

Councillor Cabada - MoN - AEDA Budget Workshop – 2026–27 Business Plan and Budget

Tuesday, 10 March 2026
Council

Council Member
Councillor Alfredo Cabada

Public

Contact Officer:
Anthony Spartalis, Chief Operating
Officer

MOTION ON NOTICE

Councillor Alfredo Cabada will move a motion and seek a seconder for the matter shown below to facilitate consideration by the Council:

That Council:

1. Notes that the 2026–27 City of Adelaide Business Plan and Budget will materially shape the City's economic performance and long-term financial sustainability.
 2. Notes that the Adelaide Economic Development Agency (AEDA), as a subsidiary of the City of Adelaide (CoA), plays a central role in delivering investment attraction, business growth, precinct activation and main street revitalisation.
 3. Requests that Administration arrange an AEDA Budget Workshop for Councillors on Thursday 12 March 2026 from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm, prior to the 2026–27 Business Plan and Budget briefing.
 4. Requests that AEDA present at the Workshop:
 - a) Its proposed 2026–27 base budget and the strategic outcomes deliverable within current funding settings.
 - b) Clear funding scenarios outlining the additional initiatives and outcomes deliverable under:
 - i. An additional \$2.25 million per annum.
 - ii. An additional \$4.5 million per annum.
 - c) The initiatives or objectives that would not proceed under base funding.
 - d) The projected economic and financial impacts of each funding scenario, including investment attraction, business growth, visitation, job creation, private sector leverage and impact on the City's rate base.
 - e) How proposed initiatives would support identified growth and development precincts.
 5. Requests that Administration provide advice on the financial implications and sustainability of each funding scenario, including identification of significant expenditure areas that could reasonably be reduced, deferred, consolidated or reprioritised to support initiatives that demonstrably drive economic benefit to the City, together with an assessment of the associated financial and service impacts.
 6. Requests that workshop materials be provided to Elected Members no later than 5:00 pm on Wednesday 11 March 2026.'
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ADMINISTRATION COMMENT

1. Engagement with the Council, AEDA Chair and Board around AEDA's 2026/27 appropriation has been in train since 26 August 2025, specifically around establishing a base funding level. The timeline of engagement is outlined below:
 - 1.1. **26/8/2025 Special CFG Workshop** – proposed 4 options to increase AEDA base funding. The AEDA Chair and AEDA General Manager participated in the discussions. A \$2.1m increase over three years from 2026/27 was first recommended and discussed with Council Members in this meeting, moving away from the “percentage of rates” model discussed to that point, to a funding model reflecting AEDA outputs. The Workshop presentation is here [\[Link 1\]](#).
 - 1.2. **19/11/2025 AEDA Board meeting** – the AEDA Board provided priorities for consideration in the 2026/27 AEDA Budget appropriation, and AEDA General Manager requested additional priorities be emailed to him out of session. Meeting minutes report discussion of the importance of outcome-based measures of AEDA impact.
 - 1.3. **25/11/2025 Council's Chief Operating Officer received preliminary budget proposals** from the AEDA General Manager framed by discussion of Board priorities. Some proposals were flagged as high/low priority for the Board.
 - 1.4. **3/12/2025 Council's Chief Operating Officer and administration discussion with AEDA General Manager** determining and prioritising subsidiary budget bids for 2026/27.
 - 1.5. **4/12/2025 Council's Chief Operating Officer met with the AEDA Chair and AEDA General Manager** to discuss budget proposals, and the preparation for the 9/12/2025 City Finance and Governance Committee Workshop on the AEDA allocation. Discussion included the proposed \$2.1m AEDA increase over three years.
 - 1.6. **9/12/2025 City Finance and Governance Committee Workshop - Base budget position (LTFP) and AEDA allocation.** Discussion included different funding level scenarios (slide 11/page 15). The AEDA Chair and AEDA General Manager participated and answered questions from Council Members. The presentation scenarios included different funding levels and funded activities – \$0.525m, \$1.1m, \$2.59m, \$4.015m and \$4.955m. The Workshop presentation is here. [\[Link 2\]](#)
 - 1.7. **11/2/2026 AEDA Board meeting** Council's Chief Operating Officer attended and reiterated the proposal presented to Council Members in the CEO Briefing on the operating budget (held Saturday 7/2/2026), namely the \$2.1m uplift over three years was likely to be both acceptable to Council and fundable within the CoA budget. Board members appeared comfortable with this summary.
2. Other questions raised in the Motion above are addressed below:
 - 2.1. **Proposal for an AEDA Budget Workshop, 5-6pm 12 March 2026.** At the 21/2/26 CEO Briefing (Capital budget session), the 5pm timeslot was rejected by the majority of Council Members due to other commitments when mooted for the Mainstreets session. Council Member feedback is that 5pm is not a viable option based on Member availability.
 - 2.2. **AEDA to present proposed 2026/27 base budget and strategic outcomes deliverable within current funding settings.** Proposed base funding levels based on AEDA's proposed workplan were included in the 9/12/25 City Finance and Governance Committee Workshop AEDA funding scenarios 1-4. [\[Link 2\]](#)
 - 2.3. **Clear funding scenarios outlining the additional initiatives and outcomes deliverable with additional \$2.25 million and \$4.5 million annually.** Both scenarios were included in the 9/12/25 City Finance and Governance Committee Workshop AEDA funding scenarios 1-4. [\[Link 2\]](#)
 - 2.4. **Projected economic and financial impacts of each funding scenario.** The impacts have not yet been adequately measured by AEDA staff, however, the AEDA Chair has committed to doing so, and the AEDA Board has discussed the importance of outcome measures at its November 2025 meeting. It is expected the AEDA Board would have to consider investment attraction, business growth, visitation, job creation, private sector leverage and impact on the City's rate base when prioritising projects, initiatives and activities.

- 2.5. **How proposed initiatives would support identified growth and development precincts.** This has not been adequately measured and will also be considered in the context of the implementation of the Council’s 27 January 2026 Precinct funding decision.
- 2.6. **That Administration provide advice on the financial implications and sustainability of each funding scenario including identification of significant expenditure areas that could reasonably be reduced, deferred, consolidated or reprioritised.** This was provided in the materials for the 7/2/2026 and 21/2/2026 Saturday CEO briefings and discussions during those briefings. Council Members did not identify any areas of the budget on which to reduce, defer, consolidate or reprioritise in response to the proposal to fund AEDA with an additional \$742k.
3. The information provided and the engagement to date suggests a further workshop with the AEDA Board is unnecessary as the issues have been thoroughly discussed with the AEDA Chair, and the Board has been engaged. A workable and fundable AEDA funding envelope has been identified and recommended (\$2.1m uplift over three years) which does not put undue pressure on services and other Strategies Council has committed to delivering.

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| Should the motion be carried, the following implications of this motion should be considered. Note any costs provided are estimates only – no quotes or prices have been obtained: | |
| Public consultation | Not applicable |
| External consultant advice | Not applicable |
| Legal advice / litigation (eg contract breach) | Not applicable |
| Impacts on existing projects | Not applicable |
| Budget reallocation | Not applicable |
| Capital investment | Not applicable |
| Staff time in preparing the workshop / report requested in the motion | Much of the material is already available but would need to be re-worked to contextualise. This could take 2-3 days of effort spread across a number of people in the Office of the COO, AEDA, Governance, and Finance teams. |
| Other | Not applicable |
| Staff time in receiving and preparing this administration comment | To prepare this administration comment in response to the motion on notice took approximately 6.5 hours. |

- END OF REPORT -