

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FORM

Do you believe the roads in the Cessnock Local Government Area need substantial improvement?

- Yes No

Do you support a continuation of the increased spending on the roads in the Cessnock Local Government Area?

- Yes No

Are you prepared to pay additional rates to continue to improve the roads?

- Yes No

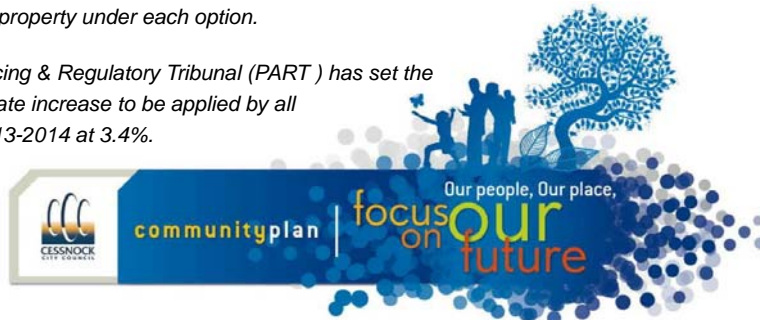
Which special rate variation option for 2013-14 would you support?

- Discontinue the existing special rate and increase rates by the legislated rate cap - reducing rates by 2.65%, or \$21 per year for the average ratepayer, with additional expenditure on roads being discontinued or a reduction in service levels for a number of Council services; or
- Continue the existing special rate and increase rates by the legislated rate cap limit of 3.4%, or \$33 per year for the average ratepayer, with existing service levels being maintained and continuation of approximately \$1.5 million expenditure on roads.

Notes: The dollar figures used above are estimates based on the rates payable on a residential property currently paying an average residential rate of \$972. The impact on individual ratepayers will vary depending on the land value and rating classification of their property.

A rates calculator is available on Council's website that ratepayers can use to calculate the variation in rates for their own property under each option.

The Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (PART) has set the cap for the general rate increase to be applied by all NSW councils for 2013-2014 at 3.4%.



Roads & Rates

Council is seeking your opinion about whether it should apply to extend its existing special rate variation for another year in 2013-14



SPECIAL RATE VARIATION OPTIONS

You have let Cessnock Council know that your highest priority for Council services is maintaining our road network.

In Council's two most recent community surveys (June 2009 & July 2012) and during the development of the *Cessnock 2020* Community Plan, it was very clear that you are not satisfied with the current development and maintenance of the road network.

Cessnock Council is seeking your opinion about whether it should apply to extend its existing special rate variation for another year in 2013-14. The special rate variation that was approved in 2011-12 for a two year period ends in June this year.

If Council no longer receives the additional rate income it will have to reduce the extent of its planned road renewal works (by approximately \$1.5 million in 2013-14) or consider decreasing service levels for other Council operations.

The money raised from the existing special rate has been spent on resealing, heavy patching and rehabilitation of regional roads, urban collector roads, and rural collector roads in the local government area.

The special rate variation approval that Council is seeking would last for one year. The special rate options are:

Option 1 Discontinue the existing special rate and increase rates by the legislated rate cap - reducing rates by 2.65%, or \$21 per year for the average ratepayer, with additional expenditure on roads being discontinued or a reduction in service levels for a number of Council services; or

Option 2 Continue the existing special rate and increase rates by the legislated rate cap limit of 3.4%, or \$33 per year for the average ratepayer, with existing service levels being maintained and continuation of approximately \$1.5 million expenditure on roads.

Council will review the community feedback before selecting a preferred option for the special rate variation. If Council adopts option 2 the special rate variation would be applied for under Section 508(2) of the Local Government Act.

The focus of the special rate variation application would be the continuation of additional funding toward renewal of the public road network via resealing,

heavy patching and rehabilitation of regional roads, urban collector roads, and rural collector roads in the local government area.

Council would like to know your views on the potential rates variation. Please complete the survey on the back of this brochure, by **Wednesday 27 February 2013**, and return it to Council by dropping it off at the Council Administration Centre or Council libraries or posting it to:

Cessnock City Council
PO Box 152
Cessnock NSW 2325.

Community Information Sessions

Community information sessions will be held to provide information about the special rate variation process and the impact of continuing or discontinuing with the proposed special rate variation.

The sessions will be followed by a discussion on the Community Strategic Plan, *Cessnock 2020*, and a confirmation that the vision, desired outcomes, objectives and strategic directions still reflect the community's aspirations.

Information sessions are scheduled as follows:

Location	Date	Time
Branxton RSL Sub-Branch Community Hall	Thursday 21 February 2013	1pm to 3pm
Cessnock Performing Arts Centre	Tuesday 19 February 2013	6pm to 8pm
Kurri Kurri Community Centre	Thursday 21 February 2013	5.30pm to 7.30pm
Wollombi Community Hall	Tuesday 26 February 2013	6pm to 8pm

For more information about the Special Rate Variation options, please see the fact sheets on Council's website where you may also complete the feedback form online www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au