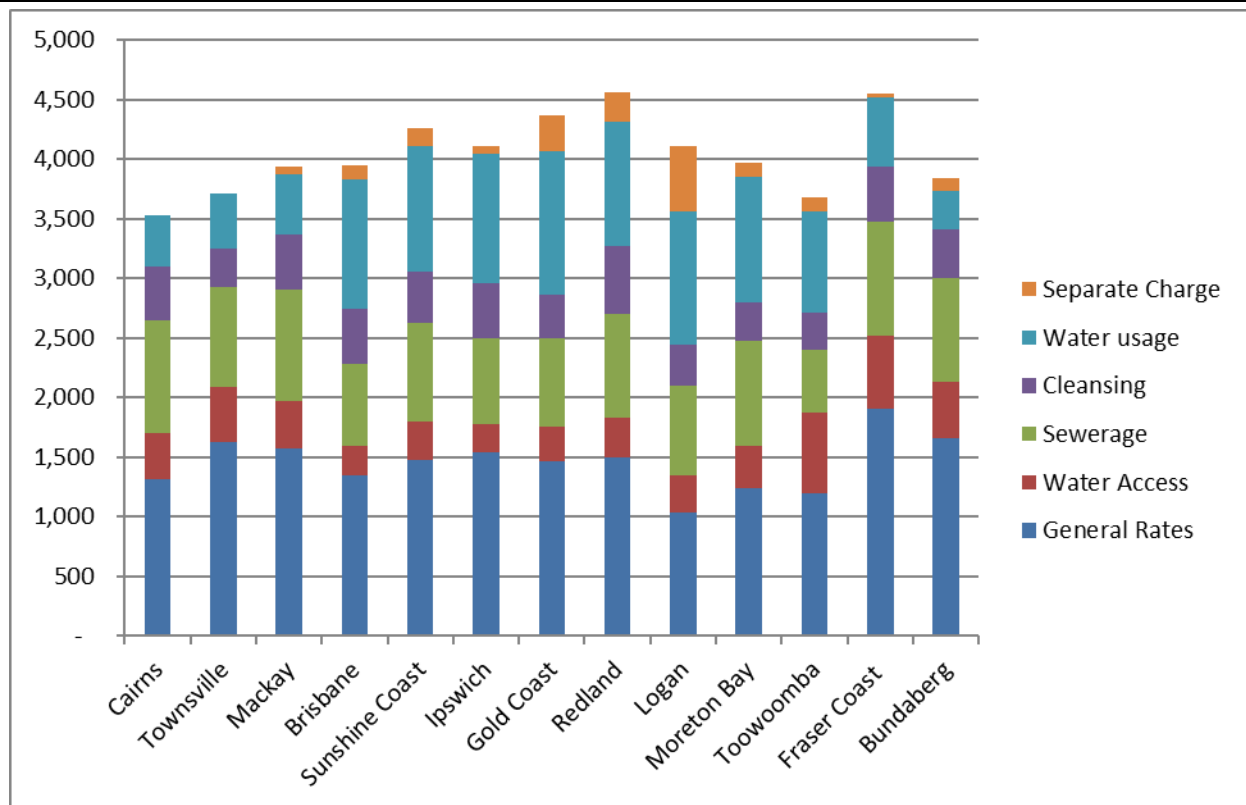


The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Residential ratepayer in each local government area.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Townsville	\$3,223	-\$62	-2%
Cairns	\$3,285	\$0	0%
Bundaberg	\$3,314	\$29	1%
Brisbane *	\$3,374	\$89	3%
Mackay	\$3,553	\$267	8%
Toowoomba	\$3,591	\$306	9%
Ipswich *	\$3,711	\$426	13%
Moreton Bay *	\$3,877	\$592	18%
Fraser Coast	\$4,004	\$719	22%
Gold Coast	\$4,042	\$757	23%
Logan	\$4,114	\$828	25%
Sunshine Coast *	\$4,254	\$969	29%
Redland	\$4,317	\$1,032	31%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MEDIAN VALUATION

