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The Northerly Aspect Architects eNewsletter

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Our New Town Plan

The Gold Coast City Councils current planning scheme (town plan) was introduced in 2003 and it is due to be replaced in 2012. The new scheme, when introduced, will govern the development of the Gold Coast for the next 10 years.

What does this mean for you? If you have a project in the pipeline, that will require a planning permit, then timing may become critical. At the last change of planning scheme there was a rush to submit before the new plan come into place, which then lead to long delays in granting approvals.

Planning schemes govern the development of the city through measures such as setting the maximum height a building may be built, the maximum site coverage, the plot ratio (for large projects), what area should be set aside as green space, where shops and industrial areas will be allowed as well as new housing estates.

The council has issued a Statement of Proposal document which sets out some of the key elements of the new planning scheme. This document puts emphasis on not only maintaining the "green" elements of the Gold Coast, but looks to increase the percentage of the Gold Coast covered by native vegetation, while still allowing for significant population growth.

The new planning scheme, when released, is anticipated to increase allowance for higher density living in the coastal corridor, to accommodate the future population growth. It is not anticipated that it will allow the development of the cane fields to the north of the city.

GCCC undertook a programme called "Bold Futures" where they asked the population of the Gold Coast to provide the council with their ideas on what the Gold Coast should look like into the future – up to 2040. The information gained through this public consultation will be woven into the new planning scheme.

Through out Queensland, city planning schemes must follow a structure, and guidelines, which are set down by the State Government. This means that the "bones" of the Gold Coast planning scheme are the same as Logan, Brisbane, Scenic Rim and Ipswich's planning schemes. In 2009 the State Government changed the laws, which governs all city planning schemes (called Sustainable Planning Act 2009 or SPA). This in turn means that all city councils within Queensland will need to revised and replace their current planning schemes.

Gold Coast City Council had many difficulties gaining approval for the current planning scheme from the State Government before it's implementation in 2003. Numerous drafts of the planning scheme were submitted and rejected, which lead to the planning scheme being introduced much later then originally planned.

A draft version of the new planning scheme will be released to the public later in 2011. We encourage all Gold Coast residences to take the time to read and comment on this draft scheme, before it becomes law.



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