

# Sunshine Coast Light Rail Route Options Consultation Report

May 2015

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1.2	26 February 2015	Leah Bancroft	Draft	Minor revisions
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During October and November 2014, Council undertook community consultation on the Sunshine Coast Light Rail project. The focus of consultation was to outline the project to the community, explaining the

potential benefits of light rail, and to gather community feedback on a range of route options in the areas of Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra.

Upon the close of consultation the project had engaged with many people across the Sunshine Coast and beyond including:

- Over 11,000 website visits
- Letterbox drop to over 30,000 households in direct proximity of the light rail corridor
- Direct engagement with over 800 people at Community Information sessions and project briefings
- Over 700 route option survey responses
- Thousands of people reached through advertising and information materials.

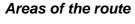


Consultation was framed around the release of two documents; 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail – Shaping Our Future' and the 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail Route Options' brochure.

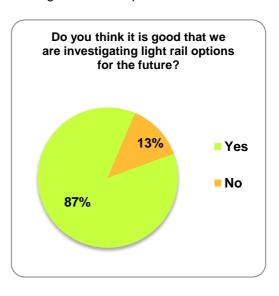
## Survey participants

The route options survey was the primary tool used to gather community feedback. 704 people completed the survey with respondents representing an extensive spread of the Sunshine Coast, including all coastal suburbs from Mudjimba and Bli Bli through to Pelican Waters in the south. The suburbs with the highest levels of survey response were those suburbs in the vicinity of the four light rail route option areas.

There was a consistent representation of persons aged between 35-74 and a lower proportion of responses in the 25-34 age category, consistent with the population profile of the Sunshine Coast. 57% of respondents were male while 43% were female. 87% of survey respondents support the investigation into light rail.



Respondents identified they would use the northern areas of the route (Maroochydore, Mooloolaba and Kawana) the most, while also identifying Maroochydore and Kawana as the two most important areas of the corridor, indicating a high level of support for the identified stage 1 of light rail to be constructed between Maroochydore and Kawana.



## Maroochydore

In relation to Maroochydore, there was a clear preference for Option A (Aerodrome Road and Maroochydore City Centre) with 50% of respondents having a preference for this route. Key issues raised by respondents included the competing interests of tourism and travel time, preservation of Cotton Tree and urban revitalisation of Aerodrome Road.

#### Mooloolaba

In relation to Mooloolaba, there was a similar level of preference for Option A (Beach and foreshore), Option B (Walan Street and Brisbane Road) and Option D (Foreshore and River Esplanade) with each receiving about 30% preference, while the key issue was the divided views regarding light rail along Mooloolaba Esplanade.

#### Kawana

In relation to Kawana, 71% of respondents preferred route options that accessed the hospital precinct (A and B) while key issues raised included access to the hospital precinct and other major destinations, travel time and connections to future heavy rail (CAMCOS).

#### Caloundra

In relation to Caloundra, there was a preference for Option C (Eastern Beaches) with 52% of preferences, while key issues raised included accessing the eastern beaches and accessing the Caloundra town centre.

## Feedback on light rail

The main potential deterrents to the use of light rail were identified as fare cost, travel time, location of light rail corridor, access to the light rail, frequency and reliability and preference for driving. A range of consistent themes emerged from other comments provided including:

- a) Support for light rail and preference for timing sooner rather than later
- b) Concerns regarding capital cost and suggestions of using buses as a cheaper option
- c) Concern regarding the cost and speed of travel on light rail
- d) A range of comments (including confusion) regarding light rail and the CAMCOS corridor
- e) Comments about public transport services to other areas including suggested extensions of the light rail
- f) Concerns regarding the impact of light rail on the road network.

## **Conclusions**

Community reaction to the potential for light rail for the Sunshine Coast was overwhelmingly positive. Feedback on the project and the route options will assist Council to move forward with more detailed study as well as informing future community consultation on the project. The option of light rail for the Sunshine Coast is broadly supported by the community.

Based on the outcomes of the community consultation and the assessments previously undertaken as part of the Route Planning and Impact Assessment Report, Council has identified a light rail route corridor from Maroochydore to Caloundra in order for further investigations to be undertaken to determine the feasibility of light rail for the Sunshine Coast.

Council also confirmed support for the establishment of a working group with the State government to introduce a high frequency branded bus as a forerunner to light rail on the corridor between Maroochydore to Caloundra.

## 1. Introduction

The Sunshine Coast Light Rail (SCLR) project is being undertaken as part of Council's planning for the future of the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast is expected to experience considerable population growth in the coming decades. In considering how this future growth is accommodated it is essential to carefully consider future transport options. Decisions regarding transport choices will not only influence the local economy, but will shape how the Sunshine Coast grows and how this growth influences future lifestyle options and liveability.

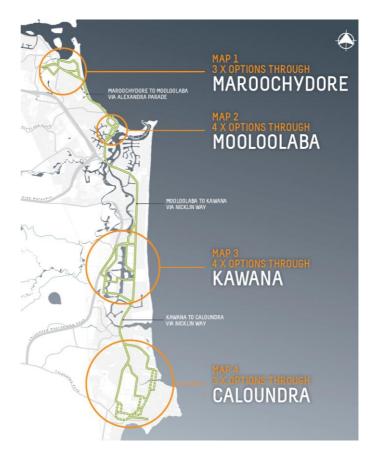
Through initial prefeasibility studies, the Sunshine Coast Light Rail Taskforce recognised the potential social, economic, environmental and transport benefits that a light rail system could bring to the Sunshine Coast. In support of these findings, the Council, in funding partnership with the Commonwealth Government, has commenced studies to evaluate the feasibility of light rail as potential future mode of transport.

## 1.1. Light rail route options

Initial feasibility studies identified four (4) areas of the Maroochydore to Caloundra corridor where a number of light rail route options exist. These four areas are Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra. The light rail route options identified have established the need for community consultation to inform the identification of a preferred light rail corridor for more detailed study. Throughout October and November 2014 Council undertook a community consultation program focussed on explaining the light rail project to the community and seeking feedback on the route options.

## 1.2. Purpose of this report

This report identifies the key findings of Councils community consultation as well as details of the activities that were undertaken as part of the consultation program. The report focuses on the results of the route option survey as it was the primary tool used to gather community feedback. This report does not make any recommendations regarding preferred light rail route options. The identification of a preferred light rail route will be informed by community feedback in conjunction with technical factors.



## 2. Consultation overview

Upon the close of consultation the project team had engaged with many people across the Sunshine Coast and beyond. Consultation highlights include:

- Over 11,000 website visits
- Letterbox drop to over 30,000 households in direct proximity of the light rail corridor
- Direct engagement with over 800 people at Community Information sessions and project briefings
- Over 700 route option survey responses
- Thousands of people reached through advertising and information materials.

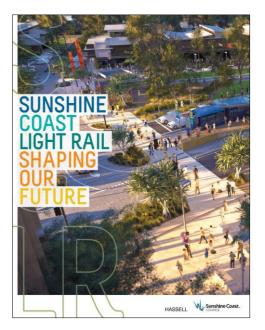
Given the length of time over which studies into light rail have been undertaken, a two-phase engagement approach was implemented to maximise message reach and survey participation. An overview of the consultation methodology is provided below. Further detailed information on the engagement and consultation activities is contained in **Appendix 1.** 

## 2.1. Phase 1: Reintroducing Sunshine Coast Light Rail

The purpose of Phase 1 was to reintroduce the light rail project to the community – reinforcing why it was being investigated, the many benefits that could be achieved and the implications of maintaining a business as usual approach to travel on the Sunshine Coast.

The Phase 1 period extended for approximately 3 weeks from Wednesday 8 October to Sunday 2 November. The focus of this phase was on the release of the 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail – Shaping Our Future' document. Engagement activities included:

- Media launch of 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail Shaping Our Future'
- Media release and interviews (print, broadcast, on-line)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Correspondence with key stakeholders (elected representatives, government agency representatives, industry organisations, Light Rail task force, council transport group, schools)
- Updated light rail website, including information sheets and contact with database of stakeholders developed since the project was launched in 2011.



