

## IPART Submission – Hawkesbury City Council - SRV

I am writing to you as a resident of Oakville, a suburb in the Hawkesbury City Council area and I am opposed to the SRV request before you.

The current Hawkesbury City Council has been very remiss in their representation of the SRV to the residents of the area. They had full knowledge that the owner of properties in the suburb of Oakville would be disadvantaged by the incredibly high rate increases already approved. These increases are partially a result of the increase in their property values, due to bordering on the North West Growth Corridor. An increase in value, which can only realise by selling their properties. Hawkesbury City Council then changed the formula for calculating the rates. They increased the portion that is based on property values. This increased people's rates to unbearably high amounts in some cases. Oakville is a small suburb that has a large amount of residents on fixed incomes, having retired to their little bit of land.

If a council can only be declared "Fit for Future" by including an unapproved SRV in their plans, then every council is "Fit for Future" and none should have been forcibly merged. Hawkesbury City Council definitely are in trouble and they have decided that alienating the smallest suburb by making them pay an inordinately large proportion of the council rates, is a way out of this mess.

The SRV places undue extra monetary pressure on the residents of Oakville, already suffering under the increased rates. I have the smallest property in Oakville, being less than an acre, yet my rates have risen over \$500 for the year over previous years. And now they want an extra 30%!! Please note that because we are considered Rural by the council, we get NO services for this money (other than garbage collection). No curbing, no guttering, no street lights, no council pickups, bad roads - you name it.

The other concern is the seemingly deceptive way that the council went about this. They say the rate change was advertised in local papers, but strangely it was in the local paper THAT IS NOT DELIVERED TO OAKVILLE!! They say that there was modelling but yet no one seemed to question that the modelling would have shown the increase of rates to this one suburb, while decreasing rates to a large proportion of the other suburbs. This is very strange behaviour. Now they would like us to approve an SRV to take more money from Oakville. An SRV that was not approved but seemingly was their only way out of not being merged?? This is so strange - I would encourage investigation into the motives of this council and why they want Oakville residents to fund the solution to the mess they created.

I would encourage the IPART committee to reject this SRV and instead propose an investigation into the workings of the Hawkesbury City Council, its mismanagement and fiscal irresponsibility.