



BOLD FUTURE Community Research Summary Report

Final Report
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Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	OTHER COMMUNITY RESEARCH REPORTS	1
1.2	METHODOLOGY	1
1.3	RESPONSES	2
1.4	REPORT STRUCTURE	2
2	GOLD COAST VALUES	3
2.1	SNAPSHOT	3
2.2	COMMUNITY INPUT	4
	2.2.1 BEACHES	4
	2.2.2 WEATHER / CLIMATE	4
	2.2.3 LIFESTYLE (THE 'GOLD COAST LIFESTYLE')	4
	2.2.4 ENVIRONMENT	5
	2.2.5 PROXIMITY / ACCESS	5
	2.2.6 FACILITIES	6
	2.2.7 COMMUNITY	6
	2.2.8 ACTIVITIES	6
2.3	VALUES & BOLD FUTURE THEMES	7
3	OUR BEACHES FUTURE	8
4	OUR COMMUNITY FUTURE	10
5	OUR CULTURAL FUTURE	12
6	OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE	14
7	OUR ENERGY FUTURE	17
8	OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURE	19
9	OUR LAND USE FUTURE	21
10	OUR TRANSPORT FUTURE	23
11	OUR WATER FUTURE	25
12	SUMMARY	27
12.1	KEY ITEMS FOR A BOLD FUTURE	27
12.2	RESOLVING CONFLICTS & TENSIONS	28
12.3	RESTATING THE THEMES	31
12.4	FUTURE RESEARCH	31

1 Introduction

BOLD FUTURE is a project to develop a sustainable vision and blueprint for the Gold Coast for the next three decades.

Considerable engagement with the Gold Coast community has been undertaken through several techniques and research methods to inform the BOLD FUTURE vision and blueprint so that it reflects community values and preferred futures.

1.1 Other Community Research Reports

This report is part of the following suite of reports on the community input to BOLD FUTURE:

- Methodology;
- Summary Report;
 - Our Beaches Future;
 - Our Community Future;
 - Our Cultural Future;
 - Our Economic Future;
 - Our Energy Future;
 - Our Environmental Future;
 - Our Land Use Future;
 - Our Transport Future;
 - Our Water Future.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology, described in detail in the Methodology Report, was designed to gather information on:

- Gold Coast lifestyle;
- Individual BOLD FUTURE themes:
 - Values and importance of the theme;
 - Preferred future concerning the theme;
 - Constraints and barriers to achieving the preferred future; and
- Demographic and marketing information.

The following activities and approaches were used to solicit input from the Gold Coast community:

- City & Staff Forums – 19 facilitated 2 hour meetings on a single theme;
- General Forums – 6 facilitated 2 hour meetings on all themes undertaken by schools, tertiary institutions, peak body organisations and interest groups;
- Self-enumeration questionnaire – distributed using using meetings, mail outs and the www.boldfuture.com.au website; and
- Community reference groups – 28 facilitated 2-hour meetings on all themes.

Because all respondents' comments are of a qualitative nature they have been subjectively coded by question area into common issues and then counted and expressed as a percentage of all comments for that question area. At a summary level these are reported upon using a five level hierarchy as follows: Low = less than 5%, Medium = 5-25%, High = 25-50%, Very High = 50-75%, Extremely High = 75+. It is worth noting that a 'Low' ranking may still represent a statistically significant result.

1.3 Responses

The number of usable responses received to 23 May 2008 (report analysis cut off date for responses received) numbered 9,600. This number of responses results in a very high level of statistical confidence¹ when extrapolated to the whole Gold Coast population (see **Table 1**). The total number of responses received by 30 May 2008 was 11,027.

Table 1: Responses by Theme as at 23 May 2008

Theme	Number	%	Confidence Interval
Beaches	2,423	25%	+/-1.99%
Water	1,781	19%	+/-2.32%
Environment	1,709	18%	+/-2.37%
Transport	1,165	12%	+/-2.87%
Land use	759	8%	+/-3.55%
Community	741	8%	+/-3.60%
Economic	618	6%	+/-3.94%
Culture	232	2%	+/-6.43%
Energy	170	2%	+/-7.51%
Total	9,598	100%	+/-0.99

Most significantly the environmentally based themes (beaches, water and environment) are the most prevalent representing 62% of all responses.

1.4 Report Structure

The report structure is as follows:

- **Section 2 Gold Coast Values** reports on the lifestyle values that respondents attribute to the Gold Coast.
- **Sections 3 to 11** present respondent's preferred futures for each of the nine themes as well as futures that appear to conflict with each other.
- **Section 12 Summary** summarising the research analysis and presents some suggestions for theme names and research into the future.

¹ Statistical confidence is represented by the confidence interval in Table 1. The smaller the number the more statistical confidence can be placed on the results when extrapolated to the whole Gold Coast population.

2 Gold Coast Values

2.1 Snapshot

Respondents were asked for the three things that they valued the most about their Gold Coast lifestyle. Beaches, weather/climate, the Gold Coast lifestyle itself, environment and proximity/access to services and facilities are the important characteristics that respondents to BOLD FUTURE value about their lifestyle.

The beaches are viewed by a medium proportion of respondents as comprising the most valuable component of lifestyle on the Gold Coast. Respondents stated that the quality of the beaches on the Gold Coast was high and conducive to the outdoor lifestyle of residents.

The weather/climate on the Gold Coast being pleasant and mild throughout the year, was seen as important to a medium proportion of respondents. Many saw this as conducive to a healthy, balanced work and leisure lifestyle.

A medium proportion of respondents nominated the Gold Coast lifestyle itself an aspect they valued highly. In particular they included pace of life, quality of life, outdoors lifestyle and the diversity of choices on the Gold Coast as important in value-adding to their way of life.

The environment was seen by a medium proportion of respondents as important to their lifestyle. In essence, respondents indicated biodiversity as important, including the beach, hinterland and wildlife.

A medium proportion of respondents highlighted their proximity / access to a variety of facilities, natural environment, services and public conveniences as a valued feature of their lifestyle. It was noted that the ability to easily travel to what was needed in day-to-day life was important.

A low but significant proportion of respondents saw access to a diverse variety of facilities as adding value to their lifestyle. A number of facilities were identified, including recreation, sporting, public and educational.

Feeling a sense of community spirit and connectedness was important to a low but significant proportion of respondents. Respondents felt that a friendly, safe community added to their lifestyle on the Coast and improved their general lifestyle.

Having a diverse range of activities, including various age groups and genres, was nominated by a low proportion of respondents as adding value to their lifestyle. Activities commonly cited included sporting, social, community, family and evening activities.

2.2 Community Input

The main lifestyle values given by respondents included:

Issue	Relative frequency (a)
Beaches	Medium
Weather / Climate	Medium
Lifestyle (their 'Gold Coast lifestyle')	Medium
Environment	Medium
Proximity / Access	Low
Facilities	Low
Community	Low
Activities	Low

Note: (a) Verbatim responses have been "coded" into issues using a five level hierarchy. At the summary level the percentage of responses are expressed as Low = less than 5%, Medium = 5-25%, High = 25-50%, Very High = 50-75%, Extremely High = 75+.

2.2.1 Beaches

A medium proportion of respondents perceived beaches as a valuable component of their Gold Coast lifestyle. This perception was generally related to beaches in terms of their contribution to recreational and outdoor activities. Others perceived the beaches on the Gold Coast as pristine, some respondents perceiving them to be the 'best in the world'.

"The white sandy beaches."

"Weekends at the beach."

"Outdoor life at the beach."

"World's best beaches."

2.2.2 Weather / Climate

A medium proportion of respondents perceived weather/ climate as being of value to their lifestyle. Respondents saw the pleasant weather on the Gold Coast as important, having a positive impact on their way of life.

"Mild and stable weather."

"The weather both for work and pleasure."

