



PAST



PRESENT



FUTURE

Brush Farm House connects us to the past, and will take us into the future as a cultural and heritage centre.



YEAR IN REVIEW

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Highlights 2007/2008

People

We installed new security and a self check system into the Eastwood, North Ryde and Ryde libraries, with four branches now converted to self-service reservation collection, providing a speedy process for library users.

Promotion of Brush Farm House as a new cultural facility – for events, tours and art exhibitions.

Formation of Aboriginal Community Working Group and Aboriginal Educational Consultative Committee.

Children's conference at Macquarie University.

Assets

\$30 million of new and replacement infrastructure was completed.

Council's largest footpath program on record was completed with seven kilometres of paving laid in 27 locations.

Four kilometres of cycleway were constructed.

Major park upgrades at Ryde Park (Stage 2) included the new cenotaph and landscaping adjacent to Blaxland Road and the upgrade of the main oval. The construction of Anderson Park has also been completed as part of the Parramatta River foreshore parkland.

Environment

The City achieved a high four star rating in Sydney Water's 'Every Drop Counts' Business Program, achieving a water saving equivalent to 6,900 x 10 litre buckets of water!

Developed an Economic Development Strategy for the City.

In conjunction with the developers of the Top Ryde City shopping centre the 'Top Ryder' Community Bus Service was created, encouraging people to use this free public transport for local trips instead of using the car.

Significant improvement in approval time for Development Applications, placing the City of Ryde among the top performing councils in NSW.

Governance

Installation of Customer Service Kiosks in all library branches to facilitate easy access to Council services and information.

Achieved improved operating surplus to deliver a strong financial position.

Initiated Country Council Partnership with Central Darling Shire Council.

Upgraded corporate governance framework improving internal audit and risk management for greater transparency and accountability.

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Awards

Planning Institute of Australia (NSW Division) Excellence Awards: The Approval Framework for the Top Ryde City Shopping Centre Development received the Excellence in Planning (Urban Design and Ideas) Award.

Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards: Ryde Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy received the Sustainable Design, Planning and Building Award.

Australasian Reporting Awards: The City of Ryde Annual Report 2007/2008 received a Bronze Award.

Australian Property Institute (NSW Division) Excellence in Property Awards: the City of Ryde received the Commonwealth Bank Heritage Award for the restoration of Brush Farm House.

Local Government and Shires Association:

- Multicultural Health Awards: Community Profile and Needs Analysis Paper for the City of Ryde's Chinese and Korean speaking communities was third place winner in this category
- RH Dougherty Award: the *Ryde City View* newsletter was highly commended.

Community Awards

Australia Day Awards

- Citizen of the Year: Craig Stephens, a member of the Salvation Army and the driving force behind the establishment of multiple community projects, including No 47 Ivanhoe Place, a project that provides a wide range of services for the community including counselling, education, networking, holiday programs and transport.
- Young Citizen of the Year: Kate Hanley, a long standing volunteer at Weemala, assisting adults and children with disabilities.

Access Awards

Recognising the rights of people with a disability to work and be employed on an equal basis with others was the theme for the 2007 Access Awards.



- Individual Award: Dimitrios Papazoglou, taxi driver extraordinaire
- Group: Minimbah Challenge Inc, for enhanced facilities and programs for clients with a disability
- Residential: New Horizons Ltd, staff award for supported accommodation
- Business: Optus Singtel, an exemplary workplace in its provision for those with a disability, new mothers and pregnant staff
- Commendation: Eastwood Shopping Centre Management for improved access and signage.

Volunteer Recognition Awards

The Volunteer Recognition Awards are held every year in conjunction with National

Volunteer Week to honour the largely unseen army of volunteers who generously give their time and skills to uplift and benefit the lives of so many in our community.

- Volunteer of the Year: Rob Wilkinson, for 30 years of service to the community, particularly for his work with Rotary's ROMAC project which raises money to provide medical treatment for children from developing countries
- Young Volunteer of the Year: Arda Lapedjian, a valued member of the Armenian Apostolic Church who works to bring young people together to help those in need
- Group Volunteer of the Year: Ryde Hospital Pink Ladies, a group of 48 dedicated women who assist patients and staff in a variety of areas.

Financial Overview and Five Year Trend

The City of Ryde financial result for 2007/2008 of an operating result of \$29.9 million reflects Council's continuing strong financial performance.

Council achieved an operating result before capital of \$21.3 million which is an increase on the surplus by \$14.6 million for the previous year. This is the third successive year that Council has achieved an operating surplus before capital and indicates that the regular costs incurred by Council in its normal day to day service delivery operations is less than revenue received from providing these services.