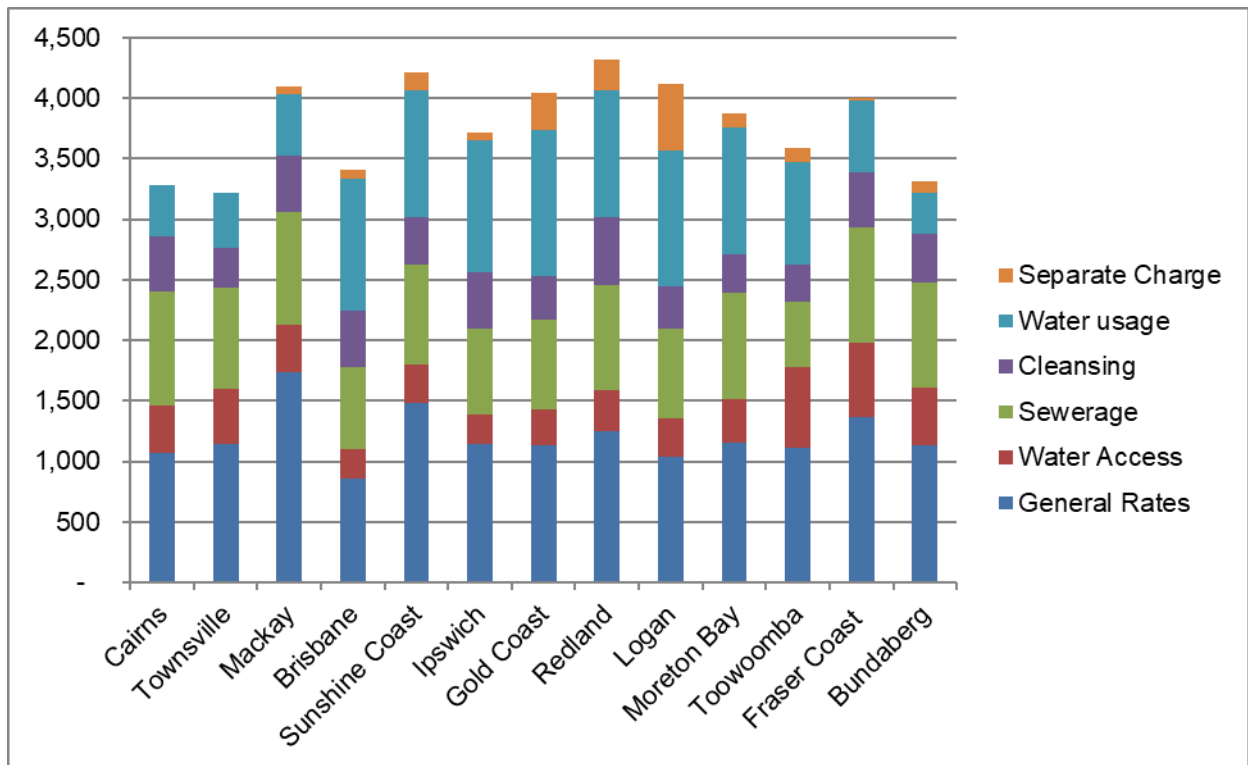


The below table shows the median valuation and total rates charges (including water usage) for the Median Residential ratepayer in each Local Government Area.

Council	Median Valuation	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$217,500	\$3,527	\$0	0%
Toowoomba	\$205,000	\$3,677	\$150	4%
Townsville	\$155,000	\$3,706	\$180	5%
Bundaberg	\$165,000	\$3,835	\$308	9%
Mackay	\$167,500	\$3,941	\$414	12%
Brisbane *	\$620,000	\$3,949	\$422	12%
Moreton Bay *	\$415,000	\$3,967	\$440	12%
Ipswich *	\$280,000	\$4,107	\$580	16%
Logan	\$320,000	\$4,114	\$587	17%
Sunshine Coast *	\$450,000	\$4,254	\$728	21%
Gold Coast	\$610,000	\$4,370	\$843	24%
Fraser Coast	\$227,500	\$4,546	\$1,019	29%
Redland	\$510,000	\$4,562	\$1,035	29%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

