

Securing *our future*

SRV Community Engagement Summary September 2023



Acknowledgment of Country

Griffith City Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters, and their deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal community. Council further pays respect to the local Wiradjuri Elders, past, present and those emerging, for whom we acknowledge have responsibilities for the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of the local Wiradjuri people.

Contents

1. Introduction

Community Engagement Plan	2
Key Dates	2

2. Community Engagement Overview

Overview	3
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3. Engagement Outcomes

Outcomes.....	4
---------------	---

4. How did we engage?

Online, email and other submissions	6
Website.....	8
Flyer to ratepayers.....	13
Mailing List.....	14
Media Releases	15
Advertising & Council Catch Up Newsletter	29
Social Media.....	32
Community Meetings and Information Sessions.....	46
SRV Presentation.....	51
Staff and Councillor communication	68

5. Response to Feedback

Council's Response to Feedback	69
--------------------------------------	----

6. Appendices

Appendices	69
Appendix 1 – SRV Community Engagement Plan	
Appendix 2 – Submissions Received	

1. Introduction

Community engagement must be undertaken prior to applying for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) under the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) guidelines. In particular, IPART requires evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise. The guidelines state that Council's engagement approach must utilise an appropriate variety of methods to ensure community awareness and input is received.

It is important to note that IPART's assessment is not based on the level of support received from the community but rather that the community was made aware of the impacts of a proposed SRV.

This summary report has been prepared as evidence of the extensive community engagement undertaken by Council, prior to a potential application to IPART for an SRV.

Community Engagement Plan

Council actively engages with the local community providing information in a timely, open and transparent nature, to ensure that residents and stakeholders remain well informed.

Council's Community Engagement & Communication Strategy was reviewed and adopted in 2022, forming the framework of Council's community consultation practices.

This Strategy outlines methods and the manner in which Council should conduct public consultation for key activities. A dedicated SRV Community Engagement Plan (Appendix 1) was developed based on the principles of this Strategy.

Key dates

Action	
May - June	Community engagement on Delivery Program and Operational Plan outlining need for future SRV.
30 May 2023	Meeting with IPART representatives
27 June 2023	IP&R docs adopted by Council
May – August 2023	SRV Community Engagement period
24 October 2023	Council meeting to consider community feedback and determine if SRV application to be submitted to IPART
January 2024	Application due to IPART

2. Community Engagement Overview

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 9 May 2023 Council gave in principle support to apply for an SRV and committed to community engagement to be undertaken seeking the community's view on the proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV) by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

As part of the SRV application requirements outlined by IPART, Council must fully communicate the impact of the proposed increases to ratepayers and demonstrate an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input into the process.

During the engagement, Council sought feedback from residents on the proposed SRV options through the use of an online feedback form, media releases, information on Council's website, social media channels, community sessions, online presentations and meetings.

As part of the community consultation Council explained that without a SRV Council will not be financially sustainable and will be forced to significantly cut services to make annual savings of more than \$4 million. Senior Management are also implementing an additional \$1 million worth of cost saving initiatives.

Council consulted on two options:

Option 1 - With SRV

Increase rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25 with a total cumulative increase of 34.9%.

This option, plus \$1 million in cost saving initiatives annually maintains current services and asset renewal in the General Fund. Community facilities, footpaths and roads will continue to be maintained.

Option 2 - Without SRV

Retain the IPART rate pegging limit only. This option, plus \$1 million in cost saving initiatives annually, will not fully fund current Council General Fund operations and will require a plan to find additional savings of \$4 million each year by cutting services.

Examples of community facilities that may have reduced hours include Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

3. Engagement Outcomes

Council utilised a wide variety of communication methods during the engagement period to raise awareness in the community of Council’s intention to apply for an SRV. During the engagement period, Council encouraged ratepayers and residents to join the conversation and provide feedback on the proposal.

Method	Outcomes
Online submissions	141 online submissions were received. The majority of submissions indicated they were not supportive of an SRV.
Email or other submissions	16 other submissions were received in writing or via email.
Website	Information was provided on Council’s website on a page dedicated to the proposed SRV: griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay 1,604 page views during the community engagement period 254 views on the Rates Estimator page and 184 users. More than 325 people viewed the SRV video presentation.
Flyer to ratepayers	Council mailed out over 10,000 flyers to all ratepayers with the rates notice, informing them of the proposed SRV and process involved, as well as encouraging community feedback.
Online mailing list	Emails were sent to 2,159 local businesses, service groups and other ratepayers to encourage participation in the engagement process and to invite to attend information sessions.
Media releases	9 media releases distributed to local media outlets, placed in the community newsletter, Council Catch Up and placed on the website and social media.
Advertising – Radio & Newspaper	Radio Advertisements - 40 x 30 second commercials in prime time 6am – 7pm across 963 Triple M and Hit 99.7 – June to August. 10 x Monday with the Mayor on Hit 99.7 Breakfast with Matt Collins. Local Newspaper - 2 x SRV ads were placed in The Area News
Advertising - Council Catch Up Newsletter	Throughout June to August 2023 the printed weekly Council Catch Up Council newsletter featured 24 SRV articles or advertisements. 10 electronic email versions were sent to over 2,000 subscribers.
Social Media – Facebook & Instagram	31 posts were made to Council’s social media channels. Total post reach Facebook and Instagram over 59,500.

Method	Outcomes
<p>Community meetings</p> <p>Information sessions</p>	<p>10 presentations by GM and Mayor made to community groups or organisations.</p> <p>Seven community information sessions were held. These included 2 Community Opinion Group Meetings and 5 Council Café / Information Sessions.</p>
<p>Online presentation</p>	<p>An online presentation by the GM, explaining the process and encouraging participation, was added to Council's website and to Council's Facebook page.</p>
<p>Staff and Councillor Communication</p>	<p>Councillor Workshops were held on a number of occasions to discuss the budget and proposed Special Rate Variation.</p> <p>An all-staff breakfast barbecue was held on 27 April 2023. All staff received an email from the GM on 10 May 2023 following the Council Meeting which resolved to consult the community on the proposed SRV. Follow-up meetings held on 8 June 2023 to provide an update on the process.</p>

4. How did we engage?

Online, email and other submissions

Launched 5 June 2023

Action

Council offered an online submission form on the website for ratepayers and residents. The form was promoted through social media, Council's website, Council Catch Up newsletter (2,159 subscribers). In addition, residents were invited to make submissions via email or post. A QR Code was provided to attendees at SRV engagement events with a link directly to the SRV page, allowing ratepayers to make a submission.

**PROPOSED
SPECIAL RATE
VARIATION**

SCAN THE QR CODE TO

Watch a video presentation



Learn more and make a submission

griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

**Contact Us
1300 176 077**

Outcome

Total submissions including received by online form, email/letter: 157 – refer to Appendix 2 - Submissions Received.

- 69% of respondents said they were not in favour of the SRV
- 16% were in favour of the SRV
- 15% made no comment/not clear.

Of the 141 submissions received online (via Paperform), 96% were ratepayers to Griffith City Council.

Of the 141 submissions received online (via Paperform) 92% indicated they had received/read information about the SRV.

A summary of the key themes in the submissions follows:

- Affordability of proposed rate increase / cost of living / capacity to pay / user pays system for facilities
- Smaller increase / fewer years plus / supported by reduced operational costs and revenue streams / alternatives in combination with the SRV
- Do not want to cut services / lose jobs
- Reduce Councillor numbers and Councillor costs
- Review current spending / services, Council efficiency, cost saving initiatives/ streamline processes
- Review senior positions and staffing levels
- Concentrate on essential infrastructure projects
- Concerns about the new Art Gallery proposal
- Affordability of Housing (higher rents).

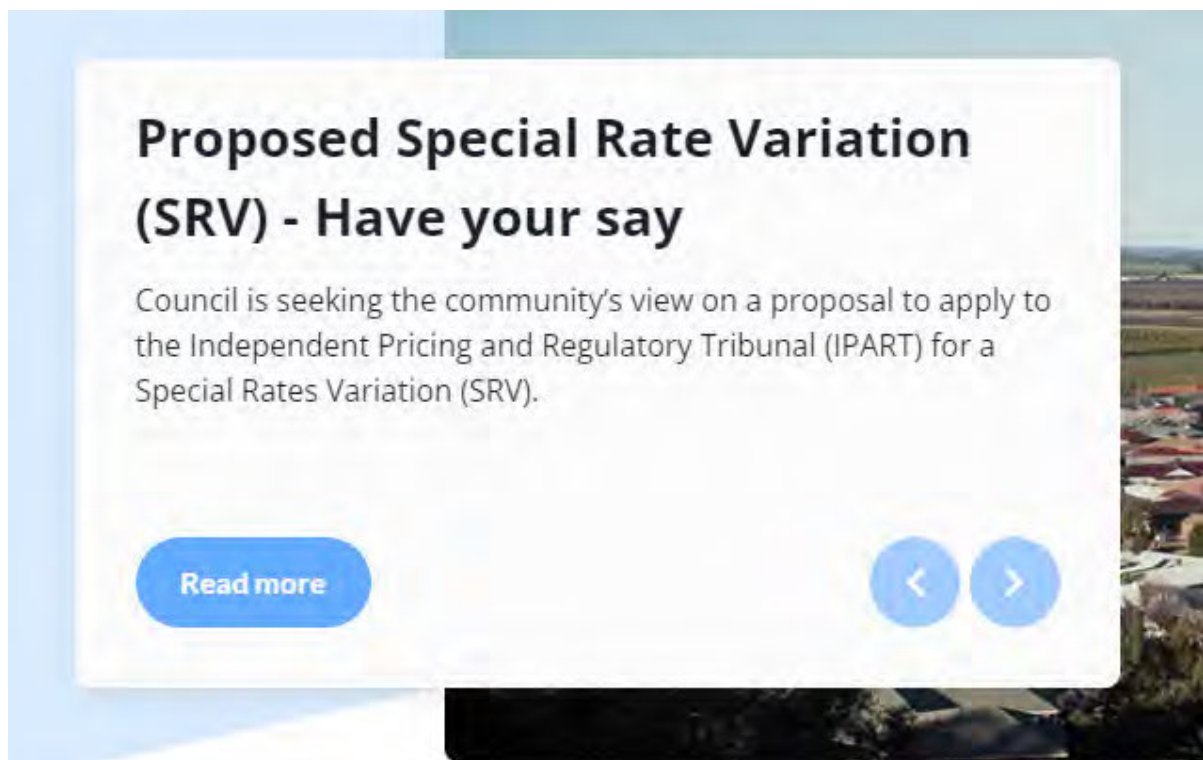
Website

Launched 5 June 2023

Action

A dedicated SRV page was launched on 5 June 2023 with a slider directly linking from Council's homepage. The SRV page served to provide information throughout the SRV consultation process and following the community engagement period. The page was updated throughout the community engagement period in response to questions raised.

A Rates Estimator was made available on the webpage to assist ratepayers to estimate the impact of the proposed SRV on their rates.



Outcome

During the community engagement period, Council's SRV page received 1,604 views.

[Home](#) » [Latest News](#) » [Special Rate Variation](#)

Special Rate Variation



BACKGROUND

At the Council Meeting on Tuesday, 9 May 2023, Council gave in principle endorsement for an application to be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to be implemented over three years commencing 2024/25 financial year. You can view the [Council report here](#) and our [IP&R documents including the Long Term Financial Plan](#)

What is a Special Rate Variation (SRV) and Rate-Pegging?

Rates increase each year in line with an amount set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). This amount is calculated every year and is called the 'rate peg'.

For the 2023/24 financial year the rate peg applied to Griffith City Council, will be 3.7%.

If a council's rate revenue is not sufficient to maintain service levels or undertake capital works, it can apply to IPART to increase overall rate revenue by more than the rate peg. This is known as a Special Rate Variation (SRV). In order to apply for an SRV, councils must demonstrate to the community and IPART that they need the money and have implemented improvements to be more efficient and productive. Council has already identified \$1M in savings annually.

Why do we need a Special Rate Variation (SRV)?

The rate increases set by IPART have not kept pace with cost escalations faced by Council in providing services to our community. Cost shifting from other levels of government and diminishing value of annual operating grants over time have also contributed significantly to the pressure on Council's financial position.

The additional funds received through the SRV will increase the money available to address and correct Council's operating position and enable sufficient funds to be available for renewal and maintenance of assets and the continuation of current service levels.

What will happen if the SRV is not implemented?

Council will have to look at options to reduce the levels of services to the community. Examples of community facilities that may have reduced hours are the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

What level of rate rise is Council considering?

The proposed rate increase is based on Council's funding requirements.

Griffith City Council is seeking the community's view on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV) by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

How much will rates change?

Average Rates - Residential				
	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
With SRV 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$1,106	\$1,222	\$1,350	\$1,492
No SRV assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$1,106	\$1,139	\$1,173	\$1,209

Average Rates - Business				
	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
With SRV 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$2,968	\$3,280	\$3,624	\$4,005
No SRV assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$2,968	\$3,057	\$3,149	\$3,243

Average Rates - Farmland				
	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
With SRV 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$4,184	\$4,623	\$5,109	\$5,645
No SRV assumed 3% Rate Peg	\$4,184	\$4,310	\$4,439	\$4,572

Based on Office of Local Government Performance comparative data FY2020/21 - average Griffith

[Special Rate Variation Estimator here](#) Ratepayers are encouraged to assess the impact of the SRV on their respective properties by using this estimator.

How can I have my say?

Griffith City Council values community input and actively seeks feedback during the consultation period for the Special Rate Variation. (Up until Thursday 31 August 2023)

You can email admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au or write to PO Box 485 Griffith, 2680. You can also make an online submission using the button below.

[Make a submission here](#)

Following extensive community consultation, should Council resolve to apply to IPART for a Special Rate Variation, members of the public will also be able to make a submission to IPART.

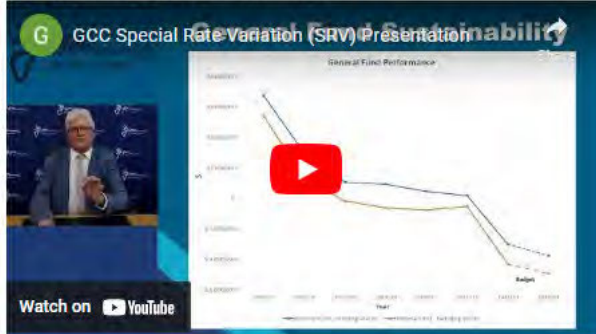
We will have community information sessions:

Date	Time	Location	Event
6 June 2023	7pm	Yoogali Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
15 June 2023	10am-12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
27 June 2023	5pm	Council Chambers	Information session
6 July 2023	11.30am-1.30pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session
20 July 2023	10am-12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
1 August 2023	7pm	Hanwood Sports Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
4 August 2023	10am-12pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session

When will the decision on the Special Rate Variation be made?

The decision on the Special Rate Variation will be made by Griffith City Council after intensive community consultation has been undertaken. Following the public consultation period, a further report will be considered by Council in October 2023. At that meeting Council will make a final decision as to whether it will apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation. If IPART approves the application, the first stage of the increase will be effective in July 2024.

[View the online SRV Presentation here](#)



[View the SRV Flyer here](#)

[View our latest PowerPoint presentation here](#)

TIS National interperative service

TIS National is a - phone 131450 - language service.

SRV - Frequently Asked Questions from community consultation

1. The Cashflow statement shows that Council will have around \$190M in cash in June 2033. Why is this SRV necessary if Council has so much money in the bank?

Council must restrict funds to the water, sewer and waste areas. It is a legal requirement to do this. Council does not include capital works in the Long-Term Financial Plan for major projects in the outer years as they are not within the Councillors Delivery Program period (ie; 4 years). Council must ensure that it has sufficient cash reserves to fund major future renewal of existing infrastructure and growth for new development.

2. Does this SRV guarantee no future SRVs?

This SRV will allow Council to become financially sustainable in the General Fund to maintain existing services and provide the capability to grow. Future regulation changes, additional State Government cost shifting and future capital works programs as determined by Councillors may influence future SRVs.

3. Will water and other charges increase?

Yes.

4. What services will be impacted?

If a SRV is approved the current level of services will be maintained. If a SRV is not approved, examples of community facilities that may have reduced hours are the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

5. Is the SRV increase permanent or will it wind back after 3 years?

The proposed SRV will increase the rate base annually over the 3-year period of implementation with the third year being 2026/27.

The annual rate base as from the 2027/28 year will increase by the annual rate pegging limit as set by IPART.

6. With the cost of living going up so much now, how can we be expected to manage this increase?

The proposed SRV is not a decision taken lightly. Council recognises the delicate balance between providing essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and ensuring affordability for our residents. Council offers the Pensioner Rebate Scheme, which financially supports this important group in our community. Council also has a Hardship Policy to accommodate the special needs of those unable to pay their rates in full on time. The increase is proposed to come into effect in July 2024 and staged over a 3-year period, recognising the impact and in an effort to minimise this impact as much as possible whilst ensuring Council's financial sustainability.

7. What is Council doing to remediate the situation?

Regardless of whether Council resolves to apply for an SRV, Council's Senior Management Team is committed to finding \$1 million in savings each year starting from 2024/25. This will be achieved by identifying operational efficiencies. Councillors are also being encouraged to identify possible alternate revenue sources and potential saving opportunities.

8. What do land valuations have to do with my rates?

The NSW Valuer General's Office is responsible for the valuation of all rateable land in NSW and is revalued every three (3) years. Rateable land within the Griffith LGA was revalued during 2022 and these values were provided to Council. Council calculates rates using the land value determined for your property plus a base amount.

The land revaluation process does not provide any additional rate revenue for Council. The total increase in rate revenue to Council is capped on an annual basis by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). For the 2023/24 year the rate cap increase is 3.7% above 2022/23 level (ie approx. \$700,000).

Changes to land values will impact the amount of rates payable for individual properties but the total increase in rate income received by Council for the year does not exceed the rate cap as determined by IPART.

Whilst we acknowledge that some individual assessments have moved by much greater than the 3.7% rate pegging figure, many have also increased by less and in fact some assessments have reduced in line with new land valuations.

9. What is the alternative to the proposed rate increases?

Without a Special Rate Variation, Council would need to consider reducing the levels of services provided to the community to save costs. Examples of services that may be impacted include the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

READ NEWS AND UPDATES HERE:

2 June 2023 Council seeks support for proposed SRV

8 June 2023 COG Meeting kicks off community consultation

22 June 2023 SRV consultation continues

13 July 2023 Have you had your say on the proposed SRV yet?

25 July 2023 Rates estimator now available

8 August 2023 Council's Special Rate Variation Consultation Progress Update

21 August 2023 Time running out for residents to have their say on Council's proposed SRV

1 September 2023 Council's SRV next steps

For more information on Special Rate Variations visit the [IPART website here](#)

[Home](#) » [Special Rate Variation \(SRV\) - Rates Estimator](#)

Special Rate Variation (SRV) - Rates Estimator



RATE NOTICE Tax Invoice
Assessment No. [REDACTED]

1 Benerebahn Street, Griffith NSW 2680
PO Box 485, Griffith NSW 2680
Phone: 1300 176 077
Email: admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au

ABN 61 274 100 792

Notice is hereby given that the undermentioned land has been rated by the Griffith City Council as shown hereunder, under the Section 500/561 of the Local Government Act, 1993.

If address is incorrect please advise council in writing

Enter Your Assessment Number

Disclaimer

Please note this Rates Estimator provides an estimate only and is subject to change due to the Valuer General assessment of your land value. This Rates Estimator does not include Sewer, Water, Waste, Recycling or Stormwater charges. This estimate cannot be substituted for actual Rates Notices and Council cannot be held liable for an incorrect estimate. The information is provided in good faith, however Council makes no statements, representations or warranties about the information provided by the Rates Estimator.

Flyer to ratepayers

14 July 2023 quarterly notice

Action

An SRV flyer was sent to all ratepayers informing them of Council’s intention to apply for an SRV and encouraged them to have their say. The flyer included the following information:

- The SRV options being proposed and SRV timeline
- Information on how ratepayers could provide feedback
- Average residential yearly rates under the SRV
- Overview of what general rates pay for.

Outcome

A total of 6,861 hard copy flyers were mailed and 3,219 were sent to e-notice customers via email. The flyer was also handed out at all of the information sessions and meetings and was available to pick up from Council’s customer service area and the library.

Securing our future
A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION WILL ENSURE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

WHAT'S PROPOSED
Council is seeking the community's view on a proposal to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) starting in July 2024. An application would be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. The base rate increase would be retained permanently. The proposed rate rise will only affect the Ordinary Rate. Waste, recycling, sewerage, stormwater and water charges will not be affected by the SRV.

WHY DO WE NEED A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION?
Without a SRV rate rise Council will not be financially sustainable and will be forced to significantly cut services to make annual savings of more than \$4 million. Senior Staff are also implementing an additional \$1 million worth of cost saving initiatives. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 9 May 2023 Council gave in principle support to apply for an SRV. This does not mean a final decision has been made. Council is consulting with the community to inform of the proposed SRV to maintain existing service levels or explain how services may be impacted if no SRV is implemented.

