

From: Ann Pederson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 29 July 2015 5:21 PM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Cc: manly@parliament.nsw.gov.au
Subject: Ann Pederson: Submission to Review of Local Council Fit for the Future Proposals

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
Local Government Division
Review of Local Council Fit for the Future Proposals

The Honourable Mike Baird, MP and Premier of NSW

The Honourable Paul Toole, MP and Minister for Local Government

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached my submission to IPART's review of its Local Council Fit for the Future Proposals.

I appreciate this opportunity to express my views on the matter as I believe that effective local government is the bedrock of Australian democracy and government accountability to its citizens.

I oppose amalgamations where the cost to the communities impacted is far greater than any benefit and I endorse all the points made by the City of Sydney Council in its minute and attached submission to IPART of 18 July 2015.

Kind regards,
Ann Pederson

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Ann Pederson
[REDACTED]

**ANN PEDERSON: SUBMISSION TO IPART REVIEW
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT *FIT FOR THE FUTURE* PROPOSALS
29 July 2015**

A 'good society' is one where people are socially and politically included, where everyone has access to housing, education, employment, cultural opportunities, healthy lifestyles, recreation and information.

Downloaded 27 July from URL: <http://blog.id.com.au/2014/id-news/highlights-for-2014/>

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts on the proposed movement to amalgamate local government entities in NSW.

As a US national who has emigrated Australia as my preferred home country and citizenship, I believe very strongly that one of the things the USA Founding Fathers did correctly was to enshrine local government as the cornerstone of the American democracy.

It is the most wide-ranging, influential and accountable of the three levels of US government because it interacts most directly and intimately with the daily lives of citizens. US state and federal governments serve to coordinate and manage larger scale functions and external relations on behalf of their constituent local governments and citizens.

The quality of life people experience is deeply influenced by where they live and work. Home base is ideally a haven and a launching pad, enabling us to stride forth and contribute to our best to Australia.

Local government councils provide infrastructure, communications and services to give our homes, businesses and our lives within them the best environment to achieve satisfaction and success. To ensure the system works, we choose locally based candidates we trust to serve on our councils. Councillors, in turn, work with Council employees and with State and Commonwealth government partners, to ensure the best local outcomes are achieved.

In case I've not been clear: my key concerns here are to nurture and protect LOCAL INVOLVEMENT for locally relevant and agreed upon outcomes.

In the *Fit for the Future* scenario, the emphasis is on ensuring local government entities have sufficient size and scale, modernized and cost-effective structures and regulations and interact more effectively with business/industry and other levels of government. These aspirations are terrific, but they must be carefully considered and balanced against the risks and costs of seeming to promote change for change's sake.

In the case of the City of Sydney Council, its factual and authoritative submission documents that Sydney already FAR EXCEEDS the above goals and the criteria of the *Fit for the Future* local government improvement report. Therefore, there is no mandate or business case for any forced City of Sydney boundary or service area changes.

The changes in Sydney's boundaries in the 1990s brought five years of turmoil and cost taxpayers many millions of taxpayers' dollars to bed down.

There are large “unglamorous” costs are not factored into the *Fit for the Future* scenario. Take, for example, the cost to each amalgamation participant of the following essential adjustments:

1. Rebranding to accommodate changed names, logos, stationery, forms, etc. All old stationery & signage must go.
2. Consolidating the duplication of staffing for programs and services via forced redundancies of numerous employees at all levels.
3. Recasting and revising IT infrastructure, established work programmes, deployments & schedules, effectiveness measures, plans for future projects. Months and years of work for everyone involved, not to mention the consultants required.

The costs of just three essential, but below-the-radar measures is SIMPLY ENORMOUS, many hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Whereas the alleged benefits of amalgamation, if any, particularly in the case of City of Sydney, are NON-EXISTENT or dwarfed into irrelevance.

Sydney City Council, under the exceptional stewardship of Independent Lord Mayor Clover Moore, should be lauded, applauded and allowed to continue its own effective and responsible development and governance.

Sydney Council has endured relentless white-anting, sabotage and interference from political and vested interests that do not have the welfare of the city or of its businesses and residents at heart.

The State government has fostered this disgraceful campaign and should immediately restore Sydney Council’s authority over the Centennial Parklands, Darling Harbour, Barangaroo, Millers/Dawes Point/the Rocks and all other areas it has shamefully excised from the city’s responsible and vigilant control.

As one of the 1.2 million people that patronize the City of Sydney several days a week, I fully support all points made in the Sydney Lord Mayor’s Extraordinary Council Meeting Minute of 18 July 2015 and its attached Appendix A: Submission to IPART.¹

PLEASE, SHOW INTEGRITY & LEADERSHIP & LEAVE THE PROVEN HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SYDNEY’S METRO AREA ALONE.

Kind regards,

Ann Pederson

[REDACTED]

¹ City of Sydney Lord Mayor’s Minute:

http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/236346/150618_EX-COUNCIL_ITEM02.pdf

Appendix A: City of Sydney Submission to IPART:

http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/236894/150618_EX-COUNCIL_ITEM02_ATTACHMENTA.PDF