

State Government announces Forced Mergers and ignores our Communities

Published on 18 December 2015

Today's announcement by the State Government of a proposed forced merger between our Councils totally disregards the sophisticated and contemporary model we have put forward of a Joint Regional Authority between the City of Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Councils.

The report from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government in NSW, strongly supported City of Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove Councils proposed Joint Regional Authority (JRA) and urged the NSW Government to work with local government on a statutory model for Joint Organisations based on the Hunters Hill, Ryde and Lane Cove Council model as a cooperative and consensus model for local council reform in Metropolitan Sydney.

Ryde Mayor Clr Jerome Laxale said: "For a Premier whose popularity has been based on trust and honesty, today's broken promise proves that he is no messiah, rather just another politician looking after the big end of town. Ryde, Australia's 3rd oldest settlement was proven to be financially fit, yet we will be smashed together with others in a forced merger. Costs of merging will far outweigh any benefit and our communities will lose their local identity. In short our ratepayers will be worse off thanks to Mike Baird, Victor Dominello and Anthony Roberts."

Hunter's Hill Mayor Clr Richard Quinn said: "Hunters Hill Council is profoundly disappointed and outraged that the NSW Government has chosen to ignore the strong views of the great majority of our community. The Baird Government has no mandate from the people to force council amalgamations. We have maintained from the outset that this should be a decision of the voters of NSW. This is a very sad day for democracy."

Lane Cove Mayor Clr Deborah Hutchens said: "To apply a blanket approach to so many councils shows just how out of touch the State government is with the reality of how local communities actually work. That is why we need the State government to give the opportunity for a poll of local communities – ratepayers should be in control of their own future, not have it handed down to them by the State".

Our Councils are financially fit and sustainable, and have the capacity for effective local government. The JRA is a sophisticated and contemporary model which breaks the traditional mould of amalgamations and we are convinced it would meet our communities' needs and allow them to have a say in their future together in working with the State Government in the strategic planning of Greater Sydney. Our residents have clearly shown their preference for us to work together which was demonstrated by their 92% level of support of our JRA as their first or second preference, which is a very clear mandate from our communities on this issue. From the research and studies conducted, it is apparent that disadvantages of mergers include the following:

- The cost of creating a merged entity is estimated at \$120 million in the short and medium term.
- The first three years of the merged entity will accumulate deficits of \$62.2 million.
- Empirical evidence on amalgamations falls overwhelmingly against forced amalgamations and there is little, if any evidence that forged mergers result in cost savings.
- Empirical evidence of the 2000-2004 NSW council amalgamations shows no difference in the performance of merged and unmerged councils using the Fit for the Future criteria.

Whilst today's announcement is extremely disappointing, Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove will continue to work together through the Boundaries Commission process to get the best outcome for our communities.

Project Management at the City of Ryde Video

Published on 17 December 2015



How the City of Ryde manages projects from initiation, planning, implementation and project closure

Council votes for Synthetic Turf to ease soaring demand for Sporting Fields

Published on 16 December 2015

ELS Hall Park No. 1 and Christie Park Nos 1 and 2 will be developed with all-weather synthetic playing surfaces to meet the soaring demand for sporting fields in the City of Ryde.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour of the staff recommendation for a 10 year Synthetic Surfaces Program as part of the draft Sport and Recreation Strategy that will go on public exhibition in February 2016.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said the decision was a good outcome for the sporting community. "I am glad that the Council has put years of delay and indecision behind it and voted to immediately build synthetic facilities in our City. With the likely forced amalgamation of Ryde around the corner, it was vital that we reached a decision last night.

"Our sporting facilities are in high demand and use is already well over capacity. Coupled with wet-weather issues, our fields just are not up to standard to cope with our growing population.

"This plan is an investment in the future of sport in our area. It also deals with the short term demand for fields, particularly for winter sport, through a combination of new synthetic turf surfaces, additional lighting and redesign, so we can address the current over-use of playing fields."

Council staff will now continue planning for:

- Construction of synthetic surface fields at Christie Park 1 and 2 and relocation of grandstand by 2017
- Construction of a synthetic surface field at ELS Hall Park No 1 (requiring relocation of the turf cricket wicket to Marsfield Park and possible relocation for rugby user group) by 2016.

"I will be working closely with the General Manager to ensure these deadlines are met or bettered. It has taken Council too long to get where we are today, if there is any way that we can get these fields built more quickly, then we'll do it," the Mayor said.

Consultation with sporting groups and residents will be undertaken as part of this planning and this will commence in 2016.

Funding for the works will be sourced from the Asset Replacement Reserve and repaid from S94 developer funds when the new Section 94 Plan is adopted (anticipated in 2016).

