

How do we respond to the problems that relate to the Sunshine Coast?

The response to the problems

Many people move to the Sunshine Coast because it is a great place to live. This popularity brings problems and opportunities. The table below identifies the key population growth related problems that we are facing and the proposed responses to those problems.

| Identified challenges | Problem statement | Response to Problem |
|---|--|---|
| An accelerating trend towards urban expansion | | |
| Cost of urban expansion (i.e. growth beyond existing urban areas) | Continued urban expansion will increase transport, congestion, productivity, environmental, social and infrastructure connection costs. | A major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres and housing areas and linking the region to Brisbane. |
| Reversing the current dominance of low-density housing | The lack of affordable housing and choice of housing type in the coastal corridor has led to a people deciding to move to urban expansion development areas where greater housing stock and housing affordability is available. | A coordinated program to establish high quality and affordable housing choices on lands in existing centres and along the mass transit alignment that currently host ageing and under-utilised development. |
| High dependency on private motor vehicle transport | | |
| Existing low capacity public transport system will hinder urban and economic growth | Problems identified with the existing public transport system within Sunshine Coast region will inhibit the achievement of strategic urban and economic growth targets. | A major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres and housing areas and linking the region to Brisbane |
| High dependency on private motor vehicles and declining public transport use | The car dependant nature of the Sunshine Coast transport system places high pressure on the existing road network. It will continue to degrade the liveability and economic attractiveness of the Sunshine Coast Urban Corridor. This would be exacerbated if combined with urban expansion. | Provide a feasible alternative to the private car by providing a major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres. |
| Growing car parking demand | Plentiful supplies of free and low-cost car parking will support growth of car travel and reduce the need and incentive to travel to locations within the Sunshine Coast Urban Corridor via public transport. | Consider car parking provision and pricing in key centres and activity areas. |

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|---|--|---|
| Growing levels of road congestion | | |
| High level of road congestion on key arterial roads on the Sunshine Coast | Congestion is currently occurring in key areas on the Sunshine Coast in peak times on key routes in the Sunshine Coast Urban Corridor. | Appropriate road upgrades in conjunction with a major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres and housing areas and linking the region to Brisbane. |
| Effects of congestion on business and industry | Road congestion will reduce the likelihood of the region reaching its urban consolidation targets and delaying or erasing urban transformation opportunities. In particular, the coastal areas that are also tourist precincts will likely suffer reduced attractiveness to visitors due to congestion. This will result in decreased income for businesses and industry. It would also result in decreased agglomeration benefits, which occur when there is an increase in effective density due to reductions in transport accessibility. | |
| Liveability and environmental sustainability challenges | | |
| Impacts of reduced levels of employment self-containment | The present high level of employment self-containment in the Sunshine Coast presents an opportunity to provide effective public transport and reduce negative environmental externalities associated with long trips in private vehicles. | To promote and maintain self-containment of employment on the Sunshine Coast a major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres and local housing and local workforce. |
| Future jobs and productivity growth | Lack of physical connectivity between the major activity centres of the region, reduced business-to-business interaction (reduced agglomeration and clustering opportunities) and the lack of reliable access to local workforce are affecting the attraction of new growth in employment opportunities and development of a broader industry base. | |
| Impacts of growth on the natural environment | Catering for population growth by urban expansion can undermine the quality and extent of the natural environment. | Urban expansion and the impact on the natural environment can be reduced by establishing high quality and affordable housing choices on lands in existing centres and along the mass transit alignment. |
| Increased environmental externalities | Urban expansion and reduced levels of employment self-containment will sustain very high levels of car dependence, increase the amount of travel, and the level of energy consumption and emissions from transport activity. Energy consumption is higher due to less efficient transport practices, and there are increasing emissions which affect air and noise quality, and emissions of Greenhouse gases. | A major improvement to mass transit to provide an integrated network connecting the major activity centres and housing areas and linking the region to Brisbane. This can be complemented by establishing high quality and affordable housing choices on lands in existing centres and along the mass transit alignment. |

| Identified challenges | Problem statement | Response to Problem |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Climate change resilience | Increasing travel demands, made in more vehicles powered by fossil fuels will hinder the region's ability to respond to climate change imperatives. | Less reliance on the private vehicle through a major improvement to mass transit. Mass transit technologies to consider alternative power sources such as battery or hydrogen power. |

Summary

The problems facing the Sunshine Coast are common among many growing cities around the world. The Sunshine Coast has the benefit of learning from these cities. Figure 1 provides a brief summary of the best practice approaches to managing the problems going forward.



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