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Submission: I support the submission made by the Committee of the Gladesville Community Group, of which I am a part.

I believe that reform, to achieve the scale and capacity required to undertake infrastructure works and deliver services as required, is essential.

I believe that public representation and public access to Councillors is also essential, for Councils to represent their communities and fulfil their role effectively.

I do not think that the 'mega-merger' as proposed for the region properly balances these requirements.

I also do not believe that the public consultation by Ryde, Hunters Hill, and Lane Cove Councils was adequate to represent the community's objectives. It is circular logic and definitive that everyone should want a "Superior Alternative", but the question is what model could be defined as superior.

It is my belief that:

- Council boundaries should not cut commercial centres into separate municipalities, and
- The suggested delegation of procurement activities or creation of a shared service delivery model while operational decisions and policy remain vested in constituent Councils (the Joint Regional Authority) is an attempt to 'have one's cake and eat it' too.

In terms of management of heritage and cultural factors, there is a strong argument that Lane Cove Council has delivered management more closely aligned with the expectations of the Community in Hunters Hill and Gladesville, than Ryde did in the past. Ryde Council is respected for the provision of services what are the envy of those of us living on the Hunters Hill side of Gladesville.

I request that a Superior Alternative of a smaller (than the mega-merger) amalgamation be considered, and that i) boundaries as well as ii) the balance of scale and capacity vs public representation be considered.

Boundaries

The retail/commercial centre of Gladesville, with some buffer, should be wholly contained within one municipality, to allow for coordinated planning across parking, pedestrian movement, & traffic management, as well as integrity and continuity (of the streetscape, character, etc) in the area.

Scale and Capacity vs Public Representation

I believe that the small size of Hunters Hill Council makes it difficult to employ the breadth of professionals with the skills required to deliver services in the modern era, as well as to purchase with the capacity to achieve efficiencies that a larger organisation could. However, the public do need access to elected representatives, and the 'mega-merger' of the scale suggested would not permit this.

I request that an amalgamation of Ryde, Hunters Hill, and Lane Cove Councils be regarded as a Superior Alternative to the mega-merger.