RATES BENCHMARKING – STRATA – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Strata ratepayer in each Local Government Area.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Townsville	\$3,223	-\$62	-2%
Cairns	\$3,285	\$0	0%
Bundaberg	\$3,314	\$29	1%
Brisbane *	\$3,408	\$123	4%
Toowoomba	\$3,591	\$306	9%
Ipswich *	\$3,711	\$426	13%
Moreton Bay *	\$3,877	\$592	18%
Fraser Coast	\$4,004	\$719	22%
Gold Coast	\$4,042	\$757	23%
Mackay	\$4,102	\$816	25%
Logan	\$4,114	\$828	25%
Sunshine Coast *	\$4,216	\$931	28%
Redland	\$4,317	\$1,032	31%

* Water and Sewerage provided by separate water utility

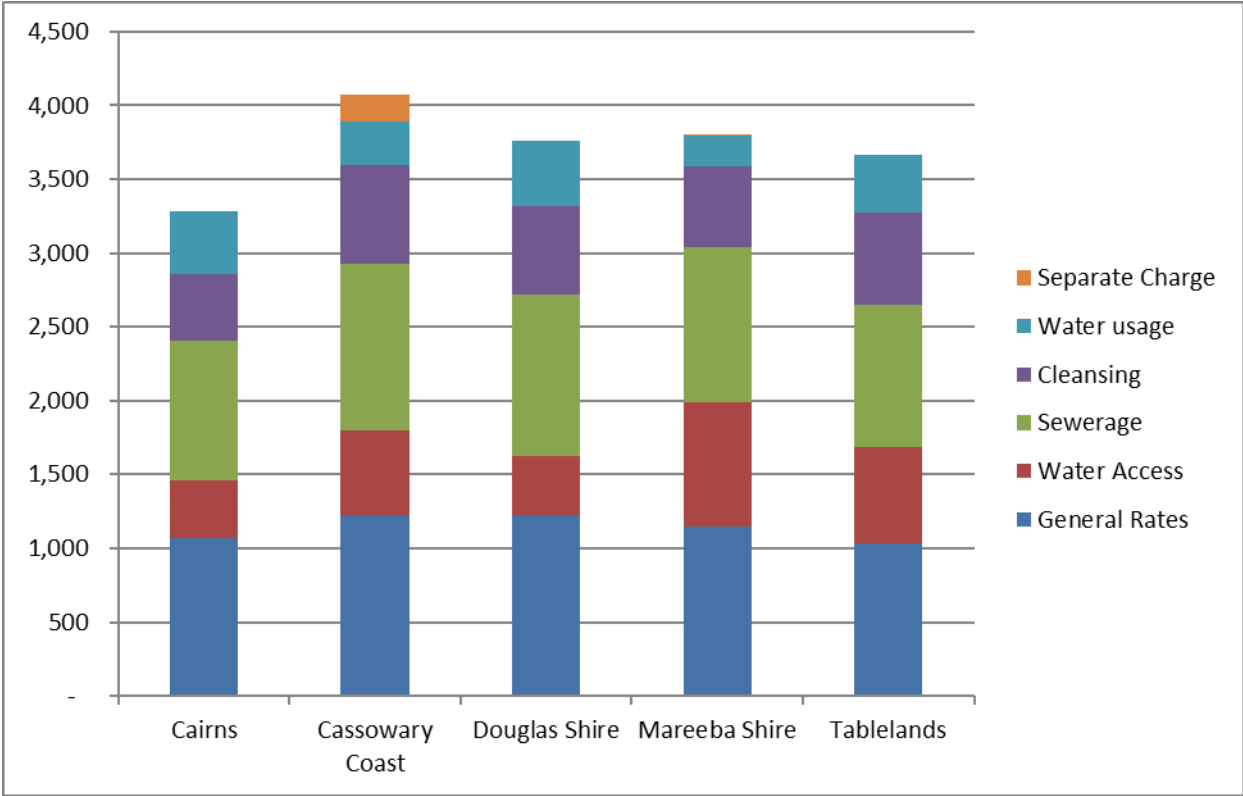
Attachment 2: 2024/25 Rate Benchmarking – Neighbouring Councils

ASSUMPTIONS

Where applicable, the following key assumptions have been made:

- General rates are based on Principal Place of Residence.
- Where strata rates differ based on high or low rise, the low-rise option has been shown.
- All rates are shown net of early payment discounts.

