

Bridge Road Special Charge Renewal Submissions under Section 223

Date of submission	Property Owner or Tenant	Type of business	Support Yes or No	Feedback (with personal information redacted)
12-Jun	Tenant	Retail	Yes	the value that BRMS provide for such little money is vital to the Road's continuing life and growth from it's lowest ever condition from the impact of years of neglect, currency, internet and DFO's. Where else can we get experienced volunteers to provide their time and expertise, for no pay, to contribute to the road for such the tiny amount of money we are charged, to benefit from several promotional events and media. It's a bargain. Even I were not on the committee, I would still be saying the same thing.
14-Jun	Tenant	Retail	No	I don't support the special charge because the business in Richmond Plaza are not good and the Plaza will be closed not very long.
14-Jun	Tenant	Trade Services	No	None
15-Jun	Owner	Food and Beverage	No	As you know business is not good in Bridge Road, Richmond. Vic. 3121. We both are on aged pension to help us get by but to no avail. Regards XXXX XXXX
15-Jun	Owner	Fashion/Retail	No	I have paying too much expenses for this building i own.. which we just bought on 2016 1. i have to pay council rate which \$4124 per year an council rate increase every single year. 2. i have to pay Land tax \$2800 per year and the government increase land tax every single year . in here i have too much expense for this bridge road property , and myself is a self employed we cant really afford another extra \$300 / year . because if u want to expend , invest fund to facilitate or marketing ... there is nothing to do with us. why have to be bridge road not other road around richmond ? we also couldnt increase our tenant rent because of this matter, our tenant may left and is not fair !! many shop become vacant , empty , no one want to rent around bridge road , i more recommend if Yourself can walk around bridge road & do research .. many people complain about the rent so expensive , they not longer can afford. and of course owner have to pay too much outgoing fee and no choice , have to blame all to COUNCIL & GOVERNMENT. so in here im not support this special charge. if u need fund /help i more suggest u to ask help from government / ATO not from small business owner / property owners.
19-Jun	Tenant	Retail	No	None
19-Jun	Owner	Trade Services	No	As a nature of our business is not an everyday retail. We believe that there's no benefit that Bridge Road Association can provide to us. we don't feel that's its fair that all businesses should pay to benefit some businesses
20-Jun	Tenant	Retail	No	None
21-Jun	Tenant	Food and Beverage	Yes	None
21-Jun	Owner	Fashion/Retail	Yes	None
22-Jun	Tenant	Food and Beverage	Yes	None
22-Jun	Owner	Hairdresser	No	Too expensive and a waste of money and we have never supported this special charge. Ever since this levy was introduced when the family ran the hairdressing business we feel that it did not benefit our property or our business. There are already too many expenses and many businesses are struggling. The present tenant feels the same and does not support this special charge as she cannot afford it. The \$300 can be better spent and needed to pay for other expenses. We cannot afford this special levy, and we do not support the continuation of this special levy, this should not be a compulsory levy imposed on all property owners or traders. Those who support it or feel that they can afford it or will benefit from it, let them pay for it. We do not need this levy to help us promote our business, we do that ourselves successfully via our own promotions and social media. I feel that we should have a right to say No to this Levy if we do not want to pay for it. This special levy is a complete waste of hard earned money with no benefits. We do not support this levy!
25-Jun	Owner	Bank	Yes	None
25-Jun	Tenant	Bank	Yes	Bridge Road Main Street provide an option for marketing the street, the businesses on the street, that would not be available if the levy did not exist.
26-Jun	Owner & Tenant	Fashion/Retail	Yes	I would be in support of this if there was also a focus on retail fashion stores, instead of a lot of focus going on restaurants and bars in the area.
27-Jun	Tenant	Retail	Yes	No comment
27-Jun	Owner & Tenant	Food and Beverage	Yes	No comment
27-Jun	Tenant	Trade Services	Yes	No comment
27-Jun	Tenant	Retail	Yes	No comment
27-Jun	Tenant	Retail	Yes	The council should be funding this not us
28-Jun	Owner & Tenant	Design Services	No	We are a small graphic design studio loacted with the 'ARK' apartment development. We are not on Bridge Road and tucked away with the development. Given the nature of what we do, I expect there to be no benefit to my business contributing to this fund. Therefore, I am NOT happy to pay the special charge and feel the council rates should cover this initiative!