## 2.2. Phase 2: Route options consultation

After having restarted the discussion about light rail through Phase 1 activities, the purpose of Phase 2 was to engage the community in discussions around route options for the four areas of Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra. Further, the consultation was designed to encourage participation in the route option survey to enable meaningful feedback to be factored into the next stages of the project.

The Phase 2 engagement period extended for 4 weeks from Monday 3 to Friday 28 of November 2015. Engagement activities included:

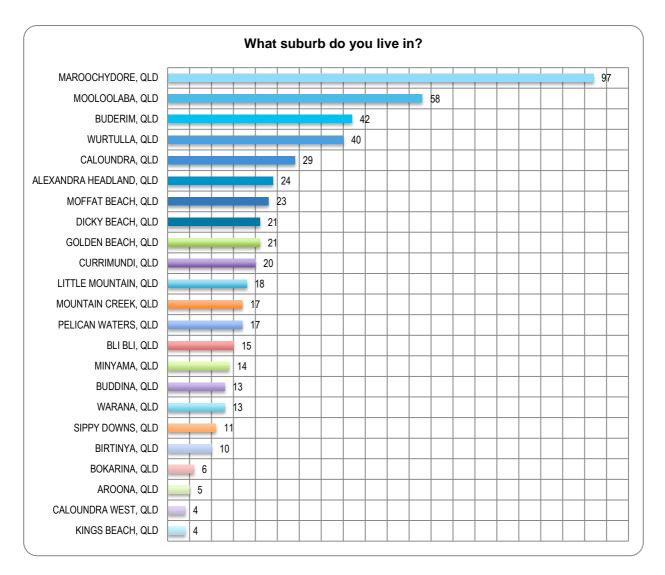
- Media launch of route options and interviews
- Seven (7) community information sessions across four (4) locations
- Information pack distributed to key stakeholders
- · Website information including online route option newsletter and survey
- Hardcopy of route option newsletter and reply paid survey
- Letterbox distribution of an invitation to public displays to key areas
- Advertising (television, print, on-line)
- Briefings
- · Social media.

## 3. Route option survey results

704 route option surveys were completed during the Phase 2 consultation period. 590 were completed online and 114 in hard copy format. A copy of the survey is included as **Appendix 2**. While the online survey featured the first three (3) questions as mandatory questions, respondents to the hard copy survey did not always answer every question. Non responses to these questions have been excluded from the results presented in sections 3.1 (Source of respondents by suburb), 3.2 (Demographics) and 3.3 (Top line survey question).

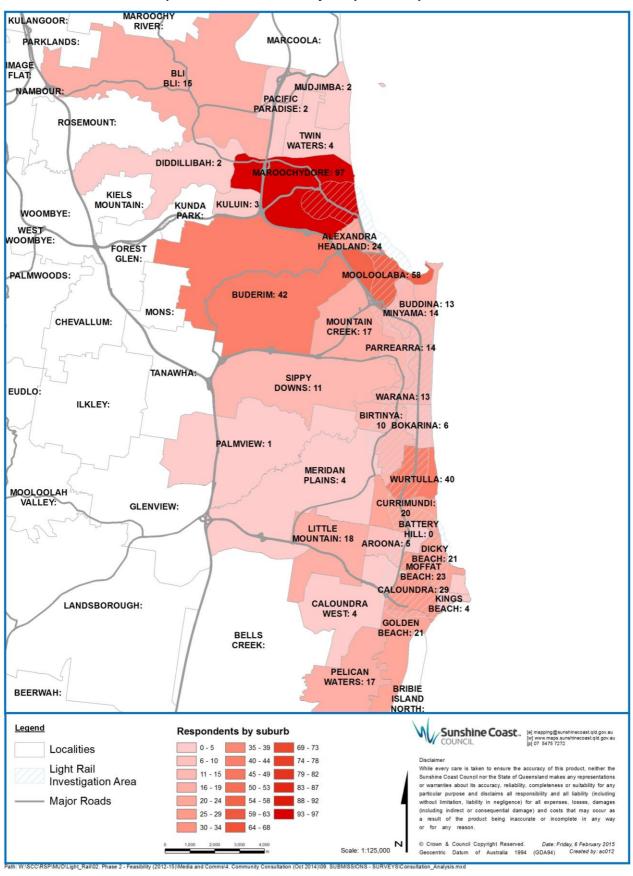
## 3.1. Source of respondents by suburb

Survey respondents were asked to provide suburb and postcode information. The survey reached community members living in a broad spread of suburbs across the Sunshine Coast as shown in the following graph. Only those suburbs that contained four (4) or more respondents are identified in this section.

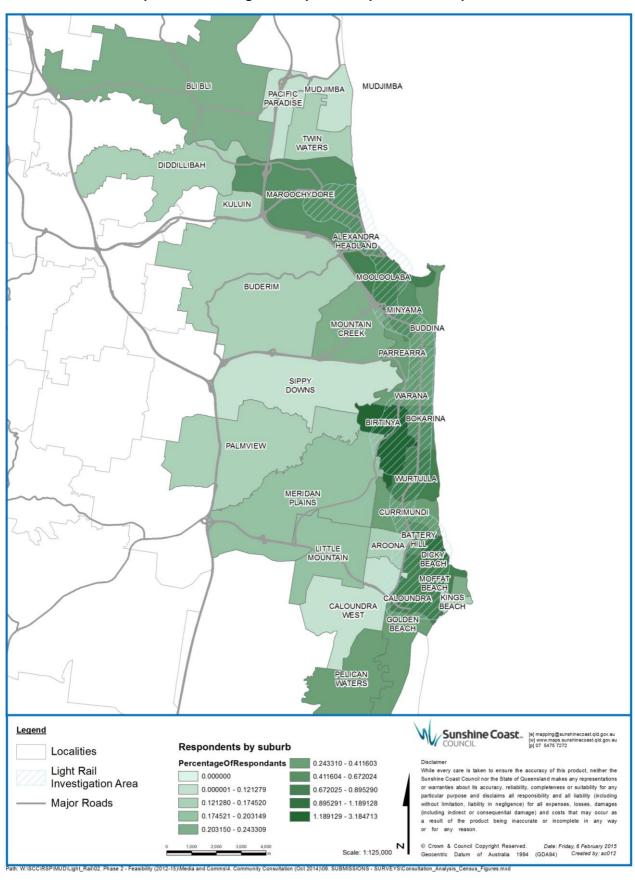


The maps on the following pages provide a geographic representation of the survey respondents per suburb. Whilst Map 3.1 (Number of Survey Respondents per Suburb) highlights Maroochydore as the suburb with the greatest number of respondents, Map 3.2 (Percentage of Respondents per Suburb Population) provides a clearer indication of the number of survey respondents as a proportion of the population of each suburb. It can be noted from Map 3.2 that the suburbs with the highest levels of survey response are those suburbs in the vicinity of the four light rail route option areas, so it is considered that the communities most likely to be directly impacted have responded well.

Map 3.1 - Number of Survey Respondents per Suburb

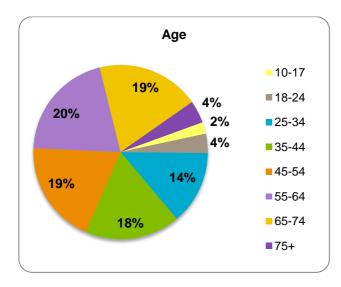


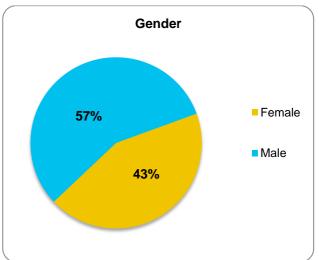
Map 3.2 - Percentage of Respondents per Suburb Population



## 3.2. Demographics

Respondents were asked to provide their age category and gender. The breakdown of survey respondents by age indicates a consistent representation of the 35-44, 45-54, 55-64 and 65-74 age categories with each category representing around 20% of respondents. The lower proportion (14%) of responses in the 25-34 age category is consistent with the population profile of the Sunshine Coast, reflecting the lower presence of this age group. 365 respondents were male whilst 281 were female.