WHAT YOUR ORDINARY RATES PAY FOR
Council uses your ordinary rates to maintain:

- 1,245 km of sealed & unsealed roads
- 100 Parks
- 7 Major Sporting Grounds
- 41 Playgrounds
- 2 Cemeteries
- Community facilities including the Library, Theatre, Art Gallery, Aquatic Centre, Stadium, Pioneer Park, Airport, Saleyards and Landfill.
- Community services such as street sweeping, footpaths, street lighting, Scenic Hill, events and sponsorships

TWO OPTIONS
We have two options to show you what it will look like with or without the proposed SRV.

OPTION 1 - WITH SRV
Maintain current services
Increase rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25 with a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. This option, plus \$1 million in cost saving initiatives maintains current services and asset renewal. Community facilities, footpaths and roads will continue to be maintained.

OPTION 2 - WITHOUT SRV
Significant reduction of services
Retain the IPART rate pegging limit only. This option, plus \$1 million in cost saving initiatives, will not fully fund current Council operations and will require a plan to find additional savings of \$4 million each year by cutting services. Examples of community facilities that may have reduced hours are the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

HOW WILL A SRV RATE RISE AFFECT ME?
Griffith has three different rating categories, Residential, Farmland and Business and one sub-rating category which is Farmland - Irrigable. The value of the SRV increase will depend on the category and value of your property. Council's website provides more information as well as other examples of average increases. To learn more or complete a submission form go to griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. This webpage will be regularly updated and will include a rates estimator.

Average Rates - Residential			
2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
3.7% Rate Peg	10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg	10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg	10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg
\$1,106	\$1,222	\$1,350	\$1,492

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- June 2023 IPART notified of intent to apply
- Jun-Aug 2023 Community engagement
- October 2023 Decision by Council to apply or not apply for SRV
- May 2024 IPART determination
- July 2024 If approved, SRV commences
- July 2024 If SRV not implemented, service cuts commence

Contact: admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au, www.griffith.nsw.gov.au, 1300 176 077

Mailing list

Various dates throughout

Action

Over 2,000 people received emails throughout the community engagement period encouraging them to attend meetings and information sessions and to have their say.

These included separate SRV specific emails as well as Council Catch Up e-newsletters containing SRV articles and advertisements.



Council is inviting you to attend a series of Community Consultation sessions for the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV)

Griffith City Council is seeking the community's views on whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a SRV by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%).
If you can't attend any of the consultation sessions below, please visit the [SRV webpage](#) to find out more and make a submission.

Date	Time	Location	Event
6 June 2023	7pm	Yoogali Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
15 June 2023	10am – 12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
29 June 2023	5pm	Griffith City Library	Information session
6 July 2023	11.30am - 1.30pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session
20 July 2023	10am – 12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
1 August 2023	7pm	Hanwood Catholic Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
4 August 2023	10am – 12pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session



Have you had your say on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV)?
Griffith City Council is seeking the community's views on whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a SRV by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%).


A series of Community Consultation Sessions have already been held.

Upcoming information sessions and meetings:

- Tuesday 1 August 2023 - Hanwood Catholic Club - 7pm
- Friday 4 August 2023 - Griffith Central Plaza - 10am to 12pm

If you can't attend any of these face-to-face consultation sessions, please visit the [SRV webpage](#) to find out more and make a submission.

DESKTOP MOBILE TEXT



Have you had your say on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV)?

Griffith City Council is seeking the community's view on whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a SRV by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%).

Time is running out to have your say, with the consultation period ending **4pm Thursday 31 August 2023.**

Your input is important to us!

Please visit the [SRV webpage](#) to find out more or make a submission.

Media releases

Nine issued throughout consultation period

Action

Media releases were distributed on 17 May 2023, 2 June 2023, 8 June 2023, 22 June 2023, 13 July 2023, 25 July 2023, 8 August 2023, 21 August 2023 and 1 September 2023.

These media releases were to inform the media and community of community consultation for the proposed SRV. Further media releases were distributed advising key dates for meetings, encouraging submissions, the launch of the rates estimator and an update on the progress of the consultation.

Outcome

The media releases were published on Council's website and social media with several news agencies following up on the media releases.

17 May 2023



MEDIA RELEASE
Griffith City Council

Wednesday 17 May 2023

RESIDENTS INVITED TO NEXT COMMUNITY OPINION GROUP (COG) MEETING

Griffith City Council's next Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 June 2023 at the Yeogall Club from 7pm.

The primary focus of this COG Meeting will be to facilitate discussions about the Draft Budget. By moving the meeting from early May to June, Councillors and senior staff will have ample time to provide a comprehensive explanation of the 2023/24 budget.

While residents are encouraged to submit their own agenda items and ask questions during the meeting, it is particularly important that information regarding the budget is shared at this gathering, according to Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran.

"Councillors welcome the opportunity to engage with community members outside the confines of the Ordinary Council Meeting framework," said Cr Curran.

"I'm pleased with the way residents have been attending these meetings to bring issues to our attention. For this June meeting we have prepared a budget presentation and will also be touching on the proposed Special Rate Variation to help people understand what this means and the process involved."

The COG Meetings demonstrate Council's ongoing commitment to open and transparent consultation with the Community.

The COG Meeting allows community matters of concern to be documented and if appropriate, championed by a Councillor through a Notice of Motion procedure to Council for formal consideration.

To have your items added to the COG Meeting Agenda, head to <https://forms.griffith.nsw.gov.au/Forms/COGS> and fill out the submission form by 4pm on Thursday 25 May 2023.

The proposed COG Meeting dates and locations for the remainder of the year are as follows:
Harwood - Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at the Harwood Catholic Club, 7pm, and Yenda - Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at the Yenda Diggers Club, 7pm. These meetings offer further opportunities for community engagement and collaboration.

ends

Media Information:
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www.facebook.com/griffithcitycouncil

2 June 2023



Friday 2 June 2023

GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL SEEKS SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Griffith City Council is seeking support from the community to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to be implemented over a three-year period, starting from the 2024/25 financial year.

Council proposes to submit an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), an independent body that determines the maximum which councils across NSW can increase rates.

The proposed SRV seeks a 10.5% increase each year for three years, inclusive of the assumed rate pegging increase of 3.0%. This equates to a cumulative increase of 34.92% over three years.

Mayor Doug Curran said these increases are necessary to sustain the current level of services provided by Council.

"To secure the future of our community and the services and assets that we cherish and to ensure our Council is ready for the future, we need to engage our community with very mature discussions about why we need this Special Rate Variation (SRV)," Councillor Curran said.

"I ask that you take the time to read all of the information that we will be distributing, attend meetings and briefings or watch our online presentation, ask questions, seek to understand and provide your feedback.

"As well as the sessions listed below, we are meeting with service groups, committees and organisations in our community to have these discussions, if you would like us to do so for your group please reach out and let us know."

During the Council Meeting on Tuesday, 9 May 2023, Council provisionally endorsed the application to IPART.

To learn more about the proposed SRV and express your opinion, please visit www.griffith.nsw.gov.au.

Residents are encouraged to attend the following sessions:

- Tuesday, 6 June 2023, 7pm: Yoogali Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Thursday, 15 June 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 22 June 2023, 5pm: Griffith City Library
- Thursday, 6 July 2023, 11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm: Hanwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting

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- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.

Important key points to note:

- The SRV will only be applied to ordinary rates
- Following the public consultation period, Council will consider a subsequent report in October 2023. At that meeting, Council will make a final decision on whether to apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation.

ends

8 June 2023



Thursday, 8 June 2023

COG MEETING KICKS OFF SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION

Griffith City Council's Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting on Tuesday night, kicked off consultation for the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV), with almost 40 people attending alongside Councillors and Senior Council staff.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran said he was pleased to see residents attend to find out about the proposed SRV and have other agenda items addressed.

"The first COG meeting was very interactive and I truly appreciated the members of the community, our Councillors and senior management attending Yoogali for the session. We answered quite a few questions on the evening about the ramifications of the SRV and took some on notice, there was obviously quite a bit of interest which is great to see," Councillor Curran said.

"Over the next three months we will be doing our best to inform all of our ratepayers and hear their views. If you can't get along to one of the sessions listed below, I ask that you head to our webpage www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/sr/haveyoursay. You will find lots of information and an option to make a submission.

"We are also meeting with service groups, committees and organisations in our community to have SRV discussions, if you would like us to do so for your group please reach out and let us know."

A number of other concerns were also highlighted at Tuesday night's COG meeting at the Yoogali Club. Residents are reminded that the best way to have matters addressed at COG Meetings is to lodge an agenda item prior to the meeting.

SRV Community Consultation Sessions:

- Thursday, 15 June 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 22 June 2023, 5pm: Griffith City Library
- Thursday, 6 July 2023, 11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm: Hanwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.

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22 June 2023



Thursday 22 June 2023

COUNCIL CONTINUES SPECIAL RATE VARIATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Griffith City Council continues to seek the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

An application would be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. The base rate increase would be retained permanently.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran is encouraging all ratepayers to get involved in the process.

"We have held two information sessions so far plus the General Manager and I have also addressed the Griffith Business Chamber and USA," Councillor Curran said.

"We've got five more community sessions where we will be informing our ratepayers and taking feedback. If you can't get along to one of the sessions listed below, I ask that you head to our webpage www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. You will find lots of information and an option to make a submission.

SRV Community Consultation Sessions:

- Tuesday, 27 June 2023, 5pm: Council Chambers
- Thursday, 5 July 2023, 11:30am - 1:30pm: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm: Harwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.

ends

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13 July 2023



Thursday 13 July 2023

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR SAY ON THE PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION YET?

Griffith City Council wants to hear the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

Following extensive community consultation (June to August) Councillors will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%.

So far, Council has held four general public information sessions and eight meetings with community organisations including the Griffith Business Chamber, USA, Rotary Club, Griffith Ladies Probus, Yanda Progress Association & Yanda Rotary, Griffith Lions Club and NSW Farmers Association.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran said the aim was to reach as many ratepayers as possible.

"We are doing our very best to engage as many community members as possible through this difficult process. I am proud to be part of a community that cares about each other and about the services our Council delivers," Councillor Curran said.

"We still have three community sessions to go. If you are keen to see a detailed presentation, I'd urge you to get along to the Harwood Catholic Club on Tuesday 1 August 2023.

"If you can't make that meeting, you can still talk to staff and Councillors at one of our stalls. It is important that we explain why we are considering this SRV and hear what our community thinks."

"If you are unable to get to any of the face-to-face sessions head to www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. You will find lots of information including a video presentation and an option to make a submission. We will also have a Rates Estimator up and running in the next few weeks."

Upcoming SRV Community Consultation Sessions:

- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm: Harwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central - Council Cafe

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ends

those unable to pay their rates in full on time. The increase is proposed to come into effect in July 2024 and staged over a 3-year period, recognising the impact and in an effort to minimise this impact as much as possible whilst ensuring Council's financial sustainability.

Q. What is Council doing to remediate the situation?

Regardless of whether Council resolves to apply for an SRV, Council's Senior Management Team is committed to finding \$1 million in savings each year starting from 2024/25. This will be achieved by identifying operational efficiencies. Councillors are also being encouraged to identify possible alternate revenue sources and potential saving opportunities.

Q. What do land valuations have to do with my rates?

The NSW Valuer General's Office is responsible for the valuation of all rateable land in NSW and is revalued every three (3) years. Rateable land within the Griffith LGA was revalued during 2022 and these values were provided to Council. Council calculates rates using the land value determined for your property plus a base amount.

The land revaluation process does not provide any additional rate revenue for Council. The total increase in rate revenue to Council is capped on an annual basis by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). For the 2023/24 year the rate cap increase is 3.7% above 2022/23 level (ie approx. \$700,000).

Changes to land values will impact the amount of rates payable for individual properties but the total increase in rate income received by Council for the year does not exceed the rate cap as determined by IPART.

Whilst we acknowledge that some individual assessments have moved by much greater than the 3.7% rate pegging figure, many have also increased by less and in fact some assessments have reduced in line with new valuations.

Q. What is the alternative to the proposed rate increases?

Without a Special Rate Variation, Council would need to consider reducing the levels of services provided to the community to save costs. Examples of services that may be impacted include the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

Griffith City Council values community input and encourages feedback during the consultation period up until 4pm on Thursday 31 August 2023. Residents can submit their views via email to admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au, by mail to PO Box 425 Griffith 2682, or through an online submission.

Following the comprehensive community consultation, Council will consider a further report in October 2023, during which a final decision will be made on whether to apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation. If IPART approves the application, the first stage of the increase will take effect in July 2024.

For more information and updates, residents are urged to visit Council's website at griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay or follow Council's Facebook page.

Council sincerely appreciates the community's engagement and looks forward to reaching a decision that best serves the interests of all residents.

25 July 2023



Tuesday 25 July 2023

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION ESTIMATOR NOW AVAILABLE

Griffith City Council has launched a Rates Estimator to allow ratepayers to assess the impact of the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) on their respective rates.

The SRV Estimator is available on Council's website: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvnhsurveyoraustrv

The SRV Rates Estimator has been added to help ratepayers better understand how the increase will impact them as Council continues to ask for the community's view on a proposed SRV to ensure long term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

Simply enter your Assessment Number, which can be found in the top right hand corner of your rates notice to see the estimated rates based on proposed SRV (10.5% including 3% Rate Peg) each year for three years commencing 2024/25.

Following extensive community consultation (June to August) Council will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a proposal to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.5%. The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

Please note, the Rates Estimator shows Ordinary Rates, it does not include Sewer, Water, Waste, Recycling or Stormwater charges.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran said: "I encourage all ratepayers to use the Estimator in an effort to overcome a lot of misinformation circulating. If you have any questions after using the Estimator, please feel free to contact myself or the GM and we'll do our best to answer your questions."

Ratepayers are being urged to attend upcoming SRV Community Consultation Sessions:

- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm, Harwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 11am - 12noon, Griffith Central Council Cafe

• In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.

Residents are urged to have their say up until 31 August 2023 when the consultation period closes. Council appreciates the input received so far, with some constructive discussions had.

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8 August 2023



Tuesday 8 August 2023

COUNCIL'S SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION PROGRESS UPDATE

Griffith City Council is pleased to announce that face-to-face community consultation regarding the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) has concluded.

Council would like to thank the community for actively participating and providing valuable feedback during the process so far.

This phase of the consultation has been highly successful, with a significant number of community members attending various meetings held across the Local Government Area. These gatherings included COG Meetings at Yeogali and Harwood, as well as five Council Cafes/information sessions at different locations in Griffith. Additionally, Council representatives delivered presentations at several community group meetings, fostering engagement with organisations such as the Griffith Business Chamber, USA, Rotary Club Avanti, Griffith Rotary, Griffith East Rotary, Griffith Ladies Probus, Yenda Progress Association, Yenda Rotary, Griffith Lions Club, NSW Farmers Association, and Griffith business leaders.

While the formal presentations and information sessions have concluded, Council emphasises that online feedback submissions remain open until August 31 2023. Residents are strongly encouraged to submit their feedback to ensure that all relevant information is available to Councillors for an informed decision on whether or not to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the proposed Special Rate Variation.

The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.5%). The increased revenue would be permanently retained in Council's rate base.

To assist ratepayers in understanding the potential impact of the SRV on their properties, Council offers a Special Rate Variation Estimator on its website.

More than 100 submissions have been received so far, with Council endeavouring to answer all questions submitted on the SRV page on the website. Many questions and a significant proportion of community comments in general have been concerned with the cost of living. This and some of the other frequently asked questions are addressed below.

Q. With the cost of living going up so much now, how can we be expected to manage this increase?

The proposed SRV is not a decision taken lightly. Council recognises the delicate balance between providing essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and ensuring affordability for our residents. Council offers the Pensioner Rebate Scheme, which financially supports this important group in our community. Council also has a Hardship Policy to accommodate the special needs of

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21 August 2023



**MEDIA
RELEASE**
Griffith City Council

Monday, 21 August 2023

LAST DAYS TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Time is running out for Griffith residents to have their say on Griffith City Council's proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

Submissions close at 4pm on Thursday 31 August 2023. You can provide your feedback and find information about the proposed SRV: griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran is urging residents to visit the SRV Have Your Say page and use the Rate Estimator to find out how the increase will impact them.

"It's vitally important that we hear from our community," Councillor Curran said.

"I strongly encourage people to submit their feedback to ensure that all relevant information is available to Councillors for an informed decision on whether or not to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the proposed Special Rate Variation.

"We've already received more than 100 submissions and I thank each and every one of those residents who have taken the time.

"Council appreciates the community's engagement and looks forward to reaching a decision that best serves the interests of all residents."

Following the public consultation period, a further report will be considered by Council on Tuesday 24 October 2023. At that meeting Council will make a final decision as to whether it will apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation. If IPART approves the application, the first stage of the increase will be effective in July 2024.

Residents can also submit their views via email to admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au, by mail to PO Box 485 Griffith, 2680, or through the online submission griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay.

ends

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1 September 2023



**MEDIA
RELEASE**
Griffith City Council

Friday 1 September 2023

COUNCIL'S SPECIAL RATE VARIATION NEXT STEPS

Community consultation for Griffith City Council's proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) has concluded.

Council would like to thank all those who attended meetings or information sessions over the past three months as part of community consultation.

The SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%).

During consultation a significant number of community members attended various meetings held across the Local Government Area. These included COG Meetings at Yeogali and Harwood, as well as five Council Cafes/Information sessions at different locations in Griffith.

Council representatives also delivered presentations at community group meetings, with organisations such as the Griffith Business Chamber, USA, Rotary Club Avanti, Griffith Rotary, Griffith East Rotary, Griffith Ladies Probus, Yenda Progress Association, Yenda Rotary, Griffith Lions Club, NSW Farmers Association, and Griffith business leaders.

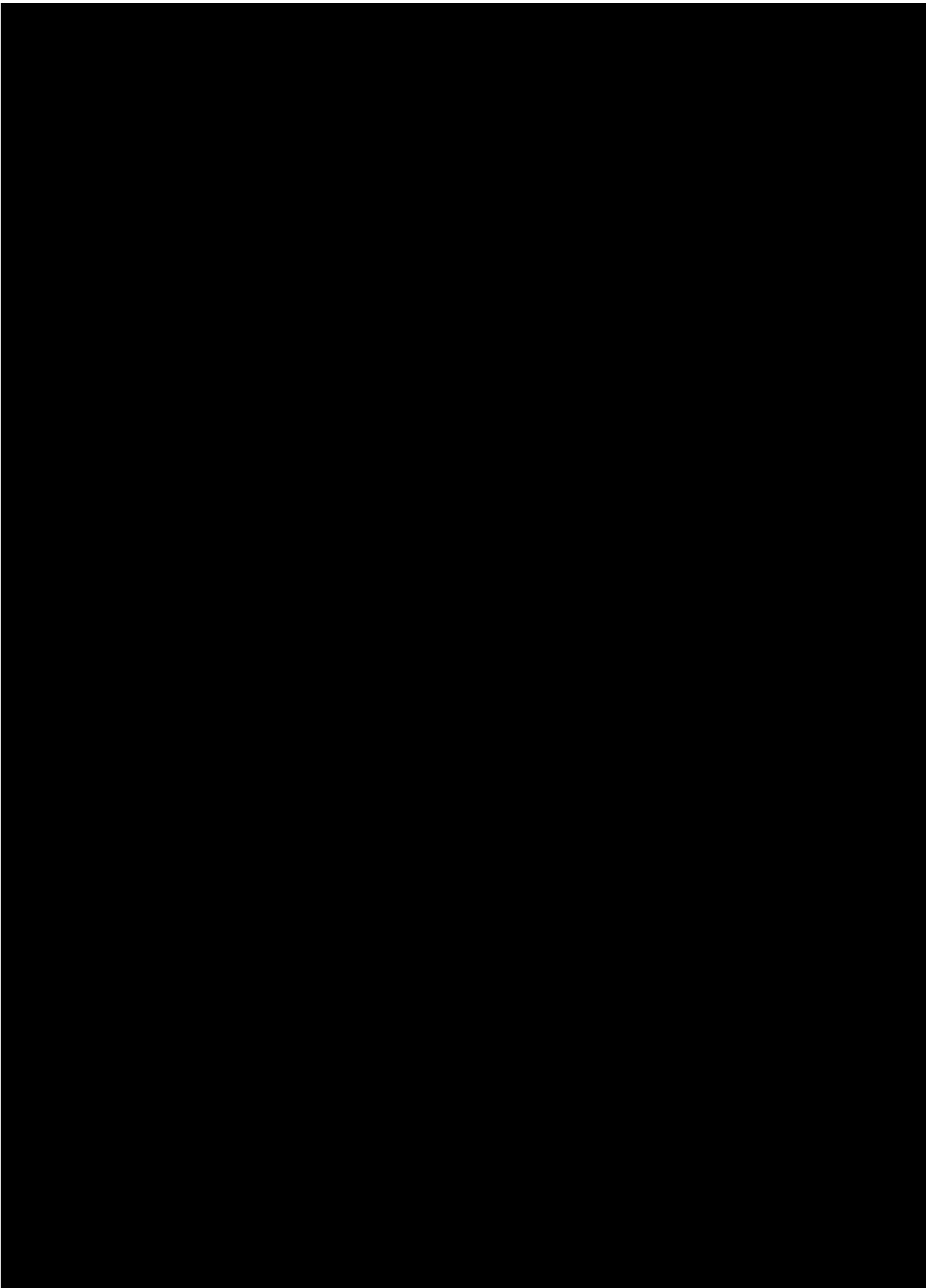
Submissions closed at 4pm on Thursday August 31 2023, with over 150 received.