"The sun shining all the time."

A number of respondents highlighted the value of climate on their way of life, some respondents indicating that the favourable climate on the Gold Coast as having a positive impact on everyday life.

"Temperate climate for 9 months."

"Climate encourages outdoor life."

2.2.3 Lifestyle (the 'Gold Coast lifestyle')

A medium proportion of respondents perceived the Gold Coast lifestyle (or way of life) as being important for a variety of reasons, including:

- Quality of life;
- Outdoors lifestyle;
- Leisure activities;
- Pace of life; and
- Diversity of choices.

Many perceived the ease of living on the Gold Coast as well as the pace of life important in regard to their lifestyle.

“Ease of living.”

“Laid back / casual living.”

Others perceived leisure activities and the active lifestyle the Gold Coast encompasses as valuable.

“Leisure lifestyles.”

“Waterfront lifestyle.”

The ability to maintain a balance between work and leisure as well as the ability for residents to have access to a diverse array of services, facilities, natural environment, and activities. was important in adding value to their lifestyles.

“Lifestyle choices, including proximity of shops and services, such as medical, airports, education, close to Brisbane, the style & location of home we can live in.”

“Great lifestyle environment - work and play.”

“The lifestyle - between the beach, the hinterland, the ‘city’ life in Surfers, the entertainment and the fun, it’s pretty hard to beat!”

2.2.4 Environment

A medium proportion of respondents nominated the natural environment as adding value to their Gold Coast lifestyle. Specifically a number of respondents made reference to the diversity of the environment on the Gold Coast, highlighting the biodiversity.

“Gold and green features - sand-surf and mountains.”

“The natural environment (beach and mountains).”

“Natural environment (wildlife and green space).”

“Environment - beaches and national parks.”

“The green belts and natural environment.”

2.2.5 Proximity / access

A low but significant proportion of respondents indicated ‘access’ and the issues of ‘proximity’ as a value contributing to their Gold Coast lifestyle. This was broken down into various themes including proximity to services, natural environment, facilities and transport. A significant proportion of respondents indicated proximity in general to services, infrastructure, facilities and other cities as a significant influence on their lifestyle.

“Clean beaches, rainforest and hinterland so close together.”

“Everything is half an hour away.”

“Proximity to hinterland and beaches.”

“Always in close proximity to shops / public conveniences.”

The most commonly nominated areas of value relating to access included:

- Free public access to the beach;
- Access to the hinterland;
- Free access to natural environment;

- Access to general facilities e.g. medical facilities;
- Transport access including infrastructure; and
- Access to essential resources.

“Availability of most things wanted.”

“Access to clean open space/peaceful places.”

“Free, unobstructed access to all beaches.”

“Ease of access to diverse environment.”

2.2.6 Facilities

The quality of public facilities offered to residents of the Gold Coast was also seen as being of value to a low but significant proportion of respondents. This incorporated a number of key facilities including recreational, sporting, health and educational.

“Great facilities / infrastructure.”

“Recreation and sporting facilities.”

“It has the facilities and services of a large city but with a relaxed lifestyle.”

“Facilities including shopping / schools and activities.”

“Great public facilities.”

2.2.7 Community

‘Community’ was perceived by a low but significant proportion of respondents as an important component of their lifestyle. Many respondents felt it was important to retain a sense of community belonging and safety.

“Community feel – safety.”

“A more community feel and less glitz.”

Others saw the friendliness of the community and ‘knowing their community’ as important.

“Community care and friendliness.”

“Knowing my local community.”

“Relaxed and friendly community.”

2.2.8 Activities

Respondents indicated that the various activities available on the Gold Coast added value to their lifestyle. A number of specific activities that were identified and included but were not limited to:

- Professional sporting events;
- Recreational sporting activities;
- Community, family friendly activities;
- Various night life events and activities;
- Activities for children;
- Outdoor activities; and
- Social activities.

“Ability to be close to many diverse activities.”

“Fantastic community support programs (library, clubs, SLSC, golf, bowls, rowing, dance etc).”

“Number of available activities apart from beaches.”

2.3 Values & BOLD FUTURE Themes

It is instructive to compare respondents' top ten lifestyle values with the nine BOLD FUTURE themes to see if there are any clear parallels. Those that have direct parallels are:

- Beaches, the most popular value, corresponds directly with the beaches theme;
- Environment, the fourth most popular value directly corresponds with environment theme;
- Community obviously corresponds with the community theme to which the cultural theme could also be added; and
- Access is linked with the transport theme.

Of the other most popular values, elements of lifestyle, facilities, proximity and activities have a loose relationship to the economic and land use themes.

None of the lifestyle values are related to the energy and water themes although these utilities could be considered enablers of the lifestyle values that are embedded in the Gold Coast lifestyle.

3 Our Beaches Future

Gold Coast Beaches are an integral component of the identity and attraction of the Gold Coast. Beaches represent many things to the Gold Coast community, providing business and leisure opportunities, and therefore constitute an important link between tourism and the local economy. Beaches are also a location for socialising and interacting with community members, friends and families.

Gold Coast beaches are facing increasing pressures from population and tourism growth, thus increasing usage, as well as environmental pressures, including climate change. As such, respondents recognised that beaches are both the foundation of, and are inextricably linked to, many other BOLD FUTURE themes.

How these pressures are recognised and managed will be a major factor for the future of this important natural environmental asset.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE, the beaches theme attracted the highest proportion of overall responses (25%). Consequently, the beaches theme contains the greatest diversity of responses.

In general, respondents identified a future preference for:

- Concentration on the environmental aspects of the beaches;
- Protection, maintenance and retention of the beaches – allowing for continued access, usage and experiences of the beaches by all users;
- Limiting high density, high rise developments along the beach / foreshore; and
- The provision of access, amenities, facilities and infrastructure all contributing to the usage and experience of beaches.

More specifically, the main issues raised for the preferred beaches future can be summarised as:

- **Environment** – The physical environment of beaches achieved a high proportion of responses. The main aspects of the natural environment discussed by respondents included animals and wildlife, habitat and vegetation – with the overall requirement being to ensure the environment is kept clean, and / or improved.
- **Protected and maintained** – Of medium importance to respondents is the general protection and maintenance of the Gold Coast beaches, including the physical aspects, and general appearance.
- **Amenities, facilities and infrastructure** – A medium proportion of residents provided responses relative to usage and the associated usability of the beaches. Beach usage appears to be viewed as tied to the facilities available to users.
- **Development** – Responses referring to development represented a medium proportion of comments and predominantly related to preferences of limiting and reducing development along the beachfront. A small proportion of respondents indicated a preference for additional 'commercial' style developments at the beach.
- **Access** – The topic of access was referred to by a medium proportion of respondents and related on the whole to the beaches providing free and equitable access for all members of the community. Access was also perceived to be facilitated through the provision of pathways – including walkways, cycle ways and boardwalks.
- **Safety** – Of medium importance to respondents is the concept of the safety on the Gold Coast beaches – this referred to services provided by police, security, and lifeguards relative to beach and water based activity.

- **Population** – Control of population and the risk of over crowding on the beaches is of concern for a low but significant proportion of respondents.

Included within respondents' comments were bold ideas in the areas of:

- The environment – including both the protection of, and generation of built environments (i.e. artificial reefs / designed open space);
- Sand management;
- Government policy, planning and management behaviours;
- Safety and security measures;
- Development – limiting development;
- The provision of additional facilities and amenities relating to beach usage; and
- The provision of additional transport and infrastructure.

