




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Sunshine Coast, Light Rail

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.12 pm): Like many who live on the Sunshine Coast, my family and I choose to live on the Sunshine Coast because of the laid-back lifestyle and sense of community. My priority is ensuring that these things are preserved. We need the right kind of development on the Sunshine Coast. Poorly planned developments impact every single Sunshine Coast resident and we have seen too many examples of development for development's sake which puts the way of life of Sunshine Coast residents second to the relentless pursuit of population growth.

I want the Sunshine Coast that my kids grow up in to continue to have the great lifestyle and deep sense of community that attracted so many people to move to the Sunshine Coast in the first place. That is why I am concerned with the Sunshine Coast council's relentless push to build light rail along the coastal strip between Caloundra and Maroochydore. It is a push that is predicated on greater densification, which will see the houses and suburban blocks along the route replaced with medium- and high-density development towers. Labor's own national president, Wayne Swan, describes it as a desire for 'densification at any price'.

If we use Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3A as an example, much of the justification for the project relies on 'land use changes' and 'alignment to the urban consolidation aspirations of the South East Queensland Regional Plan'—that is, far greater population who live in high-density towers along the route. Ironically, for a project that aims to reduce congestion, Infrastructure Australia has stated that, if such densification occurs, congestion on the southern Gold Coast will increase after the project is completed.

To be clear, I want to see better public transport on the Sunshine Coast. Our current public bus network is hopelessly inadequate and, as a result, few Sunshine Coast residents use it. New suburbs like Harmony at Palmview have exploded in recent years, yet there are no public bus services that regularly service Harmony, and residents in places like Mountain Creek cannot even catch a bus to the beach.

Council's proposed solution has long been light rail. While Mayor Mark Jamieson may wish to dispute it, the current mass transit consultation process is nothing but an exercise in validating council's long-held position to build light rail. At \$150 million per kilometre it is a ridiculously costly and inflexible solution that is only designed to service those who live within 400 metres of a station. Light rail will do nothing for the people of my electorate. What we need to see is a commitment to heavy rail running from Beerwah to Maroochydore, coupled with improved bus services within suburbs across the coast.

As well-regarded local architect Ken Down recently stated, light rail will 'totally change' the look of the Sunshine Coast. I know that the last thing my constituents want is for the Sunshine Coast to become the Gold Coast. Along with my Sunshine Coast state and federal colleagues, I will continue to fight to ensure that the Sunshine Coast way of life is preserved.