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Date of submission: 31 July 2015

Submission: The Manager
IPART Submissions for "Fit for the Future"

Dear Manager,

Re: Submission for "Fit for the Future"

Having lived in Redfern since 1988 I was first under the jurisdiction of the City of Sydney, then was transferred to the City of South Sydney, then was amalgamated back into the City of Sydney.

I have found the current structure to be superior of the previous two and find no value in further changes to boundaries. I argue this for the following reasons:

1. Scale and Capacity

The City administration is accessible to the rate payers, it is efficient, rates are reasonable, services are delivered quickly and the improvements of parks, street gardens (beautification of Cleveland Street for example), its support for the culture of ratepayers (Festivals like Chinese New Year, Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, services for the aged, community centres is exceptional. Infrastructure (like bike paths and money put into light rail for example) development is of world class standard.

Expanding the boundaries would dilute this commitment to the community.

2. Sustainability

The current structure supports the community with no debt, strong finances, no corruption, its management aims to be carbon neutral. The staff has developed expertise and attuned its response to communities since the previous amalgamation and we do not want to waste that.

Expanding the City of Sydney would make it the size of the smaller states and territories. We will lose what it means to have "local" government and will dilute a culture which has taken years to build up where council is responsive to community input.

3. Future

In the future the pace of change will accelerate. The current structure has demonstrated exceptional ability to deliver development and prosperity to the City, take for the Waterloo and Green square areas for example. The structure enables a quick response to development application, increasing demand for housing, and it has increased its population substantially and rapidly with smooth and community accepted processes.

Amalgamation would dilute that focus.

4. Waste

Diverting council funds to amalgamation AGAIN wastes money, dilutes business confidence, slows development approvals, not to mention renewal of logos, street signage YET AGAIN. My new City of Sydney street sign has just gone up this year, replacing the former South Sydney street sign. Do we have to go through that again?

Changing the colour and logo of an organisation does not guarantee efficiency.

Staff time will be diverted to meetings dealing with the change of culture. The City of Sydney is a world class international city, the bordering councils have a suburban emphasis. Joining these different cultures takes money and time as we had with the amalgamation of South Sydney and Sydney councils ten years ago.

5. Summary

Please do not change the boundaries of the City of Sydney.

Please enable Councils to spend rate payers' money on improving delivery of services and waste it on amalgamating.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Jagelman