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Submission: I am thoroughy opposed to the proposed rate increase for the following reasons:
when Port Stephens council consulted the community on the proposal, 76% of respondents were opposed to the highest proposed rate rise and yet this is what Port Stephens Council has elected to pursue, completely disregarding their local community
Council spent a significant amount of money and time on community consultation only to totaly disregard the findings of this. This was a waste of my rate dollars and is a total failure by those who are supposed to represent the community
however Council spins it, they are functionally asking for an approximately 70% rate increase over 7 years, which far exceeds any growth of income for residents of the area
the rate rise far exceeds the rate of inflation across the country and the rate of wage growth over the past decade, as well as predicted wage growth in the coming decade. This will put many households, mine include, under significant financial strain.
the proposed rate increase will decrease housing affordability for both buyers and especially renters. In an economy where there is already significant concern over housing affordability and availability for renters, and the Fedefal Government is coming up with various schemes to try to increase the availability of rentals, the rate increase will negatively impact this situation by making houses less affordable
Port Stephens Council does not have a great track record within the community for managing their money and the majority of current rates, as well as the proposed increase, will benefit the tourism town of Nelson Bay while the majority of the LGA suffers from poor roads, poor facilities and in the case of Medowie, a poor excuse of a playground which pushes parents to drive to McDonalds so their kids can play somewhere safe and interesting.
the Council is currently operating worth a budget surplus, so asking for additional funds is unacceptable.