

Friday 1 August 2014

## **COMMUNITY ASKED TO HAVE SAY ON RATES**

City of Ryde residents are being asked to consider a rates increase to help close a funding gap that is preventing the Council from maintaining the City's ageing roads and footpaths to an acceptable standard.

Community consultation will run from August to September and ratepayers have been provided with detailed information on the rates proposal and asked to provide feedback on a range of options.

Mayor, Cllr Roy Maggio, said: "We have a good financial record and have recently identified internal savings of \$2.5million a year, but like many councils across NSW our general rate revenue, which is capped by the State Government to annual increase of around 3%, is not adequate to keep pace with the increased costs of maintaining our infrastructure, in particular roads and footpaths.

"We know that increases are never popular, but the reality is if we don't secure the future of our City now, then our assets will continue to decline."

The Council is responsible for more than \$2 billion worth of public assets for the community – including 321 kms of roads, 448 kms of footpaths, 250 kms of drains, 55 sportsgrounds, 94 playgrounds and 205 hectares of natural areas.

The Mayor added: "As a Council we know that something needs to happen now to secure Ryde's financial sustainability for current and future generations."

At the end of the eight week community consultation period, all responses will be collated and the Council will reconsider the proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal, the State Government agency responsible for determining price increases for utilities and service.