

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 6
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
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Dear Madam/Sir

Parliamentary Inquiry into the State Government's Fit for the Future Local Government Reform Agenda

In my local government area of Ryde the State Government is proposing:

1. That Ryde be split with one third going to Parramatta, Auburn and Holroyd to make a mega Council for reasons including:
 - The new Council will have a projected 2031 population of 558,500;
 - Close functional interaction and economic/social links between these councils;
 - Need for stronger unified local government to develop Parramatta as the second CBD;
 - Parramatta's northern boundary is very close to its CBD; relocation to M2 would facilitate planning and improve socio-economic mix and community linkages; and
 - Incorporating part of Ryde would strengthen link between Parramatta and 'Global Sydney Corridor' and improve scope for integrated planning around Epping station.
2. Amalgamation of the remaining two thirds of Ryde with Hunter's Hill, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney and Willoughby Councils for reasons including:
 - The new Council will have a projected 2031 population of 365,400;
 - Close functional interaction and economic/social links between these Councils;
 - Need for integrated planning for major centres, Sydney Harbour foreshores, etc ; and
 - 3 of these Councils are projected to have fewer than 50,000 people in 2031.

I **disagree** with this approach of the State Government to split the City of Ryde and force amalgamations.

I **support** what my local Council, the City of Ryde is proposing: for Ryde to stand alone and continue to deliver local services and address local issues, in addition to working in partnership with neighbouring Councils, Lane Cove and Hunters Hill on regional matters to achieve efficiencies through shared services.

I support the City of Ryde's approach for these reasons:

- It is a win-win solution for local communities and the State Government;

City of Ryde to Stand Alone and establish a
Regional Partnership with neighbouring Councils

- Instead of one-size-fits-all, the regional partnership model would mean local issues stay local and regional matters are dealt with at the regional level by the three Councils working together;
- This solution is a much cheaper option, not confusing or disrupting for ratepayers and we get to keep our high level of access to our local representatives and be able to participate in local decisions that affect our neighbourhoods and suburbs;
- It would also mean that Ryde is not split and keeps its local identity and its proud heritage does not disappear;
- The State Government will get what it wants, which is to deal with one organisation on subregional matters instead of three, with local government working together in planning and identifying priorities for the region;
- Through a regional partnership with Lane Cove and Hunters Hill the community will get a more powerful voice to advocate on critical regional planning and infrastructure matters like schools, hospitals and transport issues;
- A regional partnership also means that Councils could share delivery of some services and save money. It means that they can gain more buying power in the market, all of this will save the ratepayer money;
- Local Councils are supposed to be local, being close to the people and working with communities to plan for neighbourhoods and town centres;
- If Ryde is split and divided into two mega Councils, the residents will lose and not get the proper services and representation they deserve;
- Ryde has no close ties to Parramatta and does not share the same community of interest; the western part of Ryde is separated from Parramatta geographically with the Parramatta River and the Main North Rail Line;
- The Government's proposed split will dissect Macquarie Park, NSW's second largest commercial centre that continues to grow in economic output and jobs growth for Sydney and NSW. The City of Ryde has carefully planned this commercial centre and this will be jeopardised if it is divided between two mega Councils. The proposed splitting of Ryde seriously puts into question the continuation of the sustained and planned growth that has been achieved under the City Ryde's stewardship of Macquarie Park.

The Government has not provided any evidence that amalgamations will benefit communities, especially in non-financial ways.

I believe that the Committee should consider the benefits of partnerships and the joint collaboration model as proposed by the City of Ryde in preference to using amalgamations as a one size-fits-all solution, as bigger is not always better.