02-Jul	Tenant	Tattoo Services	No	I am writing to you in reference to your letter regarding 'Notice of intention to declare a Special Charge Scheme 2018 to 2024 Bridge Rd'. Unlike traditional tattoo studios Fine Line Tattoos caters to a much different market with 90% of our clientele being female. With that said, demand is high, my business has been open on Bridge Rd for 12 months, in that time I have personally built a strong clientele with over 273k followers on social media. XXXXXXXXXX XXXX has an average 20 people a day walk through its doors in which at least 70% of those people will visit a café near by before or after their appointment. In a most recent example a café a few doors down was considering closing its doors, unable to maintain their business. Due to the high traffic flow from our business we sent many clients to them in which they now perceive as one of the reasons why their business has been able to remain open. After talking with many of my fellow business owners, I know that I speak for many; Instead of adding to our ever-increasing 'costs' we would prefer a more collaborative approach. Unfortunately I do not see, and have not seen the value in the items that you quote such as 'ongoing marketing, branding & promotion' & how they have benefited my business in any way. These items are vague & based on history I do not recall anytime where my business has benefited from a council lead marketing initiative. I therefore, object to the 'special Charge Scheme 2018 to 2024 Bridge Rd'. I would ask that the council's focus should be on maintaining the fantastic business's you have on Bridge Rd rather then pushing them away. Please look in more detail why there is an increasing amount of 'non-occupied' shops on bridge Rd & why many continue to close. I am available to talk anytime, being a local resident I personally love Richmond and Bridge Rd and will continue to build relationships with fellow business owners & drive traffic through my own social media channels. Sincerely,
02-Jul	Tenant	Retail	Yes	It is important for Bridge Road to maintain a digital presence and also to promote itself as a destination. There is a lot to do to promote the area. In my time here I have seen BRMS gaining traction and trying various things to promote, I am sure more could be done in future provided they exist.
05-Jul	Tenant	Fashion/Retail	No	As a retailer on the strip for 45 years, I find your "special charge" arrogant at best. We have been advertising and marketing our own business and do not require council to step in and show us how it's done. If you want to advertise your plans for Richmond, you should do it out of your own pocket and not force others to pay.
05-Jul	Tenant	Fashion/Retail	No	I do not believe that retailers should pay this charge which has been forced by council to business owners. We have made our own arrangement for advertising our own business. And we have not been satisfied with the way council has marketed Bridge Rd in the past years.

10-Jul	Owner & Tenant	Trade Services	No	I don't believe we benefit in any way from this program. We are a Specialized business, that does not draw on local customers. Our customers are from far a field, and travel to us as a destination. I also don't believe that the business selection area for the program is correct. The Hawthorn end (Bumley Street to the Yarra) of Bridge Road are taken up by larger business's that would not benefit, like the smaller local traders, at the west end.
12-Jul	Owner & Tenant	Retail	No	<p>We are writing to object to the proposed Special Charge being levied to our property at XXX Church Street, Richmond</p> <p>We run a small XXXXXXXX business from this address and are the property owners.</p> <p>The City of Yarra have been imposing a special charge for "Bridge Road" on us for several years now, and we have seen nothing from it. The first communication we have received in all that time is a glossy newsletter announcing the proposed extending of the charge. We have not heard from nor seen anyone representing the Bridge Road Main Street Inc. in the six years we have been operating at this address.</p> <p>There is no signage on Bridge Road pointing to where our shop is, or to any of the other shops near us.</p> <p>Our property is located near the corner of Church Street and Cameron Street, Richmond about 200metres north of Bridge Road and is situated in a small group of shops that are not related to any trade in Bridge Road.</p> <p>The area between our group of properties (196 – 206 Church St) and Bridge Road is totally taken up by the Richmond Plaza complex, which currently is a barren wasteland of empty shops and when it eventually is demolished and redeveloped will be a major disruption to trading for us for an extended time.</p> <p>The Special Charge is in itself may be a good idea for the businesses in Bridge Road to raise funds to promote themselves. We feel that we should not be compelled to contribute to a scheme that does not give any benefit to our Recycling shop.</p> <p>We know that the majority of our customers are from the opposite direction from Bridge Road as we engage with them to find out why they are in Richmond.</p> <p>Here is a list of where our customers are from.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The high rise Public Housing complex, who are going to Coles Supermarket or to McDonalds. 2. Patients staying at the Melbourne Clinic out on supervised leave. 3. "Tradies" getting their beer from the bottle shop next door after work. 4. Students for Lynall Hall School in Highett Street. 5. Occasionally we meet people who are filling in time whilst a family member is in the Epworth Hospital having an operation. 6. Locals going to the Coles supermarket or just doing "Coffee" <p>Clearly the list above indicates that our customer base has nothing at all to do with coming to Bridge Road for the shopping experience.</p> <p>Our business is a hobby business about Recycling and not about making money, we do not draw a wage from the business.</p> <p>So, Please do not impose upon us the "Special Charge" levied to help the businesses in Bridge Road.</p> <p>We would like to know what the funds from the "Special Charge" that have been collected over the years have been spent on. We have never received any information of where the money has been spent.</p> <p>XXXX XXXX From XXX XXXX</p>
13-Jul	Tenant	Accommodation Provider	Yes	None
13-Jul	Tenant	Food and Beverage	No	<p>It is unclear what sort of benefit the special charge has brought to a gentrifying (but oddly decaying) strip. The benefits, if any, is non-tangible and not visible. The business plan that was issued to traders lists the core functions of the BRMS (Marketing, BRMS management and governance, Communication and Engagement) as its weaknesses, which is a major concern and does not offer the special charge much confidence moving forward. The approach taken by the committee cheapens the image of Bridge Rd (constant offers of special deals that do not promote the gentrifying image of Bridge Road; it will forever be the discount warehouse); there is poor visibility of the official social media account to promote Bridge Rd despite an annual \$10,000 spent on it (it is in the shadows of social media accounts run by local residents though the content of those accounts tend to promote a more cynical side of Bridge Road); there is poor planning and consideration around the needs of traders - why schedule meetings during dinner time when some traders are unable to attend and if you are trying to promote Bridge Road as the next food hub? Our business would be in support of the special charge only if fundamental changes were made to how BRMS has been run. To issue a business plan now for the next three years is 2 years too late. Trader involvement is half-hearted at best - the self-acknowledged "lack of understanding about the purpose of Special Charge funds" is a very painful admission of the committee's failure despite having had the last 10 years to communicate its purpose!!</p>
13-Jul	Tenant	Florist	Yes	None
14-Jul	Tenant	Food and Beverage	No	Object to the special charge. I do not want to pay for this service, as i believe it is non existant.