End of the Line Mentality for Macquarie Park to Parramatta Light Rail

Published on 15 December 2015

City of Ryde Council and business leaders have expressed dismay at the omission of the Macquarie Park to Parramatta Light Rail route, describing it as the 'critical missing link' in the Western Sydney Light Rail Network announced by the NSW Premier this week.

Macquarie Park's booming \$10 billion a year economy grew by 6.8% last year, outstripping Parramatta (1.6%), Sydney (1.1%) and North Sydney (-0.2%).

"This is a huge loss for the Macquarie Park precinct, a blue chip hub described as the economic star performer, and a massive shock for the long suffering commuters in the region," Ryde Mayor, Jerome Laxale said.

"Connecting two CBDs, two universities, two hospitals and two booming residential catchment areas with light rail infrastructure that can move 10,000 passengers an hour is a no-brainer, and would remove thousands of cars from our roads.

"Macquarie Park to Parramatta is the only link in the Global Economic Corridor that does not have a current or planned mass-transit service."

Campaigners have long pushed for faster and more efficient services from Macquarie Park and Parramatta to boost the economy. Currently the only public transport system connecting the two CBS is a bus service.

MACQUARIE PARK PROFILE

- Current job numbers in Mac Park = 47,000 employees*
- Current student/staff numbers in Mac Park = 38,000*
- The Parramatta to Macquarie Park Light Rail corridor would connect the people of Western Sydney and Greater Parramatta to over 80,000 potential jobs in Macquarie Park
- It would also connect the people of Macquarie Park, City of Ryde and residents along the North Shore Rail line to over 53,000 potential jobs in Greater Parramatta.
- Anticipated future numbers (by 2031) of student / staff = 50,000*

<http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Business-and-Development/Town-Centres/Macquarie-Park-Corridor/Connecting-the-Future>

The NSW Government's Metropolitan Strategy states that the Macquarie Park – Parramatta route would service 10 times the passenger numbers of the Olympic Park option and offers the greatest potential for success.

Chair of the Ryde Business Forum, Tony Abboud, said: “Macquarie Park, which is strategically located between the cities of Parramatta and Sydney, will now not have the infrastructure to accommodate one of the largest workforces in Sydney.

“A light rail connection between Parramatta and Macquarie Park would have a multiplier effect on job growth and security in the region.”

“This initiative not to support the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars by the corporate sector in Macquarie Park is an opportunity lost and a blow to the future growth of the region.”

Categories Transport

Winners Announced for the Christmas Lights Competition

Published on 14 December 2015



Carmen Grech (winner), City of Ryde Mayor - Clr Laxale, Joe Grech (winner), CEO of Coco Cubano - Tony Melham and his children. (L-R)

West Ryde residents Joe and Carmen Grech decorate their house for Christmas to make others happy and to raise funds for Westmead Children's Hospital, but winning the best overall lights and display at this year's Christmas Lights Showcase is a bonus.

Mayor Jerome Laxale said the Grech display was outstanding.

"With so many displays to choose from it was difficult to pick a winner but it was obvious the Grech's invested a lot of love and effort in creating an extraordinary display which stood out," he said.

Mr Grech is no stranger to the competition having participated seven years in a row and raised \$1,600 last year for the Children's Hospital.

"I do it just to light up people's lives and seeing them happy makes it all worth it," he said.

Congratulations to residents of Chavel Street, North Ryde who took out the award for Best Decorated Street and Best Decorated Business went to Macquarie Chapel Presbyterian Church, 2 Herring Road, Marsfield.

BEST DECORATED HOUSE CATEGORY

1st Place- \$500 cash prize- 122 Brush Rd, West Ryde

2nd Place- \$300 cash prize- 34 Chauvel Street, North Ryde

3rd Place - \$200 cash prize- 19 Farrington Pde, North Ryde

BEST STREET AWARD

Chauvel St, North Ryde

BEST DECORATED BUSINESS CATEGORY

1st Place- \$500 cash prize- Macquarie Chapel Presbyterian Church- 2 Herring Rd, Marsfield

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Head over to the [Christmas Lights Competition page](#) to find out how to vote via SMS or Facebook.

Everyone who votes in the Christmas lights competition via facebook or SMS will receive a 2 for 1 coffee at coco Cubano Top Ryde and will also go in the running to win 1 of 4 coffee cards loaded with \$50 value.

Light Rail decision has let Ryde down, again

Published on 08 December 2015

City of Ryde's campaign to link Macquarie Park with Parramatta via Carlingford by light rail has been delivered a knock-out blow following today's Western Sydney Light Rail announcement by the NSW Premier.