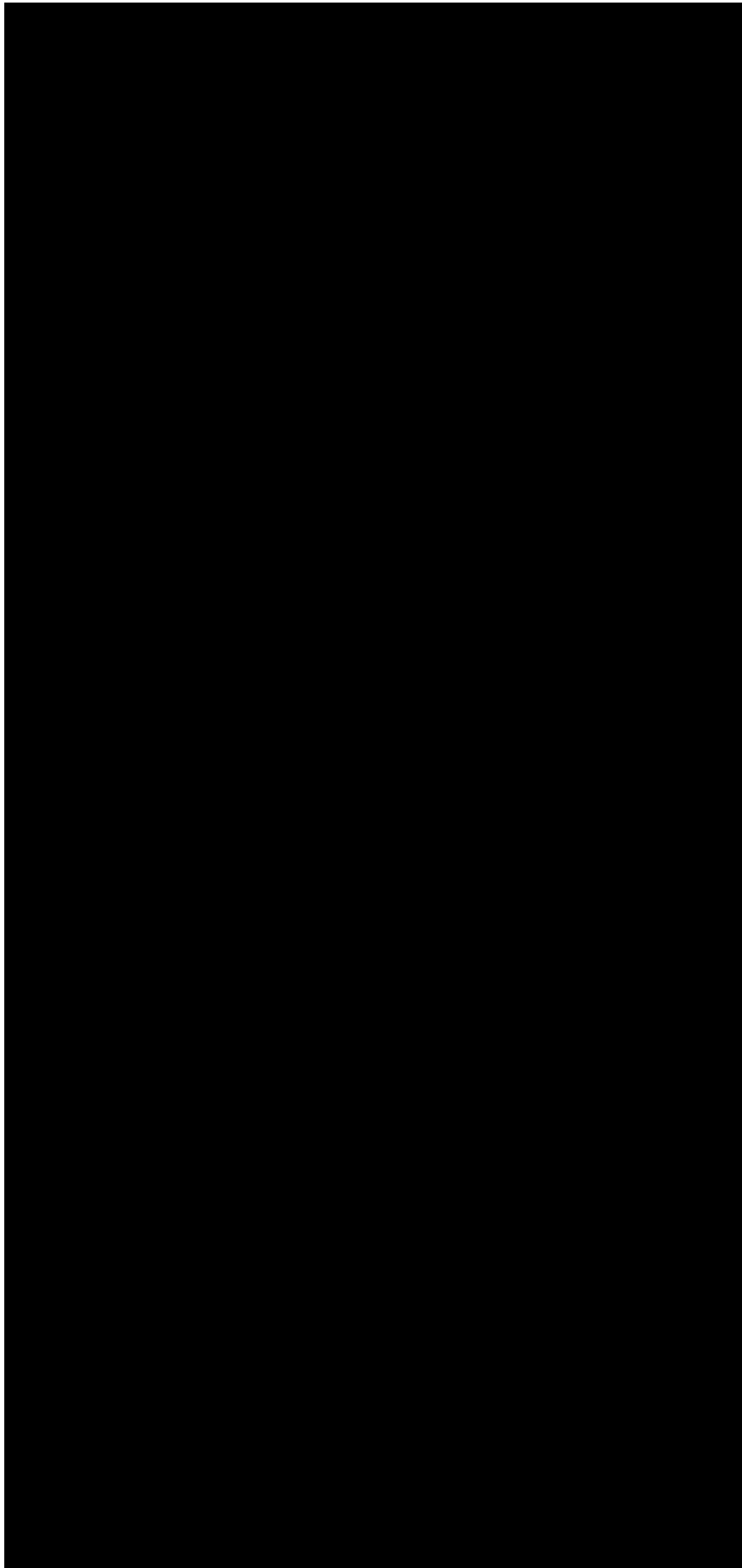
The community feedback received will now form part of a report to be presented to Council at a meeting on Tuesday 24 October 2023.

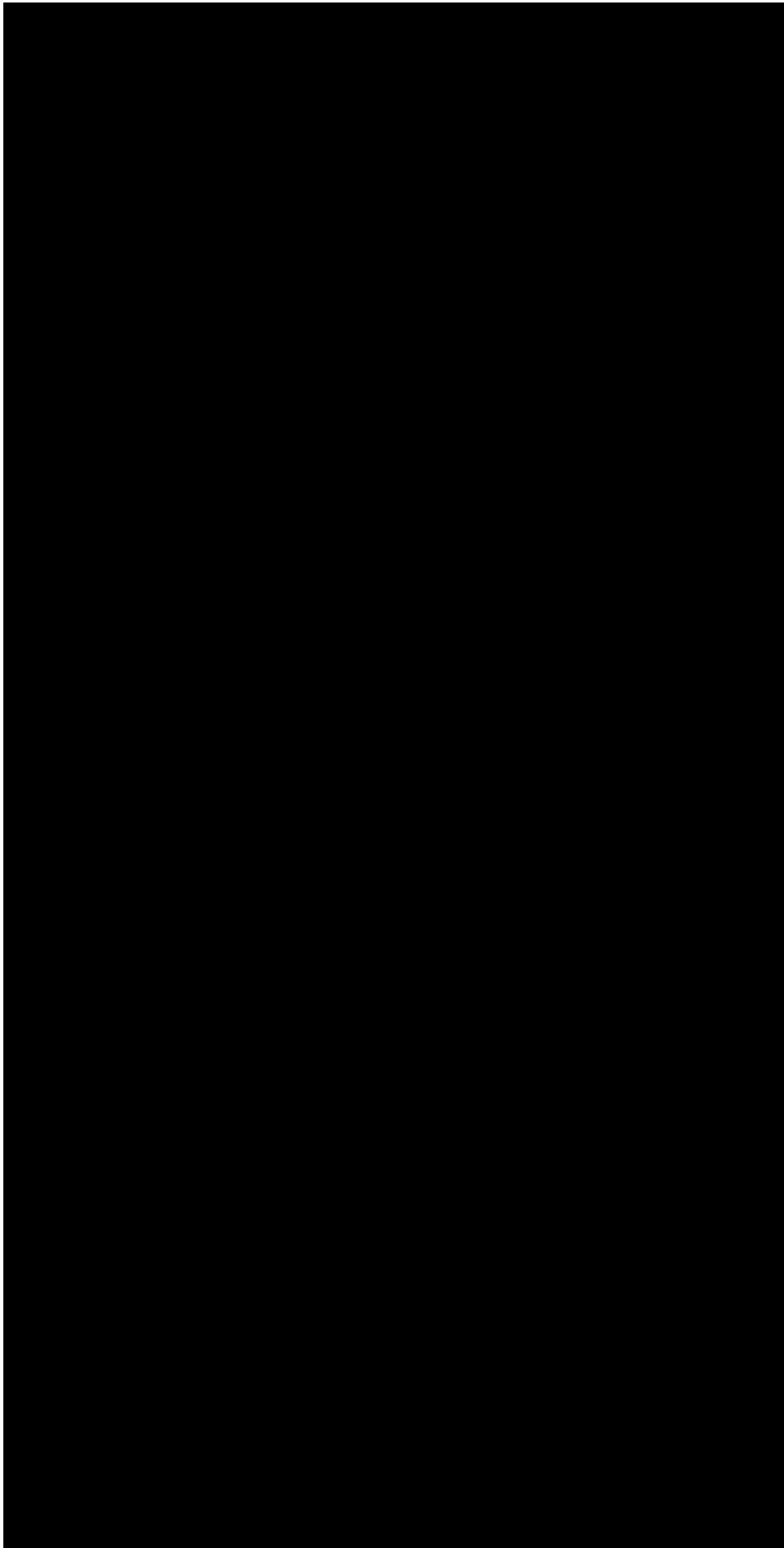
At this meeting Councillors will consider whether or not to advise IPART that an application will be prepared and submitted to request a Special Rate Variation.

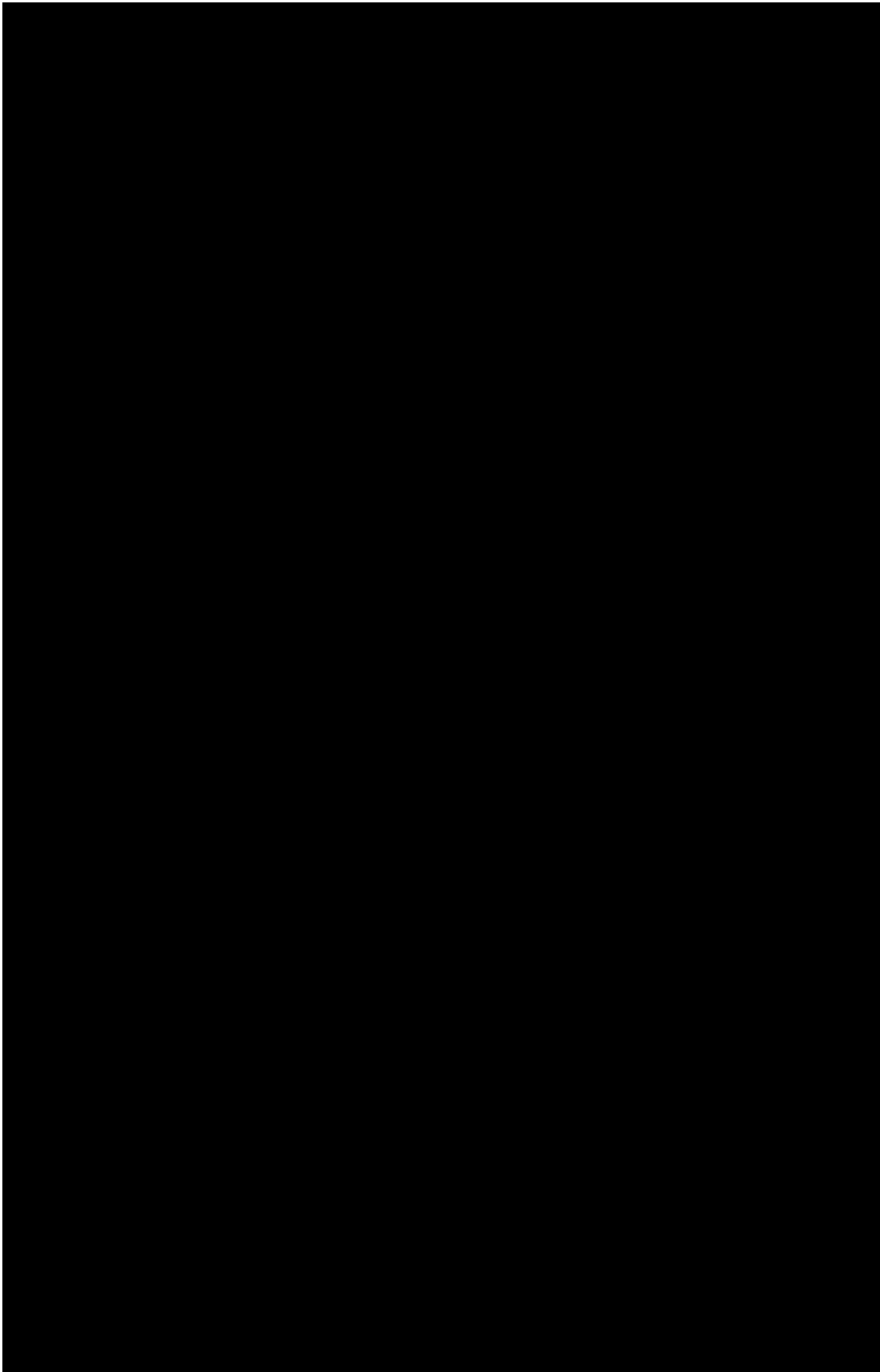
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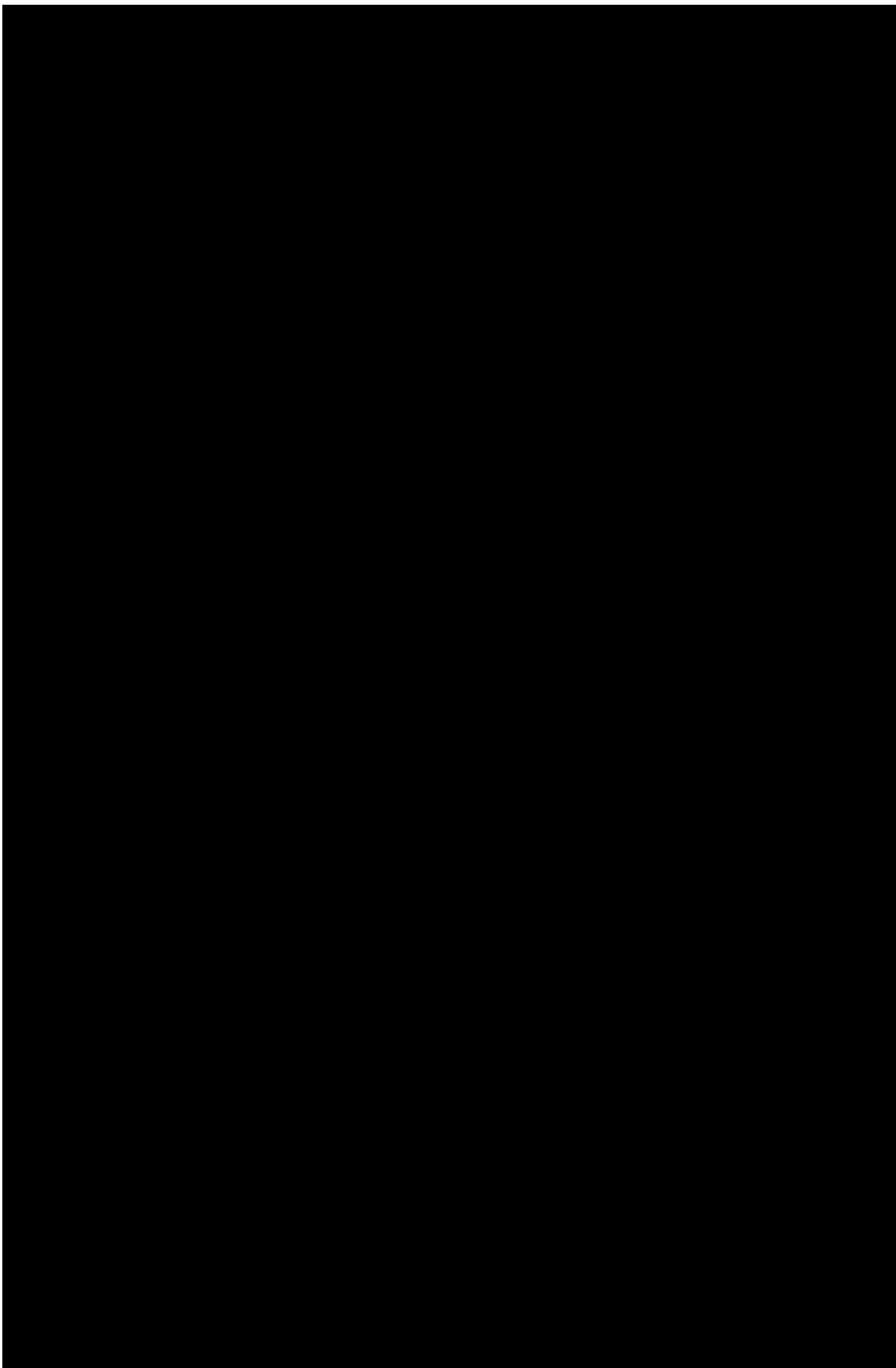
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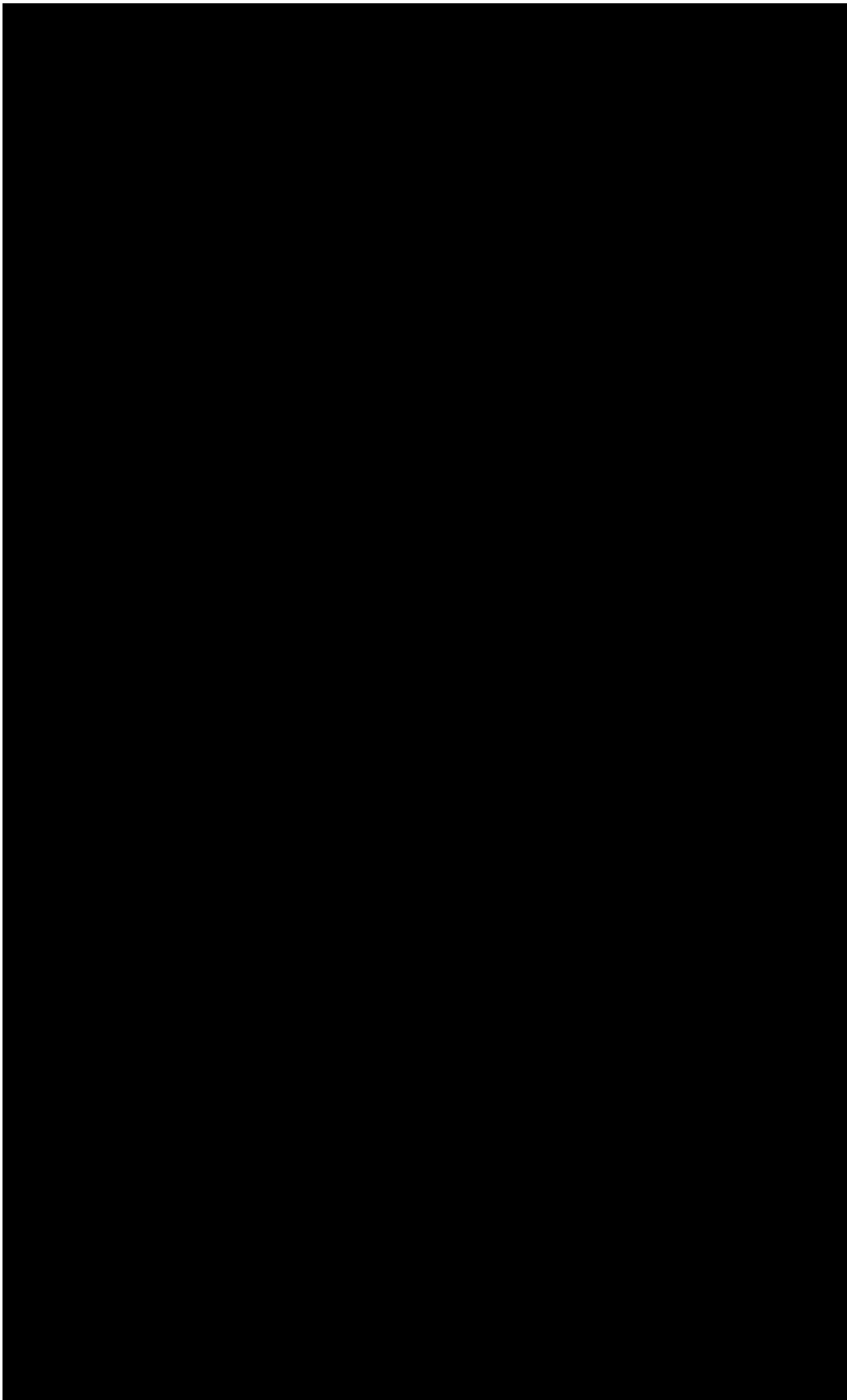