Whilst most of the bold ideas were more suggestions for improvements, perhaps the boldest accumulation of ideas is encapsulated as follows: expansion of the areas behind the beach by controlling development and high rise development close to the beach, including returning developed areas to public open space. These areas behind the beaches could then be used for environmentally friendly pursuits including access and connectivity along the whole coastline. This bold idea is partially expressed by one respondent in the following preferred future statement:

“Creating the Gold Coast ‘ocean park’, which will be the integration of open space management and represent provision of pedestrian walks, bicycle ways and public bus ways that are linked and safe for children to use. These corridors will link schools, local communities, work and recreation places.”

This particular BOLD FUTURE and other ideas introduce several conflicts all concerning the need for future preservation of the natural asset in the face of continuing population and visitor growth against the need and desire for access, development and facilities at the beaches. These conflicts can be described as:

- **Preservation v Access** – Respondents' clearly prefer the beaches to remain pristine, clean and pollution free but also identified a lack of infrastructure, roads, parking and beach access relative to the beaches as limitations. Similarly, they have also nominated 'traffic' and perceptions of increases in traffic and congestion as elements of concern. An increase in the provision of infrastructure and road related access may in fact result in increased usage of and access to the beach areas.
- **Preservation v Development** – Respondents comments indicate their preference for less and reduced development, especially residential high rise developments, though at the same time, other respondents mentioned a preference for an increase in development facilitating usage of the beaches. This includes such suggestions as increased facilities, amenities and commercial developments related to an increase in leisure related behaviours close to the beach. It was also recognised that the population of the Gold Coast is increasing, however suggestions of alternatives to high rises, and developments to accommodate the increases to the population base were not provided by respondents.
- **Preservation v Facilities** - Protection and cleanliness of the beaches achieves high priority ratings by respondents, with the requirement to keep the beaches in a pristine condition. The concept of 'pristine' precludes usage of the beaches, whereas a large proportion of responses also require additional facilities, and the built environment to encourage increased usage of the beaches, and or to cater for increased usage by others.

Whilst beaches can be considered linked to a number of other BOLD FUTURE themes, in particular the environment and economy themes, the beaches are regarded by respondents of critical importance to the Gold Coast lifestyle, identity and future, being referred to as iconic and linked with not only the name of the city but also the image of the Gold Coast. This may suggest that they should remain as a theme in their own right or certainly remain a key area in one of the themes to be carried forward into the vision.

4 Our Community Future

The Gold Coast community provides a foundation for the lifestyle and quality of life experienced by all of its members. Participation within a safe, cohesive, functioning, and diverse community is of vital importance to that lifestyle.

Whilst the key to any community is the people that comprise it, and their participation within the community, of equal importance is the environment in which a community operates consisting of the facilities, services, programs and infrastructure available to service the community's needs and requirements.

Participation in a community is essential for its continuation, and the provision of a sense of inclusion and belonging for people. Facilitating this participation however, in a rapidly changing environment can, and does provide challenges.

When compared to the other themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE the community theme attracted the fifth highest number responses (8%), which compares to community being the seventh most important value to respondents' Gold Coast lifestyles.

In general, respondents identified a preference for:

- Services and facilities that allowed for increased participation within the community (and facilitating a sense of belonging) with the provision of these matched to cater for increases in population; and
- A safe and secure community for residents and all members of the community – families, children and older people.

More specifically, the main issues raised for the preferred community future can be summarised as:

- **Services & Facilities** - Achieving a medium proportion of responses, the services and facilities available to cater for the community's needs, and the availability of socialisation opportunities were deemed as important to the community future. Specified services and facilities included references to, community centres / halls, sporting facilities, libraries, shopping centres, and youth related. Services also included the provision of services to members of the community, namely health and education services, and programs to improve social interaction.
- Residence within a **safe society** was identified by a medium proportion of respondents as essential to the future. To facilitate the concept of safety, respondents suggested an increase in the provision of police and security services. Respondents' indicated the perception that **social issues** (including anti-social behaviour, graffiti, drugs, alcohol, and welfare issues) are increasing within the Gold Coast and may adversely impact on the community future. Changes to the current legal system were identified by respondents as potentially offering a solution to the rise in crime and social issues.
- A medium proportion of residents nominate **infrastructure** as an important element relevant to improving community interactions. Public transport and the roads in and around the Gold Coast were commonly recurring topics.
- The physical **environment** in which the community exists, as well as the atmosphere, are identified by a medium proportion of respondents. The provision of areas allowing social interaction were perceived as important including parks and open spaces. Similarly, elements of the Gold Coast atmosphere were viewed as providing an important element of the environment through a friendly village style atmosphere.
- **Activities and events** – which allow for the socialisation and participation of community members are of medium importance to respondents.

- A medium proportion of respondents cited **development** on the Gold Coast as an issue, most specifically related to high rise developments, and the requirement of limiting development (growth of the community).
- The attitudes and actual participation and co-operation of **members of the community** achieved a medium proportion of comments from respondents. A healthy community is perceived to consist of high levels of participation and co-operation amongst it's people, and is influenced by the attitudes, values and behaviours of these people.

Many respondents identified aspects required to improve the perceived general standard of living within the Gold Coast. Some of these related to different levels of government responsibilities. For example, whilst respondents identified a need for increased safety and security within the community often specifying the requirement for more police and security patrolling, this is in fact a service provided by the state government.

Likewise the provision of many programs, services and infrastructure appear to be perceived as the responsibility of the local council, when in fact they often are the responsibility of state and commonwealth government departments.

Included within respondents' comments were bold ideas in the areas of:

- Improved public transport options;
- Increased community events, functions, festivals, markets and sports;
- Provision of facilities to cater for community events;
- Programs to increase community participation – volunteering and environmental;
- Programs to improve community interaction;
- Provision of development encouraging socialisation – leisure, public spaces, sports and recreation; and
- Improvements to the legal system in response to social issues and safety.

Whilst no bold ideas particularly stand out from those received, it is clear that the summation of bold ideas are oriented around facilitating change in the community towards breaking down the barriers that prevent strong community formation and sense of place. Breaking down these barriers may involve many of the idea areas listed above as well as long-term community development programs and activities, along with appropriate land use planning and development controls.

Whilst the bold ideas presented above do not on the surface appear to present conflicts, a number of potential conflicts were apparent throughout the more detailed comments provided by respondents, including:

- **Perceptual and/or behavioural conflicts between generations** – Comments provided by respondents indicated references to 'hope' for the future of the children within the community, though tended towards more 'negative' perceptions in terms of young people, and resultant perceptions of safety within the community, as related directly to youth behaviours.
- **Over development v provision of additional facilities and infrastructure** – Respondents have indicated their preferences for additional facilities and infrastructure, though have also expressed concern over the perceived risk of over-development within the Gold Coast.

Overall, respondents perceived that community was very important to the future social fabric of the city. As such, the analysis supports the view that the 'community' needs to remain as a theme to be carried forward into the vision. There are however parallels with the cultural theme and the two could be combined to form a synergy by a community and cultural theme.

5 Our Cultural Future

The Gold Coast is a rapidly growing and vibrant city with a rich diversity of cultures and environments. The city has a strong emphasis on lifestyle, the outdoors and sport as well as boasting an internationally recognised beach culture.

The Gold Coast, as with other cities, has recognised the increasing importance of creating a sustainable culture that values equally economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion. The cultural vision for the Gold Coast drawn from the community is to be widely known as “*the best place in the world*” where cultural development is sustained for the enjoyment of residents and visitors and where cultural diversity is celebrated as a fundamental part of everyday life.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE the cultural theme attracted a relatively low number of overall responses (2%) and was the second least commented upon theme. Although it is worthy of note that it achieved by far the largest attendance at the city forum events with over 150 attendees.

In general, respondents identified a preference for the following elements of their cultural future:

- Values surrounding the current cultural focus, particularly Australian, music, arts and family values or lifestyle and to celebrate its cultural diversity;
- Expanding cultural opportunities (including an increase in the number and variety of facilities / venues) allowing increased community participation in activities and events celebrating diversity and identity; and
- The Gold Coast city will be recognised as a place with a distinctly diverse cultural identity.

