

Councillor News - Cr Donna Gates - Division 1

Budget and growth

It's hard to believe it's June, and we're planning the allocation of the City's \$1.3 billion budget. There is much to do in our city as we move towards the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™, but we remain mindful of divisional issues and the need to accommodate city growth. Interestingly, over the last decade, the northern Gold Coast region has grown at a rate of 8.9 per cent and as of 30 June 2015, had an existing residential population of 71,947. Over the same period the city, as a whole, has grown at around 2.4 per cent to a total population of 555,608.

Over the next 15 years the northern Gold Coast will represent around one quarter of the city's projected population growth to 2031. This will result in an additional 33,576 people residing in the area by 2021 increasing by a further 28,526 residents to a total population of 148,561 by 2026. These are staggering statistics and a reminder of how important it is to continue our focus in delivering sporting and community facilities to support existing and future residents of the area.

Even more important will be accommodating the potential population growth in terms of traffic management.

We have heard recent commitments from the Federal Government for road upgrades through Black Spot funding across the city, (a total of \$200 million across the nation). There are also State projects on the Gold Coast totalling \$160 million underway to widen major arterial roads together with other local projects aimed at easing congestion.

The City budget will see the allocation of \$1.2 million to fix our problem on Peachey Road Ormeau at the intersection with the Woolworths/Shearers access. There is major work underway on Norwell Road, and more to come, Stapylton Jacobs Well Road, Foxwell Road and Dreamworld Parkway to mention a few. Peachey Road has been impacted by its upgrade at the Stanmore Road end and by the time you read this, traffic should be flowing well again in that sector. Hopefully, the southern link from Reedmans Road to Creek Street at Ormeau will also be operational after unexpected delays as

a result of City of Gold Coast requirements. Rifle Range Road at Pimpama has also caused difficulties and delays but the end result will deliver improved traffic conditions for all.

For those of you who have expressed concern about the recent build-up of traffic at the Exit 49 north-bound exit, a referral has been made from my office to the Department of Main Roads in regard to traffic using both the exit lane and the "tourist board" lane. The back-up of traffic onto the M1 is a grave concern which I hope can be resolved to improve safety for all road users. We will keep you informed of progress.

Suggestions

There will be an opportunity to consider suggestions for improvements to our area – but I have to admit, due to a raft of needs, most of the 2016-17 divisional budget has been conditionally allocated. There will be funds re-provisioned from this year's budget and the allocations made are simply proposed works, so do not ever hesitate to contact me if you have ideas for our area. I am always pleased to know your thoughts to help me propose better plans for our patch.

Opera in the Cane Fields

Congratulations again to the incredibly hard working team from the Jacobs Well Progress Association who staged another wonderful "Opera in the CaneFields" on Saturday 28 May. Thanks too to Gold Coast Marine Aquaculture for willingly making available an area where our community could gather for what was a fantastic night, enjoyed by all.

You can contact me on 0424 778999 or by email at dgates@goldcoast.qld.gov.au, division1@goldcoast.qld.gov.au or deputymayor@goldcoast.qld.gov.au. Catherine in the office on 5581 6301 will also be pleased to assist you.

