City of DAREBIN

Darebin Spending & Economic Snapshot

Economic Development Team
September 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung People who are the Traditional Owners of the Land. I recognise their continuing connection to Land, Water and Culture.
I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Artwork by Natashia Ellis-Corrigan, proud Jinibara/Bundjalung woman. Aboriginal artist from Jinibara Designs.

Headline Updates – September 2026



September Total Local Spend up, + 3% year-on-year

Total local spending was up in September, mainly due to positive results for specialized and luxury goods (+9.6%), shoes and clothing (+11%), personal services spending (+12%) and professional services demand (+10.6%).

For additional context, specialised and luxury goods include a broad range of retailers, such as jewelers, cosmetics, pharmacies, books, sporting goods and bike stores, computer and electronics, hobby and toy stores, luggage and leather, antique and second-hand stores, florists and musical instrument, records and more.



Household item purchases and home improvements on hold

The September results show that households continue to put off expenditure on big ticket household items, renovations and home upgrades, likely due to pressure from rate rises and an increase of +30.8% in fuel spending, compared to September last year. Furniture and household goods expenditure was down -28.3%, bulky goods sales dropped by -3%, while trade and contractor spending shrunk by -7.2% and light industry sales (hardware and specialty industry supplies stores) dived -45.4%.

Data Source: Spendmapp by Geografia

September Spending Breakdown

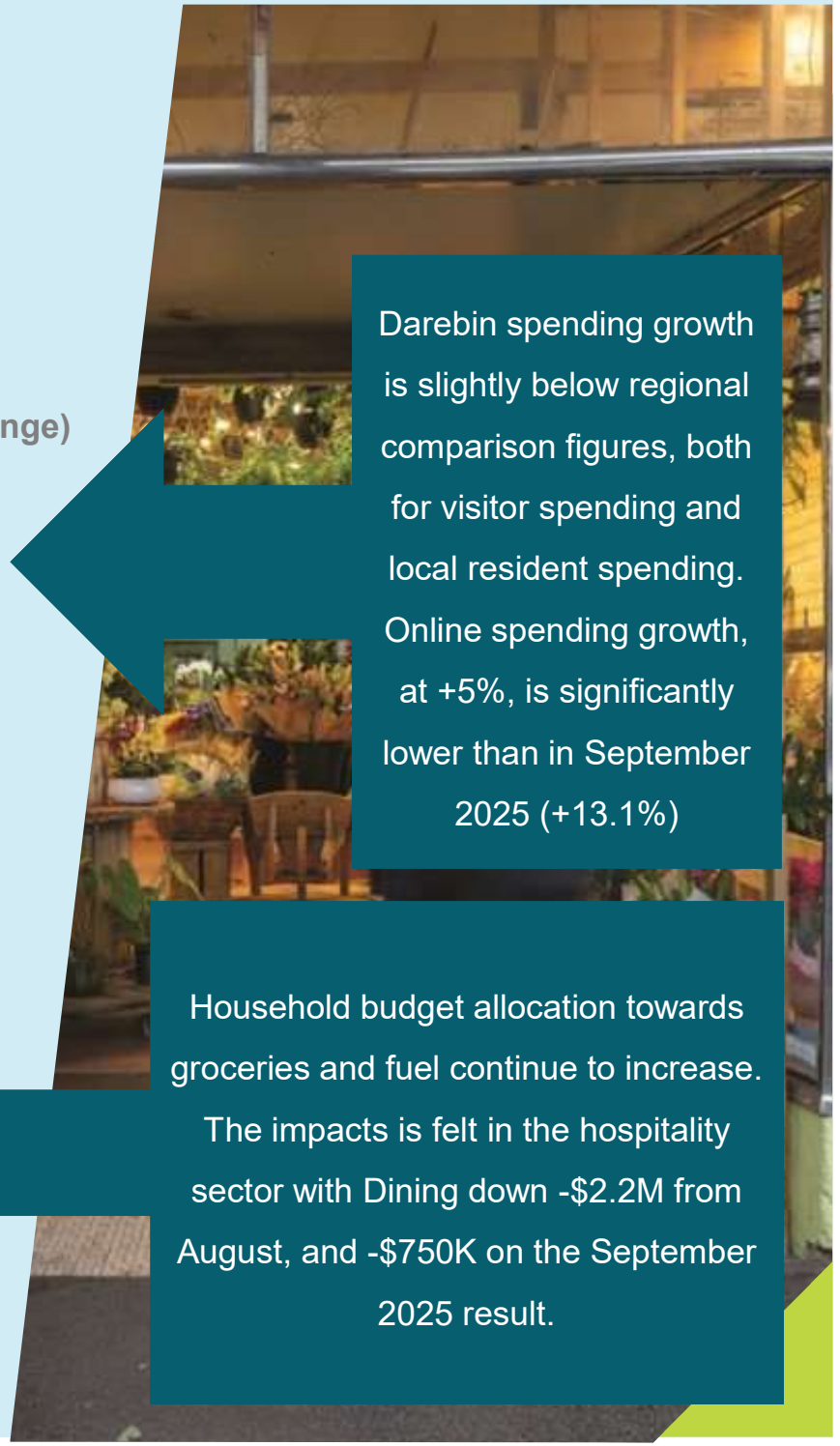
Expenditure Types (August Total Local Spend & year-on-year change)