More specifically, respondents’ main preference for their cultural future were:

- **Facilities** – The provision of cultural facilities, particularly of a high standard and in line with population growth, is identified by a high proportion of respondents as essential to the future. These included art galleries, museums, theatres and cultural or art centres.
- **Activities and events** – A medium proportion of respondents perceived the need to increase diversity and access to cultural activities and events, with particular reference to festivals, concerts and exhibitions.
- **Identity** – Culture is perceived by a medium proportion of respondents as being crucial to the identity of the Gold Coast.
- **Diversity** – A medium proportion of respondents’ preferred future is one based on acceptance of cultural diversity and difference.
- **Environment** – The cultural environment, including other values such as Australian culture and beach culture, is perceived as important to the future.

Included within respondents’ comments were bold ideas in the areas of:

- Development of a stronger identity based around community values;
- Educational opportunities to appreciate the local history of Gold Coast;
- Celebration of cultural diversity / multiculturalism and lifestyle through a range of activities and events on par with other Australian cities;
- Increase support from Governments (via funding source);

- Expand cultural and artistic opportunities to attract skilled cultural workers (local and interstate);
- Need for a broader range of cultural facilities such as provision of a ‘world class’ cultural centre / arts building; and
- Celebrate people of significance in culture and the arts.

Aside from the physical provision of cultural facilities perhaps the defining bold idea from respondents is embedded in what cultural pursuits can deliver, especially in terms of creativity and innovation. This goal is best summarised by the following quote:

“To become a centre for creative thinkers. A city where designers, writers, performers, moviemakers, musicians, technologists, researchers, educators and ideas people want to be.”

The delivery of this vision will require a combination of people and facilities (existing and new) using the lifestyle and environment of the Gold Coast as attractions. In addition, creativity and innovation was a recurring image identified in the Regional Economic Development Advisory Board (REDAB) workshop for the future of the city and also appeared in the economic theme comments.

Inherent in this vision and in respondents’ comments are some potential conflicts including:

- **Australian culture v cultural diversity** – Values placed on the cultural environment related to the importance of retaining and preserving the Australian lifestyle / culture. However, respondents also commented that it was important to celebrate diversity of lifestyle and cultural differences within the community.
- **Provision of activities and events v infrastructure** – Respondents indicated a preference to have access to a broad range of activities and events but have also nominated a lack of infrastructure / facilities to support this.
- **Increased creative opportunities v facilities / venues** – Respondents commented that there was a need for dedicated art space for artists to support the cultural sector. However, there was a perceived current lack of infrastructure / venues to support creative industry in the Gold Coast.

Overall, respondents perceived that cultural values are important in enhancing the quality of life of residents through a range of creative areas such as arts, music, theatre, film and festivals. Although only receiving a smaller proportion of responses from the community compared to other themes, there may be a case for the cultural theme to remain as a theme in its own right, although perhaps with a creativity nomenclature. Alternatively there are parallels with the community theme and the two could be combined to form a community and cultural theme as well as creative areas forming an important elements of the economic development future for the city.

6 Our Economic Future

The Gold Coast of today has evolved into a major Australian city. The sixth largest city, second only to the state capitals, it has developed an economy which continues to diversify away from its traditional industry sectors of tourism, construction and retail associated with its growth and popularity as a tourist destination.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE the economic theme attracted a relatively low number of overall responses (6%). Comments related to the economy in other themes were minimal.

The most significant issue running through respondents' comments on the economic theme was the recognition that the economy is fundamental to the future of the Gold Coast and consequently to the success of the other eight BOLD FUTURE theme futures.

Specifically, the main issues for respondents' economic future were perceived as:

- **Attraction of future economic activity** - The need to maintain the attractiveness of the Gold Coast for a range of economic activities such as tourism, business, investment, people and employment.
- **Sustainable and self sufficient economic base** - The current economic base and economic growth in the future should be sustainable and self sufficient from an environmental and lifestyle/quality of life perspective. Future growth should be a balance between several conflicting aspects such as development and the environment.
- **Economic management** - Respondents saw the city as responsible for managing the economic future in terms of planning and financial capacity to deliver necessary infrastructure.
- **Development** - Concerns regarding appropriate controls on development (often conflicting) as well as the need to improve and provide for adequate future infrastructure.
- **Industry diversification** - Whilst respondents generally saw a need to maintain tourism as a major industry they also preferred a future that creates new sustainable industries to build a substantial alternative business reputation for the city and employment opportunities and that ensure the city's economy is more balanced into the future.
- **Transport** - Respondents saw a need for appropriate transport infrastructure to move people around the city in an efficient and effective manner supporting economic growth including public transport and the road system.
- **Affordability** – Concerns surrounding the general cost of living, taxes, rates and housing.
- **Income generation opportunities** - Including continuing low unemployment created by a growing and diversifying economy and access to job availability with higher paying employment opportunities.
- **Creative capacity building and learning** - Strategies and actions for the preferred economic future are dependent on fostering a culture of creative capacity building and learning. Greater investments in people with a long view to the future needs of human capital, skills and capacity to adapt are also seen as critical to the city's prosperity.

Respondents' generated a wide range of bold ideas, probably more than any other theme, covering the attraction of economic activity, economic management, development, industry diversification, transport, facilities and income generation and employment. Standout specific bold ideas included:

“To become Australia’s Las Vegas.”
“Space station astro-tourism – research.”
“Hi-tech hub (similar to Silicon Valley) with great lifestyle.”
“Gold Coast is the headquarters for ASX top 200 companies.”
“Gold Coast to replace Sydney as Australia’s financial centre.”

These bold ideas are best encapsulated in the following vision statement generated from the REDAB forum:

“A regional economy that nurtures the city’s accessibility, culture, greenness or eco-efficiency, proactive leadership and diversity. The Gold Coast has to be an accessible city, connected physically and virtually to local and global markets. A city that through proactive leadership, develops a clear identity and enterprising spirit – being clean and green with diverse industries and business opportunities.”

In addition to promoting economic diversity and markets, this vision statement has parallels with many of the other BOLD FUTURE themes and picks up on transport (accessibility and connectedness), cultural (culture) and environment (greenness, eco-efficiency, clean and green) themes. Leadership is another issue, which whilst not a BOLD FUTURE theme is identified by respondents as a barrier or constraint in delivering on the future.

Further to the preferred economic future a number of conflicts were also revealed in comments from residents:

- **Economic development v environment** - As evidenced in a number of BOLD FUTURE themes, respondents’ see a need for development to cater for population growth but not at the expense of the environment. For example, depending on the type of industry, economic development can require large tracts of land, located away from residential areas. Furthermore, industry and especially job creation can sometimes be at the expense of the environment.
- **Economic development v tourism** - The natural attractions that have underpinned tourism growth and the Gold Coast as an attractive place to live could be compromised by pursuit of economic development and diversification. Tourism should retain its prominent position as an industry sector and not be forgotten through the pursuit of other economic development opportunities.
- **Economic development v increasing prices** - Economic development can be in conflict with existing communities, especially where development pushes prices out of the reach of locals especially in regard to housing, rates, utilities and groceries.
- **Local v regional v state economic planning** - The question of who is responsible for economic planning can create conflicts unless there is strong collaboration and consensus between economic planning authorities.
- **Picking winners v market forces** - Conflict and economic loss can occur where an attempt is made to pick winners. Instead government policy should seek to create the appropriate economic environment where natural comparative advantage and market forces can shape economic development.
- **Regional competition and incentives** - Competition between regions for new business can lead to conflicts especially if incentives are offered that either consume resources best used elsewhere or, overtime these initial incentives lead to the wrong locational decision.
- **Public transport v freight transport** - The balance between investment into public transport and an efficient freight transport network is important. Although the Gold Coast does not require a significant freight task, the Pacific Highway is the major Brisbane to Sydney transport route, plus the city requires an efficient distribution network.

