

Environment and Liveability Strategy

What the community told us

The majority of respondents strongly supported the overall aims of the draft strategy. Comments identified specific issues in regard to managing continued population growth, retaining the positive aspects of the Sunshine Coast lifestyle, and ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with growth and change.

Comments also related to the challenge of implementing and achieving the desired aspirations articulated in the strategy when confronted with the reality of balancing the pressures of development while retaining the Sunshine Coast lifestyle. The top five themes were:

Retaining the distinct character: People are passionate about 'their' Sunshine Coast, and want to see the distinct qualities of our 'community of communities' and village feel retained and the natural areas preserved. Recognising the contribution made by the first Australians and the importance of our shared history and connection with the land are also important.

Protecting natural assets: There is recognition that the protection, management and enhancement of our environment (plants, animals and ecosystems) and distinct landscape are fundamental to the future of the region. Continuing the tradition of the coast's strong stewardship for our natural environment is strongly supported.

Finding the balance: Submitters recognise the need to find the 'sweet spot' that manages the competing needs and desires of individuals, communities, businesses and industries. It is recognised that transitioning to a more compact urban form is necessary to protect the natural assets. Retention of the character, scale and lifestyle we have now are also important – creating vibrant places for people and ensuring housing options for

everyone. There is a strong recognition that supporting infrastructure (especially transport) is critical to accommodate population growth and ensure our liveability.

Being sustainable: Integrating 'good sustainability practices' into all we do to manage both present and future impacts and understanding the link between (and achieving) sustainability and affordability are important. Reducing litter and consumptive practices are identified as concerns. The need to be prepared for and understanding the risks associated with climate change are identified as needing more attention and the community expressed an interest in being more actively involved.

Community involvement: It is important to the community to be involved in future decisions, seeking to be engaged regularly by council on major issues as change occurs. Maintaining the integrity of the Planning Scheme is also considered very important.

Recognising that the community are the custodians of the Coast's natural environment and liveability is also important to them.

Overall there is also a need to better understand the relationship with other council strategic documents, such as the Regional Economic Development Strategy, Social Strategy and Planning Scheme.

Current as at September 2017

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