"This is a huge loss for Macquarie Park and a massive shock to commuters in the region," Ryde Mayor, Jerome Laxale said.

"Premier Mike Baird and the Member for Ryde Victor Dominello had the chance to right the wrongs of the past, yet they have let Ryde down again

"Linking Macquarie Park and Parramatta makes sense. It is the missing link in our transport network, and will remain so due to this ill-considered decision.

"A link to Parramatta would help solve the significant traffic problems in Ryde and Macquarie Park by removing thousands of cars off our local roads."

"I am calling on Victor Dominello to support his City and have the Carlingford line extended to Macquarie Park."

The combined CBDs of Macquarie Park and Parramatta employ 97,500 workers, and this figure will rise to 130,000 over the next 10 years.

Connecting two strategic business centres, two universities, two hospitals and two residential catchment areas by light rail would reduce traffic congestion making it easier for everyone to get around and for business to thrive.

In June, Ryde Council joined forces with business and civic leaders to lobby the State Government to link Macquarie Park to Parramatta as part of the \$1-billion Western Sydney Light Rail Network project.

"According to the Government's own Metropolitan Strategy, the Macquarie Park-Parramatta route would service 10 times the passenger numbers of the Olympic Park option and offers the greatest potential for success," Clr Laxale said.

Chair of the Ryde Business Forum, Tony Abboud, said: "Macquarie Park, which is strategically located between the cities of Parramatta and Sydney, will now not have the infrastructure to accommodate one of the largest workforces in Sydney.

"A light rail connection between Parramatta and Macquarie Park would have a multiplier effect on job growth and security in the region."

"This initiative not to support the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars by the corporate sector in Macquarie Park is an opportunity lost and a blow to the future growth of the region."

A Happy Ho-Ho Time at the Community Christmas Celebration

Published on 07 December 2015



A family crowd of around 2,500 descended on Ryde Park on Sunday to enjoy the giant water slide, a visit by Santa, Christmas crafts and the chance to 'dunk' the Mayor in a big tub of water, at the Council's annual beach-themed Community Christmas Celebration.

Everyone's favourite Hot Potato Band and Peter Combe and the Belly-Flop in a Pizza Band and a special performance by AvenueD kept the crowd entertained and there was an eager line up all afternoon to play in the monster sandpit and make some crazy Christmas craft.

To top it all off, the Salvation Army had the sausages sizzling and the Bubble Man created amazing multi-coloured bubbles, plus there were funny hats galore.

Everyone had a very happy ho-ho-holiday time.

Road and Drainage Works at West Ryde

Published on 07 December 2015



There will be night works happening next week between Wed 16 Dec - Fri 18 Dec 2015 on West Parade, West Ryde as part of developer works for the West Ryde Urban Village.

West Parade will be closed from 8pm, Wednesday 16 December on West Parade between Anthony Road and Miriam Road, West Ryde. A detour with traffic control will be in place (see map below) to allow the concrete speed hump to cure. **The road will re-open midnight, Friday 18 December.**

Traffic controllers will be on site to allow residents access to their properties.

Unique Calendar Designed to Promote Road Safety

Published on 03 December 2015



Everyone can benefit from a refresh every now and then, especially where road rules are concerned. A unique calendar that is free to the local community aims to remind drivers about road safety and staying safe while driving on NSW roads.

The Road Safety Calendar 2016, is a Council collaboration between Hornsby, Kuring-gai, Lane Cove, Manly, North Sydney, Pittwater, Ryde, Warringah and Willoughby, and features a compilation of driving safety messages and amazing imagery.

Each month showcases historical photographs merged with images from today, to bring you an artistically inspired calendar filled with colour, former times and fascinating facts. Important road safety topics such as drink/drug driving, children and traffic, driving distractions (eg phone use), special events, driving and roadworks and general parking rules are covered. It also lists useful contacts and other driving tips.

Residents will be transported back in time and amazed as they compare photos of the past and present of local areas such as the opening of De Burgh's Bridge (North Ryde), Neutral Bay Junction, Chatswood Transport Interchange, Pacific Highway Turrumurra, Coronation Street Hornsby, Grandview Parade Newport and The Oaks Mosman.

First produced in 2001, the calendar was originally targeted to senior drivers aged 60 and over, however, this is the first version where it has been expanded to accommodate drivers of all ages on NSW roads.

For a copy of the free calendar, please contact one of the nine local councils involved (City of Ryde Customer Service 9952 8222). Stocks are limited.

Mayor TV: Episode 5

Published on 02 December 2015



Clr Jerome Laxale - City of Ryde Mayor

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, pays a visit to Top Ryde city and takes a look at Ryde Library's first outdoor Storytime event in November 2015.