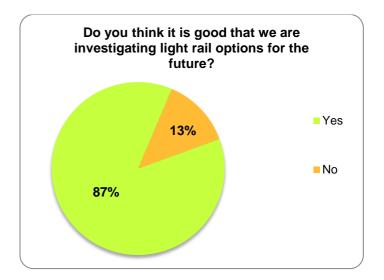




## 3.3. Top line survey question

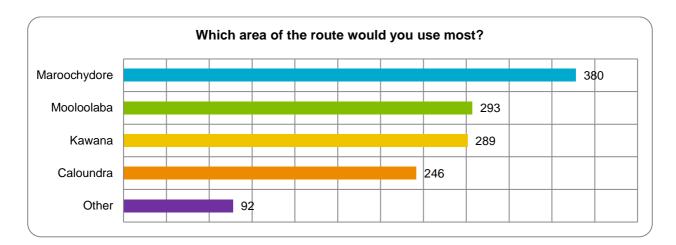
Respondents were asked, "Do you think it is good that we are investigating light rail options for the future?"

Of the 690 responses to this question, 600 respondents (87%) answered yes, while 90 (13%) answered no. Fourteen (14) hard copy survey respondents elected not to answer this question.

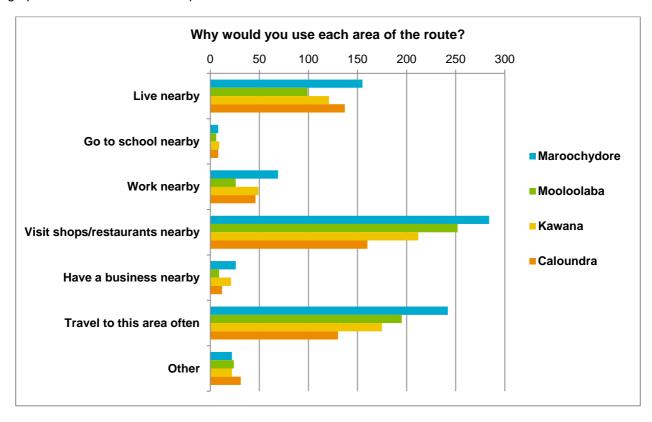


## 3.4. Areas of the route

The survey sought information on areas of the light rail route that people would be most likely to use. Respondents were able to nominate more than one area of the route. The following bar graph illustrates the answers to the question, which gives a broad indication that light rail within each of the areas is of a similar level of interest, but with greatest interest shown for the Maroochydore area. The results also indicate that the northern areas of the route are of slightly greater interest, which supports the identified stage 1 of light rail being between Maroochydore and Kawana.

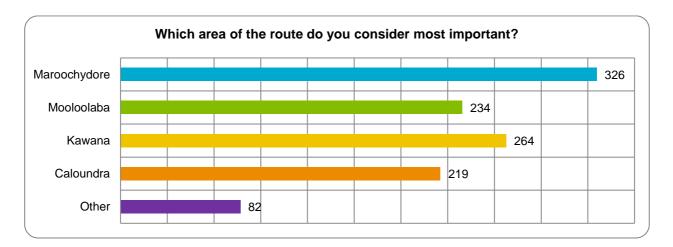


As part of the same question, respondents were also asked to indicate the reasons why they would travel to the areas nominated via a multiple-choice selection of reasons. 'To visit shops/restaurants nearby' was most commonly cited for all areas, closely followed by the more general response, 'Travel to this area often'. 'Living nearby' was also relevant to their predicted use of the area of the route. Few respondents nominated 'having a business', 'working in the area' or 'going to school' as reasons for using the route. The following graph shows the result of this question for each of the four main areas of the route.



## 3.5. Importance of different areas of the route

Respondents were asked to nominate the areas of the route they consider most important. Respondents were able to nominate more than one area. Maroochydore was cited most often (326), followed by Kawana (264), Mooloolaba (234) and Caloundra (219). 82 respondents selected 'Other' for this question, reflecting comments about potential routes to locations such as the University of the Sunshine Coast and the Sunshine Coast Airport.

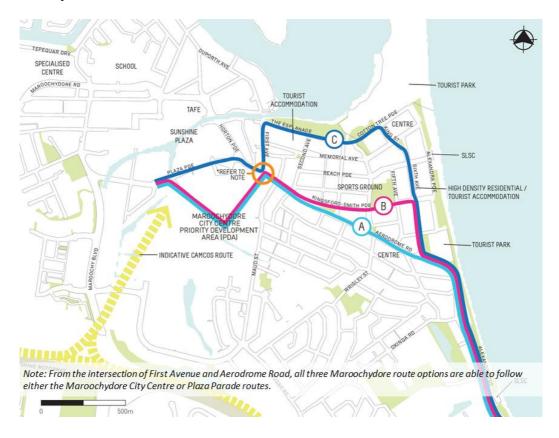


## 3.6. Route option preferences

Respondents were asked to nominate one preferred route option for each of the areas including Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra. Three route (3) options were available for Maroochydore, four options for Mooloolaba, four options for Kawana and three options for Caloundra. Respondents were also able to provide comment in relation to each of the four route option areas.

Whilst approximately 90% of respondents indicated a route option preference in each area, approximately 43% of respondents provided further comment in relation to each area. A summary of the comments provided is outlined below together with details of the route option preferences.

## 3.6.1. Maroochydore



Three route options were nominated for Maroochydore, resulting in the following split of responses:

Option	Route	Preference count
Option A	Aerodrome Road and Maroochydore City Centre	306
Option B	Kingsford Smith Parade and Aerodrome Road	97
Option C	Cotton Tree via Sixth Avenue	204
No response		97

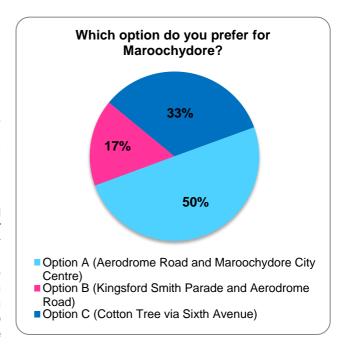
The percentage breakdown of responses is shown below (excluding non-responses). The key issues raised by respondents in relation to the Maroochydore route options included:

- Tourism versus travel time
- Preserving Cotton Tree
- Urban revitalisation (of Aerodrome Road)
- Traffic impact
- Public transport integration
- Flooding.

Comments on the Maroochydore route options indicated an awareness of the planned Maroochydore City Centre and its role as the northern anchor of the light rail route.

#### Tourism vs. Travel Time

A key issue for respondents was the competing interests of a faster route that supports commuter use and is more competitive with travel by car versus a longer route that prioritises tourist travel. Respondents that considered the relationship between light rail and tourism more important than travel time were typically more supportive of Option C (Cotton Tree via Sixth Avenue) while those who believed commuter usage and travel time was more important were more supportive of Option A



(Aerodrome Road and Maroochydore City Centre). Respondents who preferred Option B (Kingsford Smith Parade and Aerodrome Road) typically justified their choice as a compromise between the competing interests of tourism and travel time.

## **Preserving Cotton Tree**

A number of respondents commonly cited the preference to preserve existing assets, such as the Cotton Tree Park and Cotton Tree 'village' at King Street as the reason for eliminating Option C (Cotton Tree via Sixth Avenue). Some respondents also noted the impacts of tight bends and the longer distance on travel time in relation to Option B and Option C.

