

Rates Review

Frequently Asked Questions

Property owners receive general rate notices twice a year, usually in February and August. These reflect the cost of services, facilities and activities that are supplied or undertaken for the benefit of the community and charges incurred by the State Government. Townsville City Council is required to raise an appropriate amount of revenue to maintain assets and provide services to the city as a whole.

What are General Rates?

General rates are the main source of the money used to keep the city running by providing infrastructure and services across Townsville.

Council divides land into 23 Differential Rates Categories (down from 31 previously) based primarily upon the use of the land, and then sets a general rate for each category that broadly reflects the demand that type of land use makes upon Council's infrastructure and services.

Why has Council completed a Rating Categorisation Review?

Council periodically reviews its Differential Rating Categories to ensure they support the current City Plan and for consistency across similar land uses. This is the first comprehensive review since amalgamation. The review was undertaken to provide consistency across the whole of the city.

How was this review conducted?




The review involved an assessment of:

- > Council's costs of providing community infrastructure and services
- > whether similar land uses are charged similar rates; and
- > whether the rating categories support Council's planning scheme
- > 19 other similar and neighbouring Councils.

Valuation Change

In addition to the changes associated with the rating review, all properties are subject to new valuations, received by Council in March 2020 from the Valuer General. While there was a minor overall change in valuations across the region, individual properties may have seen shifts in valuations which could result in their rates changing.

For further information, please contact:

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Residential Properties

Individual Dwellings

Residential categories have been simplified with no significant changes to how they are applied.

The inner-city categories and the associated premiums have been removed to coincide with the City Plan objectives.

Inner city rates have been reduced so they are in line with the rates paid for similar properties elsewhere in the city.

The new rating categories for residential dwellings are as follows:

- > **Residential Principal Place of Residence** – owner occupier benefit maintained - no change from 2019/20.
- > **Residential Non-Principal Place of Residence** – Both the rate in the dollar and minimum rate are set slightly higher than for residential Principal Place of Residence.

Multi-Unit Dwellings

There is a new category for multi-unit properties, broken down into 11 sub-categories.

The change means that the rates paid for a multi-unit property is based on the number of units and not whether the property is strata titled.

The minimum rate payable for each sub-category is calculated by the lower limit of the category multiplied by the minimum rate for a single principal place of residence (i.e. Category Multi-Unit Dwellings 5-9 units has a minimum rate of 5 x minimum rate for a single principal place of residence).

The new rating categories for multi-unit dwellings are as follows:

- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 2-4 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 5-9 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 10-14 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 15-19 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 20-29 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 30-39 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 40-49 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 50-59 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings 60-69 units**
- > **Multi-Unit Dwellings >69 units**
- > **Multi Unit Dwellings - Retirement Village / Boarding House**

Definitions:

Rate in the dollar

The rate in the dollar is applied to a land valuation to determine the general rate payable.

Minimum rate

The minimum rate is the lowest amount payable in a category irrespective of valuation.

Inner-city and CBD

For rating purposes the previous Inner-city or CBD categories described the area from Willis Street to Ross Creek and Blackwood Street to Hamilton Street/Melton Terrace.

Commercial/ Industrial Properties

Inner-City

No premium anymore. Consolidated with non-CBD commercial properties.

Inner-city categories have been removed, generally resulting in a reduction of rates of affected properties so they are in line with the rates paid for similar properties elsewhere in the city. Historically, CBD properties have been levied at higher rates, however this conflicts with the City Plan objectives for intensified/infill development and activation of the CBD.

Commercial

There is a new category for Commercial Land, broken down into four sub-categories including a new Commercial Heavy Industry category. Rates have been reduced for most commercial property owners.

The new rating categories for Commercial are as follows:

- > **Commercial**
- > **Heavy Industry**
- > **Special Development >10ha**
- > **Land not otherwise defined**

Primary Production

The new rating category for primary production properties is broadly consistent with 2019/20, with a minimal increase in the rate in the dollar and a slight reduction in the minimum rate, balancing this category between residential owner occupier and Commercial.

Large Retail

There is a new Large Retail Category broken down into five sub-categories. The new category results in similar treatment for all large retail properties, whether they contain a large stand-alone shop, a collection of individual stores (e.g. a homemaker centre) or a traditional shopping centre.

Similar size centres will now pay similar rates.

The new rating categories for large retail premises are as follows:

- > **Large Retail 2,000-20,000 sqm** – consolidation of previous Shopping Centre, Drive-In Shopping Centre and Retail Warehouse categories.
- > **Large Retail 20,000-29,999 sqm** – consolidation of previous Shopping Centre, Drive-In Shopping Centre and Retail Warehouse categories.
- > **Large Retail 30,000-39,999 sqm** – consolidation of previous Shopping Centre, Drive-In Shopping Centre and Retail Warehouse categories.
- > **Large Retail 40,000-49,999 sqm** – consolidation of previous Shopping Centre, Drive-In Shopping Centre and Retail Warehouse categories.
- > **Large Retail >=50,000 sqm** – consolidation of previous Shopping Centre, Drive-In Shopping Centre and Retail Warehouse categories.