

We The People
Program 360 October 21, 2019
We the People The Councils Disdain for the People



Good Day to you. The questionable self proclaimed wisdom in the Gold Coast Council and no doubt the State government is that the City plan for the Gold Coast needs to be changed. I agree but for very different reasons to the politicians and bureaucrats and the likely hood that the development industry have special guided entry and sway which it should not have. Now in my view the Government and Council hold *'we the people'* in contempt and this is best illustrated by their repeated actions and lack of foresight about the future of the Gold Coast. This constitutes a **deep state** mentality and the current proposed changes to the city plan provide a paltry 20 business days for people to comment. This used to be an equally trifling 31 days which was never enough anyway and now further reduced. The plan is so complex and the time line so short it appears to be in contravention of the Local Government Act of Queensland chapter 3 which calls for an accountable, effective, efficient council. Going further, chapter 4 stipulates transparent and effective processes and decision making *in the public interest*. By any measure the time frame for comment on the complex city plan is woefully inadequate. The following media release from **John Hicks President of the Community Alliance Association** says it all, under the heading of **Grossly inadequate public consultation for City Plan updates** and I quote.....

"The newly formed Community Alliance of Gold Coast community groups is dismayed with the totally inadequate time being allowed for public comment on updates to the City Plan and is calling for a more realistic timeframe. No reasons were provided to the community as to why the Council has adopted the bare minimum period of 20 business days allowed under legislation. Community Alliance Association President John Hicks said: "The Alliance is profoundly disappointed with the 20 business day public consultation period on City Plan Major Updates 2 and 3 and we have written to the CEO requesting an extension. This is a complex and vital document for the City and its residents. The updates proposed are contained in 34 items under six themes spanning hundreds of pages and numerous detailed maps presented only online. Making a proper submission requires firstly for residents, with no planning experience, to understand the material presented and then put together a coherent response with supporting grounds." The 20 business days does not take into account the time required to read, evaluate and respond to the extensive, complex detail in the proposed changes and is too short for many community associations, including The Community Alliance, who work on a monthly meeting cycle. The Community Alliance considers that ordinary citizens and community groups should be afforded 40 business days to respond.

The Community Alliance is further concerned that no community forums will be convened by Council officers to provide overview briefings and answer questions from the floor. There is no sense of community participation and ownership being generated. Rather, this has the feel of intentionally restricting detailed scrutiny and discussion in the community. Based on these concerns the Community Alliance has written to Council requesting the consultation period be extended to 40 business days and that the extended consultation be supported with three Council convened public forums (northern, central and southern Gold Coast) where all residents will be afforded the opportunity to hear briefings and ask questions of senior planning staff and Councilors".....end quote.

I wrote and recorded this narrative over a week ago so in the meantime if the Council in its primitive wisdom seeks to grant an extension it will only be because of political discomfort and their initial actions once again betray their willingness to hamper or stifle public scrutiny. Shame on them and the disdain they show toward the public.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley