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Subject: (56892) Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council - External Boundary Review - Tony Williams
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Online submission for **Livingstone Shire Council and Rockhampton Regional Council - External Boundary Review** from **Tony Williams**

Submission Details

Name: Tony Williams

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4 June 2022

Mr Pat Vidgen
Electoral Commissioner
Level 20, 1 Eagle Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Pat

As the Mayor of the Rockhampton Region, I am pleased to make a submission in support of the suburbs of Glendale, Glenlee and Rockyview transferring to the Rockhampton Regional Council (RRC).

Having spent 18 years in local government with Rockhampton City Council, then the amalgamated Rockhampton Regional Council and now the deamalgamated Rockhampton Regional Council, I have consistently advocated for one thing – a bigger and better region.

This transfer will achieve that, and both the Rockhampton Region and Livingstone Shire will benefit from this decision into the future.

It is my firm belief that while the 2013 deamalgamation should never have occurred, the boundary review now is an anomaly from that process which needs to be corrected. The government at the time failed to give Rockhampton Region residents the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights and have a say on their future, and subsequently, de-amalgamation was forced upon us. This is now an opportunity to correct that wrong.

Since deamalgamation, RRC has been placed at significant disadvantage by supporting the residents in those three communities who live on our doorstep and who use council's services and facilities, as they naturally would, being just 12km from our City Centre, as opposed to 40km to their centre in Yeppoon. Without any rates income to support their use of our services and infrastructure including sporting facilities, libraries, and roads, it has been left to RRC ratepayers to make up the shortfall which is estimated to cost around \$2.5 million a year. If these suburbs do not transfer to RRC, this problem will only be exacerbated in the years to come and put an even greater impost on current ratepayers. And we know this to be a clear fact.

Residents in the Northern Suburbs work, go to school, play sport and shop in our region as evidenced in the heat map data supplied by Roy Morgan in 2022 as per Council's previous submission. This data clearly shows these residents spend 87% of their time in the RRC area. It is untenable that there is an expectation that Rockhampton ratepayers should subsidise and underwrite the further growth in these areas without the transfer occurring as it will come at our expense as we continue to provide this key critical infrastructure.

During RRC's community consultation and promotion of the Northern Boundary Review, we have overwhelmingly received feedback from residents of the three suburbs that it simply makes sense to be part of the Rockhampton Region.

This is further confirmation of what we have already seen three times over the last decade as residents in the Northern Suburbs of Glenlee, Glendale and Rockyview voted three times to transfer to the community they call home – the Rockhampton Region. Their voices have not been heard to date and this is an opportunity for the Change Commission and Queensland State Government to listen and to take action.

I am calling on the State Government to do the right thing and redraw the boundary to include Glenlee, Glendale and Rockyview in the RRC area, as this is the single most important decision which will define our Region's growth for decades to come.

The only viable option for Rockhampton to grow is to the north. Rockhampton city is constrained by the Berserker Range to the east and in the south and west by the Fitzroy floodplain. This is a major issue for Council as we see continued approval of rural residential development (with no proper planned community infrastructure) in the Northern Suburbs that will limit the future of natural growth patterns of residential development should the current status quo remain.

As a major service centre for defence, agriculture, resources and mining and manufacturing industries, it is critical for our Region's future prosperity that we can continue to grow. Over the next 20 years, Parkhurst's population will grow by approximately 10,000 people, at which point we will be land locked. RRC's investment and advocacy to grow these industries means it is planning well beyond the next 20 years. The Northern Suburbs will support our Region's growth for the next 50 years and beyond which is critical for sustaining future generations.

By supporting the wishes of these residents, it not only allows them to contribute to the community that they actually live in and balances what is currently a very unfair ledger, but it gives our Region the opportunity to give a more considered approach to the planning and development of the northern suburbs compared to the ad hoc and fragmented development that is occurring under LSC.

Not only is this what the residents in the Northern Suburbs want, these suburbs coming home would benefit everyone across the Rockhampton Region and, ultimately, Livingstone Shire as well. Livingstone's current growth rate of 1.8% means they will recover these property numbers in the next few years as they, understandably, continue to concentrate on growing along the Coast. Meanwhile, RRC has a plan to invest in and grow these areas to provide critical infrastructure and services while still protecting the rural character of these three suburbs.

Our plan means more people, more businesses and more jobs. It means more money flowing into the local economy here and at the beach. The future we want is a bigger and better Rockhampton Region, with more schools, more healthcare options, more facilities and more services for everyone. And as we grow these suburbs, Livingstone will grow the coast and we will both be better which means our region will be its best. A rising tide lifts all boats, and the future of both Local Government Areas is brighter if only this decision can be made once and for all.

Yours sincerely



Tony Williams
Mayor
Rockhampton Regional Council