

Public Comment Submissions List - Proposal for Levying Differential Rates for the 2018-19 Financial Year

Response	Objection/ Support/ Comment	Comments
1	Comment	<p><i>The proposed Differential Rates for 2018-19 has rated Residential Vacant at double the amount as Residential Improved. The rationale being ‘... an effort to promote development of this category....’</i></p> <p><i>The objective of the Local Housing strategy is, “... to cater for population growth, provide for future housing needs within the City of Joondalup, and meet residential infill targets.....’.</i></p> <p><i>I have a property within the Local Housing Strategy, which I am considering demolishing the house and subdividing the land into Duplex Blocks.</i></p> <p><i>However, the current approach to Differential Rates is a disincentive to redevelop the property, as the rates will be doubled when the property moves from Residential Improved to Residential Vacant.</i></p> <p><i>I therefore recommend that the City exempts properties within the Local Housing Strategy, to pay the same rates as Residential Improved, for a period of five years after the commencement of the property’s redevelopment.</i></p>
2	Support	<p><i>Agree to the proposal. I would even add an additional 5% per year to the double rates. The reason is that this way more lots will be made available for construction. If we just get 1.000 lots this way into the market that would be 5% of our infill requirements.</i></p>
3	Comment	<p><i>I believe that our rates will increase by twice that of inflation. Thats just great. More money we have to find. I understand that money is required to run the City but instead of constantly stinging the struggling rate payers why not have a good look at how you spend the money. Give me a week in your office and I bet I can find lots of savings and inefficiencies that would possibly reduce our rates.. Yea thats going to happen.</i></p>
4	Comment	<p><i>My feedback to the Differential Rates proposal is general in nature: Rates increases need to be kept to the lowest possible level. With CPI just above zero, wages stagnant and unemployment high; and</i></p>

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		<i>with electricity, water and gas prices rising, I feel the City of Joondalup can best serve a majority of its citizens by striving to minimise rates increase.</i>
5	Comment/ Objection	<p><i>I wish to note a number of comments regarding the differential rates:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Why is the increase of 2.95% across all rates not clearly spelt out and why is there no supporting argument for that increase in the "Objects & Reasons" document? It appears to be a clear effort to obfuscate the increase that is being levied on all ratepayers in the City of Joondalup.</i> <i>2. The May Council meeting had financial papers disclosing that the CPI rate for Perth was 0.9%, the WA wage price index was 1.4% and the Local Government Cost Index was 1.9%. How can the Joondalup Administration and Council justify charging a rate significantly higher than the potential cost increases they are facing? Where is the explanation for the increase being 227% higher than CPI or 111% higher than the wage index?</i> <i>3. WA Business and economy is suffering and the Joondalup residents are experiencing stagnant or decreasing wages over the past few years. The City needs to show flexibility and empathy towards its residents and keep the proposed increase to a minimum and demonstrate its willingness to live within its means.</i> <i>4. If differential rates are to be applied to vacant land then it should only be for land owned by corporations or investment structures for example trusts. Individual owners should not be penalised for the time taken to design and build a house on vacant land.</i> <i>5. Higher rates applied to commercial business premises impact on the costs of small business and if the City of Joondalup is looking to attract more businesses to the area then a more appealing rates policy towards businesses should be considered.</i>
6	Comments/ Objection	<p><i>I wish to complain in about the council proposed 2.95% rates increase for 2018-2019. Yet again council is increasing rates significantly more than inflation. The current Perth inflation rate of 0.9%. Wage growth (for people lucky enough to have a job) is virtually non existent. Perth had the country's highest unemployment rate.</i></p>

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		<p><i>Shadow Local Government Minister Tony Krsticevic said Councils needed to do more to minimise rate increases.</i></p> <p><i>“Rate rises across the board should be kept at inflation and councils need to justify to ratepayers why they’re beyond that, especially in these difficult times,” he said.</i></p> <p><i>“Councils are obviously not in tune with the difficulties of ratepayers if they’re increasing rates more than inflation.”</i></p> <p><i>Personally I have never been involved in mayor or councillors elections until last year's debacle surrounding the ridiculous waste of money that Council wanted to borrow to build a performing arts centre.</i></p> <p><i>At that time some councillors voted to inflict rate increases of between 5% and 7% (council figures) to finance this white elephant project on an already suffering ratepayers. The project was ridiculously expensive. It was badly planned. It wasn't even in the CBD. It wasn't needed in the present tough financial climate. It cost ratepayers approx \$1.6 million. It would have exposed long suffering ratepayers to unsustainable debt for 40 years. I felt it was foolish and a reckless waste of money. I decided to attend all of the recent Mayor / Councillor pre-election forums. I now wanted to see where my rates were being spent. I wanted a new fresh approach to local government. I wanted genuine consultation. I wanted to hear that Council will spend my money wisely and efficiently. I wanted to hear how the new council would reinvigorate the CBD. A quick walk round the deserted streets and empty shops, cafes and offices will tell you the city is slowly dying. The majority of candidates wanted either 0 or low rate increases yet here we are with a rate increase of over 3 times the rate of inflation. The majority of candidates wanted one or two hour free street parking to help both businesses and individuals. After talking to many small business owners and residents of Joondalup I firmly believe this would be a massive help to them. Many many local councils have successfully introduced one or two hour free street parking. Why can't joondalup? There will be soon be more “lease for sale” signs around joondalup than actual operating businesses and offices</i></p> <p><i>After nine months of the new council I am now bitterly saddened and disappointed. To the Mayor and Elected Councillors:</i></p> <p><i>“ Never again will I vote at Council elections or attend such forums. I believe it is a complete and utter waste of my time.</i></p> <p><i>“ I don't feel council listens to insignificant people like me. I feel my (and many voters) concerns are ignored.”</i></p>