This allows Council to generate sufficient funds to provide for asset replacement and strategic service delivery projects and is key to Council's long term financial sustainability.

Key features of the 2007/2008 result are:

- Council delivered \$28.3 million on capital expenditure, an increase of \$4 million from the previous year, with major projects including:
 - Town Centre upgrades (\$2.9 million)
 - Roadworks (\$5.2 million)
 - Footpaths & Cycleways (\$3 million)
 - Community Halls & Facility Upgrades (\$0.6 million)
 - Catchments (\$4.7 million)
 - Parks (\$4.5 million)
 - Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre (\$0.3 million)
 - Technology Systems (\$2 million)
- Working capital of \$2.2 million, to cover day to day operations and provide a buffer for unforeseen expenditures
- Council's debt service ratio has been steadily declining over the past 6 years with 2% of our total revenue committed to loan repayments in 2007/2008

| Key Performance Indicators | 2003/2004 | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Unrestricted Current Ratio | 3.4:1 | 1.7:1 | 1.8:1 | 1.7:1 | 3.65:1 |
| Debt Service Ratio | 3.6% | 3.2% | 3.2% | 2.6% | 2.0% |
| Rate Coverage Ratio | 66.1% | 57.9% | 58% | 57.2% | 47.9% |
| Rates & Annual Charged Outstanding Percentage | 2.1% | 2.7% | 2.6% | 2.5% | 2.8% |

- Council receives approximately 48% of its revenue from rates and annual charges and has consistently achieved an excellent recovery rate with only 2.8% of rates outstanding.
- Council's unrestricted current ratio, which is a measure of its capacity to satisfy obligations in the short term, remained sound and is a healthy 3.65 : 1
- Council's level of internal reserves (funds put aside for specific projects) has increased from \$15 million in 2002/2003 to \$59 million in 2007/2008.

The Council's financial indicators as attested to by its auditors Spencer Steer reflect that it is in a sound financial position, however it faces a number of challenges in the years ahead.

Some of Council's investments have been impacted by the current global financial crisis as have superannuation funds, businesses and all levels of government. Council has taken responsible action to contain losses by establishing an \$8 million Financial Security reserve to contain losses to ensure our service delivery is not affected.

Council continues to address its long term financial sustainability, a major issue for Local Government across Australia, through its Long Term Financial Strategy (LTFS).

The City of Ryde owns over \$2.4 billion in essential infrastructure (roads, footpaths, drains, libraries, community buildings etc) and is well advanced in developing asset management plans for all of its assets. It is estimated that the cost to bring these assets up to a satisfactory condition is in the order of \$74 million and based on Council's LTFS, it needs to spend around an additional \$4 million per year on asset renewal.

Council is continuing its proactive approach to Asset Management to ensure the community's assets are maintained.

Further information on Council's financial performance is contained in the Community Financial Report and Financial Report in Section 6 of this report.

Calendar of Events 2007-2008

JULY 2007



- Ryde Eisteddfod (July – September)
- NAIDOC Week: ‘Moving Pictures’ – Indigenous Short Films
- National Tree Day – community tree planting at the Field of Mars Reserve
- Winter School Holiday Program

AUGUST 2007



- Ryde Business Week – workshops and seminars
- Community Prayer Breakfast
- Open Day at Brush Farm House
- National Family History Week – presentations by the City of Ryde Family History Librarian

SEPTEMBER 2007



- Spring Sustainability Expo
- Ryde Art Awards and Exhibition
- ‘Helping Learner Drivers Become Better Drivers’ workshop for parents and learner drivers
- Ride around Ryde – Bike Week event

JANUARY 2008



- Australia Day Celebrations
- Cinema in the Park
- Summer School Holiday Program

FEBRUARY 2008



- Chinese New Year Celebrations

MARCH 2008



- Harmony Festival
- Community Information Expo
- Seniors Celebration Program (March – April)

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OCTOBER 2007



- Granny Smith Festival
- Children's Festival – celebrating National Children's Week
- Spring School Holiday Program

NOVEMBER 2007



- Read, Write, Ryde – City of Ryde Writers' Festival
- Power of Positive Parenting – seminar series for parents of 0 – 12 year olds
- Microchipping Open Day – free microchipping for pets

DECEMBER 2007



- Carols in the Plaza

APRIL 2008



- Youth Week
- Heritage Festival
- Autumn School Holiday Program

MAY 2008



- Council Expo
- Volunteer Week Celebrations
- Lights! Camera! Action! 'Filmscape' Youth Short Film Competition

JUNE 2008



- World Environment Day film screening
- World Wide Knit in Public Day