


24 September 2015.

Dear Traders,

## **This time there'll be no second chances.**

This week you will receive a letter from Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC), outlining the intention to introduce the Mildura City Heart Special Rate (to replace the traditional Differential Rate).

The letter is very similar to what you received back in March this year – quick outline of the how/what/when, a handful of paragraphs about objecting to the Rate, and an Objection Form.  mildura city

There's a simple method of reducing costs to your business. Fill it out.

You don't need Mildura City Heart gift cards or foot traffic. Events don't really impact your business. You've got enough clients. Christmas runs itself. Parking is a bit all over the place, but that's cool. Council will pick up the slack; they get so much money already – there'll be heap of spare money to do stuff. What on earth does MCH Inc do with all that money anyway?

Things might slow up a little bit. Subtle changes. The thousands of MCH gift cards will probably go to Coles Myer or something. The streets are a bit quieter – there's nothing on this weekend in the town. It was only a matter of time before that little shop closed up – the one next door was vacant – what could they expect? Council will arrange a Santa-type thing for Christmas. Probably. There's a real need for longer parking out the front of those stores. Easter used to be really busy in the CBD. Hopefully it's busier next month.

## **370+ individual traders sharing the same issues.**

Here's the reality of the situation. Without the Special Rate, Mildura City Heart will cease to exist and MRCC will not run these activities and events, as a matter of competitive neutrality. MRCC does not run such marketing activities for other areas of the municipality and they cannot favour City Heart by doing so here.

Without Mildura City Heart driving foot traffic, events, promotions, advertising, training, sponsorship, and trader advocacy, you will find that these issues will start impacting your business from January 1<sup>st</sup>.

We have the most diverse Board that MCH has ever seen. Professional services (Anna Sullivan, Michael Murdoch, Tim Aldridge – Collie & Tierney), Hospitality (Cassi Circosta – Banjo's), huge Retail (Alan Fisher – Fisher's IGA), and small Retail (myself – Hammerton's & Etherington's).

We will stick to the excellent things that MCH has always produced but are looking in new directions and opportunities to improve business for all traders in the City Heart.

## **Contact us before you object to the Special Rate.**

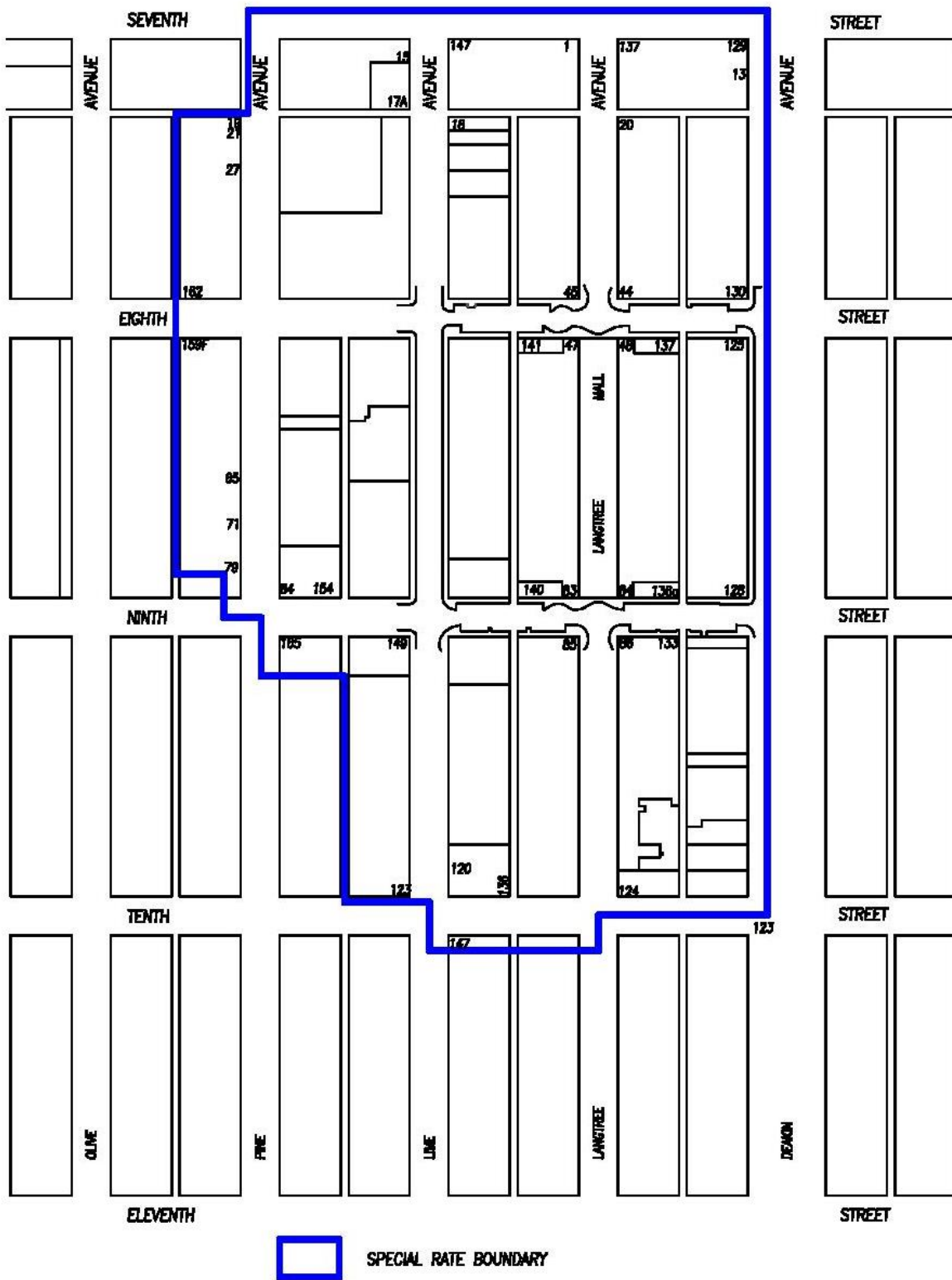
We're volunteers and we're traders. We get it. We mightn't be able to resolve your issues but it's important for us to understand your position.