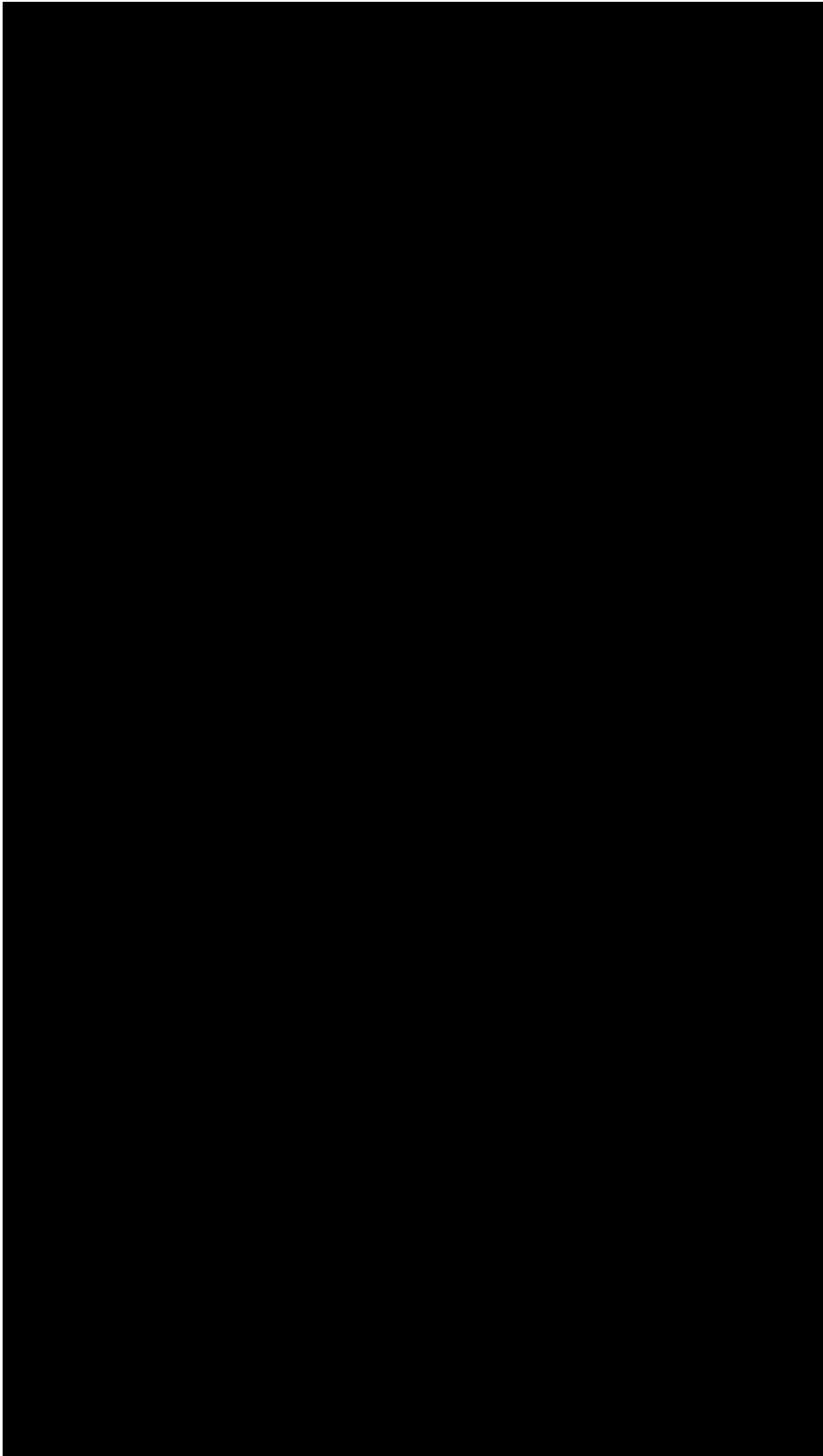


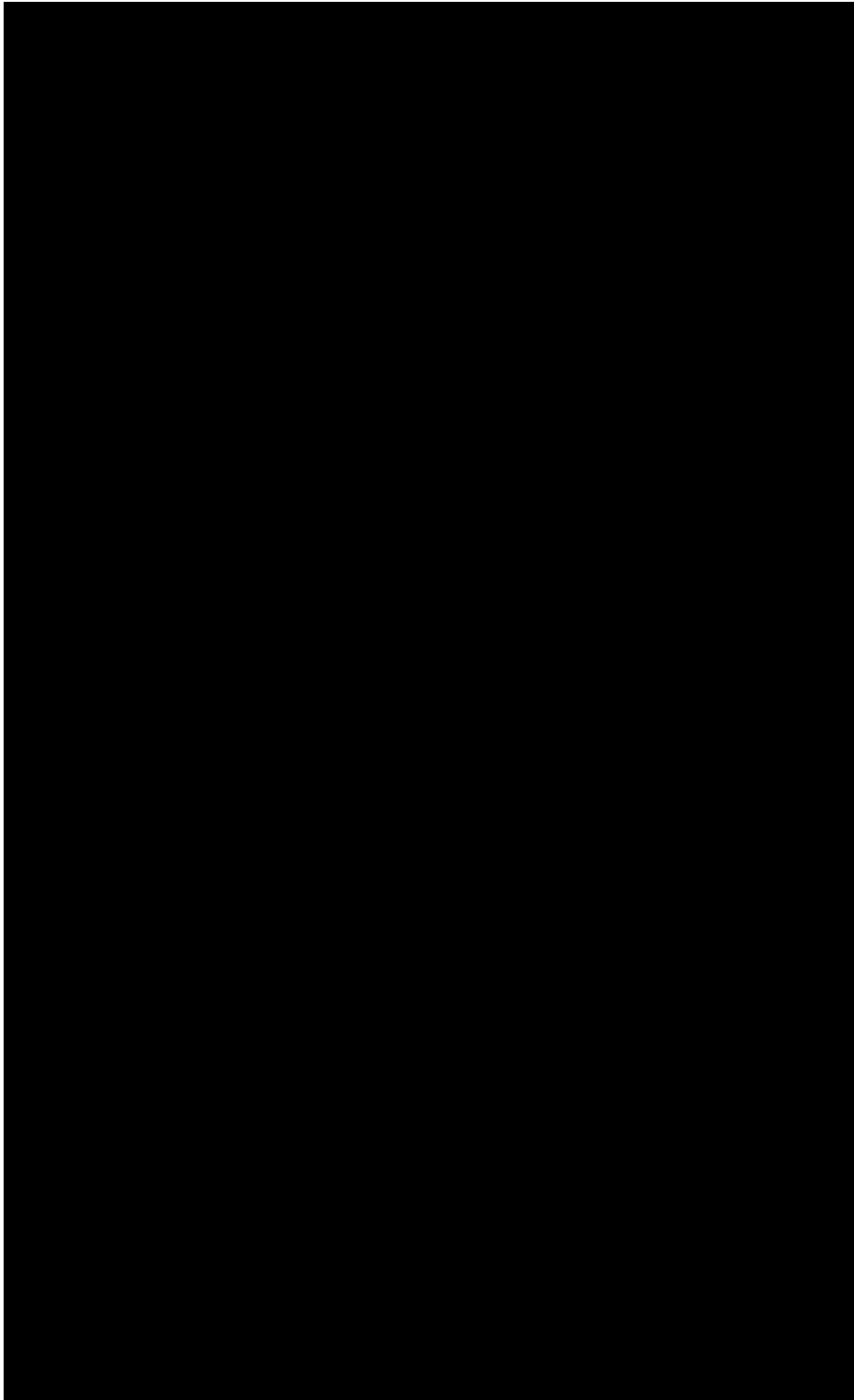


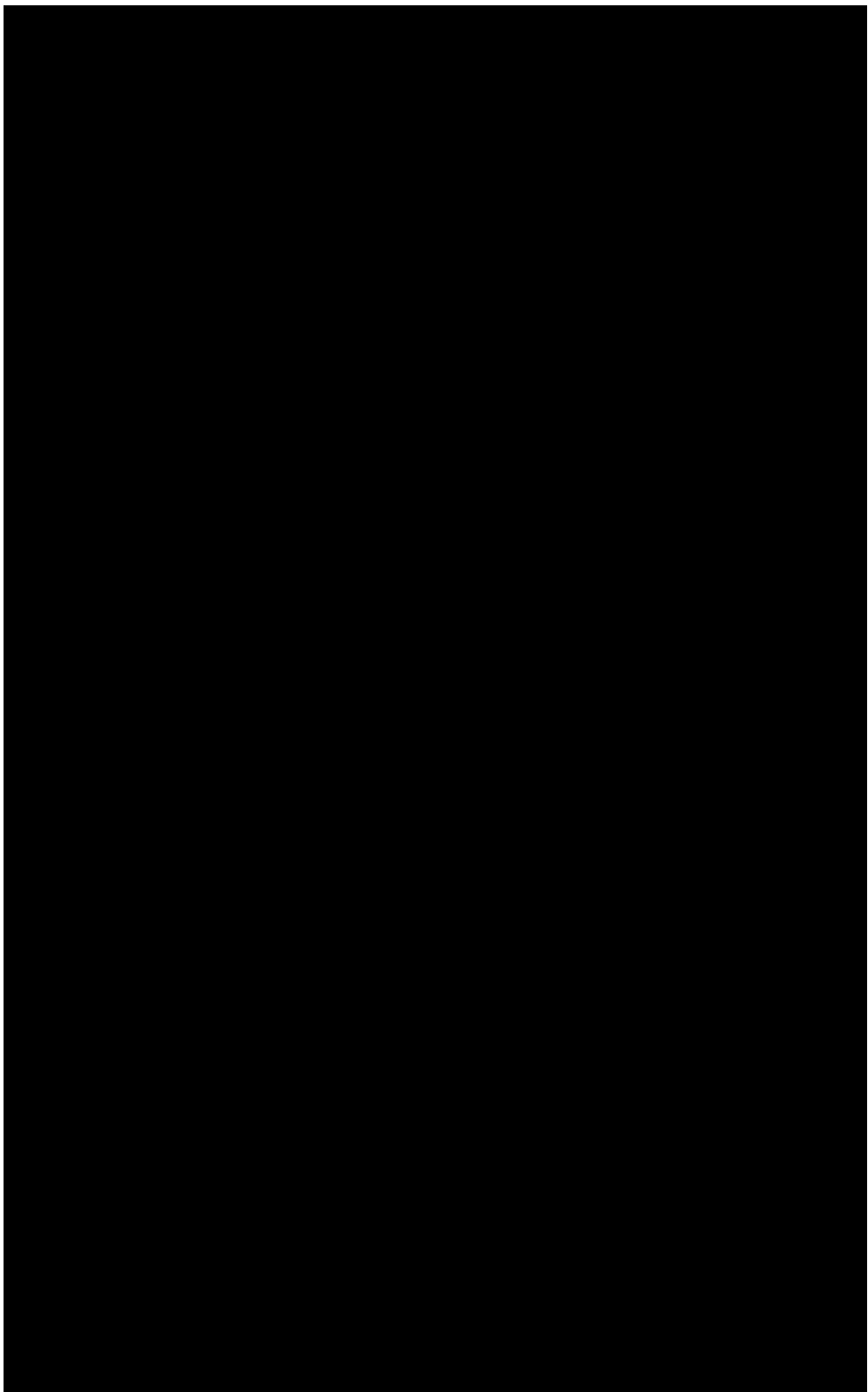












Advertising and Council Catch Up Newsletter

Throughout

Action

Council purchased 40 x 30 second radio ads in prime time 6am – 7pm across 963 Triple M (AM) and Hit 99.7 (FM) – June to August 2023.

In addition, 10 x Monday with the Mayor interviews were held on Hit 99.7 Breakfast with Matt Collins.

Council also placed advertisements in the local newspaper, the Area News. The advertisement included Council’s proposal, contact details and information on how people could provide input into the decision.

Advertisements and articles were also placed in Council’s weekly newsletter, Council Catch Up.

Outcome

Advertisements were placed in the Friday edition of The Area News (Historically the largest circulation). The Monday morning breakfast radio interviews with Mayor Curran discussed the proposed SRV and allowed questions from residents to be addressed.

Each Friday 500 copies of the Council Catch Up community newsletter are printed, an e-Edition or PDF version can also be read on the website. Printed copies can be picked up from 20 locations around the city including all local supermarkets, major shopping centres and Council facilities.

More than 2,000 Council Catch Up e-Editions were sent out each week.

25 August 2023 Edition 33/23 FREE

COUNCIL CATCH-UP

IN THIS EDITION

- Work on Warkona Locks - Progressing proposals
- Fun at bus services ahead for Griffith
- Take care - the mosquito rearing season!
- Message from Cr Melissa Krizan - Roads, Hill and Fire, Protection, Visiting the people

Time is running out for residents to have their say on the proposed Special Rate Variation

Time is running out for Griffith residents to have their say on Council's proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV). The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base. Submissions close at 4pm on Thursday 31 August 2023. You can provide your feedback and find information about the proposed SRV: griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran is urging residents to visit the SRV Have your say page and use the Rate Estimator to find out how the increase will impact them. "It's vitally important that we hear from our community," Councillor Curran said. "I strongly encourage people to submit their feedback to ensure that all relevant information is available to Councillors for an informed decision on whether or not to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the proposed Special Rate Variation. "We've already received more than 100 submissions and I think each and every one of those residents who have taken the time to provide their feedback is making a difference. "Council appreciates the community's input and looks forward to reaching a decision that best serves the interests of all residents." Following the public consultation period, a further report will be considered by Council on Tuesday 24 October 2023. At that meeting Council will make a final decision as to whether it will apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation. If IPART approves the application, the first stage of the increase will be effective from July 2024. You can also submit your feedback via email admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au

Better bus services for Griffith from 18 September

- Better connections to hospitals
- New Sunday and Public Holiday services
- More travel options for Yenda and Daglington Point
- New services for growing suburbs

Learn more

14 July 2023 Edition 27/23 FREE

COUNCIL CATCH-UP

IN THIS EDITION

- National Robotics and Wireless Institute (RWI) visit
- New technology to help employees (paid) improve their skills
- ESG - Economic, Diversity, Curious or Cautious? It's all about the future of our city
- IPART releases on draft Rate Variation (SRV) - 10.5% increase
- Message from Cr Annemette - Public Health and Services, Volunteering

Have you had your say on the proposed Special Rate Variation?

Griffith City Council wants to hear the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels. Following extensive community consultation (June to August) Councillors will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. So far, Council has held four general public information sessions and eight meetings with community organisations including the Griffith Business Chamber, Rotary Club, Yenda Progress Association and NSW Farmers Association. Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran said the aim was to reach as many ratepayers as possible. "We are doing our very best to engage as many community members as possible through this difficult process. I am proud to be part of a community that cares about each other and about the services our Council delivers," Councillor Curran said. "We still have three community sessions to go. If you are keen to see a detailed presentation, I'd urge you to get along to the Hamwood Catholic Club on Tuesday 1 August 2023. "If you can't make that meeting, you can still talk to staff and Councillors at one of our stalls. It is important that we explain why we are considering this SRV and hear what our community thinks." If you are unable to get to any of the face-to-face sessions head to www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. You will find lots of information including a video presentation and an option to make a submission. A Rates Estimator will be up and running in the next few weeks. Read the media release in full: griffith.nsw.gov.au/media-releases

GRASS ROOTS

UNDER 30'S OPEN MIC COMPETITION SUNDAY 30 JULY 2PM

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Information sessions

- 20 July 2023 - Kooyoo Street Kiosk - 10am - 12pm
- 1 August 2023 - Hamwood Catholic Club - 7pm
- 4 August 2023 - Griffith Central Plaza - 10am - 12pm

FIND OUT MORE griffith.nsw.gov.au

Council seeks support for proposed Special Rate Variation

Griffith City Council is seeking support from the community to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to be implemented over a three-year period, starting from the 2024/25 financial year.

Council proposes to submit an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPRT), an independent body that determines the maximum which councils across NSW can increase rates. The proposed SRV seeks a 10.5% increase each year for three years, inclusive of the assumed rate pegging increase of 3.0%. This equates to a cumulative increase of 34.50% over three years. Mayor Doug Curran said, "To secure the future of our community and the assets that we cherish and to ensure our Council is ready for the future, we need to engage our community with very mature discussions about what we require the Special Rate Variation (SRV)."

To learn more about the proposed SRV and express your opinion, please visit www.griffith.nsw.gov.au. Residents are encouraged to attend the following sessions:

- Tuesday, 6 June 2023, 7pm: Woogah Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Thursday, 15 June 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kookey Street Kiosk
- Thursday, 22 June 2023, 3pm: Griffith City Library
- Thursday, 5 July 2023, 11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central
- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kookey Street Kiosk
- Monday, 3 August 2023, 7pm: Hinwood Catholic Club
- Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central

The Mayor and Cll are also available to address individual community organisations. Call us via mature discussions about what we require the Special Rate Variation (SRV) at 1300 176 077 or arrange.



COG MEETING

Woogah Club

Tuesday, 6 June 2023
from 7pm

Agenda items include the 2023/24 draft Budget and the proposed Special Rate Variation

Message Cr Christine Stead

This week I've been busy learning as much as I can about the most exciting world of tourism. The 2023 Local Government NSW, Destination and Visitor Economy Committee was held in Manly over three days and we got to hear about what other issues are doing. It's always insightful to learn about the challenges and opportunities from other local government areas. Even though we are all different, there is always something you can take away in terms of creating successful and sustainable tourism events. We are fortunate here in Griffith to have many great events such as A Taste of Italy and Springfield. The King's Birthday Long Weekend is coming up and I urge everyone to check out our wonderful venues or take a look at the Griffith Shalebook (tourism).

The King's Birthday Long Weekend is coming up and I urge everyone to check out our wonderful venues or take a look at the Griffith Shalebook (tourism).

I want to urge everyone to have their say on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV). I would advise the councillors who voted against this.

Until next time,
Councillor Christine Stead

GRIFFITH REGIONAL ART GALLERY

LUNCH SOCIETY

WHERE ART MEETS LUNCH

Friday, 23 June 2023 at 12:00
Art Talk by Gallery Curator -
What a Machine by Tony Curran

Have your say on whether to introduce a FOGO bin service

Griffith City Council is exploring the possibility of introducing a Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) service. This proposed service by H2O2 a kerbside collection taking the survey [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HMO2V5F](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HMO2V5F) waste bin so it can be recycled into top quality compost. Give us your feedback on this proposed service by H2O2 a kerbside collection taking the survey [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HMO2V5F](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HMO2V5F) added to a green lid garden

Make a splash and join the GRALC Break Time Lappers

Want to give your fitness a kick each day to help you stay motivated and increase your fitness (programs will be on a Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre's (GRALC) Break Time Lappers.

- No bookings required, just come and join us
- Best of all there is no additional cost. If you pay to swim, you're in
- For more information call GRALC on 6562 8228
- A set swimming program

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12:00pm - 2:00pm (swim 30 mins, 15 min of the entire 2 hours)

Swim Program will be on the 25m whiteboard

Seeking community feedback on Special Rate Variation

Griffith City Council continues to seek the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels. An application would be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPRT). We've got five more community sessions where we will be informing our ratepayers and taking feedback. If you can't get along to one of the sessions listed below, I ask that you head to our webpage www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvshaveyoursay. You will find plenty of information and an option to make a submission.

SRV COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2023
11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central

THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2023
10am - 12noon: Kookey Street Kiosk

THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2023
3pm - 5pm: Griffith City Library

THURSDAY 5 JULY 2023
11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central

THURSDAY 20 JULY 2023
10am - 12noon: Kookey Street Kiosk

FRIDAY 4 AUGUST 2023
7pm - 9pm: Hinwood Catholic Club

Have your say on the draft Lake Wyangan Foreshore Plan

The draft Lake Wyangan Foreshore Plan is currently on public exhibition, with feedback sought on the plan. It is proposed that the Lake Wyangan Recreational Area be staged to meet funding availability. Lake Wyangan & Catchment Management Committee members have identified eight priorities in Stage 1 to put the Master Plan out for public consultation. These include: 1. Soilment, 2. Riparian revegetation, 3. Fencing, 4. Fencing, 5. Fencing, 6. Fencing, 7. Fencing, 8. Fencing.



PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH A VIDEO PRESENTATION

LEARN MORE AND MAKE A SUBMISSION

griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvshaveyoursay

The Australian Ballet returns to Griffith Regional Theatre



Experience the artistry of the Australian Ballet on stage at the Griffith Regional Theatre on Wednesday 9 August 2023. The program also features two contemporary pieces - a classical favourite and contemporary pieces, the Australian Ballet is delighted to return to celebrate their 60th year as Australia's national ballet company, with over 40 years of touring repertoire across Australia.

Securing our future

NOW LIVE

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION (SRV) ESTIMATOR

FIND OUT what the proposed SRV would mean to your rates

griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvshaveyoursay

Special Rate Variation consultation progress update

Face-to-face community consultation regarding the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) has concluded. The process has been highly successful, with a significant number of community members attending various meetings held across the local government area. The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 to the local government area. The increased revenue would be permanently retained in Council's rate base.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. With the cost of living going up so much now, how can we be expected to manage this increase?

A. The proposed SRV is not a decision taken lightly. Council recognises the delicate balance between providing essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and ensuring affordability for our residents. Council offers the Pensioner Rebate Scheme, which financially supports this important group in our community. Council also has a hardship policy to accommodate the special needs of those unable to pay their rates in full on time. The increase would come into effect in July 2024, staged over 3 years to minimise the impact.

