



Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Draft Options Analysis and Urban Transformation

Community Engagement Framework

Sunshine Coast Council is planning now for future growth to ensure our lifestyle, environment and liveability is maintained and enhanced into the future. The Sunshine Coast is expected to grow to more than 518,000 people over the next 20 years which necessitates a holistic and sustainable plan for growth. A critical part of that plan, which will be crucial to maintaining and enhancing the liveability of the region, will be an efficient and accessible public transport network.

It is important that our community and stakeholders have the opportunity to share their views, expertise and ideas to help shape our collective future and to inform the planning for a better public transport network for our region. This Community Engagement Framework outlines the approach to engaging with the community and stakeholders to inform the Draft Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Options Analysis and in doing so, foster a wider understanding of the challenges or managing urban growth and the opportunities associated with urban transformation in the high growth urban coastal corridor.

Urban transformation

Through its policy and planning instruments developed over the course of the last decade, Council has identified key centres where significant opportunities can be achieved to provide greater housing and lifestyle choice, and improve and enhance local areas. The objective is on enabling Council to meet the growth targets set in *ShapingSEQ* in a sustainable way and in a manner that does not undermine or compromise the lifestyle values and characteristics of the region. This includes focusing on areas where land use change and housing diversity is most appropriate, as well as leveraging a mass transit solution to achieve urban renewal benefits.

The Sunshine Coast Mass Transit project identifies mass transit options for our coastal corridor where around 80 percent of the population lives and where a greater proportion of the population is expected to be accommodated in more accessible, connected and well serviced locations.

The approach to Urban Transformation will consider the integration of a mass transit solution including land use considerations and local area enhancements, such as more walkable suburbs with accessible paths and shade trees to access the corridor. Urban transformation will be focussed on areas close to the mass transit stations that have the greatest potential for renewal rather than existing high-quality residential areas. Consistent with the community's and Council's values, this does not necessitate high-density, expansive and significant building height adjustments across the entirety of the corridor.

Planning for a long-term transit solution

As this growth occurs, our community must be less reliant on private vehicles for short regional travel – and an efficient and sustainable public transport solution will be critical in achieving this shift.

Mass transit solutions require significant planning to undertake a rigorous assessment of viability, benefits and impacts through a business case process. The initial phase of this process, the Strategic Business Case, was completed and released in 2019. Council then commenced work on the second phase of the process, the Preliminary Business Case, which will be submitted to the Queensland Government once endorsed by Council.

The business case process is guided by the Building Queensland Framework, which recently adopted new terminology, so what was known as the “Preliminary Business Case” is now known as the “Options Analysis”. The aim of the Options Analysis is *“to narrow the breadth of options by applying rigorous evaluation criteria before assessing the viability of any remaining options”*.

The Options Analysis assesses land use, transport, liveability and environmental sustainability challenges, considers options to address these challenges and defines the priority for more detailed investigations. It does not establish a definitive position on matters such as the alignment of the mass transit system or property requirements, which are subject to further investigation in the Detailed Business Case and future project delivery planning.

While significant community consultation is to be undertaken during the preparation of the Detailed Business Case, Council considers there would be benefit in seeking early input from the community at the Options Analysis phase while it remains a Council-led initiative, to build on the range of strategies, plans and consultation programs undertaken by Council in recent years.

Therefore, before considering and submitting the Options Analysis to the Queensland Government, Council will seek feedback from our community and stakeholders through an extensive consultation program. This will include a phase of technical engagement with state agencies as well as a conversation with the community around the views and ideas for the mass transit system and the form and character of the surrounding areas.

Once the engagement program is complete, the draft Options Analysis will be finalised with community and stakeholder inputs and presented to Council for consideration. The final Options Analysis will describe how the engagement program and community input have shaped the final document.

When the Options Analysis is considered and endorsed by Council in 2021, it will be provided to the Queensland Government as the basis for the preparation of the final phase of the business case process, the Detailed Business Case – to be led by the Queensland Government.

Our approach to engaging

Council is committed to best practice engagement and genuinely seeking meaningful input that will help shape the way in which we continue to live, travel, work and play.

Consultation will be based on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) standard as the best practice framework for community engagement. Consultation will be undertaken at a number of points through the planning lifecycle for this project, at times which are appropriate to seek input to ensure there is a genuine opportunity for the community to influence the project.

The following principles will underpin Council’s ongoing community engagement process:

Timeliness – Council will engage with its community in ways that are timely, open to all, easily understood and not overly bureaucratic or resource-intensive.