15-Jul	Tenant	Food and Beverage	No	<p>We opened our restaurant on XXX Bridge Road in 1998 and therefore it has already been 20 years. Our restaurant has been very busy since we opened however for the last 5/6 years, the business has been very slow. As you know, the whole Bridge Road was very busy during both day and night during that period long ago. However as I said previously, the business has been very slow and our sales has been decreasing from 5/6 years ago until now. The whole Bridge Road has been very quiet for many years already and a lot of shops were closed down and have been emptied. The Council initiated the Bridge Road special charge as an investment fund to facilitate effective business and marketing activities. This has occurred for the last 6 years but I believe it hasn't provided positive change as our business is still same very slow and there are hardly any customers. As a result, there are many more stores closing constantly on Bridge Road. We are all struggling to pay our high rent, high electricity bill, high council rates and ongoing fees. That's why we do not wish to pay any other extra fees such as the Bridge Road special charge. Also as we have found out that the Bridge Road special charge has not benefited our lacking business in the last 6 years. So my decision in relation to this proposal is not to declare the Special Charge.</p>
16-Jul	Owner	Fashion/Retail	Yes	None
16-Jul	Owner	Fashion/Retail	Yes	We say the special charge has been and continues to be important initiative to protect and build the Bridge Rd brand, especially at a time of significant disruption and transition.
16-Jul	Owner	Fashion/Retail	Yes	<p>We also say that Bridge Rd Main Street inc has been a successful manager of the special charge and also in advocating and communicating with the wider community and statutory authorities.</p> <p>We also commend the accountability and transparency by BRMS and the many meetings and extensive social media coms offered to participants.</p> <p>We have been very impressed with the many festivals and promotions, and in particular last year's grand final lighting of the town hall, which we would look forward to seeing as an annual tradition.</p>

16-Jul	Owner	Retail	Yes	<p>Our daughter XXXX XXXX is writing this submission on our behalf as we are both elderly and speak very limited English. We think it is important to support the traders of the bricks and mortar businesses of the Bridge Road precinct to succeed. We hope this scheme will continue to evolve and fine tune further, ultimately impacting and reducing the high vacancy rates, particularly on Richmond Hill. The traders can't reverse this situation on their own. It is hoped that with having such an association as the BRMS specifically dedicated to continuing with the task of revitalising the Bridge Road trading precinct in a collective manner, a more successful outcome will be achieved which will flow onto all the businesses within the precinct. The past decade or so has been extremely challenging for the traders, particularly those in the retail fashion and foot ware sectors, and we hope that sufficient focus is placed on revitalisation of these important retail sectors as well. We think council needs the assistance of a dedicated body such as this which has accountability to council and is able to focus on the task at hand. The proposition of revitalising the Bridge Road precinct and surrounds is too large for council to manage alone without partnering up with such an organisation as BRMS. Ultimately with payment of a Special Levy to achieve this outcome, it is hoped an overall benefit and strengthening of the Bridge Road precinct is achieved. It is stated that the property which we ownwill derive a 'special benefit' from the expenditure of the Special Charge funds". How measurable this is in real terms, we are unsure of however we need to show good will and faith in the scheme. Without such a scheme in place, we believe the chances of Bridge Rd being strongly positioned for the future would be far less likely. As we understand it, the current Bridge Road Special Charge amount appearing on previous rate notices, is being replaced by this Special Charge Scheme 2018 to 2024 amount paid according to property type. It would be helpful if access to information obtained by the Association was also reported to us, or we can access it via the internet, so we could quantify its progress and the resultant outcomes in relation to the precinct and our property seeing there is a Special Levy being charged. It would also be helpful to be notified in more detail what the money from the Special Charge will be spent on and of upcoming street events beforehand. Yours Sincerely, XXXX XXXX on Behalf of XXXX and XXXX XXXX</p>
16-Jul	Tenant	Food and Beverage	No	<p>I am writing this email in regards to the special charge that every business owner is paying on bridge Rd.</p> <p>I am against this special levy, I think the council should stop paying money to Bridge Rd traders association as it has not achieved anything in the last 10 years.</p> <p>It will be much better if council can have some dedicated full time marketing staff working at the council, who can work for the betterment of the street.</p>