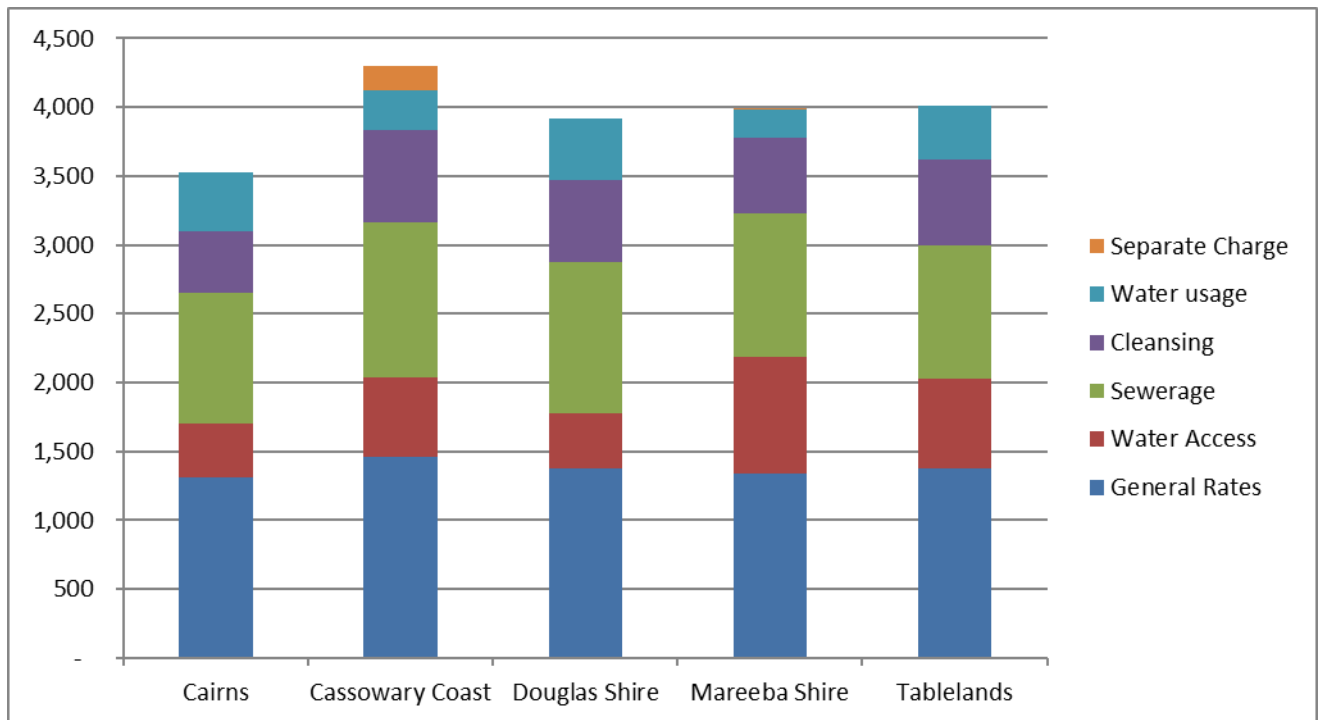
RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Residential ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$3,285	\$0	0%
Tablelands	\$3,663	\$378	11%
Douglas Shire	\$3,763	\$477	15%
Mareeba Shire	\$3,798	\$513	16%
Cassowary Coast	\$4,069	\$783	24%

