

# Urban Change in the Sunshine Coast Urban corridor

The coastal corridor between Maroochydore and Caloundra attracts new residents and visitors every year. How do we best accommodate this

## How do we best shape the change that is coming to the Sunshine Coast?

**It's no secret that our coastal corridor is one of the most beautiful places in the world. Due to its increasing popularity, urban change is coming with or without a mass transit system. We need a plan to protect and enhance this corridor to be in keeping with the Sunshine Coast lifestyle.**

When an investment is made in new major transport infrastructure, it improves the accessibility of land within its catchment. This can occur irrespective of whether the infrastructure is a road or public transport initiative. For example, a new motorway to an area previously only served by a basic two lane road will reduce the time taken to get to and from the area

thereby improving the ability for people to access the area.

When change is planned to occur in an existing urban area, the provision of new transport infrastructure is often required. This is because there will likely be more people and jobs in the area than prior to the redevelopment. This means the capacity of the local transport system will need to be increased, to meet the extra travel demand.

Although existing roads in the area can be widened, this will increase the amount of traffic and reduce the amenity of the area due to noise, pedestrian severance and air pollution (see Figure 1). The widened, busier roads will impact the ability to create great urban places. Further, more cars result in more parking, which takes up valuable space that could otherwise be utilised for residential, commercial, green space or recreational uses.



*Figure 1 Large roads and intersections can divide communities and reduce the safety and attractiveness of places for pedestrians*

An alternative approach to support the change of an existing urban area is to provide an efficient mass transit system that can move more people in fewer vehicles and fit in better with the local urban character and lifestyle (see figure 2). If such a system integrates well with the locality, is electrically powered and quiet, it will have far less noise and air pollution impacts than a busy road.

The provision of a new mass transit system will increase the accessibility of land in the catchment and increase the potential for development of either dwellings or commercial enterprises thereby creating more jobs.

The draft Options Analysis has found that the right type of environmentally friendly mass transit technology can act to increase the potential for, and benefits of, consolidation of new dwellings and employment along the mass transit route. This will enable a higher proportion of projected growth to occur within the established urban footprint which will protect our natural and rural areas. It will also allow residents to access key destinations and employment nodes without having to drive long distances in private vehicles.

In particular:

- The Project, if based on technology with an ability to influence urban outcomes (Category B right of way), will deliver a significant region-shaping opportunity when enabled by appropriate changes to planning provisions.
- Investment in the Sunshine Coast Mass Transit, if based on a technology with the ability to influence land use outcomes, will help drive a stronger, more competitive and sustainable economy. This will in turn generate substantial and lasting economic, social and environmental benefits.

An important objective of the project is to support the policies in the *Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014*, and *ShapingSEQ* that aim to contain urban expansion. Urban change should be focussed on existing centres and areas close to the mass transit route that offer the greatest accessibility and potential for renewal. Importantly, urban consolidation should also focus on supporting the Maroochydore City Centre as the region's CBD, and capitalising on development opportunities in the major centres in Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra town centre.

In other parts of the corridor outside of these major centres, a carefully planned and staged approach can transform ageing and underutilised development into a modern, low key lifestyle precincts. Excessive high-rise developments are considered inappropriate for the Sunshine Coast.



*Figure 2 Mass transit systems can carry lots of people using a relatively small space which creates more liveable streets and provides the opportunities for more diverse living opportunities (Trackless Tram option shown).*

## Have your say

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