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		<p><i>For your information: I'm 62 and unemployed (for three years) State taxes and charges have increased by over \$495 in 2017 and \$295 per year in 2018. A eye watering \$790 increase in two years. I had my state seniors rebate (roughly \$250) put back a year by Colin Barnett. I had it then cut to \$100 by Mark McGowan Caltex Joondalup today advertised petrol at \$1.63.9 per litre. July 2017 the average price was near \$1.20 per litre. Or in layman's terms an increase of about \$800 per year. Rates in Joondalup have, I believe, increased significantly more than inflation every year since 1998. I now am roughly \$1700 per year worse off (not including Joondalup rate increases). I realise that this figure is not Joondalup Councils increase. A significant portion of that comes from the unsustainable spending of former Liberal state premier Colin Barnett and his government and the dreadful financial position the state finds itself in. But... Every increase hurts people like me. Every dollar of lost income hurts people like me. For someone like me every dollar counts. I can't spend money I dont have! I hope that you take into consideration people like me when you finalise this years rate increase.</i></p>
7	Comment/ Objection	<p><i>I would like to comment on the proposed rate increase of 2.95% for the financial year 2018-19.</i></p> <p><i>As the table below indicates, CPI for Perth over the past year was a tiny 0.9%. It seems unfair that the City of Joondalup wants to increase rates by more than THREE times the CPI rate.</i></p> <p><i>Ratepayers are doing it tough. Wage increases are flat, unemployment has risen to its highest level in 16 years (6.9 % according to ABS data for the March quarter), and many retirees are getting record low returns on their investments (1.12% - current Hostplus cash rate).</i></p>

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		<i>Please will the City consider cutting non-essential expenditures so that a more modest rate increase (no more than 0.9%) can be set for 2018/2019?</i>
8	Comment	<p><i>I thought it important I share my thoughts on what I assume is the tough task of setting the Annual budget for 2018-19. I would like to preface my commentary by explaining that I appreciate the CEO, The Executive team, as well City's administration officers for the work undertaken all year round.</i></p> <p><i>As Elected Members one of the powers vested to you is the setting of the how the administration raises revenue and how it is spent. This year has already seen the State Government raise fees and charges for households - I have accepted these as I have read the rationale and while annoying were necessary for a number of reasons. Local Governments in themselves are an interesting beast, often lumped with the States dirty work with little to no support.</i></p> <p><i>This year it appears the administration has recommended a general rate increase across the all categories of 2.95%. While I appreciate the policy and planning framework surrounding the figure, I ask; Why in the current economic conditions a rise of this magnitude justified or necessary?</i></p> <p><i>The next financial year Department of Treasury forecasts inflation at 1.5% and wages at 1.75%, while the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) has inflation at 2.0% and wages 2.4%. Both these economic groups key figures do not justify a 2.95% rise, the City's administration has not provided a rational for it either..</i></p> <p><i>This past year found my family experienced some financial hardship which ended with a mediated agreement with the City regarding our rates. Furthermore I have seen year in year out continual increases and its accepted normality. Based on my calculation, the proposed increase will see an additional cost of \$38.86 to our household. Hardly bank breaking for us in isolation however will be a number of rises that will no doubt add up.</i></p>

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		<p><i>I would therefore encourage the current Council to request the administration to tighten its belt regarding the operating costs. This would not necessarily be the monumental task which they may lead you to believe it is. I promise you that your experienced CEO and Executive team can and will, with ease, continue to provide the excellent level of service for residents within the City. The additional revenue equates to roughly the total interest received on investments. The mechanisms still exist for budget relocation during the year the difference is the administration would have to seek Council approval to put the hand in its pocket rather than asking the residents to fund the additional expenditure.</i></p>
9	Comment	<p><i>.....certainly understands that the City of Joondalup has an obligation to run a balanced budget. Obviously as part of this process the Differential Rates Levy plays a significant part to ensure this occurs.</i></p> <p><i>While some LGA's do not apply this Levy, it seems since 2008-09 it has become an integral part of rate revenue for the City.</i></p> <p><i>Feedbackindicates the impost of Differential Rates has an impact on their business. Small to medium size businesses are struggling in the current economic environment, for a variety of reasons, and any additional tax/rate impost cuts heavily into their ability to stay afloat, let alone employ more local people (an outcome we all want).</i></p> <p><i>.....is not privy to the elements and pressures associated with putting the City's Budget together; however we do believe we have an obligation to and the small business community in general to oppose cost increases that may affect their ability to simply stay open.</i></p> <p><i>.....also understands, and acknowledges, that a lower amount of revenue from these rates would lead to a larger increase in residential rates.</i></p> <p><i>The position ofis to abolish the Differential Rates Levy and indeed any additional cost burden on business; however we do understand this, currently, is not a reasonable outcome as part of the overall Budget for the City.</i></p> <p><i>A preferred outcome would be to consider the impact on small business and limit the increases where possible to be counteracted by cost reducing alternatives going forward.</i></p>