You'll find our contact details on the bottom of Page 4.

Cheers,  
**Ryan Hammerton**  
Chairman

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abn 96 628 236 116 [milduracity.com.au](http://milduracity.com.au)

# Map of the Mildura City Heart Precinct



## CITY HEART SPECIAL RATE

G/Roads/Mildura/Langtree Mall/Mall Special Charge.Dwg

31-08-2015

Mildura City Heart Inc, known as MCH and marketed as Mildura City, commenced operations in December 2010 as an independent association funded through a Differential Rate.

For almost 5 years the organisation has undertaken work across the defined Mildura City Heart precinct (refer to attached map) to generate vibrancy and foot traffic, promote the businesses in Mildura's CBD and to also attract new investment.

Our mission is: "to promote and improve Mildura City Heart, to provide a unique, quality, lifestyle experience", and our primary purpose is to develop, market and promote the CBD.

Those responsible for paying the MCH Special Rate are the members of Mildura City Heart and have the opportunity to be elected to the Board and to participate in our activities. Mildura City is governed by a Board of 7 Directors and employs 2 full-time staff.

Until 30 June 2015, property owners and businesses in the defined MCH area had been levied as part of their Council rates with a Mildura City Heart Differential Rate.

MCH is now pursuing a Special Rate for implementation on 1 January 2016, as there are currently no funds being provided to MCH to market the CBD precinct.

All funding collected under the Special Rate will be provided to MCH. This is a more effective solution than the Differential Rate where only the majority was provided to MCH.

### Why is there a need for the new Special Rate?

Due to Ministerial Guidelines on Differential Rating issued in April 2013, the Differential Rate model can no longer be used to fund the specific services to be provided to MCH properties. In order to collect funds for Mildura City Heart's operations a Special Rate has been proposed because it is considered to be more appropriate.

The Special Rate provides MCH with a sustainable funding model to continue to promote and encourage visitation and investment in our CBD. It will be used by MCH for CBD activation including business development and investment attraction (including new traders for vacant stores); marketing activities; management of the precinct; and key events and promotions such as major events and 'buy local' promotional campaigns to generate foot traffic.

### What does MCH do? What are the benefits of the Special Rate for my business?

The activities funded by MCH include a broad range of marketing activities.

Under a Special Rate, members will see improved services and continue to receive the following:

- Access to the Mildura City Investment Prospectus for attracting tenants to the precinct (anticipated April 2016);
- If you have an EFTPOS machine, you will be able to accept Mildura City Gift Cards. In 2014/2015 more than \$110,000 of gift cards were issued by the Mildura City office;
- Access to cost-effective cooperative advertising campaigns;
- A continued and improved program of events throughout the City Heart precinct including, but not limited to, School Holiday activities; Good Friday Easter Power Sports Show & Shine; Mildura Country Music Festival; Mildura Jazz, Food & Wine Festival; Hattah Desert Enduro Scrutineering; Goanna Run Kustom Kulture Festival; Zest Fest Citrus Festival; MASP's Community Sleep Out; Christmas in the City; and countless community events generating CBD foot traffic
- Access to MCH's equipment pool such as marquees, trestle tables, chairs, PA systems, etc to assist with your own marketing efforts and events;
- You and/or your management team can attend the Trader's Networking events (at least 2 per year);
- Monthly newsletters from Mildura City;
- Access to, and advice about, various training programs and business events; and
- Inclusion in the Mildura City Business Directory

A continuing and co-ordinated marketing program to which every business contributes will provide the following benefits:

- Stronger promotion of Mildura City through various media and promotional events leading to increased CBD visitation
- Collective marketing power
- More people shopping and doing business locally
- A better image and profile of the Mildura CBD within the community
- New and improved events, projects, business attraction, and community confidence
- Progressive attitudes in making Mildura City a great place to work, visit and invest

Over time, all of this adds up to more customers in your business and increased sales.

