

From: [REDACTED]
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To: Mount Alexander ERAP Submissions 2023
Subject: Submission to Review

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Local Council Electoral Structure Review 2023 - Mount Alexander Shire

Submission to Preliminary report

I am a resident of one of the smaller towns in Mount Alexander Shire and am primarily concerned about unequal representation given between the rural wards and Castlemaine ward. Our smaller towns have different communities and therefore have different needs and priorities to the urban Castlemaine communities.

My comments on the proposed models are as follows –

Model 1 – I definitely would not like this model to be introduced because I consider that an unsubdivided structure would lead to disparity between Castlemaine and the rural areas because of the risk of a lack of local representation for our smaller towns.

Model 2 – I think this structure would provide a more even representation for rural and urban communities. This multi-councillor ward structure could also assist in the problem of wards being uncontested.

Model 3 – This single-councillor ward structure is my preferred model because it would also provide a more even representation for rural and urban communities, and it is most similar to the existing wards. Because of the heritage streetscape and landscape values, the Tarrangower ward has very different priorities to the Loddon ward.

Further comments –

I think an increase in the number of councillors, rather than a decrease, is necessary because the population in the Shire is increasing and the voter-to-councillor ratio is already high.

If Model 2 is used and previous wards are merged together, then completely new names should be used, i.e. not using previous names such as Loddon and Calder. Suggestions could include indigenous, gold-mining and/or geological themes.

In conclusion, I favour either Model 3 or Model 2.

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