



Our Ref: RS/CT File FIN.1
Enquiries: Cr Ross Thornton

9 May 2014

Mr Lyndon Rowe
Chairman
Economic Regulatory Authority
PO Box 8469
PERTH BC WA 6849

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email as the
original and
only copy**

Emailed to: publicsubmissions@erawa.com.au

Dear Mr Rowe

Re: Submission – Draft Microeconomic Reform Recommendations

With respect to the above document, the Shire of Denmark would like to submit its objection to Recommendation 4 of the report which reads as follows;

“Repeal the Royalties for Regions legislation, or restrict regional funding to an amount determined annually as part of the Budget process and guided by appropriate cost benefit analysis on a project-by-project basis.”

The Shire of Denmark remains a strong advocate for the Royalties for Regions program and the funding that regional communities have been able to access through various attributes of this program over the last few years. Council totally rejects the Report’s inference that the program is not subject to the same scrutinies as other government programs. All of the projects that this Council has been able to access has been subject to rigorous approval processes, extensive and external review and planning and each project has been managed to the highest standard, contrary to the reports conclusions and inferences.

Not since the Roads to Recovery program was implemented by the Federal Government many years ago has regional Western Australia benefited from such a worthwhile and major funding source. Country towns and communities have a right to basic infrastructure and services and the Royalties for Regions program has helped bridge this gap and start addressing decades of neglect in rural areas with well thought-out, much needed and competitively fought projects.

Complemented by the Regional Blueprints and Regional Investment Frameworks, soon to be released across regional WA, the funding moving forward will be subject to even higher levels of scrutiny and economic, environmental and social betterment investment tests.

We are certain that continued access to this funding will provide opportunities for transformational projects that will also deliver on the expectations of value for investment demanded by the taxpayers of Western Australia living in both the metropolitan and regional areas of this vast and diverse State.

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After all it is predominantly the metropolitan communities that travel throughout this vast State expecting the same basic level of services and facilities that they have grown to expect and take for granted living in the metropolitan area!

Through the Royalties for Regions Country Local Government Fund, the Denmark community has received funding for many quality and required initiatives, providing an opportunity to start funding the gaps and providing basic levels of infrastructure that would have otherwise been impossible, including:

- *Denmark CBD Redevelopment;*
- *Peaceful Bay Infrastructure;*
- *Denmark Country Club Redevelopment including reticulation of the Golf Course and installation of grass greens;*
- *Kwoorabup Community Park;*
- *McLean Park Redevelopment.*

You only need to take a look at regional Western Australia to see that not only our community, but all other regional communities have benefited from Royalties for Regions.

We invite, encourage and indeed urge you, to enhance it and not destroy it!

Should you require further information or advice on this matter please contact the undersigned on telephone (08) 9848 0300 or email enquiries@denmark.wa.gov.au.

Yours faithfully

*Cr Ross Thornton
Shire President*

cc. Councillors

cc. Dale Stewart, Chief Executive Officer

cc. Hon. Donald Terrence (Terry) Redman MLA member for Warren-Blackwood

cc. Hon. Colin (Col) James Holt MLC member for South West Region