

Together we will create our...



BOLD FUTURE – Trends and issues



Our land use future

Gold Coast City is framed by forested, rural hinterland ranges to the west and the Pacific Ocean and Moreton Bay in the east.

Our future growth will be constrained by this physical setting as well as the efficiency or otherwise of infrastructure networks.

The State Government's South East Queensland Regional Plan promotes a compact form of urban development with clearly defined boundaries to urban growth. This means making efficient use of land in newly developing areas and achieving better integrated land use and transport for all development. Diversity of housing will be a key consideration to respond to the changing needs of the Gold Coast community.

Trends and issues

Worldwide, cities and towns are facing problems of growing vehicle use, suburban sprawl, loss of landscapes and ecosystems and rising social inequities resulting from population growth and development.

In Australia, and Queensland in particular, the sea change phenomena describes the explosion of population growth occurring along the coast with consequential impact on coastal communities. This impact is heightened in coastal South East Queensland (SEQ) which is experiencing population growth of more than 1500 new residents a week.

However, experts suggest that Gold Coast, like other cities in Australia and overseas, has reached a turning point. The land-consuming development sprawl of the past cannot be sustained and change of some form is essential. The release of the SEQ Regional Plan which created a consensus on

directing urban growth and protecting significant regional landscape and productive rural areas, sets out a way forward.

One of the emerging political issues for the future is climate change. Along with various influences on livability, access to quality public transport infrastructure and services – cutting down greenhouse gases by reducing private car use - is among the key drivers of managing urban development into the future.

The Gold Coast has experience in managing the impacts of population growth through land use and infrastructure planning. The city's diverse housing and experience with mixed use and higher density residential development, including tall buildings along parts of the coastline, provide a strong foundation for the future.

The Council's planning scheme and infrastructure framework take into account significant population growth in the future.

Since 1998, Council has developed strategies to manage this growth and respond to the challenges of change. Initiatives include:

- a new planning scheme, Our Living City which promotes ecological sustainability through the development assessment process
- a Priority Infrastructure Plan which integrates land use and infrastructure planning, and sequences new development within planned infrastructure network areas
- a draft Local Growth Management Strategy which sets out how Gold Coast will accommodate future growth and deliver outcomes under the South East Queensland Regional Plan.



What the experts have to say

"We yearn for real communities, for places to live and work that are worthy of our affection."

James Howard Kunstler

"There's a sense that the Gold Coast, like Australia, has reached a turning point: ... citizens recognise change is essential, even if they're not sure what the future should be."

Gordon Price 2007

Consolidating urban development around activity centres and along major public transport corridors is identified as the most appropriate approach to delivering a sustainable city.

Housing diversity is achieved through a range of dwelling types and sizes and innovative designs suited to our climate and lifestyle.

An important consideration in planning for more compact development is ensuring a high level of amenity is created, particularly for infill and redevelopment at higher densities focused around centres of activity. This approach acknowledges the importance of preserving the identity and sense of place of individual suburbs and neighbourhoods within the city.

The objective is to create socially cohesive communities which are physically connected with community services, employment, leisure and opportunities for general social infrastructure.

More compact development can be created using tall buildings or lower rise accommodation.

While tall buildings present a powerful physical image of the city which is recognised internationally, the area covered by this building form is less than 1% of the total urban footprint. In Gold Coast City buildings provide visual markers in the landscape and allow people to navigate the city while accommodating density but minimizing building footprint.

Density can also be achieved through lower rise development which has a more urban look and feel. Newer suburbs such as Varsity Lakes, Hope Island and Coomera Waters are achieving similar densities to parts of Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach and this form of development provides an alternative to high rise in parts of the city.

Through these approaches, more than 60% of the Gold Coast land area can be maintained as productive rural landscapes, natural areas and seascapes, providing environmental protection and visual relief to the city while contributing to its economy, lifestyle and livability.