#### Urban Revitalisation

Many respondents cited the potential for light rail to underpin urban revitalisation as a reason for choosing their preferred option, particularly those that supported Option A (Aerodrome Road and Maroochydore City Centre).

#### Traffic impact

There were a range of views in relation to traffic impact. Some respondents considered that light rail would cause traffic congestion while others considered it would ease congestion by providing a viable alternative to private cars.

#### Public transport integration

Some comments were made in relation to the need for light rail to connect and integrate well with other transport modes, including heavy rail and the Sunshine Coast Airport. Further comments were made about the development of a light rail network with extensions to other major destinations.

#### **Flooding**

The flood risk of Option C (Cotton Tree via Sixth Avenue) was raised a number of times.

#### 3.4.2 Mooloolaba

Four route options were nominated for Mooloolaba, resulting in the following split of responses:

Option	Route	Preference count
Option A	Beach and foreshore	177
Option B	Walan Street and Brisbane Road	161
Option C	Walan Street and River Esplanade	88
Option D	Foreshore and River Esplanade	173
No response		105

The percentage breakdown of responses is shown below (excluding non-responses). The key issues raised by respondents in relation to the Mooloolaba route options included:

- Mooloolaba Esplanade
- Traffic impact
- Urban revitalisation
- Tourism
- · Car parking.



#### Mooloolaba Esplanade

The Mooloolaba Esplanade was noted as a key consideration for many respondents in determining their preferred route option. Comments ranged from those opposing the light rail along the Esplanade to those supporting light rail along the Esplanade. Preference either way was approximately equal in number.

#### Traffic impact

The impact of light rail on traffic congestion was a common consideration of respondents. Some respondents believed that the light rail would result in worsening of traffic congestion whilst other respondents believed that the light rail would alleviate congestion by providing another travel option.

## Urban revitalisation

Many respondents cited the potential for light rail to underpin urban revitalisation as a reason for choosing their preferred option, particularly those that supported Option B (Walan Street and Brisbane Road) and Option C (Walan Street and River Esplanade). Some respondents also considered that the Wharf, River Esplanade and foreshore would benefit from renewed development interest if Option D (Foreshore and River Esplanade) was the preferred route option.



Tourism was cited as a key consideration for route options in Mooloolaba. Views and scenic opportunities

Which option do you prefer for Mooloolaba?

29%

14%

27%

30%

Option A (Beach and foreshore)

Option B (Walan Street and Brisbane Road)

Option C (Walan Street and River Esplanade)

Option D (Foreshore and River Esplanade)

were cited regularly. The key attractors of Mooloolaba including the beach, river, the Wharf / Underwater World, the Spit and Surf Club were referred to as areas the light rail should provide access to.

#### Car parking

Other comments related to car parking with several respondents suggesting the development of a multi-deck car park on Brisbane Road and the removal of car parking from the foreshore area.

#### 3.4.3 Kawana

Four route options were nominated for Kawana, resulting in the following split of responses:

Option	Route	Preference count
Option A	Kawana Town Centre Heart and Bokarina Beach	243
Option B	Kawana Town Centre West via Health Precinct	176
Option C	Stadium via Sportsmans Parade	62
Option D	Nicklin Way	112
No response		111

The percentage breakdown of responses is shown below (excluding non-responses).

The key issues raised by respondents in relation to the Kawana route options included:

- Hospital precinct, town centre and surrounding destinations
- Travel time
- CAMCOS (heavy rail).



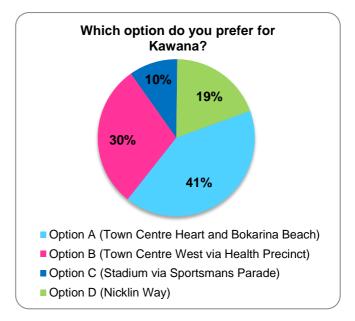
## Hospital precinct, town centre and surrounding destinations

The new Sunshine Coast Private University Hospital, future public hospital and surrounding health precinct

were acknowledged by many respondents as a key determinant of route selection for the Kawana precinct. Other major attractors, including the future town centre, schools, Sunshine Coast Stadium, the Homemaker Centre and the Business Village on Innovation Parkway were also cited as important considerations in deciding route preferences.

## Travel time

Whilst respondents were aware of the importance of the major destinations, the responses were often mindful of the travel time implications of the less direct routes required to service these destinations. The importance of the health precinct often outweighed travel time considerations, however many respondents suggested that a loop, spur line, or shuttle bus were ideas worthy of consideration.



#### CAMCOS (heavy rail)

Respondents understood the importance of the opportunity to connect with future heavy rail (CAMCOS) at Kawana.

#### 3.6.2. Caloundra

Three route options were nominated for Caloundra, resulting in the following split of responses:

Option	Route	Preference count
Option A	Nicklin Way to Omrah Avenue	182
Option B	Beerburrum Street to Ulm Street	104
Option C	Eastern Beaches	305
No response		113

The percentage breakdown of responses is shown below (excluding non-responses). The key issues raised by respondents in relation to the Caloundra route options included:

- Accessing the eastern beaches
- Accessing the centre of town
- Tourism
- Public transport integration.



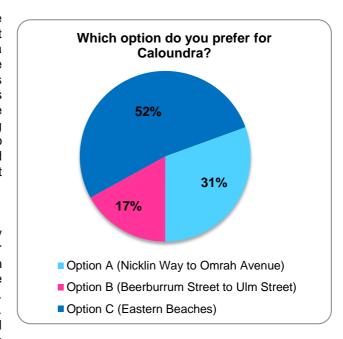
Many comments demonstrated an understanding of the trade-offs and compromises, acknowledging that there are advantages and disadvantages to each of the widely different Caloundra route options.

#### Accessing the eastern beaches

Whether or not the light rail should travel close to the eastern beaches of Caloundra featured most frequently in the comments offered on the Caloundra route options. Many more comments were supportive of a route through the eastern beaches than those that were opposed. Additional comments about the eastern beaches option related to the perceived benefits to or impacts upon existing residential areas. Additional comments also expressed concern about the possible traffic and property impacts along some of these narrow street corridors.

#### Accessing the centre of town

The Caloundra town centre featured frequently where respondents elected to comment on their choice about the Caloundra options. A common theme was that Options B and C were lacking for the simple fact that they didn't arrive in the town centre. Directness or minimisation of travel time was a key. Several comments suggested that the light rail presented an opportunity for Bulcock Street to become a light rail / pedestrian mall.



#### Tourism

The patronage opportunity that tourism represents for light rail was acknowledged by many. Typically these comments preferred the eastern beaches route option.

#### Public transport integration

Integration with other transport modes, the importance of the existing bus station / transit interchange, and planning for future connection to the heavy rail line was a theme raised regularly. Future connections, particularly to the developing Caloundra South development and beyond to the North Coast Rail Line were identified as a key consideration by some.

Other comments included the importance of the light rail providing access to other destinations including the Caloundra hospital, schools, shops and businesses, and the Central Park sporting facilities.

## 3.7. Deterrents to using light rail

Survey respondents were asked the question "If you wouldn't use light rail, please tell us why?" 140 respondents (20%) identified one or more reasons why they would not use the light rail. The most common reasons are identified below and included:

- Fare cost
- Travel time
- · Location of light rail corridor
- Access to the light rail
- Frequency and reliability
- Preference for driving.