Total Local Spend:	Darebin: $268M (+3.1%)	Metro +4.8%
Resident Local Spend:	Darebin: $108M (+2.7%)	Metro +3.2%
Visitor Local Spend:	Darebin: $160M (+3.3%)	Metro +6.1%
Resident Escape Spend:	Darebin: $151M (+6.8%)	Metro +5.2%
Resident Online Spend:	Darebin: $216M (+5%)	Metro +5.8%

Top 5 Expenditure Categories

(August Total Local Spend & year-on-year change)

Grocery Stores & Supermarkets:	$43.5M (+10%)
Specialised & Luxury Goods:	$42.8M (+9.6%)
Dining:	$28.6M (-2.5%)
Healthcare:	$18.75M (+3%)
Automotive Fuel	$18M (+30.8%)



Darebin spending growth is slightly below regional comparison figures, both for visitor spending and local resident spending. Online spending growth, at +5%, is significantly lower than in September 2025 (+13.1%)

Household budget allocation towards groceries and fuel continue to increase. The impacts is felt in the hospitality sector with Dining down -$2.2M from August, and -$750K on the September 2025 result.

Data Source: Spendmapp by Geografia.

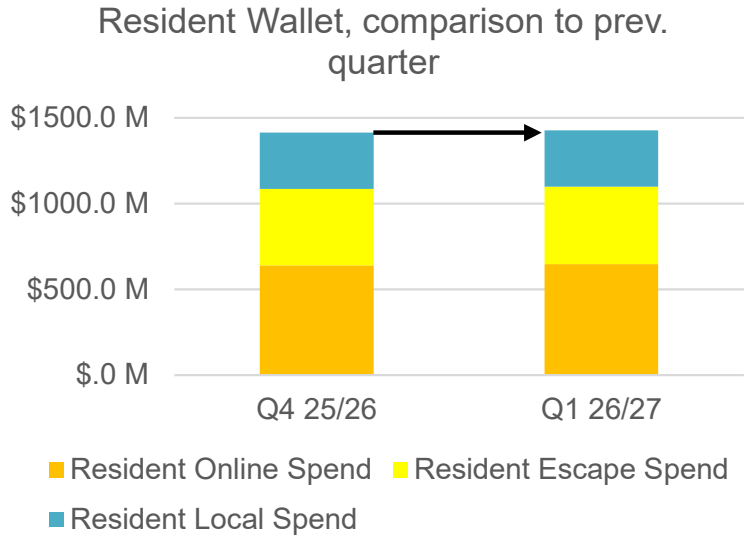
The resident wallet (quarterly review)

Resident spending comparison, latest and previous quarter:

Overall, resident spending increased **+0.9%** from the April-June to the July-September quarter. This is lower than the quarterly change of +1.9% for the same time last year.

Over the past two quarters, the wallet share changes were:

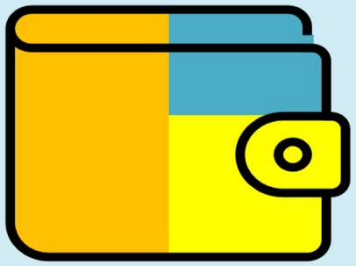
- Resident Local Spend decreased from 23.3% to **22.9%.**
- Resident Escape Spend increased from 31.4% to **31.7%.**
- Resident Online Spend remained unchanged at **45.3%.**



Trend - Change in expenditure types:

Local Spend:	Victoria: -0.5%	Darebin: -0.4%.
Escape Spend:	Victoria: +0.1%	Darebin: +0.3%
Online Spend:	Victoria: +0.4%	Darebin: 0%

Compared with the previous quarter Darebin saw more escape spend as a share of resident wallet and a smaller reduction in local spend, when compared to Victoria.