Overall, because the economy is perceived to be fundamental to the Gold Coast and all other themes, it appears from the analysis that there is recognition that this has a fundamental role as part of a triple bottom line sustainable vision for the city. It should therefore remain as a central theme but could also perhaps include land use.

7 Our Energy Future

The Gold Coast, as with most cities, is dependent on a reliable energy source for its daily operation. The major energy sources include electricity and liquid fuels both of which are largely hydrocarbon based. These energy sources are imported into the city.

The continued use of hydrocarbons as a source of energy and the negative impact on the environment is of global and local concern. In addition, the anticipated reduction in oil supplies has led to increasing liquid energy prices eventually leading to inflation and changes to consumer behaviour, including a reduction in demand for oil and an increase in desire for alternative sources.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE the energy theme attracted a relatively low number of overall responses (2%). However, comments regarding energy sources and energy use were also provided in the environment, economy, land use and water themes.

In general, respondents to the energy theme were focused on supporting the implementation of more environmentally friendly measures to address the issue of growing carbon emissions on the Gold Coast. The majority of respondents expressed specific concerns about:

- The sufficient and assured supply of energy to match the growth of the Gold Coast; and
- The environmental degradation caused by current sources of energy generation.

More specifically the main issues raised by respondents in regard to their preferred energy future were:

- **Alternative energy sources** – Identified by a very high proportion of respondents as being able to provide for future energy needs. These alternative energies were strongly linked with clean, green, environmentally friendly energy activities and in particular included solar power, wind power and wave power. These energies were described as renewable, and were highly desirable for their environmental outcomes as well as their potential to provide an indefinite and sustainable energy resource.
- A high proportion of respondents also identified the need for **energy efficiency** into the future, with respondents generally providing comments on the ways in which the Gold Coast could become more energy efficient. A proportion of respondents suggested regulation in order to enforce energy efficiency.
- A medium proportion of respondents identified the need for a **sustainable energy future** with the provision of energy infrastructure. Comments largely referred to sustainable energy management to ensure the sufficient provision of energy services. A minority of responses supported the Gold Coast introducing self-sufficient energy technologies to aid a sustainable future.
- A low but significant proportion of respondents were aware that despite their desire for a clean, green, environmentally friendly energy future, energy provision still needed to remain **affordable**.
- **Nuclear power** was a contentious issue for a few respondents. A low proportion of respondents supported nuclear power on the Gold Coast, while a slightly higher number of respondents stated their opposition to nuclear power.

While respondents identified the need for energy to be affordable, comments did not indicate that respondents actually knew the implementation and market cost of alternative energy systems. Energy theme respondents could therefore be said to be only somewhat aware of the current energy trends and issues facing the Gold Coast, with this awareness founded on the strong appeal of environmental friendliness. This concern may only grow if the energy supply to the Gold Coast is threatened by over-population or over

development, a loss or lack of energy resources and/or significant environmental and atmospheric degradation, resulting in decreased lifestyle amenity.

Bold ideas in regard to the energy theme included target setting, the ubiquitous use of local renewable energy sources (mainly solar), widespread use of electric cars and public transport, energy efficient buildings and the potential for the Gold Coast to generate its own energy and become self-sufficient. The idea of energy self-sufficiency along with zero environmental impact is probably the ultimate bold idea and one which will generate a new local industry. These ideas are best summaries in the following quotes:

“Within 15 years the Gold Coast is environmentally friendly, with little or no impact to the issue of Global Warming from energy generation. Either from solar or wind power sources.”

I would like to see the Gold Coast lead in renewable energy as well as alternatives to conventional power. This extends to all infrastructure, not just energy; but also water, transport, and roads.”

Given the current energy trends and issues, a number of respondents' comments about their preferred energy future highlighted the following conflicts:

- **Alternative energy sources v affordability and feasible provision** - Respondents identified the need for affordability, but also strongly desired investment in alternative energies that are as yet generally considered expensive to implement on the scale that the Gold Coast would potentially require.
- **Alternative energy sources v efficient energy use** - Regardless of the energy source, there remains a need in general to reduce energy use. Reducing energy use is probably more achievable in the short term than the wholesale substitution of current energy sources with alternative energy sources. Indeed, if alternative energy sources are to be more expensive, then using less energy is a way of mitigating against significant price increases.
- **Setting energy targets v achievability** - A number of respondents identified potential energy targets for the Gold Coast. However, the feasibility of these targets did not explicitly consider their affordability, the available technologies and funding issues.

Given the low number of respondents commenting on the energy theme it would be appropriate to combine it with one of the other themes. Liquid fuels are linked strongly with transport, whilst electricity is a utility. Energy is also a key input to the economy. Ultimately, combining energy with the water theme would seem to be an appropriate avenue, given both energy and water are considered utilities. This would lead to a new theme concerning utilities and could combining energy, water, liquid and solid waste and telecommunications.

8 Our Environmental Future

The Gold Coast contains significant biodiversity, making it one of the most beautiful and naturally diverse places in Australia. On the Gold Coast and throughout the world, a considerable change in attitude is taking place, resulting in a movement toward an environmentally friendly and sustainable future.

The Gold Coast has seen significant population growth in recent years and this growth is predicted to continue, placing a strain on the city's environment. Such growth in the population has led to urban expansion and development, which in turn has resulted in an increase in the levels of waste and pollutants, degraded natural habitat and impacts on the conservation of the Gold Coast's unique environment.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE the environment theme attracted a high number of overall responses (18%). These comments linked to all of other BOLD FUTURE themes.

Respondents generally perceived the environment to be fundamental to lifestyle and the need to protect the environment as being essential. General responses to this theme related to the values of and issues impacting the environment included:

- The need to protect the natural flora and fauna on the Gold Coast;
- The impacts of development on the natural environment; and
- Impacts on future generations.

More specifically respondent's preferred environmental future included the following elements:

- A medium proportion of respondents indicated the need for **greater control of development** in their preferred future. Respondents indicated concern over development and the need to ensure that it was environmentally friendly in the future. In line with trends and issues seen on the Gold Coast, it was also perceived that the health and sustainability of the environment was significantly impacted by development.
- **Population growth** was perceived by a number of respondents as an important issue which will impact the environment in present day and into the future. This issue was seen to have significant importance to a number of respondents noting that increases in the population over time will have an impact on the health of the environment on the Gold Coast. This was seen to have an impact on the land use future of the Gold Coast as well as transport, pollution and water use in the city.
- Respondents indicated a need to protect and maintain **green space** not only to ensure the accessibility of green space for future generations, but also to ensure that carbon emissions resulting from development and residential housing are offset. This was further supported by those respondents who desired further control of development, and in some cases, reduction in development. They also sought provisions for ensuring development was sustainable.
- **Protection of the natural environment** was identified by a medium proportion of respondents as important for the future of the city. Respondents indicated that it is essential that both flora and fauna be protected and preserved.
- The importance of maintaining and protecting the natural environment including **pollution** management was seen as an issue for respondents. The desire to ensure the protection of the natural environment was of medium importance to respondents in their preferred future for the Gold Coast.

Bold ideas put forward by respondents included greater recycling programs, research and education to build greater awareness of the environment, environmentally friendly development including green space, energy efficiency and green technology, and the

protection and expansion of green space or green corridors to act as a buffer and to preserve flora and fauna.

Whilst there was no one bold idea that was illustrative of all others, it is clear that respondents are seeking to preserve the existing environment on the Gold Coast and where possible, enhance that environment and even reverse any environmental degradation that has already happened.

