Ocean Beaches Strategy

Vision: Our beaches are clean, healthy and accessible now and into the future

The City has been a leader in coastal management for more than 30 years, driven by the need to protect the city and its shoreline from the impacts of storms. A suite of innovative policies, research, technologies and beach management techniques have been implemented on the Gold Coast and subsequently acknowledged and adopted as best practice throughout the world.

The Gold Coast's iconic beaches draw some 12 million visitors to the city every year. Such valuable assets need a special plan to make sure they are given the care and protection they need, which is why the City has an Ocean Beaches Strategy, developed through widespread community consultation and endorsed by Council of the City of Gold Coast in August 2013.

Download our Gold Coast Ocean Beaches Strategy 2013-23 (PDF 2.3mb)

Download the Gold Coast Ocean Beaches Strategy - Mid-life review (PDF 1.2mb)

There is joint stewardship of the ocean beaches

We collaborate with a number of external agencies such as the Gold Coast Waterways Authority; Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation; Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project and the Griffith Centre for Coastal Management. Activities completed under these partnerships include sand bypassing, wave buoy deployment, coastal data capture, dredging and beach nourishment works, and coastal research.

The Coastal Community Education program was developed to maximise community understanding of natural coastal processes and the City's management strategies for local beaches, foreshores and dunes. The aim of the program is to bridge the gap between research, management, and the community in order to build community awareness and to provide educational and coastal community action opportunities.

The program is made up of two components:

- BeachCare – This program provides an opportunity for community members to participate in caring for their local coastal environments. BeachCare sessions are run every Saturday from 9am to 11am except at the Tallebudgera site which runs from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. These sessions rotate between 11 different sites along the coast and include activities such as planting native dune plants, removing weeds and collecting beach litter.
- CoastEd – The CoastEd Program is aimed at both primary and secondary school students. Students will learn about our precious coastal strips in an outdoor environment while taking part in dune planting or beach clean-up activities. The City is offering local schools a limited number of coastal educational presentations.

Federation Walk Program – The 92.3 hectare Federation Walk Coastal Reserve comprises of 70 hectares of vegetated land and 2.7 kilometres of beach stretching from Phillip Park car park to the Seaway on The Spit. The program is managed by the City to improve environmental values, facilitate low impact recreation, and facilitate active community participation in its management. Community coordination is encouraged through the Friends of Federation Walk community group.

Everyone can enjoy a beach experience

Our Surf Management Plan seeks to balance the interests of all beach and ocean users to ensure that our beaches are open, inclusive, and remain healthy and clean. The vision for the Surf Management Plan is to provide world’s best practice coastal management strategies to preserve and enhance the surf amenity of the Gold Coast. The Surf Management Plan also recognises the key role surfing plays in the economy, culture, sporting life and social capital of the city.

Our beaches are healthy and clean

Dredging – We undertake an annual dredging campaign at Currumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks. This program provides many benefits including flood mitigation, improved water quality and minor beach nourishment to southern Palm Beach (Currumbin) and Burleigh Beach (Tallebudgera).

Regular beach maintenance – Clean beaches and waterways are synonymous with the Gold Coast. To ensure our beaches and foreshores retain their appeal, we invest in a range of cleaning and management services. Our mainland ocean beaches are swept (using a City-designed tractor sweeper) every day of the year. We have six crews of two people who patrol the 860 kilometres of tidal waterways removing over 1000 tonnes per year of debris.

Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project (TRESBP) – is a sand transport system that collects drifting ocean sand at a jetty on the southern side of the Tweed River entrance and delivers the sand, by underground pipe, back to the ocean on the northern side of the river. From here, the sand is transported by wave currents to nourish southern Gold Coast beaches. TRESBP is run by the New South Wales Government with support from the Queensland Government and the City of Gold Coast.
Our infrastructure is protected from coastal hazards

Gold Coast Shoreline Management Plan - a strategy with a 50 year horizon that focuses on coastal physical processes, coastal ecological processes, economic values, community values and beach management. The Plan includes 77 recommendations to manage the Gold Coast’s coastline, including measures to combat the threat of increasing storm events on Gold Coast beaches over the next 15 years.

Some of these projects are as follows:

- **Palm Beach Shoreline Project** – a holistic plan to provide a sustainable solution for the ongoing protection of the foreshore at Palm Beach. The project aims to:
  - reduce the vulnerability of the beach and beachfront development to storm damage
  - protect, and if practical, enhance the beach and surf amenity for the community
  - provide a sustainable, cost effective and integrated solution to maintain a healthy beach profile
  - avoid or mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts associated with beach erosion.

- **The Northern Beaches Shoreline Project** – this project will utilise sand reserves located offshore of the Gold Coast to nourish the northern beaches of the Gold Coast and decrease the vulnerability of these iconic beaches to storm damage. The Northern Beaches Shoreline Project area includes Main Beach, Surfers Paradise and Northcliffe Esplanades.

- **Northern Beaches Sand Nourishment Pipeline** – this project is investigating the options available to use a sand backpassing system to deliver sand nourishment from the Gold Coast Seaway Bypass System back down to the northern beaches.

- **Seawall** – The construction of seawalls forms part of the City’s shoreline management response to coastal erosion. Our seawalls, located along an invisible coastal boundary known as the A-Line (alignment parallel to the foreshore set by the State Government), are a vital component of the City’s defence mechanism against erosion.

- **Project Kirra** – this project reinstated the Kirra Point groyne by 30 metres to its original constructed length and was completed in 2013.