Data Source: Spendmapp by Geografia

Dining spending trends

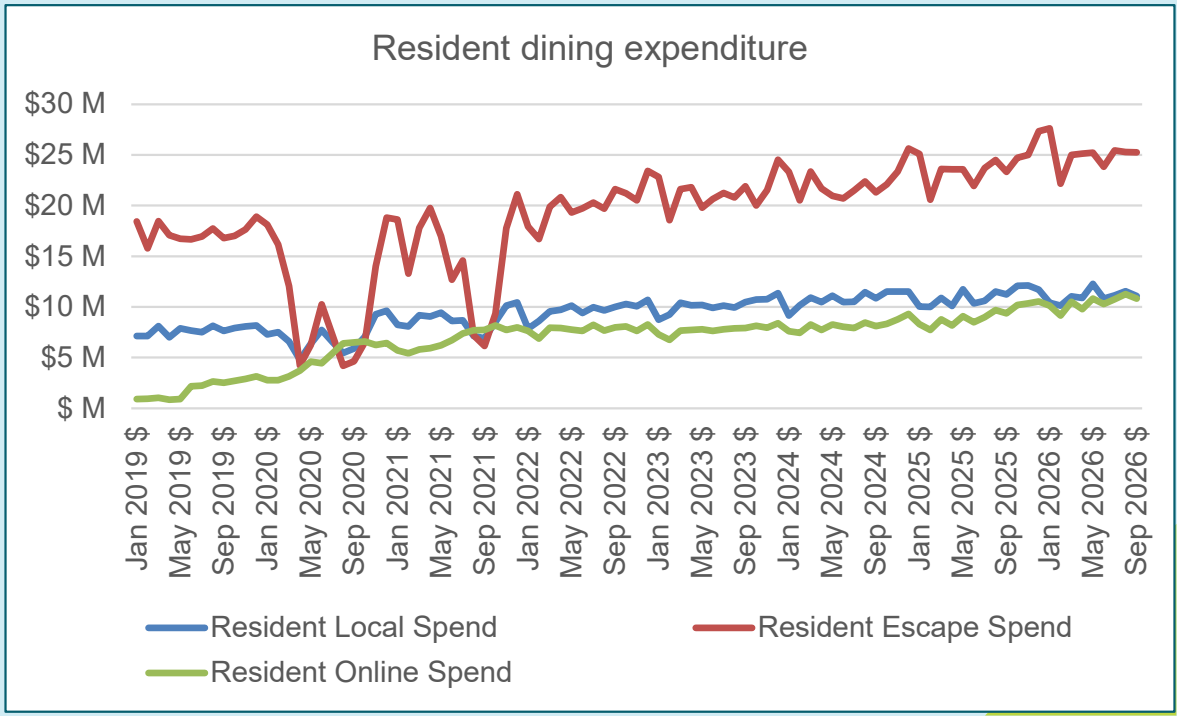
Darebin is well known for its hip and chilled cafes, a diverse mix of trendy and evolving restaurants and popular pubs and destination venues that draw in locals and visitors from all over Melbourne.

Dining expenditure consistently ranks in Darebin's top 5 categories when it comes to local spending. Whilst Darebin hospitality businesses consistently post strong numbers, residents spend more money outside of the city than online and locally combined. **Does your restaurant have a strong local following?**

Contact us and share your strategies for success to be considered for a future business feature.



Image: Darebin Council, The Keys, Preston



Data Source: Spendmapp by Geografia

Economic Outlook & Business Support

Outlook

The consumer sentiment index dropped to 80.4 in October, down from 84.4 in September.

Finances back under intense pressure from fuel costs and rate hike.

Over 80% of consumers expect mortgage rates to rise next year.

Consumers reporting growing unease about the outlook for jobs.

Support & Opportunities

Stay connected with other business owners, grow your network, find local suppliers and new customers.

To ensure that you never miss any of our upcoming workshops, events and grants, subscribe to Darebin City Council's monthly Business eNews.

Subscribe to Council newsletters

Register for an upcoming workshop

Data Source: Westpac-Melbourne Institute

Acknowledging current economic pressures

This snapshot outlines spending and economic activity across Darebin in July, and while there are some positive indicators, we recognise that increased spending does not always translate to improved financial sustainability for every business.

Council is also operating in a constrained financial context. We are focused on balancing immediate needs with long-term sustainability, while continuing to invest in the services, infrastructure and local economy that support our community.

We will continue to:

- support local businesses through programs, advocacy and partnerships
- prioritise what matters most for our community
- explore new and creative ways to strengthen Darebin's local economy.

If you or your business are experiencing financial pressure, support is available:

- Darebin Council - Crisis support
- Business Victoria – Managing your mental health and wellbeing
- Business Victoria – Managing business finances
- Business Victoria – Financial health checks



City of DAREBIN

Resources & Support

https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Business

Contact:

Business@darebin.vic.gov.au