Given respondents preferred environmental future, there are conflicts with the need to accommodate the increasing population on the Gold Coast. These conflicts present in the following manner:

- **Open space v low density development** - A proportion of respondents indicated the desire for restrictions on high rise and high density development whilst they and others also expressed the need to retain and expand the amount of open space available in the city. With increases in the population, it is seen that development is inevitable, however the most sustainable and desired development options is debatable. The line between high rise and high density development and urban sprawl was seen as a contentious issue. Many respondents were in favour of maintaining green space (and even increasing it) as well as ensuring low-density development.
- **Decrease in development v population growth** - The preference for a decrease or a stop in development on the Gold Coast was identified by a number of respondents. Outlined in barriers and constraints however was the impact of the expansion of the Gold Coast's population. Maintaining strict control over development with the preference for a decrease in the amount of development undertaken clashes with the current trend as well as the State's regional plan for continued growth in the Gold Coast population and the resulting need to provide housing and facilities to match that population.

The environment is clearly an important issue for respondents and should therefore be clearly identified as a key BOLD FUTURE theme in the vision.

9 Our Land Use Future

Land is a primary resource underpinning the local environment, society and the economy and has the ability to influence and be influenced by all of the other BOLD FUTURE themes. The future of the Gold Coast is dependent on the development and improvement of land use management practices that are environmentally sustainable, economically viable, promote social cohesion and are socially acceptable.

Managing population growth to ensure a sustainable balance between conserving the environment, achieving better integrated land use and transport for all development as well as ensuring appropriate levels of infrastructure are key components identified in the State Government's South East Queensland Regional Plan.

The sea change phenomenon has impacted Australia and Queensland in particular, with more than 1,500 new residents moving to the coast per week. The provision of infrastructure and services to match population growth are key challenges in managing urban development into the future and this is particularly so for the Gold Coast.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE, the land use theme attracted a significant number of responses (8%).

In general, the majority of respondents to the land use theme were concerned with the impacts of development on the land, particularly with regards to over-development. Respondents were concerned with the impacts of development on the city's open space and therefore viewed the preservation and maintenance of open or green space as important.

More specifically, the main issues raised by respondents were:

- **Development** – Comments relating to the management and regulation of the use of land by limiting development activities achieved a medium proportion of responses. The retention of more green areas, less high rise or high-density housing and more larger lot sizes were common preferences. Managing urban development to minimise environmental impacts, including impacts on native flora and fauna was conversely also perceived as important.
- **Environment and open space** – Of medium importance to respondents is the desire for more open space, the preservation or maintenance of green space and a reduction in the amount of open space being used for development.
- **Planning** – A medium proportion of respondents indicated their preference for a future where efficient land usage was brought about by balanced planning and good land management practices. This included the need for controlled land use, improved developmental standards, and ensuring that land use planning be 'balanced'.
- **Population growth** – A medium proportion of respondents identified population growth as a key issue impacting on their preferred land use future. The continued pace of population growth and the inadequacy of infrastructure and services to support the growth were identified as concerns for a number of respondents.
- **Sustainable future** – Sustainability and development of infrastructure and adequacy of land supplies to match the growing population achieved a medium proportion of responses. The need to integrate infrastructure requirements in planning of land development to ensure sustainability was recognised as important.
- **Transport** - Of medium importance to respondents is the need to improve public transport systems. This included the need to integrate transport planning with whole of city planning and urban design guidelines, as well as a desire to extend public transport routes, provide cheaper public transport fares and increase public transport options.

The land use theme generated a wealth of bold ideas for the future shape and form of the Gold Coast. Bold ideas provided by respondents can be summarised as follows:

- **Sustainable Development** – This incorporated urban design issues and notions of integrated communities and environmental considerations. Many of these ideas incorporate a holistic view and are linked with other themes such as transport, community, energy and environment.
- **Transport infrastructure** – The creation of a well connected city through the provision of adequate transport infrastructure;
- **Open space** – Preservation of open space and provision of recreational areas; and
- **Sustainable future** – Suggested elements through which a sustainable future could be achieved included population control, development control and effective land use planning or management.

There were many bold ideas that described a mixture of the above elements, each with a slightly different aspect. Two comments that seem to capture these bold ideas best are provided below:

“A city with vibrant and well-connected urban and green spaces. High-density living which is not isolating but connected with green spaces and beaches. All centres are well populated with a mix of uses to allow people to live, work and play.”

“More self-contained village like developments separated by open space. More integrated transport. The self-contained areas could reduce the need for transport. Self-contained would include entertainment and facilities for all age groups. Houses designed for our climate so that they do not need air conditioning.”

To move towards these bold ideas several conflicts that are apparent in the respondents comments need to be resolved, including:

- **Open space v large blocks of residential land** - The provision and preservation of open space was highly valued by respondents. At the same time, respondents had a desire to retain and continue to develop large blocks of residential land.
- **Population growth v development** – A number of respondents were concerned by the increasing pace of population growth and the inadequacy of infrastructure and services to support the growth in population. However, respondents were against development, particularly high density / high rise development and did not offer any suggestions or alternatives as to how to accommodate the population growth.
- **Development v infrastructure** – Respondents preferred less or reduced development but at the same time commented that the provision of infrastructure is important, particularly in light of population growth.

Like economics, land use is fundamental to the way the city will develop into the future. In recent years there has been a recognition that land use and economic planning need to co-exist and as such one option could be to combine the land use and economic themes in the vision.

10 Our Transport Future

Trends in Australian culture have seen the increasing reliance on private motorcars to meet transport needs. The Gold Coast is no exception, with approximately 90% of journeys by private motorcar over about 3,000km of Council Roads.

Looking at public transport, the Gold Coast currently has bus, rail and air services, with ferry operations due in 2008. Council has commenced preparation for a Rapid Transit system, to link Helensvale to Broadbeach by 2012, and Coolangatta by 2015. This will take the form of a Light Rail or Rapid Bus system.

Council has also considered vast improvements to the rail network in line with public transport needs, as well as air travel from the Gold Coast Airport, which is seen to be on the increase, with passenger numbers doubling within the past six years and expanding to more destinations.

Transport has a significant impact on a number of factors, particularly environment and economy, with 13.5% of gas emissions derived from transport representing 4.5% of total GDP (2005-2006).

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE, the transport theme attracted a high number of overall responses (12%). In addition to the comments directly provided on the transport theme, many transport related comments were submitted in almost all the other BOLD FUTURE theme responses.

Ensuring there are sufficient public transport options for the greater community, including visitors, was the focus for many of the respondents. However greater concern was shown for:

- The need to reduce traffic congestion on the Gold Coast; and
- The ability to easily move from 'a' to 'b'; and
- The incorporation of an integrated public transport plan for the City was seen as essential.

More specific comments regarding the preferred transport future covered the following:

- **Expanding public transport** options and access was seen to be a fundamental issue in improving the Gold Coast's transport well into the future. Many respondents viewed this as an aim to reducing the number of cars on the roads and encouraging 'green' transport options. A number of transport options were covered in the comments including rail, light rail, monorail, bus and ferry options.
- **Adequate roads and road infrastructure** to account for population growth and increased traffic was also a key issue raised. With increases in population numbers, respondents wished to ensure that roads would be able to keep pace with increases in population growth.

Respondents recommended a number of bold ideas in relation to transport on the Gold Coast. Ideas included having an integrated environmentally friendly public transport system and car free zones within the City.

Bold ideas or concepts for public transport included:

"The light rail takes me anywhere I want to go- even as far as south as Byron. It's never crowded and I can load my bike onto the side of the carriages and get to observe places or beaches on the network of cycle ways and paths. You can buy year round tickets so it's really cheap."

"People move from place to place in small multiple hire buses that pick you up at your door and drop you off at your destination without the hassle of having to find

a car park. It is all done by computers which are activated by your phone call, and you are allocated a vehicle and advised 5 minutes before it is due to arrive."