### Who collects the Special Rate?

If implemented, the Special Rate will be levied by Mildura Rural City Council via your annual rates notice and passed on to MCH. As the implementation is proposed to start on 1 January 2016, you will receive a supplementary rates notice to reflect your contribution to the MCH Special Rate.

### How much will be raised by the Special Rate?

The Special Rate has been structured to collect \$550,000 pro-rata in 2015-2016. In 2014/2015 MRCC collected almost \$608,000 under the Differential Rate. This means that you will pay less towards Mildura City Heart, yet receive an improved and continued service. The MCH Special Rate will increase each year by 2.5% - 2.7%.

### How much will my business pay towards the Special Rate?

As per your 2015-2016 Rate and Valuation Notice, your business is subject to Council's 'Business Rate' (the same as all businesses throughout the municipality). This will not change. If the proposed Special Rate is adopted, your contribution will be in addition to rates, charges and levies already detailed on your rate notice. This amount will be itemised separately on your rate notice.

The table below is an estimate of how much each business paid towards MCH under the Differential Rate (2014-2015) compared to an estimate of your contribution under the proposed Special Rate (2015-2016) based on an entire year.

You can calculate your individual estimated contribution for 2015-2016 by multiplying the Capital Improved Valuation (CIV) on your rate notice by 0.00264 (estimated rate in the dollar - subject to change).

If your rate notice is not issued in your name (or your business name) you will need to contact your property manager or landlord to obtain the CIV.

Capital Improved Value (CIV) of your property	\$1,000,000	\$800,000	\$500,000	\$300,000	\$100,000
2014/2015 (Differential Rate)	\$2,912	\$2,330	\$1,456	\$874	\$291
2015/2016 (Special Rate)	\$2,640*	\$2,112*	\$1,320*	\$792*	\$264*
Variance	-\$272	-\$217	-\$136	-\$81	-\$27
2015/2016 Pro-Rata (applicable 6 month period in 15/16)	\$1,320	\$1,056	\$660	\$396	\$132

\* Please note that if the Special Rate is implemented on 1 January 2016, you will only be liable for the 6 month period for the 2015/2016 year, as no funds will be collected for the period 1 July – 31 December 2015. Therefore, only half of the 2015/2016 amount needs to be paid. This pro-rata amount for 2015/2016 is shown at the bottom of the table.

\* Based on a Special Rate in 2015-16 of 0.00264 of each property's CIV.

### When will the Special Rate come into effect? And for how long?

If adopted, the Special Rate will commence on 1 January 2016 for a 3½ year period (until 30 June 2019).

### What happens if the Special Rate is not implemented?

If the Special Rate does not come into effect, Mildura City Heart will no longer be able to operate as there will be no other collaborative and efficient means of collecting funding for marketing, events and investment attraction. If the Special Rate is not implemented MCH will cease to exist.

### Need further information?

Mildura Rural City Council will be sending you more information soon about the rating process.

Our Directors and staff are available to discuss this further at a time convenient to you.

We understand that our members often find it difficult to get together during the day, and we're happy to meet with you outside of regular trading hours.

Here are the contact numbers for Mildura City Heart's Directors and staff – please feel free to call us directly with any queries or concerns you may have, or contact the MCH office on 5023 8010:

Ryan Hammerton (Chair) - 0438 052 056

Alan Fisher (Director) - 0418 502 573

Anna Sullivan (Deputy Chair) - 0408 359 004

Tim Aldridge (Director) - 0407 239 917

Cassandra Circosta (Treasurer) - 0430 035 856

Cathy Violi (Staff) – 0418 593 520

Michael Murdoch (Secretary) - 0439 045 537

Ange Johnstone (Staff) - 0408 057 131

Information about our Directors and staff is available from the 'About' section of [www.milduracity.com.au](http://www.milduracity.com.au)

### Show your support

It is important that everyone gets behind this initiative so we can have a stronger and sustainable CBD.

We encourage you to write to Council to show your support for the implementation of the Special Rate:

Mildura Rural City Council PO Box 105 Mildura Vic 3502 or email [mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au)