

Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Action Group Inc. (MTAG)

March 2024

Mayoral 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:	Rosanna Natoli	Date:	January 31, 2024
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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?

We need dedicated bus lanes so that buses can move freely. We need smaller feeder buses to deliver passengers from their homes to the major stations on the line. The current situation where buses meander through suburbs before heading to their destination creates long, uncomfortable journeys. We need better connectivity from east to west as well as the north-south line.

- 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 think we need to change the culture around public transport on the Sunshine Coast. Currently, usage is low and we need to ensure more people are on buses and out of cars. To do that quickly, I will advocate for free buses - at the very least for students and seniors. Each time there is an extra person on the bus and one less car on the road, it is a step in the right direction. If we start with young people, we can change the culture and attitude on the Sunshine Coast. Having more people on the buses will in turn improve the feeling of safety for passengers.

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

Response:

The Sunshine Coast has been missing out on infrastructure for decades. It is essential that we maximise the benefits of the Olympics to obtain legacy infrastructure like heavy passenger rail to Maroochydore. This needs to be an absolute priority. We need the three levels of government to work together to secure this project. This rail needs to travel from Brisbane to Beerwah, Aura, Caloundra, Kawana and Maroochydore. We need a network of buses travelling east and west, as well as north and south to connect us. These services need to be reliable and convenient.

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:
10

- 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?

Densification should be purpose-built and designed around the stations further inland than the Coastal Corridor. The Coastal Corridor needs to be protected for reasons of amenity and against the future impacts of climate change and rising sea levels. The Coast Corridor is narrow and having densification here will almost certainly lead to a feeling of being 'like the Gold Coast'.

- 9 If you are an existing Councillor, did you vote in favour of the current draft 2024 Planning Scheme (no answer required if not an incumbent Councillor)?

YES/NO

- 10 If you are elected Mayor, will you review the draft Planning Scheme, in particular the densification of the coastal corridor?

YES/NO Yes

- 11 As Mayor, what will you do to ensure we do not become another Gold Coast?

Response:

People tell me they do not want densification of the Coastal Corridor. They do not want wall-to-wall highrise buildings along the Nicklin Way. I will take the time to review the Planning Scheme and in meaningful consultation with residents, determine where and how the gentle densification of the region can take place.

- 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

Why?

Relaxations are given far too readily which is creating situations where large, bulky developments that take up far too much of the site, are allowed to progress. This is impacting on the liveability of people living in these neighbourhoods.

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

YES/NO Yes

If YES, what will you do to try and make this happen?

While it is not a statutory requirement, it would be good practice for Council to advise residents by letter. This way, Council and other planning staff could

	make themselves available to residents. This would ensure residents had time to engage with planning staff and make submissions.
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14 As Mayor, what will you do to achieve better development outcomes for the region that better protect existing residents' privacy and amenity?

Response:

The Planning Scheme could have much stronger provisions for privacy, making sure there is adequate screening, to prevent overlooking into neighbouring properties. These kinds of provisions have lasting impact on residents and their quality of life.