"Traffic flows are now synchronised by central control (like Melbourne) and out of town free parking is provided with free transport into Southport, Nerang and Burleigh."

Upon analysis of respondents' comments on their preferred transport future, a number of conflicts were evident:

- **Roads v public transport** - While a number of respondents indicated the need for expansion of roads to accommodate private motor vehicle use, others saw the need to encourage the use of public transport to reduce the number of private cars on the road.
- **Transport corridors v open space** - A number of respondents saw the need to expand existing roads and transport corridors to meet population needs. A clash was identified however with the lack of available land space as well as the desire to maintain green open space in the city.

The popularity of the transport theme in its own right, along with the fact that transport issues were raised in responses to most of the other themes, indicates the importance of transport as an issue. It's clear from respondents' comments that the word transport is strongly connected to public transport and roads. There is a rationale for changing the focus as a theme cover broader 'connectivity, accessibility and mobility' within the city may enable the focus to expand to broaden the scope of the theme and encompass the importance placed on land use planning to negate or reduce the need for many of the current trips. This is clearly a key element to the whole of city planning as well as the connectivity of the Gold Coast.

11 Our Water Future

Water is a basic necessity, and the Gold Coast as with most cities, is dependant on the adequate supply of water for the daily needs of its population and future growth prospects. The Gold Coast's main water sources are two dams located to the west of the city, the Hinze Dam and the smaller Little Nerang Dam.

Water has become a scarce resource over the past few years with drought and decline in rainfall leaving the dams severely depleted. In response to this, Gold Coast residents and businesses have been required to abide by strict water restrictions. These have, however, been suspended following recent rainfall increasing the water level of the Hinze Dam to overflowing. Nevertheless, concern for the future water supply of the Gold Coast has resulted in the development of a desalination plant at Tugun, the 50 year **WaterFuture Strategy** (2005), and continued monitoring and discussion around the present and future water situation of the Gold Coast.

Of the nine themes considered by respondents to BOLD FUTURE, the water theme attracted the second highest number of responses (19%).

In general, the majority of respondents to the water theme were very concerned with having adequate water to supply the present and future needs of the Gold Coast. Respondents were also very concerned with the capacity of the Gold Coast to store water and to supplement the water supply, followed by support for the continued conservation of water toward sustainable water management. A number of measures to support an abundant water future were presented by respondents, including:

- **Alternative water sources**, including recycled water, desalination, capture of storm water and water tanks;
- Retaining **water restrictions** indefinitely to ensure continued sustainable water use;
- Implementing **water saving regulation**, including development standards, for new properties and water targets for existing properties, for example requiring homes and businesses to install water tanks and water saving devices, as well as penalties for abusing water restrictions;
- **Sustainable water management** at the administration level;
- Discerning the level of **infrastructure** needed to support current and future population growth and development, or conversely preventing further development that cannot be supported by available infrastructure such as water supply; and
- **Additional water storage and supply infrastructure**, including increasing current dam capacity levels, new dams and alternative water storage options.

In general these responses aligned with the present initiatives currently being undertaken and considered by the Council's WaterFuture Strategy. Interestingly, only a few respondents expressed concern toward the change of management in the administration of Queensland's major water sources. Comments generally illustrated respondents' preference for good water management, use and availability, no matter which organisation administered the water resources. Nevertheless, some respondents did express concern for the sharing of water and how the Gold Coast would fair in the new system. It is worthy of note that respondents' comments did not refer to any of the following areas:

- The **WaterFuture Strategy**. Many respondents identified the need for a long term water plan, however appeared unaware of the present strategy initiated by Council in 2005;
- The **city's increased use of recycled water**. Many respondents commented on the need for alternative water sources and the desalination plant presently under

construction, however none indicated awareness of the city's increased use of grey water;

- The **pressure and leakage management program**. A proportion of respondents identified the need to upgrade infrastructure and piping, but did not express an awareness of the current strategy managing this issue; and
- The implementation of **fully integrated urban water management**. Only one respondent commented on an active urban water management program operating on the Gold Coast.

While respondents' comments agreed with many of the key elements that make up the **WaterFuture Strategy**, the majority were clearly unaware of many of the current programs and plans in place to manage the Gold Coast's water future. Respondents also did not particularly mention affordability, potentially suggesting that there is an implicit assumption that water charges will remain at reasonable levels into the future.

Respondents offered a variety of bold ideas concerning their preferred water future in the areas of water supply (water tanks, self sufficiency, recycled water, storm water, desalination, water sharing network), water storage, water management, water conservation and sustainable future. Given the prominence of the water debate over the last few years there did not seem to be any ideas that could be considered new.

Respondents to the water theme could therefore be said to understand the water situation of the Gold Coast and the solutions, but did not appear to be highly uninformed as to government action to manage the situation.

Given respondents' comments on their preferred water future, the following conflicts were noted:

- **Abundance of water v water conservation** - While respondents desired an abundant water future, the necessity of water conservation also identified by respondents directly conflicts with this preferred water future. It appears that a balanced approach needs to be taken to allow both the enjoyment of water and its reasonable use to satisfy the expectations of respondents.
- **Proposed solutions v feasibility and cost** - While respondents supported various solutions to supplement the water shortage and recognised that there may be a cost involved, the level of technical and logistical understanding as to the feasibility of these ideas was not clearly recognisable in responses. Respondents' suggestions included the implementation of recycled water, raising of the Hinze Dam wall, a new dam, water tanks in every building, self-sufficient water supply and use for the Gold Coast, desalination and a water sharing network. Yet no comment reported on the logistical ability of any of these solutions to supply or supplement water to the city, on the cost of the scale of works required to implement many of these solutions (particularly a water tank in every household), or even simply the scale of works needed to provide such services to the half-million residents that make up the Gold Coast.

Whilst the water theme was a popular one, governments appear to have the situation well in hand for the foreseeable future (and indeed have plans for the next 50 years). Given this situation, it would appear based on the analysis that there is limited value in the water theme remaining as a separately identifiable theme element in the vision. Instead it is suggested that it could be combined with the energy theme to form a utility theme.

12 Summary

Comments from the community surrounding their Gold Coast lifestyle values along with their preferred future for each of the nine BOLD FUTURE themes have been summarised in this report. Within each theme there are one or more bold ideas that come to the fore.

However, the comments on each theme also present a number of inherent conflicts that need to be resolved for the BOLD FUTURE vision and blueprint, if the vision for a sustainable Gold Coast City is to be successful.

It is also suggested from the analysis that the nine BOLD FUTURE themes may not be the most relevant and appropriate. Some of the themes can be condensed and some thought needs to be given to the appropriate naming of those themes so that they reflect their intention and clearly communicate priorities for the sustainability of the city.

Finally it is suggested that future research is undertaken with the community to test the robustness of certain BOLD FUTURE proposals that are candidates for final selection.

12.1 Key Items for a Bold Future

Analysis of respondents' comments has resulted in a number of key items for consideration that need to form part of the BOLD FUTURE. By theme these include:

Beaches

- Concentration on the environmental aspects of the beaches;
- Protection, maintenance and retention of the beaches – allowing for continued access, usage and experiences of the beaches by all users;
- Limiting high density, high rise developments along the beach / foreshore;
- The provision of access, amenities, facilities and infrastructure all contributing to the usage and experience of beaches; and
- Importance of beaches for the lifestyle and image of the city.

Community

- Services and facilities allowing for increased participation within the community (and facilitating a sense of belonging) with the provision of these matched to cater for increases in population; and
- A safe, secure and inclusive community for residents and all members of the community – families, children and the aged.

Cultural

- Values surrounding the current cultural focus, particularly Australian, music, arts and family values or lifestyle and to celebrate its cultural diversity;
- Expanding cultural opportunities (including an increase in the number and variety of facilities / venues) allowing increased community participation in activities and events celebrating diversity and identity; and
- The Gold Coast city will be recognised as a place with a distinctly diverse and identifiable cultural identity.