Q. What is Council doing to remediate the situation?

A. Council's Senior Management Team is committed to finding 51 million to savings each year starting from 2024/25. This will be achieved by identifying operational efficiencies.

Q. What is the alternative to the proposed rate increases?

A. If there is no SRV, Council would need to consider reducing levels of services. Examples of services that may be impacted include the Aquatic Centre, Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Library, Regional Sports Centre and Library.

More FAQs on the website.

Message from Cr Jenny Ellis

I am very excited to say that our Draft Cultural Present Master Plan is now available for people to view and comment on. (along with our Committee have been working very hard with our constituents and the community to get this important document completed.)

The Master Plan is a strategic and comprehensive document that will guide Council in managing and improving our cultural facilities to meet the needs and expectations of our community and contribute to our cultural identity and the economic vitality of Griffith.

It is particularly focused on Griffith's key cultural sites including the Regional Art Gallery City Library, Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, and also addresses the suitability of our current Art Gallery and the potential locations of a new one, including assessing the value of the Clock Building and whether it fits into the cultural requirements of the city in the future.

Even if you are not 'into' the arts it needs to be recognised that to remain a vibrant city that attracts people to live, work and visit, this is one of the key areas of appeal. Personally when my husband and I moved here 30 years ago for a 'three-year country stint' it was the relationships formed through the arts that were one of the biggest factors in keeping us here - apart from drinking the 'chardonnay water that is...'

Regards,
Councillor Jenny Ellis

WE ARE HIRING

We are currently seeking applications for the following positions:

- Swim School Coordinator (Permanent)
- Swimming Instructor (No AUSTSWIM) (Casual)
- Information Technology Support Officer (Permanent)

Applications close Monday, 14 August 2023

Applications close Monday, 28 August 2023

Apply online at griffith.nsw.gov.au/jobs

Council celebrates Local Government Week 2023

Council is inviting residents to help celebrate Local Government Week 2023. Held from 31 July – 6 August 2023, Local Government Week is designed to showcase the work councils do in their local communities, including the wide variety of services they provide.

This year, Griffith City Council is using the week to say thank you to the selfless volunteers who support Council and highlight some of the services and facilities the community enjoys.

Council will hold a Thank You Morning Tea for Council Volunteers on Tuesday 1 August 2023 at the Griffith Regional Theatre foyer. Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre (GRAALC) will offer free come and try classes for Griffith residents.

Monday – 9.30am FIT & 5.30pm Pump, Tuesday – 6am



Message from Cr Shari Blumer

At a time in the town where a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) is being discussed, it is important that all residents of the community who care weigh in.

We need the community to assist with us as Council find make that voice heard on all the issues that Council is considering, including the proposed SRV.

One of the most pressing of those issues for consideration is Lake Wyangan.

The only Lake Wyangan Catchment Management Plan is now in public consultation, with feedback sought on preferred options.

The Lake Wyangan Catchment Management Committee members have identified eight priority issues for the Council's current budget allocation of just over \$2 million.

This plan is now on exhibition and can be viewed at: griffith.nsw.gov.au/leisure.

Please make sure you take a look and share with those who may not know about it, or are not necessarily tech savvy and provide your comments back to Council.

Municipal Council staff are building their capacity and the capacity of our community with several consultation and inclusion projects that are proving that when community and Council work together the outcomes are always better.

The establishment of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) has shown that when you provide people, especially



young people with a platform on their territory, they will show up and they will speak. This group was established by Council to give the young people of Griffith and the surrounding villages a strong voice.

The group of 20 – 30 young people have been speaking up about issues they care about including safe public spaces, their own safety and mental wellbeing, as well as actively managing activities, tailored to 22-24 year olds.

With two successful events under their belt, the future is starting to look a lot brighter. This is just a snapshot of the wide range of activities that Council staff are consulting with the community on, and I congratulate them for their efforts.

Regards,
Councillor Shari Blumer



IN THIS EDITION

- Event planned on next 60th Anniversary of end of Vietnam War
- Official Baller Discussion with a difference
- Council calendar, local community events
- Message from Cr Shari Blumer
- Public consultation and feedback sought

Council's Her Way 2680 Project enters implementation phase

The exciting Her Way 2680 project, an initiative aimed at enhancing the perception of safety for women, girls, and gender diverse people in the CBD of Griffith, is moving into the implementation phase.

Council is pleased to be partnering with Transport for NSW on the safer Cities Her Way Program, which aims to make public spaces around transport hubs feel safer for everyone.

Building upon the information gathered from the community consultation, the Her Way 2680 team has developed a project plan that focuses on making the key components identified as unsafe and in need of attention. These include the installation of gender sensitive lighting, installation of way finding signage, upgrades to pedestrian bridges, murals and public art, increasing amenity of bus shelters, new landscaping, street furniture, footpaths and a new gathering space.

The project will now progress to the implementation phase, with the development of a concept plan and quotes sought for the necessary assets and upgrades.

In addition, 53 participants actively contributed



PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

SCAN THE QR CODE TO Watch a video presentation Learn more Make a submission

griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvopepar23

The Area News

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION INFORMATION SESSIONS

Council is seeking the community's views on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV).

Come along to information sessions to find out more:

- 27 June 2023 5pm - Council Chambers
- 6 July 2023 11.30am - Griffith Central Plaza
- 20 July 2023 10am - Kooyoo Street Kiosk

Ph: 1300 176 077 Have your say: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION INFORMATION SESSIONS

Council is seeking the community's views on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV).

Come along to information sessions to find out more:

- 1 August 2023 7pm Hanwood Catholic Club
- 4 August 2023 10am Griffith Central Plaza

Ph: 1300 176 077 Have your say: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au

Social Media

May 2023 - ongoing

Action

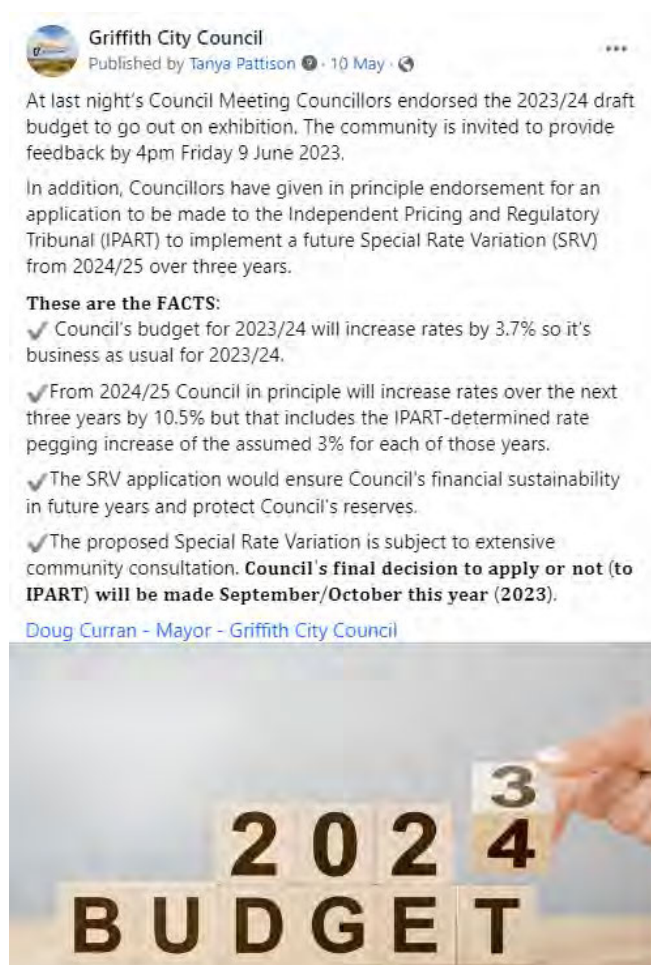
Council has an active social media audience with more than 10,000 users engaging with Council's Facebook and Instagram accounts. The social media SRV community engagement included a series of SRV posts and SRV event posts for community engagement activities.

SRV community engagement opportunities were published as events on Facebook and appeared as posts at the same time throughout. When permitted posts were also shared to Griffith Community Noticeboard Facebook Group (17,500 members).

Outcome

31 posts were made to Council's social media channels. Total post reach Facebook and Instagram over 59,500.

There was strong engagement on most social media posts related to the SRV.



Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 3 June ·

Griffith City Council seeks support for special rate variation

Council is seeking the community's views on whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary (general) rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV).

The proposed SRV seeks a 10.5% increase each year for three years, inclusive of the assumed rate pegging increase of 3.0%. This equates to a cumulative increase of 34.9% over three years.

Residents are encouraged to attend the next Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting on Tuesday 6 June 2023 at the Yoogali Club to find out more.

Read more here <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../griffith-city-council...>



Published by Tanya Pattison · 6 June ·

! REMINDER - COG MEETING TONIGHT!

Don't forget, the Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting will be held tonight, Tuesday 6 June at the Yoogali Club.

The COG Meeting is an opportunity to connect with Councillors to discuss matters important to you including the proposed Special Rate Variation.

You can view the agenda here <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../community-opinion...>



Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 16 August at 10:16 · 🌐

Have you had your say on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) yet?

👉 Council wants to hear your view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

Following extensive community consultation (June to August), Councillors will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of ... [See more](#)

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR SAY ON THE PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION?

SCAN THE QR CODE TO
Learn more
Watch a video presentation
Use the rates estimator
Make a submission!




griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay Contact Us
1300 176 077

1 comment

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 13 June · 🌐

Want to know more about what the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) is all about? Come along to one of our community information sessions being held over the next few months. **THIS WEEK** Council Café is being held on Thursday 15 June 2023 at the Kooyoo Street Kiosk from 10am to 12pm.

Upcoming SRV Community Consultation Sessions are listed below:

If you can't attend any of the face-to-face sessions, an online presentation can be viewed. Further information on the proposed SRV is available at: griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



Securing
our future

**SRV
COMMUNITY
INFORMATION
SESSIONS**

- **TUES 27 JUNE 2023**
5pm: Council Chambers
- **THUR 5 JULY 2023**
11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central
- **THUR 20 JULY 2023**
10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk
- **TUES 1 AUGUST 2023**
7pm: Hanwood Catholic Club
- **FRI 4 AUGUST 2023**
10am - 12noon: Griffith Central

In addition to the above sessions, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual organisations. Call 1300 176 077 to arrange.

For more information or to make a submission go to:
griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 3 d · 🌐

👉 Catch up on all things Council!

In this week's issue:

- 🗣️ Have you had your say on the proposed Special Rate Variation?
- 👷 National Parks and Wildlife Service to conduct training
- 🛠️ New technology to help improve road maintenance
- 📄 Input needed on draft Lake Wyangan Foreshore Master Plan
- 🎨 EOI - Creative Director - Griffith Carols by Candlelight
- 👷 Calling all First Nations artists for Basketball Court artwork
- 📧 Message from Councillor Glen Andrezza

📌 all the latest in Positions Vacant, Public Notices, Development Applications, Road Closures and more!

📄 View the e-Edition or read the 📄 PDF version here: <https://bit.ly/3o7gxf>

📄 Subscribe here: www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/subscribe

📄 Or pick up a copy from:
Beelbanger Store, Griffin Plaza, Collier & Miller, Danny's Store, Griffith Central, Griffith City Library, Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Retirement Estate, Hanwood Village Store, KMart, News & Gifts on Banna, Riverina Family Chiropractor, Rossie's Foodworks, Vaccari's Bakery, Woolworths (Main and North), Yenda Producers (Yenda), Yenda Supermarket, Griffith Airport and from Customer Service at Griffith City Council.

Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 13 July · 🌐

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR SAY ON THE PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATION YET?

Griffith City Council wants to hear the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

Following extensive community consultation (June to August), Councillors will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%.

So far, Council has held four general public information sessions and eight meetings with community organisations including the Griffith Business Chamber, U3A, Rotary Club, Griffith Ladies Probus, Yenda Progress Association & Yenda Rotary, Griffith Lions Club and NSW Farmers Association.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran said the aim was to reach as many ratepayers as possible. "We are doing our very best to engage as many community members as possible through this difficult process. I am proud to be part of a community that cares about each other and about the services our Council delivers," Councillor Curran said.

You can find more information about why the SRV is being proposed and make a submission here
👉 www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

Or read the media release in full here 🌟 <https://bit.ly/3Nq8Q88>

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Information sessions

- ▶️ 20 July 2023 - Kooyoo Street Kiosk - 10am -12pm
- ▶️ 1 August 2023 - Hanwood Catholic Club -7pm
- ▶️ 4 August 2023 - Griffith Central Plaza - 10am -12pm



Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 15 June · 🌐

! REMINDER - COUNCIL CAFE TODAY - KOOYOO STREET

Council Café is being held today, Thursday 15 June 2023 at the Kooyoo Street Kiosk from 10am to 12pm.

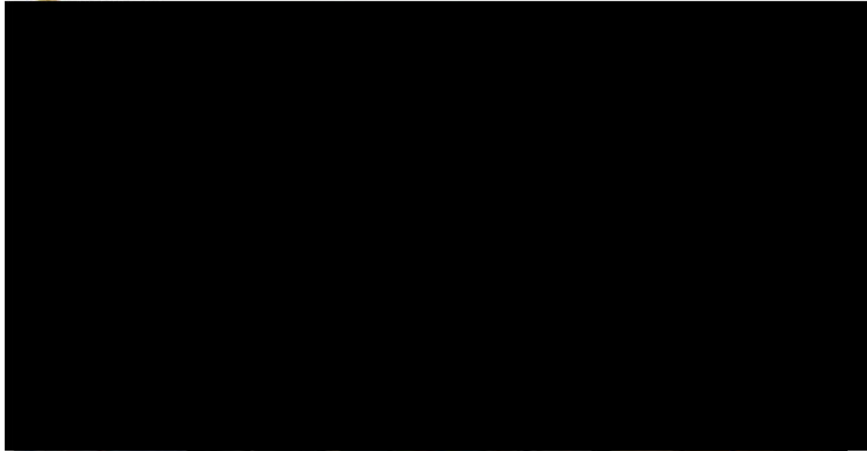
Come along and find out about the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

If you can't make it today, a list of upcoming sessions can be found below.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROPOSED SRV 📄 <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../special-rate-variation>



Griffith City Council created an event.
 7 June · 🌐



THURS, 15 JUN
Council Cafe - Special Rate Variation (SRV) Consultation
 Griffith, NSW
 4 went · 31 interested



Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 4 h · 🌐



Understanding the Special Rate Variation (SRV)

For a comprehensive explanation about the proposed SRV and what it means for Council and the community please take the time to watch the attached video.

<https://youtu.be/sn7xUvcHiMQ>

👉 For more information or to make a submission head to griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



YOUTUBE.COM

GCC Special Rate Variation (SRV) Presentation

GCC Special Rate Variation (SRV) Presentation



Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 17 May · 🌐



SPECIAL RATE VARIATION (SRV) PRESENTATION

Watch a presentation regarding the proposed SRV below 🌟

At the Council Meeting on 9 May 2023 Councillors gave in principle endorsement for an application to be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to implement a future Special Rate Variation (SRV) from 2024/25 over three years.

The FACTS:

- ✓ Council's budget for 2023/24 will increase rates by 3.7% so it's business as usual for 2023/24.
- ✓ From 2024/25 Council in principle will increase rates over the next three years by 10.5% that includes the IPART-determined rate pegging increase of the assumed 3% for each of those years.
- ✓ The SRV application would ensure Council's financial sustainability in future years and protect Council's reserves.
- ✓ The proposed Special Rate Variation is subject to extensive community consultation. **Council's final decision to apply or not (to IPART) will be made September/October this year (2023).**

Watch the video below to learn more.



Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 13 June ·

Want to know more about what the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) is all about?
Come along to one of our community information sessions being held over the next few months.
THIS WEEK Council Café is being held on Thursday 15 June 2023 at the Kooyoo Street Kiosk from 10am to 12pm.
Upcomi... See more



The poster features the Griffith City Council logo and the slogan "Securing our future". It lists five community information sessions: Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 5pm in Council Chambers; Thursday 6 July 2023 from 11.30am to 1.30pm at Griffith Central; Thursday 20 July 2023 from 10am to 12noon at Kooyoo Street Kiosk; Tuesday 1 August 2023 at 7pm at Hanwood Catholic Club; and Friday 4 August 2023 from 10am to 12noon at Griffith Central. A circular inset image shows a community event with people gathered under colorful umbrellas. Text on the poster states that the Mayor and GM are available to address individual organisations and provides the website griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay for more information.

2 comments 1 share

Published by Tanya Pattison · 22 June at 12:17 ·

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION CONTINUES

Griffith City Council continues to seek the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

An application would be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. The base rate increase would be retained permanently.

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran is encouraging all ratepayers to get involved in the process.

"We have held two information sessions so far plus the General Manager and I have also addressed the Griffith Business Chamber and U3A," Councillor Curran said.

"We've got five more community sessions where we will be informing our ratepayers and taking feedback. If you can't get along to one of the sessions listed below, I ask that you head to our webpage www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay. You will find lots of information and an option to make a submission.

👉 SRV Community Consultation Sessions:

- Tuesday, 27 June 2023, 5pm: Council Chambers
- Thursday, 6 July 2023, 11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central - Council Cafe
- Thursday, 20 July 2023, 10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk - Council Cafe
- Tuesday, 1 August 2023, 7pm: Hanwood Catholic Club - Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
- Friday, 4 August 2023, 10am - 12noon: Griffith Central - Council Cafe

• In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.



This poster is identical to the one in the first block, listing the five community information sessions and providing contact information for more details.

Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 27 June at 12:14 · 🌐

! **REMINDER - Special Rate Variation (SRV) INFORMATION SESSION TONIGHT, 5PM**

📍 Don't forget, we've got the next SRV community information session taking place at 5pm TODAY in the Council Chambers.

🗣️ Council is seeking the community's view on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV) by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%).

👉 Come along and find out more.



Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 26 June at 12:34 · 🌐

📍 **SPECIAL RATE VARIATION COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REMINDER**

📍 The next SRV Information Session will be held tomorrow Tuesday, 27 June 2023, Council Chambers - 5pm

🗣️ Griffith City Council continues to seek the community's view on a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

An application would be made to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%. The base rate increase would be retained permanently.

If you can't make it tomorrow at 5pm, or to any of the sessions listed below, head to our webpage www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay.

You will find lots of information and an option to make a submission.

Securing *our future*

TUES 27 JUNE 2023
5pm: Council Chambers

THUR 6 JULY 2023
11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central

THUR 20 JULY 2023
10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk

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In addition to the above sessions, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual organisations. Call 1300 176 077 to arrange.

For more information or to make a submission head to:
griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

**SRV
COMMUNITY
INFORMATION
SESSIONS**





Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 6 July at 11:03 · 🌐



! REMINDER - SRV INFORMATION SESSION TODAY!

We will be down at Griffith Central from 11.30am to 1.30pm today.

Come along and learn more about the proposed Special Rate Variation.

Securing
our future



SRV COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

THUR 6 JULY 2023

11.30am - 1.30pm: Griffith Central

THUR 20 JULY 2023

10am - 12noon: Kooyoo Street Kiosk

TUES 1 AUGUST 2023

7pm: Hanwood Catholic Club

FRI 4 AUGUST 2023

10am - 12noon: Griffith Central

In addition to the above sessions, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual organisations. Call 1300 176 077 to arrange.

For more information or to make a submission head to:
griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

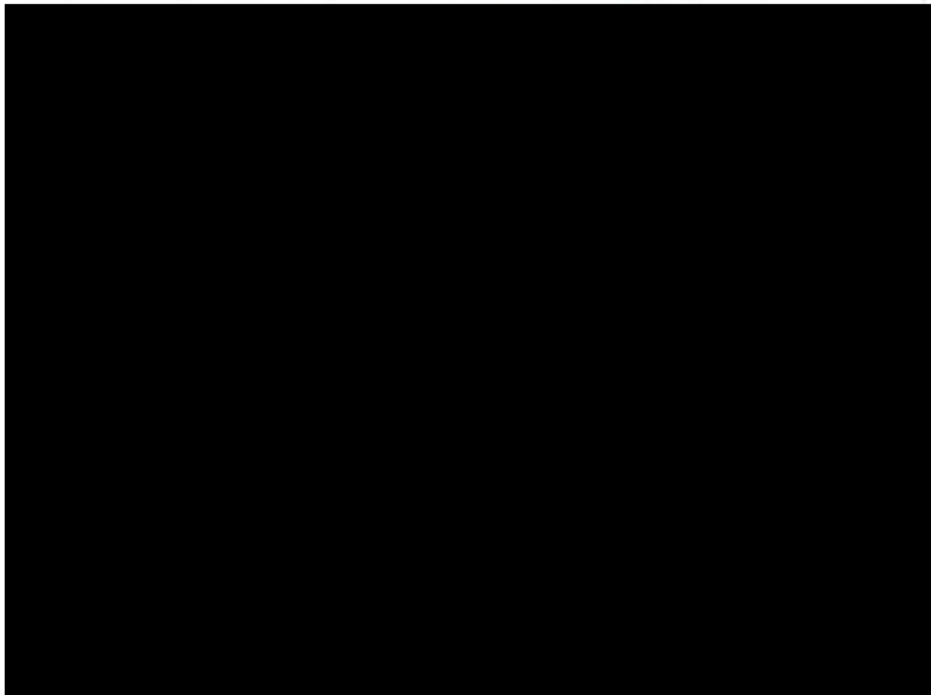


Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 6 July at 11:44 · 🌐



SRV community consultation information session [Griffith Central Shopping Centre](#) now on.





Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 14 August at 10:42 · 🌐

HAVE YOU TRIED THE SRV RATES ESTIMATOR YET?

We've launched a Rates Estimator to allow ratepayers to assess the impact of the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) on their rates.

The SRV Rates Estimator will help ratepayers better understand how the increase will impact them as Council continues to ask for the community's view on a proposed SRV to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.... [See more](#)

Securing
our future

**NOW
LIVE**

**SPECIAL RATE
VARIATION (SRV)
ESTIMATOR**



**FIND OUT what the proposed SRV
would mean to your rates**
griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



1 share



Griffith City Council

Published by Tanya Pattison · 25 July at 14:14 · 🌐

RATES ESTIMATOR NOW LIVE

Griffith City Council has launched a Rates Estimator to allow ratepayers to assess the impact of the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) on their respective rates.

The SRV Rates Estimator has been added to help ratepayers better understand how the increase will impact them as Council continues to ask for the community's view on a proposed SRV to ensure long-term financial viability and to maintain service levels.

Simply enter your Assessment Number, which can be found in the top righthand corner of your rates notice to see the estimated rates based on proposed SRV (10.5% including 3% Rate Peg) each year for three years commencing 2024/25.

The SRV Estimator is available here 📍 <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation.../>

**NOW
LIVE**

**Special Rate Variation
ESTIMATOR**



Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 8 August at 14:08 · 🌐

COUNCIL'S SPECIAL RATE VARIATION CONSULTATION PROGRESS UPDATE

Griffith City Council is pleased to announce that face-to-face community consultation regarding the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) has concluded.

Council would like to thank the community for actively participating and providing valuable feedback during the process so far.

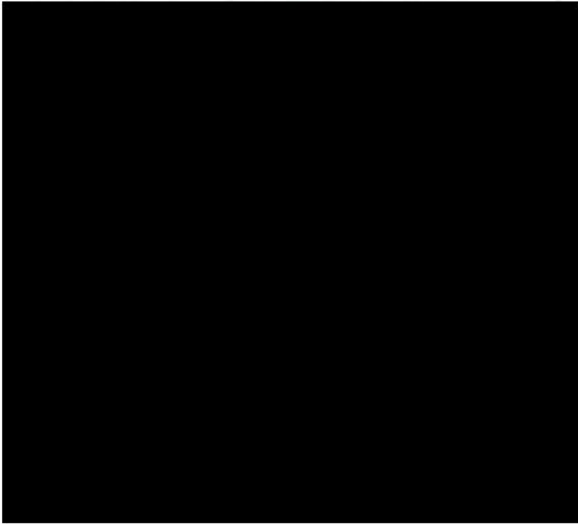
While the formal presentations and information sessions have concluded, Council emphasises that online feedback submissions remain open until August 31, 2023.

Residents are strongly encouraged to submit their feedback to ensure that all relevant information is available to Councillors for an informed decision on whether or not to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the proposed Special Rate Variation.

The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increased revenue would be permanently retained in Council's rate base.

For more information and updates, residents are urged to visit Council's website at [griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay](https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay)

Read the media release in full, including some FAQs 📄 <https://bit.ly/4558VFW>



Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 19 July · 🌐

REMINDER

Special Rate Variation (SRV) consultation session tomorrow at Council Cafe - 10am to 12pm.

Call down to the Kooyoo Street Kiosk, hear about the proposed SRV and give us your feedback.

If you can't make it tomorrow, you can find lots of information on the webpage <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation> including an option to make an online submission.

We need to hear what you think!

COUNCIL CAFE

Special Rate Variation
Information Session

REMINDER

THURSDAY
20 July, 2023

TIME
10AM -12PM

LOCATION
Kooyoo Street Kiosk

Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 2 d · 🌐

Time is running out for Griffith residents to have their say on Griffith City Council's proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

The proposed SRV aims to increase ordinary rates by 10.5% (including the assumed 3% rate peg) annually for three consecutive years, starting from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

Submissions close at 4pm on Thursday 31 August 2023. You can provide your feedback and find information about the proposed SRV: griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay

Griffith Mayor, Councillor Doug Curran is urging residents to visit the SRV Have Your Say page and use the Rate Estimator to find out how the increase will impact them.

"It's vitally important that we hear from our community," Councillor Curran said. "I strongly encourage people to submit their feedback to ensure that all relevant information is available to Councillors for an informed decision on whether or not to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for the proposed Special Rate Variation.

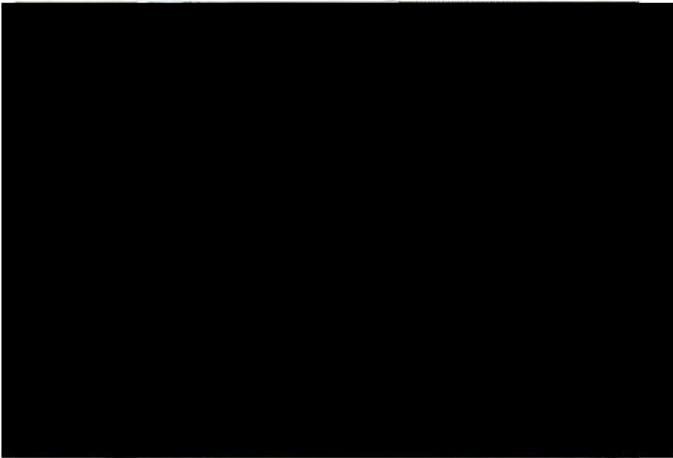
"We've already received more than 100 submissions and I thank each and every one of those residents who have taken the time.

"Council appreciates the community's engagement and looks forward to reaching a decision that best serves the interests of all residents."

Following the public consultation period, a further report will be considered by Council on Tuesday 24 October 2023. At that meeting Council will make a final decision as to whether it will apply to IPART for the Special Rate Variation.

If IPART approves the application, the first stage of the increase will be effective in July 2024.

Residents can also submit their views via email to admin@griffith.nsw.gov.au, by mail to PO Box 485 Griffith, 2680, or through the online submission griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay.



Griffith City Council
 Published by Joanne Bolton · 20 July · 🌐

Special Rate Variation (SRV) consultation session at Council Cafe today. We are at the Kooyoo Street Kiosk until 12pm.

Call down to hear about the proposed SRV and give us your feedback.

If you can't make it, you can find lots of information on the webpage <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../special-rate-variation> including an option to make an online submission.

We need to hear what you think!



Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 31 July at 19:13 · 🌐

🚨 **REMINDER!**

📍 **SRV COG MEETING IN HANWOOD TOMORROW NIGHT**

📅 The next Community Opinion Group Meeting (COG) will be held in HANWOOD - Tuesday 1 August 2023 @ 7pm - Hanwood Sports Club

👉 This COG Meeting will focus on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV), please come along and hear why this is being considered.

✅ If you can't make this meeting and would like to find out more about the proposed SRV or provide feedback, use this link: <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../special-rate-variation>

📄 Find the agenda here: <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../community-opinion...>

COMMUNITY OPINION GROUP (COG) MEETING

Special Rate Variation Information Session

TUESDAY
1 August, 2023

TIME
7PM

LOCATION
Hanwood Sports Club

REMINDER

3 shares

Griffith City Council
 Published by Tanya Pattison · 26 July at 11:45 · 🌐

🚨 **REMINDER!**

📍 **SRV COG MEETING IN HANWOOD NEXT TUESDAY NIGHT**

📅 The next Community Opinion Group Meeting (COG) will be held in HANWOOD - Tuesday 1 August 2023 @ 7pm - Hanwood Sport Club

👉 While the aim of this COG Meeting is to focus on the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV), you can still submit other agenda items.

Make a submission for the COG Meeting using this link:
<https://forms.griffith.nsw.gov.au/Forms/COGS>

If you can't make this meeting and would like to find out more about the proposed SRV or provide feedback, use this link: <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/.../special-rate-variation>

COMMUNITY OPINION GROUP (COG) MEETING

Special Rate Variation Information Session

TUESDAY
1 August, 2023

START AT
7.00PM

LOCATION
Hanwood Sports Club



Griffith City Council
Published by Tanya Pattison · 18 July ·

Find out more about the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV)

Council hopes to reach as many residents as possible to explain the proposed SRV. Please help spread the word.

📌 The next SRV information session will be held this Thursday 20 July 2023 at the Kooyoo Stree Kiosk from 10am to 12pm.

👉 If you can't make this session, there will be another night meeting, where a full presentation will be made, at the Hanwood Sports Club on Tuesday 1 August from 7pm.

✔ Or drop into Griffith Central on Friday 4 August 2023 between 10am and 12pm.

➡ In addition to these sessions the Mayor and GM are available to address individual organisations. Call 1300 176 077 to arrange.

♥ Following extensive community consultation (June to August) Councillors will make a final decision in October 2023 as to whether to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise Ordinary Rates by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% IPART rate peg) each year for three consecutive years starting 2024/25. This is a total cumulative increase of 34.9%.

For more information or to make a submission head to the webpage griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



SRV thanks

Council would like to thank all those who attended meetings or information sessions over the past three months as part of community consultation for the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV).

Thanks also to those who took the time to make a submission. Submissions closed at 4pm yesterday.

So, what's next?

All of the community feedback received will now form part of a report to be presented to Council at a meeting on Tuesday 24 October 2023.

At this meeting Councillors will consider whether or not to advise IPART that an application will be prepared and submitted to request a Special Rate Variation.



REMINDER

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION (SRV) SUBMISSIONS CLOSE AT 4PM TODAY!

If you haven't provided feedback on the proposed SRV yet you have until 4pm TODAY Thursday 31 August 2023.

We want your view on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV) by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

Find out more and have your say 🙌 griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



SPECIAL RATE VARIATION (SRV) SUBMISSIONS CLOSE TOMORROW

If you haven't provided feedback on the proposed SRV yet, you still have time.

But hurry, submissions close at 4pm Thursday 31 August 2023 (tomorrow).

We want your view on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for approval to raise ordinary rates through a Special Rates Variation (SRV) by 10.5% (inclusive of the assumed 3.0% rate peg) each year for three consecutive years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 (a cumulative total increase of 34.9%). The increase would be retained permanently in Council's rate base.

Find out more and have your say 🙌 griffith.nsw.gov.au/srvhaveyoursay



Community meetings and information sessions

June – August 2023

Action

Council held seven information sessions. These included two Community Opinion Group (COG) Meetings and five Council Café Information Sessions. Residents and ratepayers were invited to attend to provide feedback.

Council also attended 10 community group meetings where the GM and Mayor gave presentations. These included Griffith Business Chamber, U3A, Rotary Club, Griffith Ladies Probus, Yenda Progress Association & Yenda Rotary, Griffith Lions Club, NSW Farmers, Griffith Rotary & Griffith East Rotary, Griffith Business Group and Griffith Sikh Community. More than 230 people attended these sessions.

Council attended these community meetings and used the presentation to explain the proposed SRV and discuss with residents and ratepayers. An online presentation was also provided where the GM again provided a presentation.

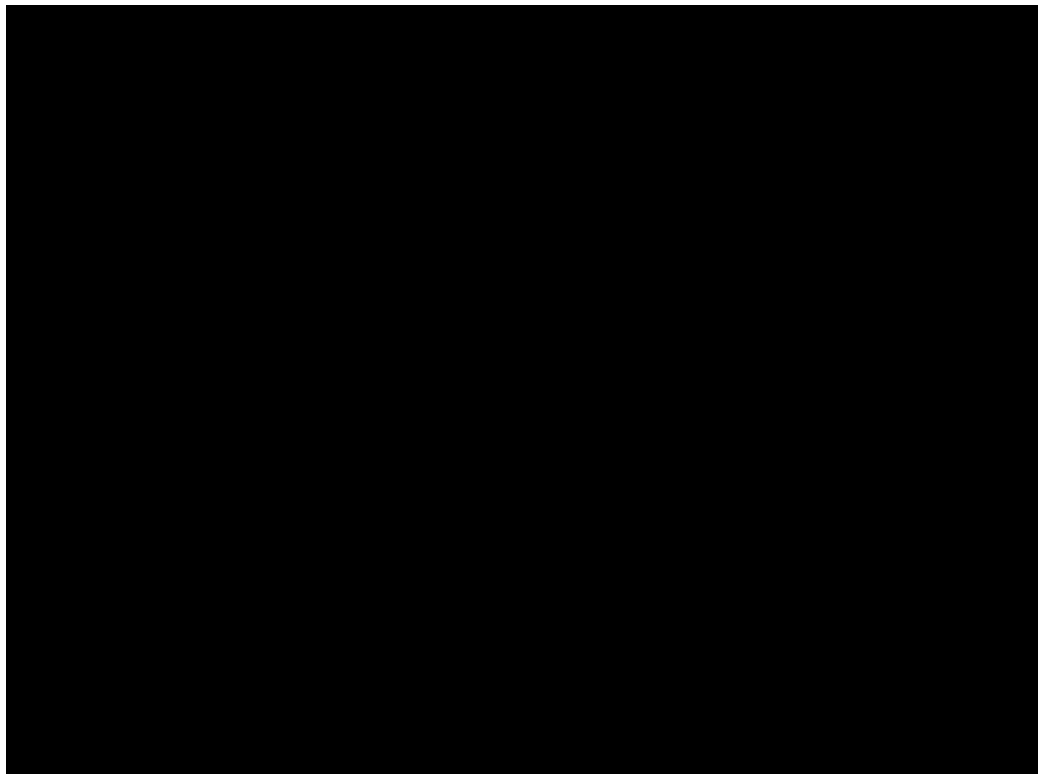
Outcome

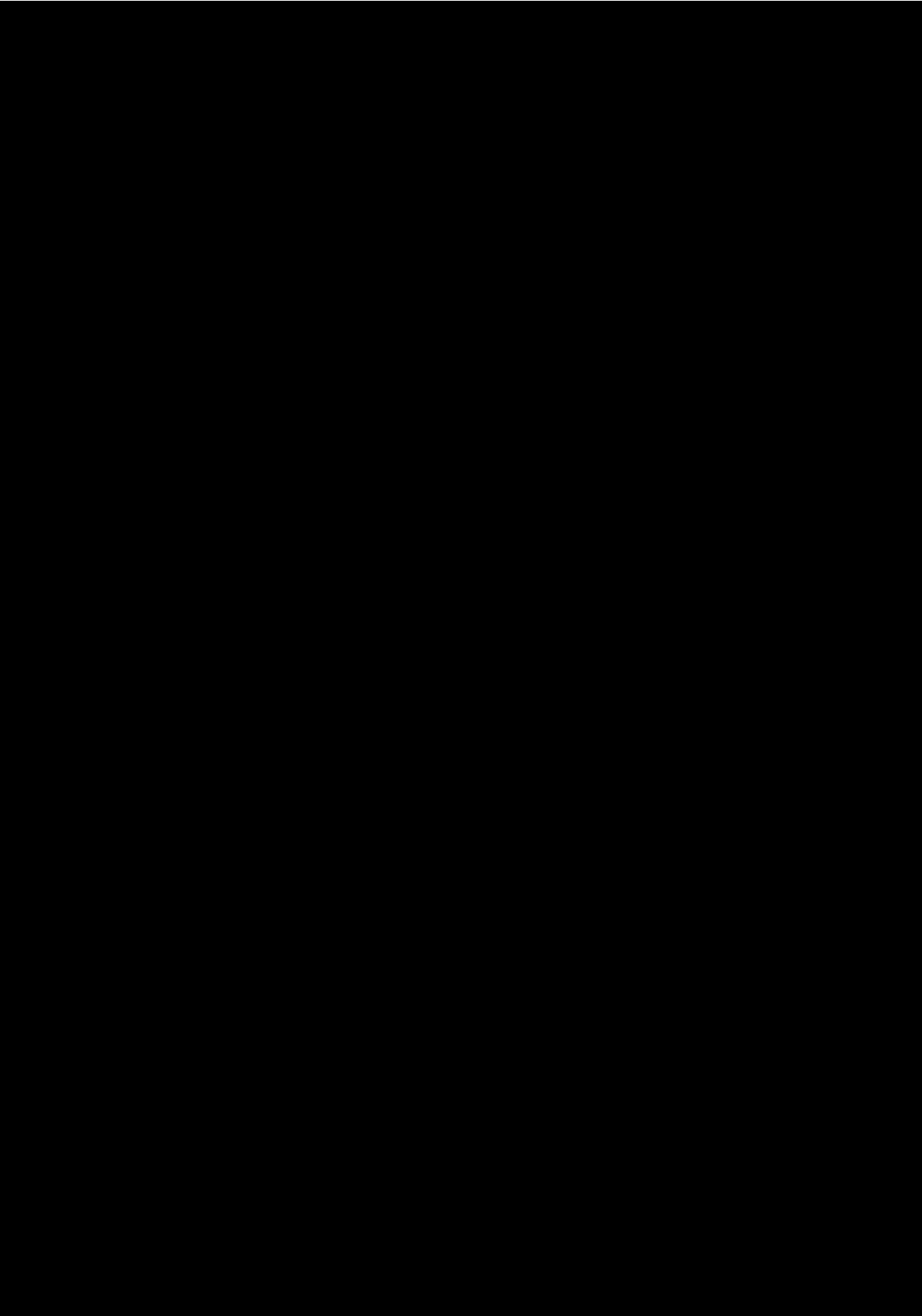
Approximately 500 ratepayers participated in community meetings or information sessions.