Information and feedback – the community has the right to be well-informed on issues and receive feedback from Council on how its input will be used to inform Council decisions.

Mutual respect – Council’s goal is one of inclusive involvement. All voices matter, all opinions are valued and considered.

Action learning – Council is committed to the development of innovative engagement approaches, learning from each engagement experience, and using such learning to improve our approaches to engagement.

Foresight – Council engages with its community not only to learn about and respond to present needs, but also to gain a better understanding of our communities’ perspective on emerging issues that may affect our preferred future.

In the pursuit of best practice business case development, the Building Queensland stakeholder engagement principles will also guide the strategic engagement approach which are outlined in the *Stakeholder Engagement Guide, Business Case Development Framework*. These principles are as follows:

1. Engagement focuses on the best interests of the community
2. Engagement is open, honest and meaningful
3. Approaches to engagement are inclusive and appropriate
4. Information is timely and relevant
5. Information is accurate, easy to understand and accessible
6. Decision-making is transparent.

Opportunities for engagement

There are several opportunities for the community to have their input including:

Corporate Plan 2021-2025

As part of Council’s annual review of its Corporate Plan, community and stakeholders will be invited to provide input into the broader context of managing growth including a sustainable public transport network.

Engagement on the Corporate Plan will help to provide a further context for subsequent engagement on mass transit and urban transformation and will help set the strategic drivers for Council and the Sunshine Coast. Engagement on mass transit will therefore be complementary to this engagement.

Draft Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Options Analysis and Urban Transformation

A community engagement program will be undertaken to seek feedback on the mass transit options identified in the Options Analysis and the community’s views and ideas on urban transformation, including land use scenarios and urban renewal opportunities. In addition to community input received over many years on a range of Council’s policy and planning instruments, further feedback will be sought on the community’s values around local character, landscape, heritage and culture, mass transit design, as well as local facilities, open space and public realm enhancement opportunities.

Council will also reconfirm the community’s feedback and views received to date on key elements including growth management, jobs, connectivity, liveability and accessibility.

Future opportunities

Delivering a mass transit system is a long-term process that requires years of planning and an ongoing commitment from all levels of government. This means there are several additional opportunities for stakeholders and the community to help shape the project by having their say, including:

- **Detailed Business Case** – community engagement is also a critical component to the preparation of the Detailed Business Case. While this process will be managed by the Queensland Government, feedback will likely be sought on the reference design, including its alignment and the proposed locations and form of the stations. Engagement will also seek input on land use planning ideas including the local character that needs to be protected and the enhancement opportunities to benefit the community.
- **Planning scheme amendments** – should the Detailed Business Case be approved and should the State Government decide to proceed with the project, there may be related proposals to amend the Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme, which would be subject to a separate statutory community consultation process in accordance with the *Planning Act 2016*.

Engagement program

The Draft Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Options Analysis and Urban Transformation engagement program will be delivered in three stages.

The program will give people the opportunity to have their say at a time when the community is best placed to participate (i.e. when a sufficient period is available outside school holidays, taking account of COVID-19 considerations).

The proposed timeframes provide time to plan a high-quality engagement program, prepare tools and materials to explain the technical elements of the draft Options Analysis, to enable broad understanding and meaningful participation, and to ensure resources are available to manage the engagement process and properly consider and analyse the feedback received. Prior to the formal engagement process, Council will provide additional and more informative material about the project to ensure the community has an opportunity to become more aware of the project and make the most of the engagement process to follow.

A well-planned and considered engagement program will offer a range of consultation opportunities and engagement methods to ensure equitable and informed participation. The program will incorporate digital engagement techniques alongside traditional engagement methods and tools may include web-based surveys, virtual and in-person community information sessions and focus groups.

The engagement program will be delivered through the following key phases.

Table 1: Engagement milestones for the Mass Transit Draft Options Analysis and Urban Transformation

Engagement program		
Stage	Objective	Timeframe
1 – Inform	To inform and educate the community about the mass transit project and urban transformation, the next steps and how to be involved in future stages.	Late 2020
2 – Engage	To engage with community and stakeholders on options for mass transit and to seek thoughtful and well considered feedback to inform the final Options Analysis.	Early 2021
3 – Feedback	To report back to Council, our community and stakeholders about how their input has been considered and incorporated into the final Options Analysis.	Mid 2021
Future engagement opportunities		
Future	Detailed Business Case (DBC) engagement led by the Queensland Government	Subject to the timing of the DBC process
Future	Planning scheme amendments - statutory community consultation (as required)	TBD

