

Fiery council debate brings mass transit feedback



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Thank you to the Sunshine Coast Daily for covering the joint press conference with Member for Kawana Jarrod Bleijie, Cr Joe Natoli and Mtag calling for Public Consultation to occur on the Mass Transit Project before it is too late. The following is an extract of SCD article.

A "reality check" is coming for the Sunshine Coast Council according to one councillor who will push for more public feedback on a major project.

Kawana MP Jarrod Bleijie stood beside councillor Joe Natoli on Wednesday morning in a joint effort to call on the council to undertake more public consultation on the mass transit plan. They said the infill development associated with the project was not discussed with residents, despite the potential for it to have a "significant" impact on the region's lifestyle.

Mr Bleijie said the draft plan stated if light rail was to go ahead, infill development between Caloundra and Maroochydore would be needed to accommodate for an additional 80,000 residents. But he said light rail was unlikely to ease traffic congestion or solve public transport problems on the Coast.

"We all love the lifestyle on the Sunshine Coast and the biggest threat to that lifestyle right now is this mass transit plan," Mr Bleijie said. He said the infill development could not be achieved without the resumption of homes and businesses along Nicklin Way.

Cr Natoli said residents needed to be consulted on the plan now.

"In the past council has consulted on whether it should be light rail or bus services, but what we need to know and tell the community is about the urbanisation strategy because it's an enabler to make this project work," Cr Natoli said.

The Sunshine Coast Daily also reported support for public consultation from former Liberal MP Ian MacFarlane.

Mooloolaba and the Spit Association president Ian Macfarlane said the organisation "fully supports" open consultation on the mass transit plans.

The former Federal Liberal MP and Minister said the group had been "horrified" by some of the things they'd heard, particularly in relation to high-rise development and increased density along the proposed corridor.

Mr Macfarlane said Mooloolaba was already a "highly-congested area", and would remain so while Brisbane Rd was still to be duplicated.

(Paywall applies to full article]