Issue	Comment			
FARE COST  The most common reason cited for not using the light rail was a concern that it may be too expensive to use.	expected to apply to Gold Coast. Passen be able to pre-pure The Go Card fare passengers could to pay another fare to many zones are	to travel on gers would be thase other e system was transfer from transfer. The travelled.	the light rail, and the light to use a sticket types approved by the fully a bus to light a cost of travel. The first stagglid cross two	etion system would be as now occurs on the a Go card, or they may oproved by TransLink. It is integrated meaning to a rail without having to would depend on how ge of light rail from zones and based on all doost:
		Go Card	Go Card Off Peak	Single Paper Ticket
	Adult	\$3.93	\$3.14	\$5.60
	Concession	\$1.96	\$1.57	\$2.80
	* Prices as at	January 2015.		
TRAVEL TIME  Another common reason identified for not using the light rail was too slow.	directness of the routhe tram. To be conlight rail would operunning segregated  The track would gebut would benefit for programmed to antended minimise delays. The with general traffic, crossed by pedestriation the Gold Coast, time because of training the contract of the right-of-way gives also ensure reliability on the Gold Coast, time because of training trai	ute, number mpetitive wit rate mostly track in the remarked in the remarked in the remarked in the light rail though being and cyclien to the light y of departuithe trams wiffic signal pr	of stops, and leads to the option of in its own right medians of exists intersections ignal priority, arrival of the track would not at ground leads to make and arrival till be able to miority and co-o	te. These include the evel of priority given to f travelling by car, the ht-of-way on a central sting roads.  with other road users where the signals are light rail vehicles and ot generally be shared evel the track could be inimise travel time and mes. As demonstrated aintain a reliable travel ordination, whereas car in to year as congestion
LOCATION OF LIGHT RAIL CORRIDOR	The light rail is proposed to be built in the coastal growth corridor between Maroochydore and Caloundra via the new Sunshine Coast			

A number of respondents identified that they would not use the light rail if it did not go to destinations that they needed to go to or because the corridor was not located where they normally travel.

University Hospital (SCUH) at Kawana. This area contains the majority of businesses, services and tourist attractions and is where future transport needs will be greatest. Future extensions to other destinations such as the Sunshine Coast Airport, the University of the Sunshine Coast and Caloundra South are also possible.

The light rail would form the backbone of an integrated public transport network for the entire Sunshine Coast. It would be supported by a connected network of high frequency bus services that improve access to all major destinations including hinterland and railway towns.

#### **ACCESS TO THE LIGHT RAIL**

A number of issues were raised in relation to accessibility of the light rail. Some respondents identified that because they do not live near the light rail they would not be likely to use it. Some respondents said that if they had to drive to the light rail they would be unlikely to use it.

The light rail would be part of an integrated network of bus, light rail and even the regional rail to Brisbane. It is proposed that it would be linked to the rest of the region by a network of high frequency buses connecting directly with the light rail stations and the North Coast Line.

The light rail is planned to be located with the majority of residential, business and tourist destinations within walking distance. It is well accepted that people will generally walk between 5 to 10 minutes (or 400m - 800m) to access rail - based public transport. Considering the relatively flat and linear nature of the coastal area, the light rail corridor could be expected to have a strong pedestrian walking catchment.

#### FREQUENCY AND RELIABILITY

Some respondents said that they would not use the light rail if the services were not frequent enough or not reliable. Light rail is proven to be one of the most frequent and reliable forms of public transport. Light rail typically operates at a high frequency service between 5 – 10 minutes apart and in certain circumstances very high frequencies of up to 3 minutes apart. An example is "The G" tram on the Gold Coast where services operate every 7.5 minutes between 7am and 7pm on weekdays and more frequently during major events.

Light rail systems are very reliable due to the vehicles operating on a fixed track and being given traffic priority. Light rail services would be scheduled to the exact minute. Real time information technology would provide passengers with certainty of travel times to key destinations as well as connections to adjoining bus services.

#### PREFERENCE FOR DRIVING

A number of respondents stated that they would not use light rail as they would prefer to drive their car. At the moment driving is generally easy as congestion is relatively low and car parking is mostly free. But this is expected to rapidly change as the region grows. The daily number of journeys around the Sunshine Coast is projected to increase by 60% by 2031. This growth will be more pronounced in the Maroochydore to Caloundra coastal area where we will need to accommodate a doubling of daily trips.

If the current trend of 86% of all trips being by car is maintained, it will mean more congestion and more demand to build new roads – bypasses, overpasses etc. If public transport becomes an option that is reliable and saves the hassle of congestion and finding a car park, more believe people can be expected to use it.

Cars will still be the dominant mode of transport and will be important to the community, but light rail would enable new, different decisions to be made about transport that have enormous lifestyle, environmental and economic benefits.

Other reasons less frequently cited for not using the light rail included:

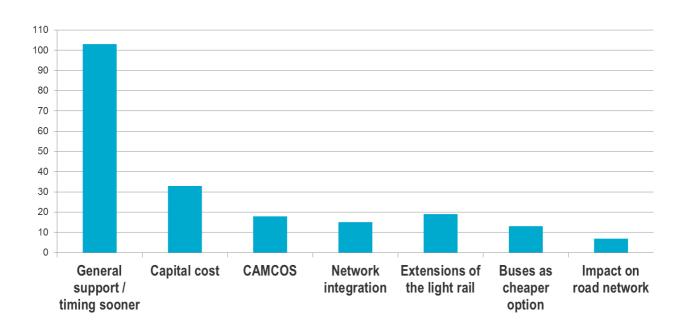
- Safety: If it was unsafe to use or be near the light rail
- Car parking: If there was no car parking at light rail stations
- Transfers: If users had to change services i.e. between bus and light rail

- · Car parking: One person identified that they would not use the light rail because parking is easy
- Disability: If the stations and vehicles were not accessible to those with a disability.

## 3.8. Other Comments

Survey respondents were asked the question "Do you have any comments relevant to the feasibility study?" 371 respondents (52%) provided one or more comments in response to this question. The most common comments related to:

- General support / timing sooner
- Capital cost
- CAMCOS
- Network integration
- Extensions of the light rail
- Buses as a cheaper option
- Impact on road network.



Issue	Comment		
GENERAL SUPPORT / TIMING SOONER	General support for the project is noted.		
The most common comments provided were comments of general support for light rail. A common comment was also that the light rail should happen sooner than later.	Light rail systems require a significant effort to plan and deliver. In cities worldwide it is not uncommon that a planning and delivery timeframe of 5-10 years or more precedes the opening of a light rail system. Based on growth projections for the Sunshine Coast, there is a need to plan and preserve a corridor now, and commence operations by approximately 2025. An early step could include a high frequency, branded bus by the time the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital opens in late 2016.		
CAPITAL COST  The main concern regarding the project was in relation to the capital cost of the project. Some comments also included suggestions or queries regarding the cost.	Forecast future population growth indicates that the Sunshine Coast will require significant investment in the transport network over the next two decades. Decisions regarding this transport investment will not only influence the local economy, but will shape how the Sunshine Coast grows and how this growth influences future lifestyle options and liveability.  If road network expansion continues to be prioritised this will impact and compromise the qualities of the Sunshine Coast. Alternatively if		

there is a balanced investment in roads and in high quality public transport it can be expected to bring many economic, lifestyle and environmental benefits to the Sunshine Coast.

Council is not proposing to fund the light rail on its own. A project of this nature will require partnership with the Queensland Government and ideally, the Australian Government. While the cost of constructing a light rail system may be high, the impacts of not providing the light rail are expected to be greater.

#### **CAMCOS**

Many queries and comments were provided in relation to the CAMCOS heavy rail corridor. Some comments indicated a preference for either the light rail or the CAMCOS heavy rail, whilst a number of comments related to the need for integration between light rail and heavy rail. There was also confusion between CAMCOS and the proposed light rail system.

There is misunderstanding in the community about the difference between light rail and CAMCOS. CAMCOS refers to the Caboolture to Maroochydore Corridor Study that was completed by the Queensland Government in 2001. It proposed a passenger rail service (heavy rail) branching off the North Coast railway line at Beerwah and extending through Caloundra to Maroochydore and the Sunshine Coast Airport. A corridor is preserved for that railway line but it is an expensive project and not currently a priority of the Queensland Government.