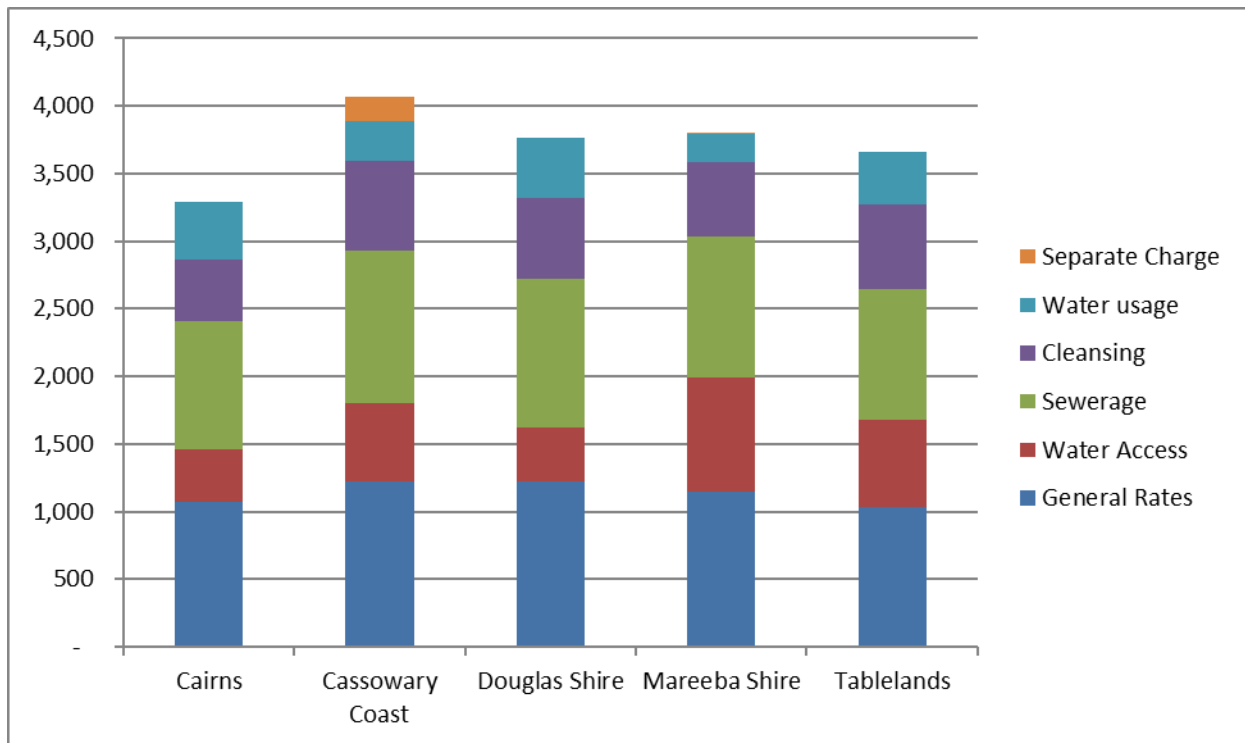
RATES BENCHMARKING – RESIDENTIAL – MEDIAN VALUATION



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Median Residential ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Median Valuation	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$217,500	\$3,527	\$0	0%
Douglas Shire	\$180,000	\$3,919	\$392	11%
Mareeba Shire	\$100,000	\$3,990	\$463	13%
Tablelands	\$122,000	\$4,007	\$481	14%
Cassowary Coast	\$73,000	\$4,303	\$777	22%

RATES BENCHMARKING – STRATA – MINIMUM



The below table shows the total rates charges (including water usage) for the Minimum Strata ratepayer in each neighbouring local council.

Council	Annual Charge	Variance to Cairns (\$)	Variance to Cairns (%)
Cairns	\$3,285	\$0	0%
Tablelands	\$3,663	\$378	11%
Douglas Shire	\$3,763	\$477	15%
Mareeba Shire	\$3,798	\$513	16%
Cassowary Coast	\$4,069	\$783	24%