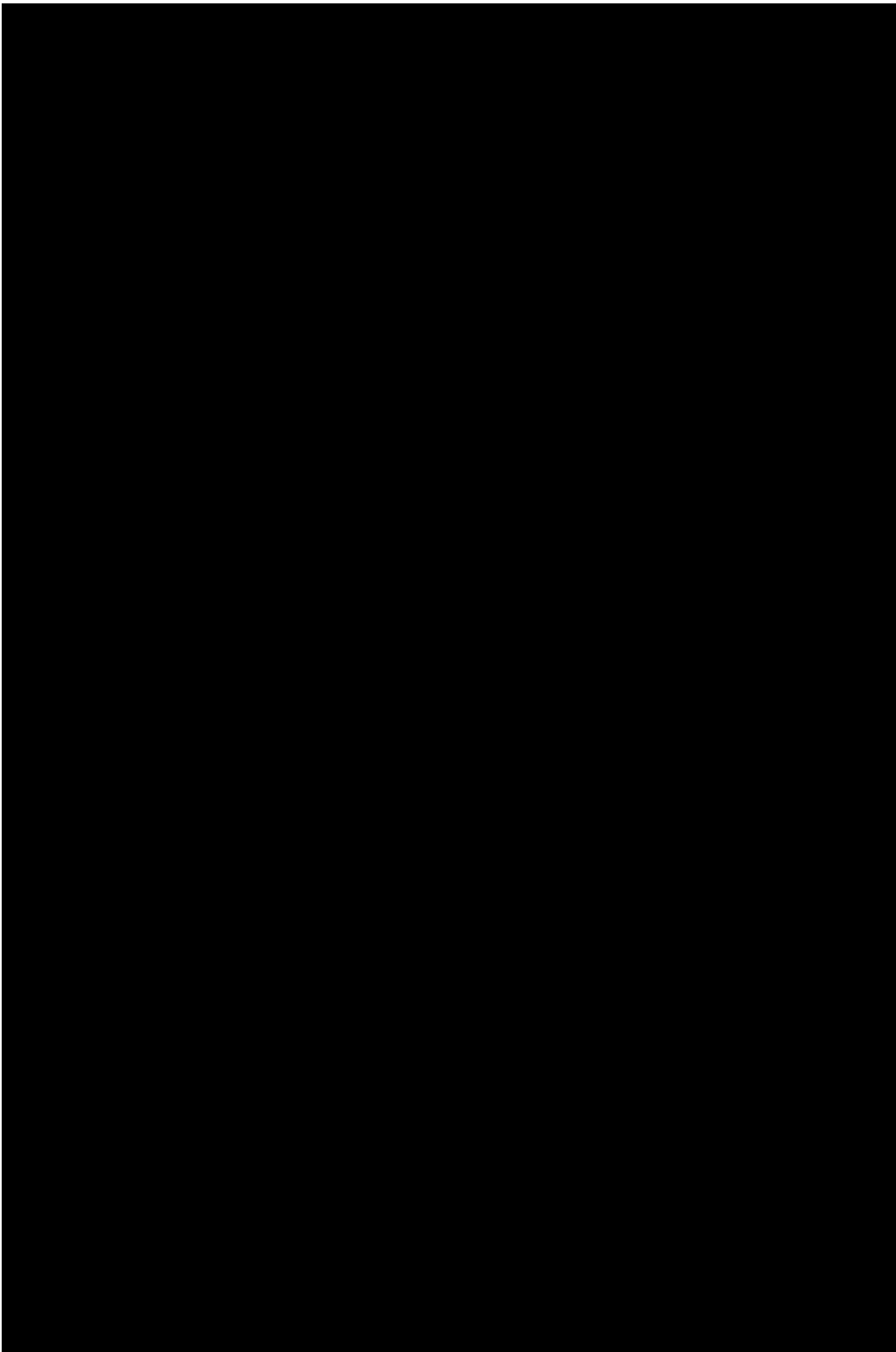
Community consultation sessions held:

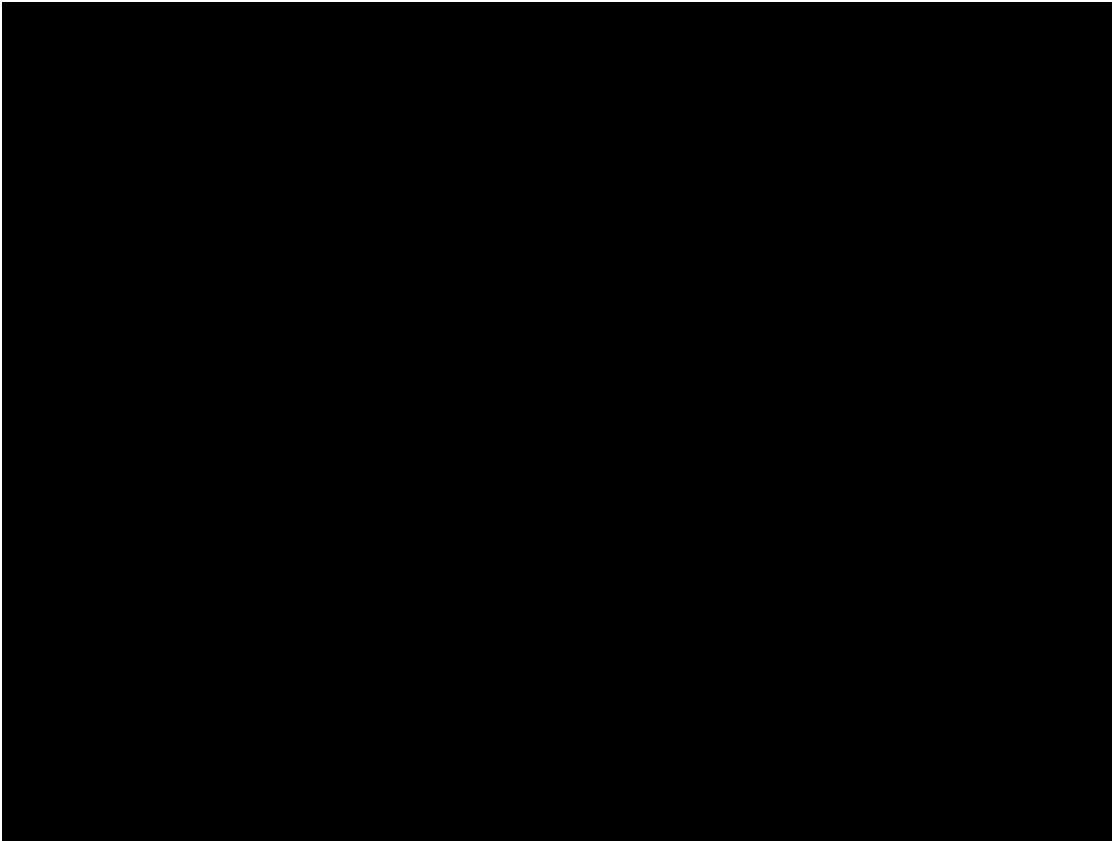
Date	Type	Venue	Time	Numbers	In person / online
17-May-23	SRV Presentation	Facebook online video	5:00 PM	325+	Online presentation
25-May-23	Griffith Business Chamber	Gemini Hotel	6:00 PM	20	In person
5-Jun-23	U3A	Senior Citizens Hall	10:00 AM	22	In person
6-Jun-23	COG Meeting	Yoogali Club	7:00 PM	39	In person
8-Jun-23	GCC Staff	Council Chambers	1:00 PM	70	Online and in person
15-Jun-23	Council Café	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	10 am - 12 pm	22	In person
22-Jun-23	Rotary Club	Griffith	7:00 AM	23	In person
27-Jun-23	Information Session	Griffith City Council	5:00 PM	1	In person
27-Jun-23	Griffith Ladies Probus	Coro Club	10:30 AM	25	In person
3-Jul-23	Yenda Progress Association & Yenda Rotary	Yenda Diggers Club	6:00 PM	30	In person
4-Jul-23	Griffith Lions Club	Leagues Club	6:30 PM	20	In person

Date	Type	Venue	Time	Numbers	In person / online
5-Jul-23	NSW Farmers	Griffith	5:00 PM	10	In person
6-Jul-23	Information Session	Griffith Central Plaza	11:30 am - 1:30 pm	15	In person
20-Jul-23	Council Café	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	10 am - 12 pm	20	In person
26-Jul-23	Griffith Rotary and Griffith East Rotary	Exies Sports Club	7:00 PM	27	In person
28-Jul-23	Griffith Business Group	La Cantina	12:30 PM	25	In person
1-Aug-23	COG Meeting	Hanwood Catholic Club	7:00 PM	80	In person
4-Aug-23	Information Session	Griffith Central Plaza	10 am - 12 pm	30	In person
16-Aug-23	Griffith Sikh Community	Sikh Temple	7pm	20	In person





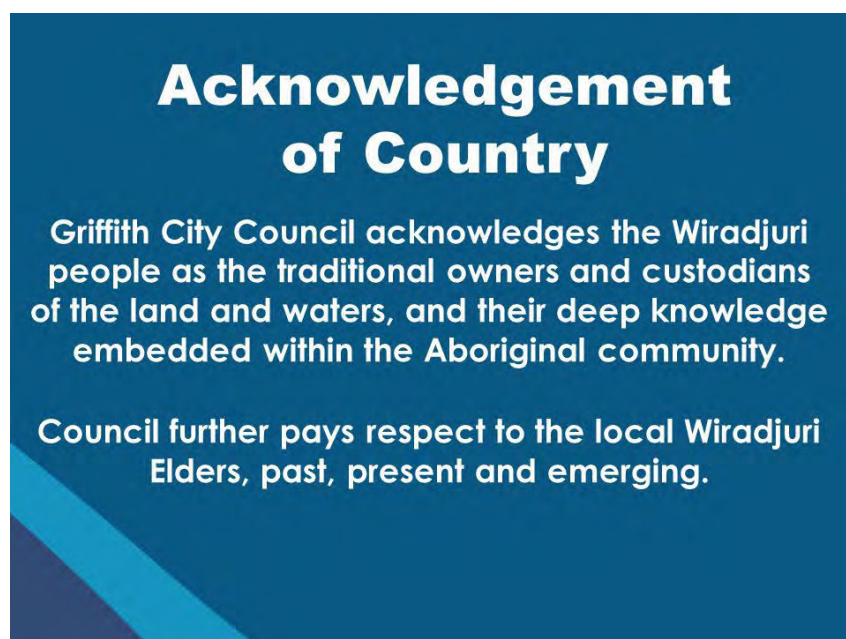




SRV Presentations

At Community Meetings

The following PowerPoint was presented at COG meetings and meetings with community organisations.





Budget Snapshot

- Rate revenue to increase by 3.7% - as per IPART Rate Peg (Approx \$700K)
- Operating Revenue - \$74.3M
- Capital Grants & Contributions - \$5.2M
- Capital Works Program - \$15.2M
- Operating Surplus - \$88K (Consolidated)

Rate impact

- Council can increase its Ordinary Rate revenue by \$716K from 1 July 2023
- There are 11,372 rateable properties in Griffith
- This equates to an average rate increase of approximately \$63 for each property

2023/24 Budget by Fund

General Fund
(including Waste Fund)

(\$3.76M)

Water Fund

\$1.89M

Sewer Fund

\$1.96M

Consolidated Operating
Surplus

\$88K

Direct Vaseby
COMMUNITY PARTNERS





Investment of Reserve Funds

- Council held \$77M of cash and investments as at 30 June 2022
 - Includes \$11M of unexpended grants and loans for capital projects
 - Council held \$66M in reserve for the following funds as at 30 June 2022:
 - Water Fund \$29M
 - Sewer Fund \$18M
 - Waste Fund \$4M
 - General Fund – Restricted * \$6M
 - General Fund – Allocated Reserves \$9M
- * Predominately Developer Contributions

Investment of Reserve Funds

- Council is committed to ensuring that externally restricted funds are used in accordance with legislation.

Major Projects – 2023/24

- Griffin Green – Affordable Housing
- Lake Wyangan Recreation Area Improvement
- Yoogali & Hanwood Flood Levees
- Completion of Yambil Street Redevelopment
- Hanwood Oval Amenities Upgrade
- Memorial Gardens Embellishment
- Mountain Bike Track

Affordable Housing Griffin Green



Partnership with Arygle Housing
20 townhouses and 42 residential blocks of land

Lake Wyangan Recreation Area Improvement \$2.0M

Recreational facilities, public amenities and green space upgrades

Roads, footpaths and cycleways \$5.3M

Major projects include:

- Boorga Road / Dickie Road
- Citrus & Rifle Road Intersection



**CBD Redevelopment
Yambil Street - Stage 4
\$2.4M**

**Visit griffith.nsw.gov.au/budget for detailed
Budget information or to make a
submission**

**Submissions close
4pm Friday 9 June 2023**

**Keep up to date with Council news via the
Council Catch Up, our website or
Facebook**

Proposed Special Rate Variation Commencing 2024/25

Griffith City Council



2011 – 2022: A Decade in Review

- 2011
 - Very low Reserves - \$14M
 - Deteriorating annual financial results
- Council response:
 - Organisational restructure - \$2M annual savings
 - Operating efficiencies. Eg: address leave entitlements, Overtime, Safe work culture
 - Alternative revenue sources identified
 - Annual operating surpluses

2011 – 2022: A Decade in Review

- **Results:**
 - Significant increases in Reserves – 2023 \$66M
 - Numerous additional Facilities
 - Financial capacity to take opportunities and be innovative

New Facilities all within Rate Pegging – Supplemented by Grants

- St Vincent's Private Hospital
- Griffith Regional Sports Centre
- 50 metre outdoor pool
- Griffin Green Affordable Housing Project (in partnership with Arygle Housing)
- CBD Upgrade – Yambil and Kooyoo Streets
- Flood Mitigation Infrastructure
- Griffith Industrial Link Road (North and South) and numerous other road upgrades
- Shared path ways including pedestrian bridges

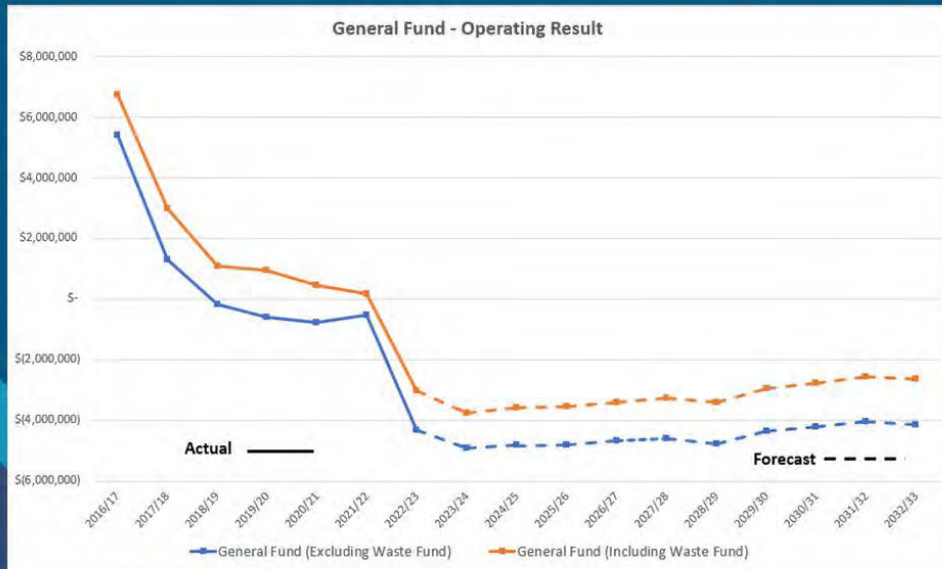
New Facilities - continued

- Two new CBD car parks
- Jubilee Oval amenities block
- New playground equipment
- Two community outdoor performance stages
- Griffith Regional Theatre Upgrade
- Lake Wyangan water circulation project
- Skate Park and Pump Track
- CBD festive lighting, event activation infrastructure (kiosks, seating, light & sound equipment)
- Additional 67+ CCTV cameras in CBD

Current Status

- Operating result deteriorating and unsustainable
- Revenue is not keeping up with inflation, cost shifting and diminishing operating grant funds
- Maintain existing services
- Asset value \$1 Billion – needs to be maintained and replaced

General Fund - Rate Peg Only



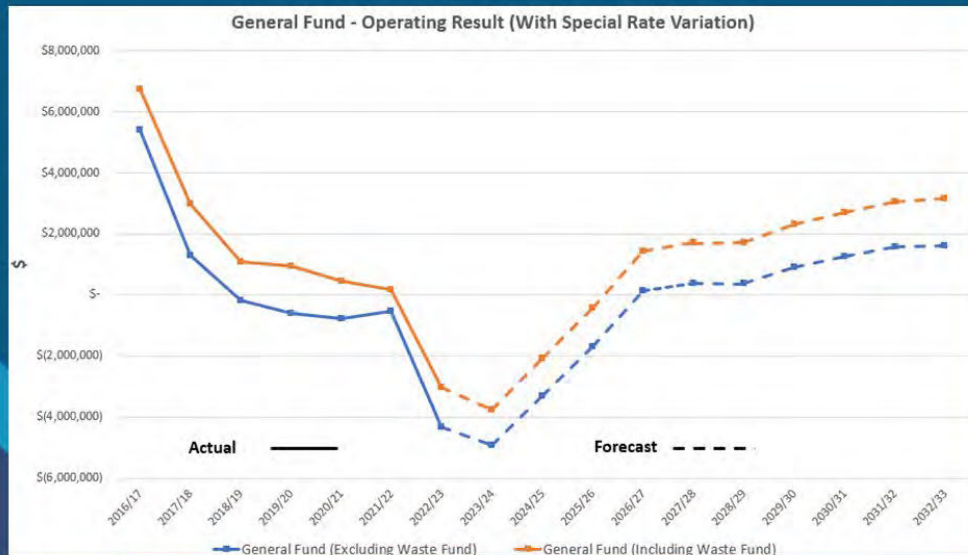
Options

- We need to respond early..... Not “kick the can down the road”
- Council is committed to finding \$1M per year in operational savings....but that will not address the whole challenge
- Option 1 – Special Rate Variation (SRV) plus annual operational savings
- Option 2 – Reduction of Services plus annual operational savings

What is a Special Rate Variation

- Councils in NSW can only increase Rate revenue by the % set by IPART each year. This is known as the Rate Peg. (2023/24 - 3.7%)
- If a Council decides to increase Rate revenue above the Rate Peg they must apply to IPART for a SRV
- If approved by IPART, the SRV will not take effect until 1 July 2024

General Fund – With SRV



Why we need to consider a Special Rate Variation for 2024/25 onwards

- The 2023/24 Budget and future projections clearly demonstrates that the General Fund is financially unsustainable
- The 2023/24 Budget for the General Fund is in deficit by \$3.65M (\$4.94M excluding Waste Fund)

What SRV is proposed?

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Cumulative
Increase including the assumed 3.0% Rate Peg	10.5%	10.5%	10.5%	34.9%

- Special Rate Variation proposed over 3 years - 34.9% cumulative increase (10.5% x 10.5% x 10.5% = 34.9%)
- Permanent – will remain in the rate base in future years

How much will rates change?

Average Rates – Residential *				
Council	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2025/26 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2026/27 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)
Griffith	\$1,106	\$1,222	\$1,350	\$1,492
Albury	\$1,493	\$1,538	\$1,584	\$1,632
Wagga Wagga	\$1,236	\$1,274	\$1,312	\$1,351

* Based on Office of Local Government Performance comparative data FY2020/21
Note: 90 of 128 NSW Councils have implemented an approved SRV since 2011

How much will rates change?

Average Rates – Business *				
Council	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2025/26 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2026/27 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)
Griffith	\$2,968	\$3,280	\$3,624	\$4,005
Albury	\$6,624	\$6,823	\$7,028	\$7,239
Wagga Wagga	\$6,642	\$6,841	\$7,046	\$7,258

* Based on Office of Local Government Performance comparative data FY2020/21

How much will rates change?

Average Rates – Farmland *				
Council	2023/24 3.7% Rate Peg	2024/25 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2025/26 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)	2026/27 10.5% includes assumed 3% Rate Peg (Griffith only)
Griffith	\$4,184	\$4,623	\$5,109	\$5,645
Albury	\$4,724	\$4,866	\$5,012	\$5,163
Wagga Wagga	\$3,074	\$3,166	\$3,261	\$3,359

* Based on Office of Local Government Performance comparative data FY2020/21

Special Rate Variation Process

- 9 May 2023 - Council resolved to make an 'in principle' application for a SRV to IPART
- May to Sep 2023 - Community Consultation
- Oct 2023 - Council resolution – vote to apply or not apply to IPART
- Jan 2024 – Deadline for application to IPART
- Feb 2024 – IPART undertakes community consultation
- May 2024 – Determination by IPART

SRV Community Consultation

Date	Time	Location	Event
6 June 2023	7pm	Yoogali Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
15 June 2023	10am – 12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
27 June 2023	5pm	Council Chambers	Information session
6 July 2023	11.30am -1.30pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session
20 July 2023	10am – 12pm	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
1 August 2023	7pm	Hanwood Catholic Club	Community Opinion Group (COG) Meeting
4 August 2023	10am – 12pm	Griffith Central Plaza	Information session

- In addition to the above, the Mayor and GM are available to address individual community organisations. Contact Council 1300 176 077 to arrange.
- Mayor & GM to attend community & business group meetings. (Rotary, Lions, U3A, Business Chamber, NSW Farmers Assoc. etc)
- Council website – information and submissions
- Council social media and newsletters

Online presentation

An online presentation by the General Manager, explaining the background, SRV process and encouraging participation, was available on Council’s website and Council’s Facebook page.

View the online SRV Presentation here

The screenshot shows a YouTube video player interface. The video title is "GCC Special Rate Variation (SRV) Presentation". The video content features a man in a suit speaking at a podium on the left. On the right, there is a line graph titled "General Fund Performance" showing financial data over time. A large red play button is overlaid on the graph. At the bottom left of the video player, it says "Watch on YouTube".

Staff and Councillor Communication

April, May and June 2023

Action

Councillor Workshops were held to discuss the budget and proposed Special Rate Variation:

- 21 March 2023
- 13 April 2023
- 24 April 2023
- 8 June 2023

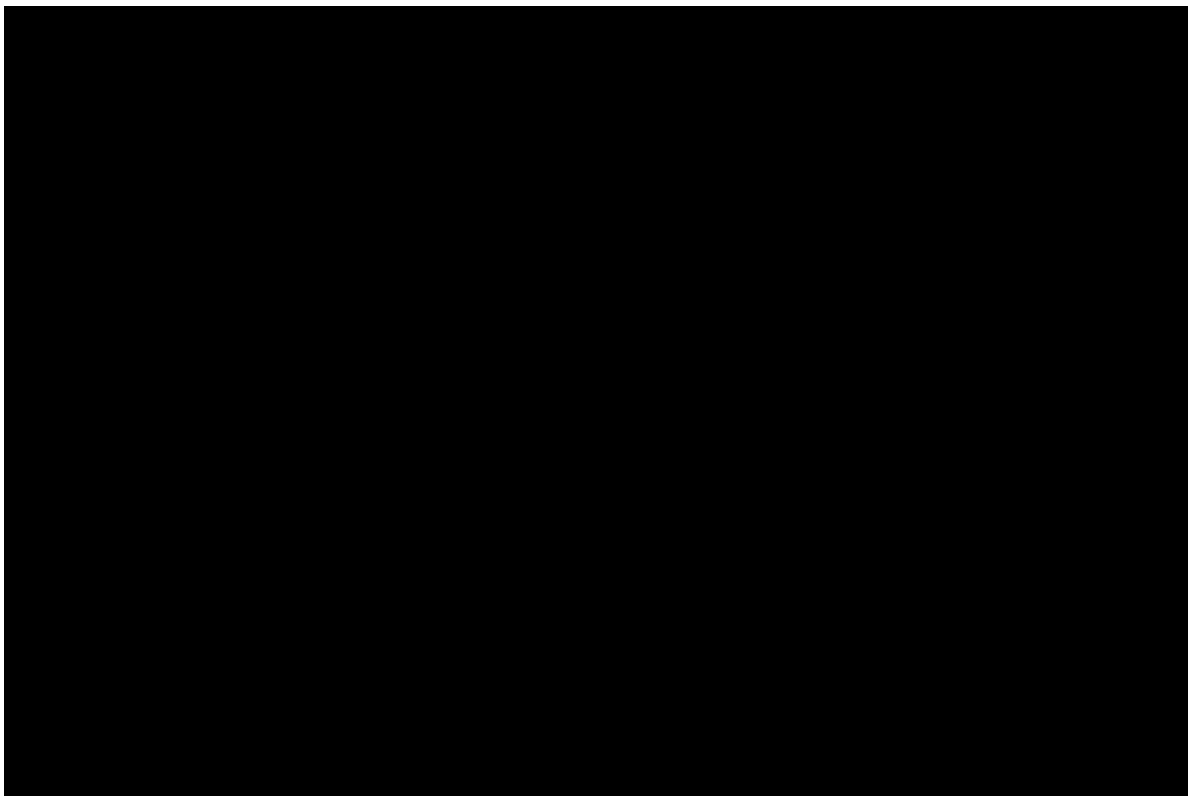
An all-staff breakfast barbecue was held on 27 April 2023 where staff were advised the SRV proposal for engagement would be going to Council.