CAMCOS and light rail are complementary as they would serve different functions. The light rail is a proposed local service that would connect major destinations within the Sunshine Coast, whereas CAMCOS would provide a regional connection to Brisbane and beyond.

Light rail could connect with the planned regional rail (CAMCOS) at Kawana and Maroochydore. Route options for light rail will consider connections to any future heavy rail stations to facilitate passenger transfer. It is important that planning is undertaken to identify and protect preferred corridors for both light rail and heavy passenger rail so that these options are preserved for the future.

#### **NETWORK INTEGRATION**

Many comments were made regarding the need to integrate public transport services particularly connections between the light rail and the existing hinterland North Coast Rail Line and any future heavy rail in the CAMCOS corridor.

A new light rail system would form the backbone of the public transport network for the entire Sunshine Coast. It would be supported by a connected network of rapid, high frequency bus services and could connect with a future heavy rail line from Maroochydore to Brisbane.

# EXTENSIONS OF THE LIGHT RAIL

Many suggestions were made for where the light rail corridor should start and end including alternate routes as well as priority to see different extensions in the future. The two most common suggestions were for extensions of the light rail to the Sunshine Coast Airport and the University of the Sunshine Coast and Sippy Downs.

Initial feasibility studies are focussed on the core light rail system extending from Maroochydore to Caloundra via Alexandra Headland, Mooloolaba and the new Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital at Kawana. Future extensions to other destinations such as the Sunshine Coast Airport, the University of the Sunshine Coast and Caloundra South are also possible.

The plan is to provide better public transport to the whole of the Sunshine Coast. Light rail will be supported by more bus services, modified routes and better connections which will reduce travel times to areas not directly serviced by light rail.

# BUSES AS A CHEAPER OPTION

A common comment was that buses should be considered as

Buses will play an important role in our future public transport network, however light rail is considered the most desirable form of public transport for the major transit corridor between Maroochydore and Caloundra. a cheaper option than light rail. This comment was generally made by respondents that also raised the cost of the project as their main concern. Comments consistently reflected an opposition to the project and tended to refute or dismiss the benefits of light rail.

Cost comparisons of light rail and bus-based transit options have been considered as part of early studies. While bus-based systems may be cheaper, evidence from around the world suggests that the benefits of light rail are significantly greater than those of bus based systems.

Furthermore, the operating and future costs to increase the number of buses can significantly increase the long term costs of bus options. While bus services have flexibility of route choice, this can lead to variable travel times and therefore reduced reliability. Bus rapid transit is also less likely to encourage redevelopment of land alongside stations because its supporting infrastructure is more susceptible to change.

#### **IMPACT ON ROAD NETWORK**

Another concern of respondents was in relation to the impact of light rail on the existing road network. Respondents commented that they did not want the light rail to make it harder to drive around. Some comments were made to locate the light rail away from main roads.

The introduction of light rail will require significant change to some road corridors and travel behaviours over time. The impacts and benefits will need to be examined in more detail before final decisions are made.

A wide range of other comments were raised and related to:

- Environmental matters
- Route option preferences
- · Concern regarding potential for impacts in residential areas
- · Comments regarding light rail on the Gold Coast
- Amenity concerns
- Benefits of light rail
- Walking and cycling access to the light rail
- Different user groups
- Community consultation
- Bicycles on trams
- Alternate transport mode preferences.

## 3.9. Key findings of route option survey

The following key findings can be drawn from the results of the route option survey:

- The survey reached community members across the Sunshine Coast, including all coastal areas from Mudjimba and Bli Bli to Pelican Waters in the south. The suburbs with the highest levels of survey response are those suburbs in the vicinity of the four light rail route option areas.
- 2. There was a consistent representation of persons aged between 35-74 and a lower proportion of responses in the 25-34 age category, consistent with the population profile of the Sunshine Coast.
- 3. 87% of survey respondents support the investigation into light rail.
- 4. Respondents identified they would use the northern areas of the route slightly more, while also identifying Maroochydore and Kawana as the two most important areas of the corridor, indicating a level of support for the identified stage 1 of light rail being between Maroochydore and Kawana.
- 5. In relation to Maroochydore, there was a clear preference for Option A (Aerodrome Road and Maroochydore City Centre) with 50% of respondents with a preference for this route. Key issues raised by respondents included the competing interests of tourism and travel time, preservation of Cotton Tree and urban revitalisation of Aerodrome Road.

- 6. In relation to Mooloolaba, there was a similar preference for Option A (Beach and foreshore), Option B (Walan Street and Brisbane Road) and Option D (Foreshore and River Esplanade), while the key issue was the divided views regarding light rail along Mooloolaba Esplanade.
- 7. In relation to Kawana,71% of respondents preferred route options (A and B) that accessed the hospital precinct while key issues raised included access to the hospital precinct and other major destinations, travel time and connections to future heavy rail (CAMCOS).
- 8. In relation Caloundra, there was a preference for Option C (Eastern Beaches) with 52% of preferences while key issues raised included accessing the eastern beaches and accessing the Caloundra town centre.
- 9. The main deterrents to the use of light rail were identified as fare cost, travel time, location of light rail corridor, access to the light rail, frequency and reliability and preference for driving.
- 10. A range of consistent themes emerged from the various comments provided. The most common issues included:
  - a) Support for light rail and preference for timing sooner rather than later
  - b) Concerns regarding capital cost and suggestions of using buses as a cheaper option
  - c) Concern regarding the cost and speed of travel on light rail
  - d) A range of comments (including confusion) regarding light rail and the CAMCOS corridor
  - e) Comments about public transport services to other areas including suggested extensions of the light rail
  - f) Concerns regarding the impact of light rail on the road network.

#### 4. Conclusions

A number of conclusions have been drawn from community consultation on the Sunshine Coast Light Rail project:

- 1. Community reaction to the potential for light rail for the Sunshine Coast was overwhelmingly positive.
- 2. A strong database of stakeholders interested in the project has been developed, which will facilitate ongoing communication about the project.
- 3. Consultation on the light rail project has provided useful information that will assist Council to move forward with more detailed study as well as informing future community consultation on the project.
- 4. Through a successful community engagement and consultation process, the option of light rail for the Sunshine Coast is broadly supported by the community and it is appropriate that investigations continue to examine further detail.

## 5. Next Steps

The findings of community consultation, together with technical information about the project from studies undertaken previously were presented to Council in April 2015 for consideration.

Council identified a corridor for further study and this corridor is indicated on Map 5.1.

The confirmation of this light rail corridor for further investigation will allow Council to:

- undertake advocacy with the State government to gain support for light rail for the Sunshine Coast;
- commence more detailed feasibility and business case studies to allow Council and the State government to make an informed decision on whether light rail is feasible as a transport and city shaping option for the Sunshine Coast.

The investigation and feasibility assessment of light rail on the Sunshine Coast is a long term project and will require strong local political and community support. There is currently a high level of general community support but this will only be maintained and increased through ongoing commitment to community engagement and opportunities for feedback.

Map 5.1 Recommended Route Alignment for Further Investigation



## **Appendix 1: Community Engagement and Consultation Activities**

The following information provides further detail about the consultation program and the various activities that were undertaken.

#### 1. Media

Five (5) media releases were distributed throughout the consultation period to stimulate community interest. This was supported by the use of social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. This proactive approach to media engagement led to articles in newspapers including print and online versions, radio interviews on ABC Coast FM (x2), MixFM (x2) and Hot91 (x1) and news items, as well as television interviews and news items. Discussion was generated in the digital space through nineteen (19) posts to Facebook and Twitter.

#### 2. Community information sessions

Seven (7) community information sessions were held across four days with a total of 318 attendees. The sessions were advertised via newspapers, media releases, a letterbox drop, posters and social media. Displays comprised large posters displaying the route options, set alongside posters that illustrated the project and its benefits. In addition to the displays, computers were provided to enable people to fill out the survey online if they wished. Hard copies of the survey were distributed to all attendees who could take advantage of the postage paid service for the return of surveys.