Economic

- The economy is fundamental to the future of the Gold Coast and consequently to the success of the other eight BOLD FUTURE themes and achievement of a sustainable Gold Coast city.

Energy

- A sufficient and assured supply of energy to match the growth of the Gold Coast; and
- The environmental degradation caused by current sources of energy generation.

Environment

- The need to protect the natural flora and fauna on the Gold Coast;
- The impacts of development on the natural environment; and
- Impacts and value for future generations.

Land use

- Impacts of development on land use, particularly with regards to over-development;
- Impacts of development on the city's open space; and
- Importance of preservation and maintenance of open or green space.

Transport

- The need to reduce traffic congestion on the Gold Coast;
- The ability to easily move from 'a' to 'b'; and
- The need for integrated public transport.

Water

- Having adequate water to supply the present and future needs of the Gold Coast;
- Capacity of the Gold Coast to store water and to supplement the water supply;
- Support for the continued conservation of water toward sustainable water management; and
- The importance of water based recreation to the Gold Coast lifestyle.

12.2 Resolving Conflicts & Tensions

Within the community responses there are a number of notable conflicts and tensions that will need to be addressed in the BOLD FUTURE vision and blueprint to achieve a sustainable Gold Coast. In summary by theme these are:

Beaches

- **Preservation v Access:** Respondents commented that it was important to preserve the beaches so that it remains clean and pollution free but also identified a lack of infrastructure, roads, parking and beach access as limitations.
- **Preservation v Development:** Respondents indicated preference for reduced development, especially residential high rise, but at the same time mentioned a desire for an increase in development (such as increased facilities, amenities and commercial development) facilitating usage of the beaches.

- **Preservation v Facilities:** Preservation of beaches so that it remains clean / pristine is important to respondents while a large proportion of responses also require additional facilities and the built environment to encourage increased use of the beaches.

Community

- **Perceptual and/or behavioural conflicts between generations:** Respondents indicated 'hope' for the future of the children within the community, though tended towards more 'negative' perceptions in terms of youth, and resultant perceptions of safety within the community as related directly to youth behaviours.
- **Over development v provision of additional social facilities and infrastructure:** Respondents have indicated preferences for additional facilities and infrastructure, though have also expressed concern over the perceived risk of over-development within the Gold Coast.

Cultural

- **Australian culture v cultural diversity:** Values placed on the cultural environment related to the importance of retaining and preserving the Australian lifestyle / culture. However, respondents also commented that it was important to celebrate diversity of lifestyle and cultural differences within the community.
- **Provision of activities and events v infrastructure:** Respondents indicated a preference for a broad range of activities and events but have also nominated a lack of infrastructure / facilities to support this.
- **Increased creative opportunities v facilities / venues:** Respondents commented that there was a need for dedicated art space for artists to support the cultural sector. However, there was a perceived lack of infrastructure / venues to support creative industry on the Gold Coast.

Economy

- **Economic development v environment:** Respondents saw a need for development to cater for population growth, but not at the expense of the environment.
- **Economic development v tourism:** The natural attractions that have underpinned tourism growth and the Gold Coast as an attractive place to live could be compromised by pursuit of economic development and diversification.
- **Economic development increasing prices:** Economic development can be in conflict with existing communities, especially where development pushes prices out of the reach of locals particularly in regard to housing, rates, utilities, energy and groceries.
- **Local v regional v state economic planning:** The question of who is responsible for economic planning can create conflicts unless there is strong collaboration and consensus between economic planning authorities.
- **Picking winners v market forces:** Conflict and economic loss can occur where an attempt is made to pick winners. Instead government policy should seek to create the appropriate economic environment, where natural comparative advantage and market forces can shape economic development
- **Regional competition and incentives:** Competition between regions for new business can lead to conflicts, especially if incentives are offered that either consume resources best used elsewhere or, overtime, lead to the wrong locational decision.

Energy

- **Alternative energy sources v affordability and feasible provision:** Respondents identified the need for affordability, but also strongly desired investment in alternative energies that are as yet generally considered expensive to implement on the scale that the Gold Coast would potentially require.
- **Alternative energy sources v efficient energy use:** Regardless of the energy source, there remains a need in general to reduce energy use.
- **Setting energy targets v achievability:** A number of respondents identified potential energy targets for the Gold Coast. However, the feasibility of these targets did not explicitly consider their affordability, the available technologies and funding issues.

Environment

- **Open space v low density development:** Respondents indicated the desire for restrictions on high rise development whilst others expressed the need to retain and expand on the open space available.
- **Decrease in development v population growth:** The preference for a decrease or a stop in development on the Gold Coast was identified by a number of respondents. Outlined in barriers and constraints however was the impact of the expansion of the Gold Coast's population.

Land Use

- **Open space v large blocks of residential land:** The provision and preservation of open space was highly valued by respondents. At the same time, respondents had a desire to retain large blocks of residential land.
- **Population growth v development:** Respondents were concerned by the increasing pace of population growth and the inadequacy of infrastructure and services to support the growth in population. However, respondents were against development, particularly high density / high rise development.
- **Development v infrastructure:** Respondents preferred less or reduced development but at the same time commented that the provision of infrastructure is important, particularly in light of population growth.

Transport

- **Roads v public transport:** While a number of respondents indicated the need for expansion of roads to accommodate private motor vehicle use, others saw the need to encourage the use of public transport to reduce the number of private cars on the road.
- **Transport corridors v open space:** A number of respondents saw the need to expand existing roads and transport corridors to meet population needs. A tension was identified however with the lack of available land space as well as the desire to maintain green open space on the Gold Coast.
- **Public transport v freight transport:** The balance between investment in public transport and an efficient freight transport network is important. Although the Gold Coast does not require a significant freight task, the Pacific Highway is the major Brisbane to Sydney transport route, plus the city requires an efficient distribution network.

Water

- **Abundance of water v water conservation:** While respondents desired an abundant water future, the necessity of water conservation also identified conflicts with this preferred water future.
- **Proposed water solutions v feasibility and cost:** While respondents supported various solutions to supplement the water shortage and recognised that there may be a cost involved, the level of technical and logistical understanding as to the feasibility of these ideas was not clearly recognisable in responses.

12.3 Restating the Themes

Throughout the process of summarising the community comment the analysis has suggested that there are some alternatives to the nine BOLD FUTURE themes. These could be re-expressed in terms of theme consolidation and theme renaming. One set of possible theme areas to focus on in the vision is provided in the table below.

Theme	Theme Consolidation	Alternative Theme Names
Beaches	Beaches	Beaches
Community	Community & Cultural	Community, Culture & Creativity
Cultural		
Environment	Environmental	Environmental Services
Economic	Economic & Land Use	Activity & Planning
Energy	Energy & Water	Lifestyle Utility (a)
Land use		
Transport	Transport	Connectivity, Mobility & Accessibility
Water		

Note: (a) Includes energy, water, solid waste, liquid waste, telecommunications.

12.4 Future Research

It is important that once the initial BOLD FUTURE vision and blue print has taken shape that the elements are tested with the community to ensure that they are not significantly at odds with what the community have said. One approach for this would be to utilise facilitated exploration with the original community reference groups (CRG) recruited for the initial input into BOLD FUTURE. This group would be much easier to recruit and cost effective to run given their existing association with the BOLD FUTURE program.

The original CRG pool numbered 612 people with an attendance rate of 53%. It is suggested that ten meetings across the Gold Coast could be organised with potential attendance of 30 – 60 persons at each. Multiple facilitators would be available at each workshop to deal with larger attendances.

This group could also be developed into the future as a form of ongoing CRG to support a level of ongoing community engagement in the monitoring and review of the vision blueprint implementation into the future.



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