

Mayors Message



Future of Local Government - City of Launceston's Proposed "Boarder Shift"

The State Government has commissioned the Local Government Board to undertake a Review of the role, function, and design of local government in Tasmania. The Review has an agreed scope that enable councils to deliver their roles and functions including seven key theme areas effectively and sustainably:

- Community wellbeing
- Economic development and local promotion
- Environment
- Finance and administration
- Governance, accountability, and representation
- Infrastructure provision and management
- Land use planning and other regulatory services

All Tasmanians including Local Governments have an opportunity to contribute to the Review which concludes in July 2023 and the City of Launceston (CoL) have made their contribution.

CoL want to create a bigger metropolitan municipality claiming a "boarder adjustment", rather than an amalgamation, is required. They argue residents in neighbouring Councils have triggered a financial liability on the city by utilising facilities such as:

- Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery
- Princess Theatre and Earl Arts Centre
- Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre
- Cataract Gorge Reserve
- Car Villa Cemetery and Crematorium
- City Park
- Riverbend Park
- Churchill Park
- Regional Netball Centre (Hobblers Bridge)
- Regional Athletics track, BMX Track and Hockey facility
- Central Business District

Parts of the Northern Midlands municipality included in the proposed boarder adjustment incorporates Perth, Launceston Airport and the adjacent business and industrial precincts.

Northern Midlands Council rejects Launceston's bid to grab control of key business, industrial and residential precincts (including the proposed TRANSLink intermodal facility) and shift its own rates costs onto our communities.

If the City of Launceston's bid is successful, it will severely reduce our asset and rates base and lead inevitably to an increase in rates for our Northern Midlands ratepayers.

Launceston's proposal says nothing about the revenue which flows to the city's businesses and shops, or the additional revenue that goes to council from car parking fees and other service charges paid by Northern Midlands residents.

Northern Midlands' is in a strong fiscal position due to its responsible financial management strategies over recent years, and this was recognised in a recent report by the Auditor-General that found we had substantially improved our position on previous years with a net surplus of \$6.8 million and net assets of \$409.27 million.

Community infrastructure such as main street renewals, recreation precincts, and community centres, is the cornerstone of regional prosperity. Infrastructure creates jobs, enables sustainable growth, protects the environment, and fosters a thriving community by bringing people and businesses together.

Priority projects we have identified align with local, regional, state, and federal plans, and represent a significant investment in the future of our communities.

At the end of the 18-month Review, the Board will make recommendations to the Government about the reforms it believes are needed. Northern Midlands will be making its own submission to the Local Government Board Review, and I encourage all our residents, who have chosen to live within our municipality, to do the same.

For more information about how you can make your submission visit:
<https://www.futurelocal.tas.gov.au/>

Mary Knowles OAM
Mayor

Project Updates

Site works have commenced at **Tooms Lake Camping Area** in preparation for a \$120,000 investment in the Infrastructure Upgrade Project which includes:

- Construction of an additional pump-out toilet facility.
- Removal of dead/dangerous limbs and trees.
- Removal of large rocks and the placement of gravel/soil to create level camp sites.
- Separation of landscaped camp sites.
- Drainage and resurfacing of the parking area adjacent to the boat ramp access road.
- Upgrade of the walking path (100m).
- Upgrading of public signage.