Location	Date	Time	Attendees
Events Centre, Caloundra	Tuesday 11 November 2014	10am – 2pm 4pm – 7pm	85
Mooloolaba Surf Club, Mooloolaba	Thursday 13 November 2014	10am – 2pm 4pm – 7pm	84
Lake Kawana Community Centre, Bokarina	Saturday 15 November 2014	9am – 1pm	81
Millwell Road Community Centre, Maroochydore	Friday 21 November 2014	10am – 2pm 4pm – 7pm	68
	·	•	Total = 318

The displays were staffed by members of the SCLR project team with the technical knowledge to respond to queries.





Images of community information sessions

## 3. Nights on ocean market stall

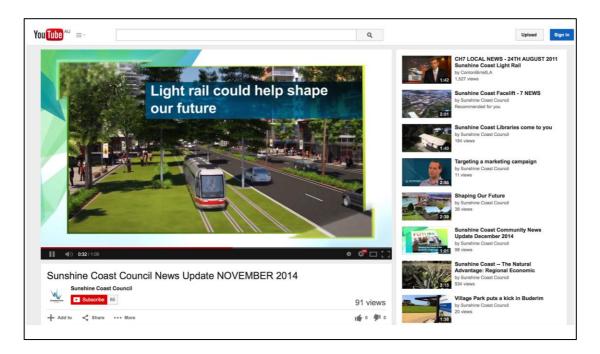
To complement the community information sessions, an informal SCLR stand was positioned at the Ocean Street Night Markets in Maroochydore. Project team members spoke with over 100 people during the evening and 45 people filled out a short version of the route survey developed specifically for this activity.

#### 4. Letterbox distribution

To maximise community participation in the community information sessions and survey, a printed doubleside card was distributed to approximately 31,000 street side letterboxes and post office boxes in proximity to the route option areas.

## 5. Television advertising

The light rail project featured in council's monthly advertisement about major activities underway across the coast, aired on Channel 7 Sunshine Coast.



## 6. Spotlight advertising

The marketing reach was further increased through use of Council's scheduled 'spotlight' advertising with five (5) different project messages published in eight (8) community newspapers (including Kawana Weekly, Caloundra Weekly, Maroochy Weekly, Nambour Weekly, Mary Valley Voice, Glasshouse Country News, Range News, Sunshine Valley Gazette) and 6 different messages on radio stations Hot91, SeaFM, MixFM and Sunshine FM.

#### 7. Messages on hold

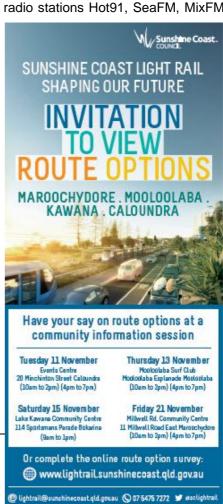
The community consultation program was promoted through Council's telephone messages on hold program, with recorded messages about the light rail project during October and November.

#### 8. Radio advertising

Radio advertising was used for additional reach into the community. On Hot 91FM we placed 2 x 60 live reads, 20 x 30 second and 24 15 second prime time advertising spots during the consultation period. On Mix FM we placed 17 x 15 second ads and 4 x 30 second live reads by announcers. Sea FM broadcast 17 x 15 second spots, 9 x 30 second and 4 x 30 second live read placements.

#### 9. Newspaper advertising

The community consultation program was supported by the placement of display advertisements (18.8cm x 8.5cm) in local area newspapers.



The advertisements captured the key messages of the SCLR project and advertised times and locations for the community information sessions.

Publication	Appearance date
Maroochy Weekly	6 November 2014
Caloundra Weekly	6 November 2014
Kawana Weekly	6 November 2014
Sunshine Coast Daily	6 November 2014

## 10. Correspondence with key stakeholders

Information about the community engagement and how to get involved was delivered to key stakeholders through direct correspondence. The targeted groups included:

- State and Federal elected representatives
- Members of the SCLR Taskforce
- Industry leaders and business/tourism/transport-related organisations
- · Residents associations and community groups
- Environmental groups
- Schools across the Sunshine Coast
- Transport community group.

## 11. Website

The SCLR website was established in December 2011 and has been a primary vehicle for carrying information about the project through all phases. Refreshed to reflect project status at the start of Phase 1, including "Shaping Our Future" as a downloadable document, the site was further updated at the commencement of Phase 2 to include the online survey, the route option brochure and media statements, along with other project-related materials.

The website also acts as a portal for database registrants. Information about the project, in both phases of the engagement campaign, was distributed to over 460 registrants. The number of registrants grew by around 40 per cent during the course of the two phases. The Sunshine Coast Council website also contained two webpages in relation to the light rail project and these pages received a total of 1,402 individual visitors during the consultation.

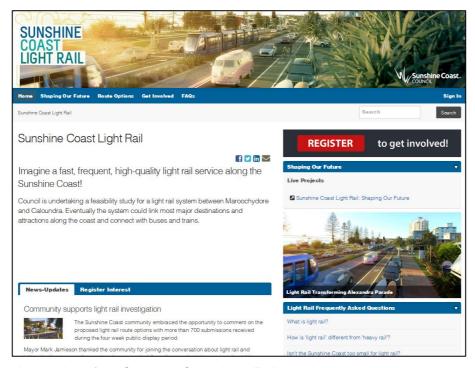
#### Website statistics

## Headline:

Period	Dates	Unique visitors	Informed	Engaged
Since project establishment	20/12/11 – 17/12/14	50,331	15,005	941
Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement	8/10/14 – 28/11/14	10,008	8,276	662
Phase 1 engagement – project reintroduction	8/10/14 – 2/11/14	3,185	2,238	79
Phase 2 engagement – route options	3/11/14 – 28/11/14	7,016	6,112	557

## Detail:

Period	Dates	Site Visits	Unique page views	Documents downloaded	New registrations
Since project establishment	20/12/11 – 17/12/14	53,579	104,220	5,737	786
Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement	8/10/14 – 28/11/14	12,456	52,114	1,675	321
Phase 1 engagement – project reintroduction	8/10/14 – 2/11/14	3,548	10,404	649	72
Phase 2 engagement – route options	3/11/14 – 28/11/14	8,691	39,007	980	249



A snapshot of the Sunshine Coast Light Rail website home page

## 12. Email updates to website registrants

Regular email updates were sent to registrants of the project during the consultation period. An outline of emails is provided below.

Update	Date Sent	Subject	# of Recipients
1	9 October	Sunshine Coast Light Rail: Shaping Our Future	529
2	24 October	Another 600,000 car trips on the Sunshine Coast every day?	530
3	31 October	Where would you put the light rail route between Maroochydore and Caloundra?	716
4	3 November	Light Rail Route Options Unveiled	725
5	6 November	Light Rail Route Options: Spotlight on Maroochydore	725
6	13 November	Light Rail Route Options: Spotlight on Mooloolaba	725
7	20 November	Light Rail Route Options: Spotlight on Kawana	754
8	24 November	Route options survey closes this Friday 28 November	725
9	28 November	Light Rail Route Options: Spotlight on Caloundra	725
10	3 December	Route options consultation wraps up	725
11	17 December	Community supports light rail investigation	725

## 13. Information pack

Information packs containing copies of the route options brochure, a personalised project introduction letter, a copy of the 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail - Shaping Our Future' document and coasters were hand delivered by a member of the project team to clubs close to the various route options.

