

## Brisbane City Council new City Plan – Brisbane CityShape 2026

Bulk Residents written submission – this submission is supported by all the residents' whose names and email addresses appear below.

Following a 'talk to a planner' session at Mt Gravatt on 7th May, 2013, I, on behalf the residents below, have modified this submission and now resubmit it here.

The Brisbane City Council is “committed to facilitating economic growth” ([Brisbane City Council website](#)) and the new City Plan is deciding “how and where Brisbane will grow” (Community Consultation pamphlet). However, *whether* it grows is not part of the perview of the plan. This is a significant oversight and represents a disenfranchisement of residents opposed to unquestioned and untrammelled growth. This submission supports developments that contribute to the quality of life of Brisbane residents and the view that growth as understood by the current Plan cannot be managed by development and that it is actually now in opposition to positive development.

We applaud initiatives such as habitat corridors between our city's forests and parks that expand the living space for native animals.

As I sat waiting to speak to a city planner on May 7th, the complaints and comments being made around me all stemmed from pressures to 'grow the city'. In my own street, a low density area, housing is being doubled and the number of residents and cars is quadrupling. This despite the Lord Mayor's pledge that 'less than 7% of Brisbane will experience significant change' (letter, 15th February) and reports that the Council and State government's plan for the city includes:

- House heights of three storeys and 9.5 metres as-of-right in every Brisbane suburb - no say, no notification
- Removing the right to be notified when a character house is to be demolished or removed from your street
- Remove the right to object to units and town houses being built next door if you live in a unit and no houses border the site
- Remove the right to object to new as-of-right small lots as low as 300 sqm (12 perches) in Low Density Residential Zones with narrow 7.5 m frontages
- Allow minimum block sizes in Low-Medium Density areas of only 180 square metres with frontages as low as 6 metres

Objections to increasing density are long-standing. My neighbour, who worked in Land Management with local authorities, recently handed me an extract on submission to a Council report (*Residential Development Issues in the Emerging Community, Low Density Residential, Rural and Environmental Protection Areas*). The submissions are long list of objections to increase in density, which resulted in the City Plan being amended. Unfortunately, this document is undated.

It is time the Council and State government listened to residents. Both authorities ought to have stated policies to stop population growth. The Council can implement this by using its zoning powers to restrict the number of residents. Also, the policy needs to be feed back up to the Federal government's Immigration policies.

*The Limits to Growth* (by [Donella H. Meadows](#), [Dennis L. Meadows](#), [Jørgen Randers](#), and William W. Behrens III, 1972) outlined trends that illustrate the negative consequences of unbridled growth, and these trends, despite being projected on old data with antiquated technology, have been borne

out (*Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update*, Donella Meadows, Jørgen Randers, and [Dennis Meadows](#), 2004). However, we don't need predictions. One only needs to turn on the evening news to hear of Global Warming going beyond the dire levels of a 2 degree increase to 4 or even 6 degrees by 2100, rendering our planet, in the words of the ABC News, 'unrecognizable' in the future. Even millionaire entrepreneurs like Dick Smith now understand the folly of never-ending growth on a finite planet.

What does it take for people in positions of authority to put 2 and 2 together? Growth is not good for our city. Growth is not good for our communities. It is putting our future quality of life at risk, for short term gain. Growth cannot be considered in isolation without reference to the environment. This is not to mention the folly of continued population growth, sustained by immigration which in turn is sustained by the economics of false scarcity. The fabric of a community cannot be sustained by an influx of opportunists. I say false scarcity because there is in fact enough to go around, if it is shared fairly, which, incidentally, many studies have shown solves many social problems (*The Spirit Level, Profs. Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett*, 2010).

The Brisbane City Plan should aim for a vision of 2031 in which the city is stabilised at a sustainable size, which is probably smaller than it already is, given the demands it makes on petro-chemical products which are now in decline. Alternative renewable energy systems take a generation to transition to and this is nowhere near happening fast enough. Sea levels will be probably 1 meter above their present levels by 2030 (IPCC). Therefore 'growth' will necessarily be mitigated by natural pressures. Is Council prepared for permanent flooding and drought? Where is the logic in growing a metropolis whose location is based on 19th century perspectives – a river flat that floods – when we have 21st century knowledge? At the very least we should be drawing back from the riverside and coastline. The city should strive to downsize and discourage population influx whilst planning an alternative urban site built with all the foresight of the latest technology.

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