Alton Twine, Director City Infrastructure, City of Gold Coast

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) will be the biggest sporting spectacular the Gold Coast has ever seen. As the first regional city in Australia to ever host a Commonwealth Games, the city is destined to benefit from growth and maturity. An additional 100,000 people, 6,600 athletes and 15,000 volunteers will visit the city and it will be watched by a TV audience of 1.5 billion.

The Gold Coast will be ready to shine but not without major infrastructure works delivered by the City of Gold Coast (the City). The City has been working hard to prepare its infrastructure and ensure it is equipped to be one of the best host cities the world has ever seen. Works have been underway since the bid announcement to ensure the city’s $17.3 million dollars’ worth of assets are games ready.

Alton Twine is the Director of City Infrastructure, responsible for the City’s Transport and stormwater networks, beach management as well as Council’s construction and maintenance activities. Alton has been closely involved with Games preparation activities since the announcement in November 2011 of the Gold Coast as host city for the Games. During this time, he has seen a considerable build-up of activity in preparation for this massive event.

“We have really had to re-orientate our entire program around preparing for the Games” said Alton. “A lot of work has gone into venue and precinct preparation and it’s fair to say that the City has never looked better. A big effort is being made to overcome the challenges posed by a regional city’s transport system coping with moving large numbers of people, but we have a great relationship with our key partners of Goldoc (the organising committee) and the State (particularly Transport and Main Roads).”

The Gold Coast is a fast growing and multi-centred city with a complex traffic network. The City of Gold Coast is delivering more than $100 million (this in one financial year) worth of transport upgrades to accommodate capacity during GC2018 and future growth. This includes over $23 million worth of shared path upgrades for pedestrian and cyclists, creating links to key city areas and GC2018 venues.
Congestion will also be eased by their investment in specialised technology that will improve the coordination of the traffic network. As well as travel behaviour change programs that will see people plan their journey better by avoiding driving during peak times and choosing to cycle, walk or catch public transport.

The Gold Coast’s light rail system has proven to significantly reduce congestion. The city has seen a 25% increase in public transport use since the light rail was introduced in 2014. The plan is to build this even further by opening the new Helensvale Station in time for GC2018.

Major coastal projection works including the biggest offshore dredging program the city has ever seen will ensure its iconic beaches are in the best possible condition. A 111-metre specialist dredge from Denmark is spending 16 weeks working along the coastline to increase the volume of sand on the beaches, improving their resilience to coastal erosion and storm damage. The Gold Coast is known to experience a summer storm every year; these storms can cause damage to its beaches. This project will prevent the chance of the beaches suffering from erosion at games time and ensure visitors can enjoy the true Gold Coast beach experience.

Every City of Gold Coast staff member is involved in preparing for games in one way or another. In addition to major infrastructure upgrades the City is also delivering thousands of smaller projects. Crews have been working on every aspect of the city. From resurfacing roads that will be used for the cycling race to fast-tracking our disability access upgrades to ensure public transport is accessible for everyone. The City of Gold Coast has made a major contribution to ensure GC2018 is the best games we have ever seen.

Alton Twine will be arguing for the negative team at this year’s Great Debate on the topic ‘smart cities are not that smart’. Don’t miss it! Register now to join us in Townsville, 24-26 October 2017.

The 2018 IPWEAQ state conference will be held on the Gold Coast post-Commonwealth Games on 10-12 October 2018. Mark your diaries now!