#### **Surf Clubs**

- Maroochy Surf Club, 34 Alexandra Parade, Maroochydore
- Alexandra Headland Surf Club, 167 Alexandra Parade, Alexandra Headland
- Mooloolaba Surf Club, The Esplanade, Mooloolaba
- Kawana Surf Club, 99 Pacific Boulevard, Buddina
- Metropolitan Caloundra Surf Club, 1 Spender Lane, Kings Beach
- Dicky Beach Surf Life Saving Club, 1A Coochin Street, Dicky Beach

#### **RSL Clubs**

- Maroochy RSL, Memorial Avenue, Maroochydore
- Caloundra RSL, 19 West Terrace, Caloundra

#### **Bowls Clubs**

- Kawana Waters Bowls Club, 476 Nicklin Way, Kawana
- Mooloolaba Bowls Club, 60 Brisbane Road, Mooloolaba
- Maroochydore Beach Bowls Club, 15 Memorial Avenue, Maroochydore
- Club Central Caloundra, Cnr Arthur Street and Bingera Terrace, Caloundra

#### 14. Council customer service centres and libraries

Copies of the route options brochure and the "Shaping Our Future" document were displayed at council's three customer service centres and all council libraries, including mobile libraries.

#### 15. Presentations to clubs and groups

The project team provided morning and evening presentations to service clubs and business groups between Maroochydore and Caloundra including:

- Caloundra Chamber of Commerce
- Kawana Waters Rotary Club
- Alexandra Headlands Rotary Club
- Maroochydore Rotary Club
- Caloundra Rotary Club
- Mooloolaba Rotary Club
- Sunshine Coast Business Breakfast Group.

## The project team also provided presentations to:

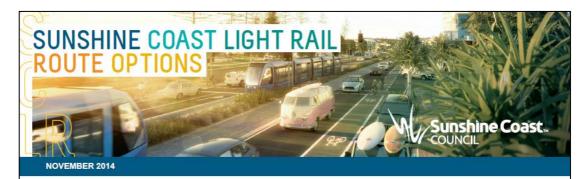
- An evening forum of planning professionals coordinated by Sunshine Coast Council and the Sunshine Coast branch of the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)
- An evening professional development event of the Sunshine Coast Chartered Practicing Accountants (CPA) group.

#### Project information stalls were also held at:

- A business and industry information evening hosted by Sunshine Coast Council in Caloundra
- The Sunshine Coast Futures Conference hosted by the University of the Sunshine Coast.

#### 16. Route options brochure

A route options brochure was the central communication and feedback device developed for Phase 2 community engagement. The brochure provided information relevant to the project, dates and times for community information sessions, details of the routes options for the four primary areas – Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra – and a perforated reply paid survey form. Approximately 2,500 of the brochures were distributed during the course of community engagement.



## Community consultation on route options

The Sunshine Coast's population is expected to grow by 50 per cent within the next 20 years. This level of growth will bring opportunities and challenges. We want your help in deciding how the Sunshine Coast can become one of the most sustainable regions in Australia – a vibrant place with a sustainable economy, environment and community.

In line with this commitment, Sunshine Coast Council is investigating if light rail might be a part of the solution for managing future growth and to help maintain the lifestyle we enjoy today.

At this stage council has made no decisions on light rail. Instead, in this phase of work Council is identifying:

- The potential benefits and costs of light rail (economic, environmental, health and well being, community building)
- The extent to which it could solve future issues around connectivity and road congestion, particularly in the high growth corridor between Maroochydore and Caloundra

 Community attitudes and opinions about light rail and route options as shown in this brochure.

Due to the long lead time required for the funding, design and construction of major infrastructure we need to consider potential routes now, noting that the Queensland Government is responsible for the delivery of major infrastructure such as light rail.

This level of pre-planning means if we do, as a community, elect the light rail path, we will be able to move ahead more quickly.

## Setting the context for light rail

In August 2012 council began a feasibility study into light rail which is now well underway.

You may have seen the booklet 'Sunshine Coast Light Rail – Shaping Our Future'. The document provides an overview of the benefits and opportunities that light rail could provide. You can view this document at www.lightrail.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.

It also explains that light rail would be a long-term initiative, delivered in stages in line with growing demands.

It shows that connecting the growth hubs of Maroochydore, Mooloolaba, Kawana and Caloundra is the logical starting point, with the first stage linking Maroochydore to Mooloolaba and to the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital at Kawana.

## Please complete the route option survey

This brochure includes an important survey that will enable you to select preferred route options and provide comments.

The same survey is available online at www.lightrail.sunshinecoast.qld. gov.au, which may be the most convenient way to have your say.

Information gathered through the survey will be used to refine the route options for more detailed study. This will be followed by further community consultation.

We encourage everyone to participate in the survey that will help shape the future of the Sunshine Coast. For more information visit one of our Community Information Sessions (see details below) or visit us online.

In considering the options we encourage you to adopt a long-tern view about how the community as a whole can tackle the challenges of an evolving Sunshine Coast. Given the long-term nature of the light rail proposal, we also encourage our youth and young adults to become involved in the discussion.

## Attend a Community Information Session:

#### TUESDAY 11 NOVEMBER:

Events Centre, 20 Minchinton Street, Caloundra (10am to 2pm / 4pm to 7pm)

## THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER:

Mooloolaba Surf Club, Mooloolaba Esplanade, Mooloolaba (10am to 2pm / 4pm to 7pm)

#### SATURDAY 15 NOVEMBER:

Lake Kawana Community Centre, 114 Sportsmans Parade, Bokarina (9am to 1pm)

#### FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER-

Millwell Road Community Centre, 11 Millwell Road East, Maroochydore (10am to 2pm / 4pm to 7pm)

#### Get involved.

Visit our website or contact council's customer service centres.

- www.lightrail.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
- @ lightrail@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
- ☑ Locked Bag 72 Sunshine Coast Mail Centre QLD 4560

○ 07 5475 7272
#sclightrail

Page 1 of the Route Options Brochure

# **Appendix 2: Route Option Survey**

AVE YOUR S	АУ						
•			•		t.qld.gov.au. This may I and seal with tape and		most convenient way for you it into a post box.
his study conside entres of the futu		light rail cou	ld be one op	tion in man	aging future growth and	d ensuring a	accessibility in the major activity
1. WHAT SUBUI	RB OF THE	SUNSHINE	COAST DO	YOU LIVE	IN?		
Suburb:						Postco	de:
2. ABOUT YOU							
Age:  10-17	<u> </u>	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64 65-74	75+	Female Mal
_		OD THAT W	E ARE INVE	STIGATING	G LIGHT RAIL OPTION	NS FOR TH	IE FUTURE?
Yes 4. WHICH AREA	OF THE RO	OUTF WOUL	D YOU USE	MOST AND	) WHY? (TICK ALL APPLIC	ABLE)	
MAROOCHY			OLOOLABA		KAWANA	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	CALOUNDRA
Live nearby Go to school n Work nearby Visit shops/res Have a busine: Travel to this a	taurants near ss nearby	Go to the Good Work Work Have	nearby o school nearby k nearby shops/restaur e a business nel to this area	rants nearby nearby	Live nearby Go to school nearb Work nearby Visit shops/restaura Have a business ne	ants nearby earby	Live nearby Go to school nearby Work nearby Visit shops/restaurants nearb Have a business nearby Travel to this area often
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Other (please no	•		OD EAGUA	DEA AND	MUNO		
6. WHICH OPTIC	טא טט אטנ	PREFER			WHY? (TICK ONE ONLY)		
Please tick your	preferred or	otion and ad	d further com				
Please tick your AREA				•	D COMMENTS		
•				•			
AREA Maroochydore				OPTION			
AREA  Maroochydore (Map 1, Page 3)  Mooloolaba				OPTION			
Maroochydore Map 1, Page 3)  Mooloolaba Map 2, Page 4)  Kawana Map 3, Page 5)				OPTION			
AREA  Maroochydore (Map 1, Page 3)  Mooloolaba (Map 2, Page 4)  Kawana	OPTION A	OPTION B		OPTION  N/A	D COMMENTS		MENTS RELEVANT TO