Submissions to the City of Swan on the differential rating categories 2026/27

Dear Ratepayer/s

We refer to your submission regarding the City of Swan's intention to levy differential rates for the 2026/27 financial year.

Under section 6.36(4) of the Local Government Act 1995, a local government must consider any submissions received before adopting its 2026/27 differential rates.

A report of submissions received on the proposed 2026/27 differential rates was tabled and discussed at the Council meeting held on 22 June 2026 and your submission formed part of this report.

After reviewing the draft budget and estimated budget deficiency, Council resolved at the Special Council Meeting on 22 June 2026 to adopt a 4.95 per cent for the Residential rate category (lower than initially advertised), while retaining the 5.5 per cent increase for other categories.

A total of 1,821 submissions were received during the public advertising period for the proposed 2026/27 differential rates. While this was a significant response, many submissions contained identical or near-identical wording, indicating shared messaging and coordinated discussion within community social media groups and community networks. While commenting on the proposed rate increase, many of these submissions also request Council to increase expenditure on a range of projects and infrastructure.

Few submissions were received from commercial, industrial, rural business or other non-residential rating categories. No material concerns were specifically raised regarding the minimum rate or differential rating methodology for non-residential categories.

Submissions were heavily concentrated in the City's growth corridor suburbs, with the top five suburbs accounting for approximately 67.2% of all submissions.

The City recognises the financial pressures currently faced by the community and has carefully considered all feedback received. The following outlines the City's response to the key themes raised:

Cost Pressures and Financial Sustainability
The City is experiencing significant cost increases across several key areas, including fuel, utilities, construction, and contracted services. These cost pressures are largely outside the City's control and must be accommodated within the annual budget.
To minimise the impact on ratepayers, the City has implemented approximately $1 million in operational savings, alongside efficiencies in capital works planning and procurement. Despite these measures, a modest rate increase remains necessary to maintain service delivery and financial sustainability.

Service Levels and Maintenance
The City acknowledges concerns regarding maintenance and service delivery. Service level adjustments have occurred over recent years following periods of zero rate increases, during which costs continued to rise while revenue remained unchanged.

The 2026/27 budget does not include further reductions to maintenance services, recognising community expectations and the importance of maintaining asset condition and public spaces.

Infrastructure Investment
The City manages a large and growing asset base valued at over $3 billion. Continued investment in infrastructure is essential to ensure safety, functionality, and long-term sustainability. Deferring infrastructure renewal would result in significantly higher future costs and service disruptions. The adopted budget seeks to maintain investment in both new and existing infrastructure across all areas of the City.

Growth Areas and Equity
The City continues to invest in both established and growth suburbs. Recent and ongoing projects in growth areas include major community facilities, open space developments and sporting infrastructure. Funding decisions are based on asset condition and community need across the entire municipality, rather than location alone.

Support for Ratepayers
The City notes that financial assistance measures remain available to eligible ratepayers, including:

- State Government pensioner rebates (up to $750 annually)
- Flexible instalment payment options

These measures aim to assist households in managing rate payments.

Council acknowledges the concerns raised in submissions, particularly in relation to affordability and service delivery. After balancing these concerns with the City's financial obligations and long-term sustainability, a reduced rate increase of **4.95%** has been adopted for Residential rates.

This approach aims to maintain essential services and infrastructure while moderating the impact on ratepayers.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact our office on (08) 9267 9267.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID TREVASKIS
Executive Director Corporate