

Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Action Group Inc. (MTAG)

March 2024

Divisional Councillor Candidate Questionnaire

As a key advocacy groups on the Sunshine Coast, we are seeking your views on public transport and housing densification in the region. Please be advised your responses will be collated and made public as we believe all voters should be aware of your position on these two key issues prior to voting. No response will be taken to mean you agree with the following:

1. The current Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) Southern Sunshine Coast Public transport strategy and their decision to proceed with Rapid Bus Transit in a dedicated lane along our coastal strip.
2. The current Sunshine Coast Regional Council plan to house the large majority of the future population growth out to 2041, in the Coastal corridor between Maroochydore and Caloundra.

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|
| Name of candidate: | Alistar Eiseman | Date: | 30 January 2024 |
| Division contesting: | Division 3 | | |

Section 1: Transport

- 1 Do you think two public transport spinal networks (Heavy Rail from Beerwah to Maroochydore and a Mass Transit system from Maroochydore to Birtinya) with feeder networks running to them, is the best public transport system for the region?

YES/NO No

- 2 If NO, and you are elected, will you advocate to TMR for a different Sunshine Coast Public Transport strategy?

YES/NO Yes

If YES what?

Heavy passenger rail is the key to unlocking congestion on roads and provide fit for purpose long term solution to low public transport uptake on the Sunshine Coast. I am concered Mass Transit on the coastal corridor will lead to singnificant changes to density and reduced traffic capacity along the Nicklin way. With the estimated population growth of 219,000 by 2046, we will need to maintain road capacity plus introduce fit for purpose public transport that can handle this significant population growth.

- 3 Do you support a Rapid Bus Transit system in a dedicated right of way along our coastal corridor?

YES/NO No

- 4 What will you do to improve public transport now?

Response:

I am dedicated to working with all levels of elected officials to achieve positive outcomes for our Sunshine Coast public transport system. Addressing the current 3% public transport utilisation rate requires strategic enhancements. I will advocate for the implementation of more direct and purposeful options, particularly in high-traffic areas. My focus includes improving the efficiency of bus services from Caloundra to Kawana to Maroochydore by ensuring they are both time-effective and direct, addressing a significant barrier to the utilisation of public transport on the Sunshine Coast.

Looking ahead, my long-term aim involves the establishment of east-west services connecting the proposed heavy passenger rail stations. By enhancing the frequency of shorter journeys, we can effectively reduce reliance on cars, alleviating congestion on our roads and mitigating parking pressures in key areas such as shopping centers, CBDs, and commercial zones. This approach aligns with my commitment to fostering sustainable and efficient public transportation solutions for our community.

- 5 What do you think should be the priority for better public transport in the future?

Response:

In the future, it is imperative to engage in advocacy with other levels of government to secure investments in our roads and public transport infrastructure ahead of population growth. The critical aspect of this initiative is the development of the Heavy Passenger Rail from Beerwah to Maroochydore. This rail system serves as the linchpin for unlocking smarter, greener, and more efficient public transport options, such as electric buses or a rapid bus network, shaping the future of transportation in our region and critically unlocking the current gridlock seen in Division 3.

However, it is crucial to ensure that any proposed transport solution does not compromise local parking and lanes on the Nicklin Way. The plan must exhibit flexibility to adapt to the evolving needs of our growing and expanding region. It should avoid the installation of permanent tracks

and overhead cables, prioritising flexible infrastructure that can accommodate the future growth and expansion of our region.

Section 2: SCRC 2024 Draft Planning Scheme

6 Do you support the current plan to put the large majority of new arrivals out to 2041 within the Coastal Corridor? (Maroochydore to Caloundra)?

YES/NO No

7 What does high-rise mean to you (how many storeys)?

Response:

Low Rise 1-3 Stories, Mid Rise 4-7 Stories, High Rise 8+ Stories

8 Do you think housing densification should occur along the Heavy Passenger Rail Corridor rather than the Mass Transit Coastal Corridor?

YES/NO Yes

Explain why?

For several reasons, I would advocate for densification along the Heavy Passenger Rail corridor. My reasons for this include:

1. Enhanced Access to Long-Distance Travel: Facilitating easier access to long-distance travel on the proposed Heavy Passenger Rail for both inter-Sunshine Coast trips or longer trips South to Brisbane etc.
2. Efficient Connectivity to Major Roads: Providing quicker access to major roads such as Kawana Link Way, Sunshine Motorway, Bells Creek Arterial Road, and the proposed Kawana Motorway. This placement aims to alleviate congestion on congested roads like Nicklin Way, Brisbane Road, and Caloundra Road.
3. Preservation of Coastal Areas: Opposing densification on beachfront areas within the coastal corridor to prevent damage to the coastline, reduce erosion, minimise light pollution affecting turtle care and other animal life, and reduce heat hubs along the beachfront locations.
4. Commercial Land Considerations: Acknowledging the current shortage of commercial property on the Sunshine Coast and the proposed transitioning of the Kawana Industrial Area to a broader mix of uses in the future. This transition, if not managed thoughtfully, may exacerbate shortages of commercial land and contribute to an increase in residents with vehicles along the Nicklin Way without corresponding funded transport solutions.

9 If you are an existing Councillor, did you vote in favour of the current draft 2024 Planning Scheme?

YES/NO

10 If you are elected, will you vote to review the draft 2024 Planning Scheme, in particular the densification of the coastal corridor?

YES/NO Yes

11 As a Divisional Councillor, what will you do to ensure we do not become another Gold Coast?

Response:

I am committed to preserving the distinct character of our Sunshine Coast region and resisting

transformation into another Gold Coast. Residents have consistently emphasised the importance of maintaining the integrity of our community. I advocate against high-rise developments along beachfront areas, emphasising the necessity of sustainable growth. With an anticipated population increase of 219,000 by 2046 under the new Planning Scheme, I express concerns regarding the council's plans for densification and infill development. It appears that areas within Division Three are susceptible to absorbing a significant portion of proposed infill developments.

It is imperative to ensure that each suburb or community retains its unique identity. Density must be strategically located within walking distance to suitable public transport options, as an increase in cars on our congested roads is not a viable solution. As a councillor, I will oppose high-rise developments on the beachfront and will advocate to maintain low-density housing in Warana, Wurtulla, and Bokarina.

Preserving green spaces is essential for enhancing liveability and maintaining our unique lifestyle. This includes safeguarding open spaces, establishing shaded walkways, and prioritising the overall well-being of our community.

12 Do you think the current planning decision making process is too lenient toward developers, especially in regard to site coverage, set backs and density?

| | |
|------------|--|
| YES/NO Yes | <p>Why?</p> <p>Efficient implementation and management of the new planning scheme are imperative for the sustainable development of our region. Emphasising strict adherence to the planning scheme is crucial, given past examples where developments proceeded with insufficient regard for site coverage, setbacks, and density under the existing planning regulations. To address this, it's essential to establish robust criteria that enforce compliance with specified setbacks, site coverage, and height requirements, ensuring accountable and responsible development aligned with the community's vision within the new Planning Scheme.</p> |
|------------|--|

13 Do you think all Development Applications should require Council to notify all adjoining neighbours?

| | |
|------------|--|
| YES/NO Yes | <p>If YES, what will you do to try and make this happen?</p> <p>Neighboring properties should receive notifications regarding development applications. This practice promotes openness and transparency, allowing residents to be informed and engaged in the decision-making process that directly affects their immediate surroundings.</p> <p>I will willing to work on the best way to make this happen with fellow councillors should I be elected as Division 3 Councillor.</p> |
|------------|--|

14 As a Divisional Councillor, what will you do to achieve better development outcomes for the region and your Division?

| |
|--|
| <p>Response:</p> <p>There is a pressing need for increased transparency regarding future plans for densification and infill developments within our community. Clear information on building heights, densities, and rezoning is crucial. The proposed New Planning Scheme signifies the most significant population increase in our region, and it is imperative that the community is well-informed and actively involved in the decision-making process before its finalisation and adoption. My concern is that we are nearing a critical point, as the plan has already been submitted to the state government for review, and it's crucial to ensure that the community's voice is heard and considered.</p> |
|--|

It's essential to recognise that the suburbs within Division Three are poised to absorb a significant portion of the projected population growth. I firmly believe that residents deserve not only awareness of these impending changes but also the assurance that development applications will be scrutinised with adherence to the specified setbacks, building heights, and site coverage outlined in the planning scheme. This approach ensures that our community's character and livability are preserved while accommodating growth responsibly.