All staff received an email from the GM on 10 May 2023 following the Council Meeting which resolved to consult the community on the proposed SRV.

Follow-up meetings with all staff were held in Council Chambers and online on 8 June 2023 to provide an update on the process.

Outcome

Providing information to staff and Councillors helped to ensure they were equipped to respond to feedback or queries received from the community.



5. Response to Feedback

Throughout the community engagement period, Council responded to concerns raised by the community by:

- addressing questions directly at face to face forums
- written responses to enquiries received by email / letter
- regular updates on Council's website including "Frequently Asked Questions" section.

A report to Council on 24 October 2023 provides responses to the key themes highlighted in the submissions received.

SRV - Frequently Asked Questions from community consultation

1. The Cashflow statement shows that Council will have around \$190M in cash in June 2033. Why is this SRV necessary if Council has so much money in the bank?

Council must restrict funds to the water, sewer and waste areas. It is a legal requirement to do this. Council does not include capital works in the Long-Term Financial Plan for major projects in the outer years as they are not within the Councillors Delivery Program period (ie: 4 years). Council must ensure that it has sufficient cash reserves to fund major future renewal of existing infrastructure and growth for new development.

2. Does this SRV guarantee no future SRVs?

This SRV will allow Council to become financially sustainable in the General Fund to maintain existing services and provide the capability to grow. Future regulation changes, additional State Government cost shifting and future capital works programs as determined by Councillors may influence future SRVs.

3. Will water and other charges increase?

Yes.

4. What services will be impacted?

If a SRV is approved the current level of services will be maintained. If a SRV is not approved, examples of community facilities that may have reduced hours are the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

5. Is the SRV increase permanent or will it wind back after 3 years?

The proposed SRV will increase the rate base annually over the 3-year period of implementation with the third year being 2026/27.

The annual rate base as from the 2027/28 year will increase by the annual rate pegging limit as set by IPART.

6. With the cost of living going up so much now, how can we be expected to manage this increase?

The proposed SRV is not a decision taken lightly. Council recognises the delicate balance between providing essential services, maintaining infrastructure, and ensuring affordability for our residents. Council offers the Pensioner Rebate Scheme, which financially supports this important group in our community. Council also has a Hardship Policy to accommodate the special needs of those unable to pay their rates in full on time. The increase is proposed to come into effect in July 2024 and staged over a 3-year period, recognising the impact and in an effort to minimise this impact as much as possible whilst ensuring Council's financial sustainability.

7. What is Council doing to remediate the situation?

Regardless of whether Council resolves to apply for an SRV, Council's Senior Management Team is committed to finding \$1 million in savings each year starting from 2024/25. This will be achieved by identifying operational efficiencies. Councillors are also being encouraged to identify possible alternate revenue sources and potential saving opportunities.

8. What do land valuations have to do with my rates?

The NSW Valuer General's Office is responsible for the valuation of all rateable land in NSW and is revalued every three (3) years. Rateable land within the Griffith LGA was revalued during 2022 and these values were provided to Council. Council calculates rates using the land value determined for your property plus a base amount.

The land revaluation process does not provide any additional rate revenue for Council. The total increase in rate revenue to Council is capped on an annual basis by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). For the 2023/24 year the rate cap increase is 3.7% above 2022/23 level (ie approx. \$700,000).

Changes to land values will impact the amount of rates payable for individual properties but the total increase in rate income received by Council for the year does not exceed the rate cap as determined by IPART.

Whilst we acknowledge that some individual assessments have moved by much greater than the 3.7% rate pegging figure, many have also increased by less and in fact some assessments have reduced in line with new land valuations.

9. What is the alternative to the proposed rate increases?

Without a Special Rate Variation, Council would need to consider reducing the levels of services provided to the community to save costs. Examples of services that may be impacted include the Griffith Regional Aquatic Leisure Centre, Griffith Regional Theatre, Pioneer Park Museum, Griffith Regional Sports Centre and Griffith City Library. In addition, service levels will be reduced. Some examples of these include our roads, parks and gardens, strategic planning and storm water drainage.

6. Appendices

1. SRV Community Engagement Plan
2. Submissions Received (redacted)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV)
from 2024/25



Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Purpose and goals	3
3	Who will we engage	4
4	Why are we engaging?	4
5	What is community engagement?	5
6	How and when will we engage?	6
7	Methods	7
8	We will have community information sessions	8
9	Reporting back and closing the loop	9
10	Evaluation	9

1 Introduction

The Special Rate Variation (SRV) Community Engagement Plan provides the framework within which Council will engage with the community to ensure Council remains financially sustainable to continue to provide services and infrastructure in the future.

Council undertook intensive community engagement during the preparation of the Griffith City Council Community Strategic Plan (CSP), Delivery Program 2022-2026 / Operational Plan 2022/2023 and the Resourcing Strategy 2022 - 2032.

All community feedback to date indicates that the Griffith community wish to live in a vibrant City with a range of services.

Like many other councils in NSW, Council is facing challenges in maintaining financial sustainability over the long-term. Over the last few months Council has been carefully reviewing its Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP), as well as reviewing operations with a view to continue to improve productivity.

Over the past 10 years Council has worked to identify savings to help ensure Council can operate sustainably and efficiently into the future. Council has resisted applying for an SRV to date, but the rate increases set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) have not kept pace with cost escalations faced by Council in providing services to our community. Cost shifting from other levels of government and diminishing value of annual operating grants over time have also contributed significantly to the pressure on Council's financial position.

The additional funds received through the SRV will increase the money available to address and correct Council's operating position and enable sufficient funds to be available for renewal and maintenance of assets and the continuation of current service levels.

Council's main revenue stream is income from rates. In NSW income from rates is capped each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. The mechanism by which a council can increase the rates by more than the cap is through a Special Rate Variation Application (SRV).

For Council to consider the potential preparation of an Application for an SRV in 2024/25 it must be demonstrated that the Council's Community Engagement Plan for the proposed SRV demonstrates an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input occurred.

This document sets out the levels and methods of engagement that Council will undertake regarding the proposed SRV.

This Community Engagement Plan outlines the approach, key messages and timeline for community consultation on the potential SRV. This plan has been developed to ensure that it meets the SRV assessment criteria set out by the NSW Office of Local Government, who sets policy and oversees the local government industry, and IPART, who will assess any SRV application submitted. It has also been developed in compliance with Council's Community Engagement and Communications Strategy, as well as the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia Quality Assurance Standard.

Griffith City Council is proposing a Special Rate Variation to fund essential infrastructure and maintain services in the community.

The proposed Special Rate Variation will ensure that the Griffith Local Government Area (LGA) remains a liveable and sustainable community for current and future generations and is structured as follows:

- 10.5% increase 2024/25 (Inclusive of rate pegging increase assumed at 3.0%),
- 10.5% increase 2025/26 (Inclusive of rate pegging increase assumed at 3.0%),
- 10.5% increase 2026/27 (Inclusive of rate pegging increase assumed at 3.0%).

This equates to a cumulative increase of 34.92% over three years.

2 Purpose and goals

The purpose of this plan is to inform and engage the community of the Griffith LGA about the proposed SRV and encourage their input and feedback through community consultation.

The community is to be adequately informed and consulted about the impact of the proposed special rate variation and the impact of not applying for a special rate variation.

The objectives of this community engagement process include:

- To present the proposed SRV
- To identify the impact of the SRV on the average rates across each rating category
- To communicate to the community the timeline and process for any potential SRV application
- To gather and consider the community's feedback to inform Council's final decision on whether and how to move forward with an SRV application.

To ensure Council has been transparent with its community, the following must be explained during the consultation and engagement phase:

- the proposed cumulative SRV rate increases including the rate peg for each major rating category (in both percentage and dollar terms)
- the annual increase in average rates (in both percentage and dollar terms) that will result if the proposed SRV is approved in full (and not just the increase in daily or weekly terms)
- the size and impact on rates where an existing SRV will continue, expire, be renewed or replaced at the end of the current financial year or during the period when the requested SRV will apply
- the rate levels that would apply without the proposed SRV increase, also clearly showing the impact of any expiring SRV
- productivity enhancements or cost containment strategies undertaken by Council and potential alternatives to the SRV.

Council will also show how it has considered and responded to issues of concern within our community as well as the community's capacity and willingness to pay higher rates.

3 Who will we engage

The key impacted ratepayers are those that pay rates in the Griffith City Council Local Government Area (LGA) or are renting property in the LGA where there may be rent increases passed to cover the proposed rate increases fully or partly.

Stakeholder groups have been identified below to ensure that the specific considerations of these groups can be integrated into the community engagement plan.

Stakeholders	Considerations
Community	The proposed SRV is a community wide issue and will impact ratepayers directly.
Elected representatives	Councillors are an important connection point/source with our community.
Council Staff	Staff in most instances are also ratepayers of the Griffith region and as such, are an important connection with our community.

4 Why are we engaging?

Council is proposing to apply to IPART for Special Rate Variation to commence from 2024/25. As part of its application Council needs to demonstrate that it has taken the necessary steps to ensure community awareness and engagement regarding the Special Rate Variation.

Council will ensure that the community has adequate opportunities to consider the proposed SRV increase, to provide feedback to the Council and for Council to consider this feedback.

Council needs to demonstrate it has:

- clearly communicated the full impact of the proposed rate increases to ratepayers
- clearly articulated whether the SV will result in either a temporary or permanent increase in the council's total income
- clearly communicated what the SV would fund
- used an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input into the SV process
- made the community aware of the need for and extent of the rate rise.

IPART will assess whether Council's consultation with ratepayers has been effective based on:

- whether an effective variety of engagement methods were used to reach as many ratepayers as possible across all relevant rating categories in order to ensure the community is aware of the need for, and extent of, the proposed rate increases, including its timeliness
- the content of the material used for consultation and its clarity
- whether the opportunities for input and feedback on the proposal made available to the community were effective
- the outcomes from consultation and any council response to community feedback
- how the IP&R documents set out the extent of the requested rate increases.

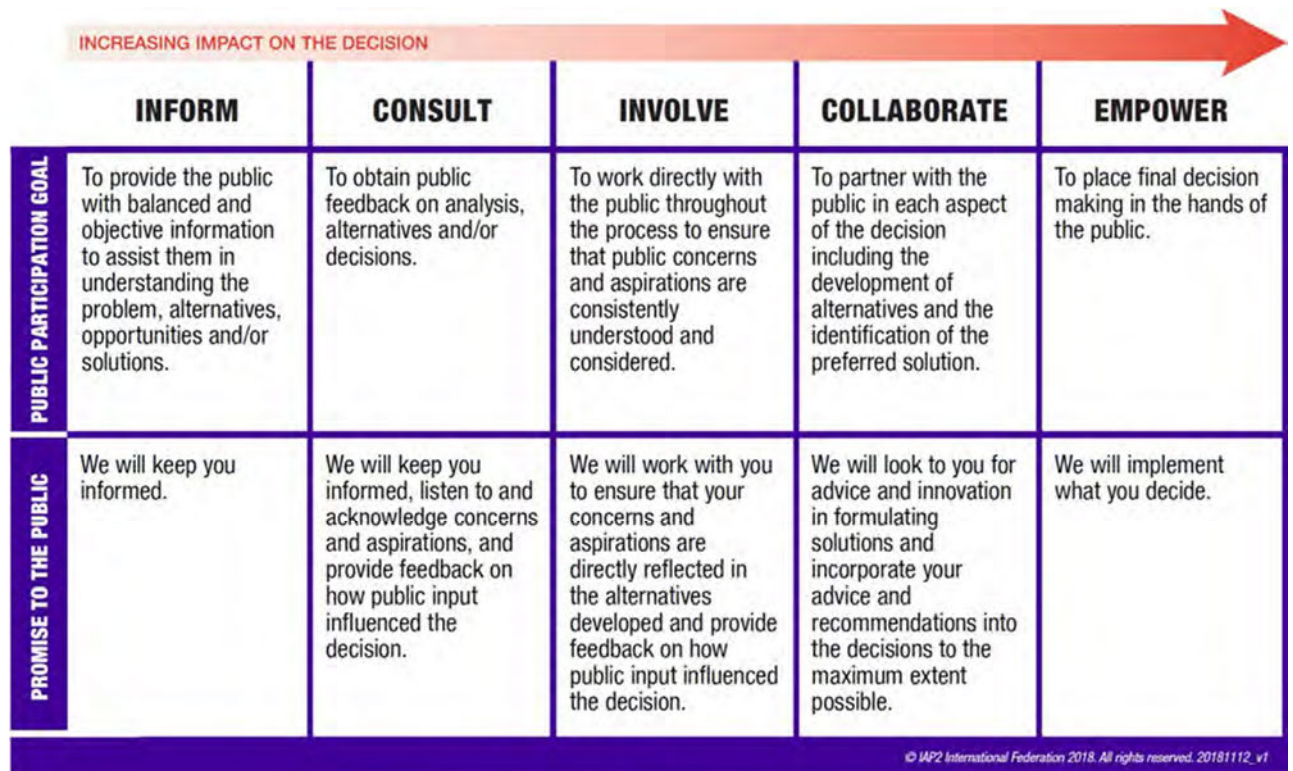
5 What is community engagement?


The level of engagement is defined from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation in the figure below, also included in Council’s Community Engagement and Communication Strategy. This spectrum outlines the level of engagement required depending on the purpose and desired outcome of the project.

The Table below outlines the different levels of input and influence the community may have over a particular project. It is our goal to give the people of the Griffith LGA as much say as the legislation, regulation, and practical realities of a given project allow.

For the purpose of the SRV Community Engagement Plan, Council will Inform, Consult, Involve and where possible Collaborate with the identified stakeholders.

Figure 1 IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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6 How and when will we engage?

The SRV Community Engagement Plan below outlines actions and timeframes for engaging the community in the potential application for an SRV from 2024/25.

Inform	Council website Fact sheet Background Rates Estimator Other information including community information sessions Online SRV presentation Frequently Asked Questions	5 June 2023 Updates as required
	Pop-up sessions COG Meetings Council Café Information Sessions with community groups and organisations	6 June 2023 1 August 2023 15 June 2023 27 June 2023 6 July 2023 20 July 2023
	Media Media releases Advertisements – Radio, Local Newspaper, Newsletters	Ongoing throughout consultation phase
	Social media Online presentation Q&A Facebook and Instagram posts Videos	Ongoing throughout consultation phase
	Printed promotional material Fact sheet, flyers, newsletter, rates notices	Ongoing throughout consultation phase
	Email newsletters Council Catch Up Council Capers (staff) Rates notices	Ongoing throughout consultation phase
	Email other Staff Community groups	10 May 2023 Staff email
Consult	Pop-up sessions COG Meetings Council Café Information Sessions with community groups and organisations	6 June 2023 1 August 2023 15 June 2023 27 June 2023 6 July 2023 20 July 2023
	Online community consultation Presentation and Q&A	17 May 2023
	Council website Have your say – online submission Written submissions	5 June 2023
	Hardcopy submission/survey Available at key Council locations	Ongoing throughout consultation phase

Involve	Pop-up sessions COG Meetings Council Café Information Sessions with community groups and organisations	June 2023 1 August 2023 15 June 2023 27 June 2023 6 July 2023 20 July 2023
	Council website Have Your Say – Online Survey Written Submissions	5 June 2023
	Hardcopy Submission/survey at key Council locations	Ongoing throughout consultation phase
Collaborate	Council website Have Your Say – Online Survey Written Submissions	5 June 2023
	Hardcopy Submission/survey at key Council locations	Ongoing throughout consultation phase

7 Methods

Dedicated SRV Webpage

- Develop a webpage dedicated to the Special Rate Variation that provides information on the proposed increase, the infrastructure and services it will fund, and how it will affect ratepayers. Website to outline community information session details, fact sheet, background, online SRV presentation, frequently asked questions and will provide a mechanism for ratepayers to submit feedback and questions. Web page to include Rates Estimator for ratepayers to assess the impact of the SRV on their respective properties .

Informational flyers

- Informational flyer to be mailed to all ratepayers of Griffith and available at community consultation sessions. The flyer will provide information on the Special Rate Variation, its benefits, and how ratepayers can provide feedback.

Council Newsletters

- Council Catch Up, Council Capers (staff newsletter).

Advertisements

- Radio advertisements during consultation phase and regular interviews with Mayor
- Local Newspaper advertisements

Community meetings/information sessions

- Hold a series of community meetings (Community Opinion Group (COG), Council Cafe and other) to inform ratepayers about the Special Rate Variation, answer questions, and gather feedback. The meetings should be held at various times and locations to ensure maximum participation.
- In addition to COG Meetings and Council Café/Information Sessions, Mayor, Councillors and General Manager available to present SRV proposal to community organisations on request.

Social Media

- Use social media channels, such as Facebook and Instagram, to promote the community meetings and encourage ratepayers to provide feedback. Social media should also be used to share updates on the progress of the consultation process.
- Online presentation of SRV proposal.

Council Meetings & Workshops

- Provide regular updates on the consultation process at Council meetings and workshops to ensure that Councillors are informed and can respond to any questions or concerns raised by the community.

Electronic Direct Mail

- (EDM) marketing to advise subscribers of information and updates.
- Internal email to Councillors and staff to inform them of the proposed SRV process.

Consultation summary report:

- Develop a Summary Report that outlines the feedback received from the community during the consultation process. The report should be made available to the public and be transparent about how the feedback was used to inform the final decision.

8 We will have community information sessions

Date	Time	Venue	Consultation type
Tuesday 6 June 2023	7pm	Yoogali Club	COG Meeting
Thursday 15 June 2023	10am - 12noon	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
Thursday 27 June 2023	5pm	Council Chambers	SRV Meeting
Thursday 6 July 2023	11.30am - 1.30pm	Griffith Central	Council Cafe
Thursday 20 July 2023	10am - 12noon	Kooyoo Street Kiosk	Council Cafe
Tuesday 1 August 2023	7pm	Hanwood Catholic Club	COG Meeting
Friday 4 August 2023	10am - 12noon	Griffith Central	Council Cafe

In addition to the above forums, the Mayor and GM will be available to address individual community organisations. Emails to be sent to stakeholder groups.

9 Reporting back and closing the loop

After the community engagement is completed, Council will:

- Collate and analyse what the community told us
- Compile a summary report to present to Council and the community
- Report to Council, including seeking endorsement to apply to IPART for a SRV.
- Inform the community of the Council decision
- Explain how the decision was made and the influence of community input
- Evaluate the engagement process.

The outcome of the community engagement and subsequent relevant decisions will be communicated through a variety of methods including:

- Councillor briefings/workshop
- Council Report and Council Meeting
- Facebook updates and information posted on Council's social media
- Website updates
- Media Releases.

10 Evaluation

To ensure the Community Engagement Strategy – Special Rate Variation is effective in achieving its objectives, a number of indicators will be used to measure success. Council will assess the following:

- Number of people who participated in each engagement pop-up and activity
- Number of enquiries and submissions received (online and otherwise)
- Social media engagement
- Website visits
- Traditional media coverage.

Appendix 2 - Submissions Received

IPART note: The council has appended submissions as part of this package, however, we have removed them in line with our privacy policy as they contain some personal information.

The submissions are available as part of the council's 24 October 2023 meeting's *Attachments Under Separate Cover 1* file via its website: <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/council-and-committees-agendas-and-minutes>