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Submission: I wish to express in the strongest terms possible my support for Marrickville Council's improvement plan. This plan clearly shows why Marrickville Council is in a much more sustainable position as a stand alone council rather than as part of the Inner West Super Council proposed by the state government.

I have been a resident of Marrickville Council all my 35 years and have been actively involved in council activities and projects, especially around youth facility improvements, at various times since I was 16. Having this experience I wish to briefly state my reasons for supporting Marrickville Council's case to continue as a stand alone council.

The first, and most obvious reason, is that the merger is not supported by the residents of Marrickville Council who are happy with the way the council is run.

The second obvious reason is that Marrickville Council is already providing more and better services than many bigger councils. To tamper with any successful council can not be a good thing and in this particular case would be a clear disservice to the residents of Marrickville Council. For example, Marrickville Council runs excellent childcare facilities, a service other councils included in the merger proposal do not provide.

Less obvious, but equally important, reasons include the character of the inner west and the importance of accessibility.

The inner west is made up of different villages. The character of the built environment and the demographics change dramatically from suburb to suburb. The demographics include many first generation migrants and for them a smaller, easily accessible council, which reaches out to the community, makes all the difference when it comes to civic engagement. It is this local civic engagement which turns ethnic concentrations into valued and valuable communities like the 'Portuguese bairo' of Petersham and the 'Greek Senate' of Marrickville.

A smaller council helps guarantee these smaller communities are valued and reached out too, that changes are noticed and capitalised upon and that the right people in council can be easily reached so that community-led initiatives come to fruition. Trust me, I have seen these dynamics at work, I am speaking from experience. As the economist E. F. Schumacher so persuasively argued we must use appropriate technologies for the best results and so often when it comes to people-centred economics "small is beautiful".

I don't believe the area I love so dearly would be the place it is if it wasn't for the impact of many, many years of good local council governance. Please allow us to keep the local in the equation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission.

Best,

Chrisanthi Giotis