

# 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:	Maria Suarez	Date:	3 February 2024
Division contesting:	Division 9		

## 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 Yes

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

YES/NO

If YES what?

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

YES/NO Yes

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

Response:

Q.3 I support the mode, however the route needs careful consideration.

Q4. Voting on the Options Analysis to go to the State for consideration was not an easy decision. A number of councillors, myself included spoke against Light Rail as a mode. It was great news that Light Rail was not the preferred option. By allowing the State to review public transport in this corridor it has opened the door to public transport reviews for the Northern Sunshine Coast and the Hinterland. I will also look to review the Transport Levy funds to see if any can be utilised for interim improvements or trials of public transport servicing previously unserved areas..

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

Response:

The region requires both an improved internal public transport system as well as an efficient system to Brisbane and beyond. An internal public transport system would have a more frequent impact to the community as it would provide an alternative to traffic congestion on a daily basis.

## 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 Yes

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

Response:

Q6. This corridor is already where the majority of residents live and the current planning scheme also allows for more density than is currently on the ground in this corridor. Infill or increased density needs to be placed close to major employment centres, hospitals and educational institutions.

Q7. 6 storeys

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

YES/NO

Explain why?

Some densification should occur around train stations along the heavy passenger rail. However, placing ALL densification in these areas would be impractical as the places of employment are far less than the identified mass transit corridor. All divisions across the region are earmarked to take some of the densification.

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

YES/NO Yes

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

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

Response:

Q.10 The draft planning scheme will be reviewed by the community first. Once the community have had their say, it is only then that Councillors will vote on what the next steps are with the planning scheme.

Q.11 Areas of densification require careful controls. Clear direction on heights, where height is located, setbacks, site cover and design.

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?

The current scheme is lenient to anyone who makes an application. The current scheme's provisions for site cover, set backs and density too often allow applications to rely on performance outcomes instead of acceptable outcomes.

	These areas of a new plan need to be more prescriptive to ensure expectations are met.
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**13 Do you think all Development Applications should require Council to notify all adjoining neighbours?**

YES/NO No	<p>If YES, what will you do to try and make this happen?</p> <p>It is typically the applicant's responsibility to make notifications. It would be too onerous for Council to advise owners of every application as many applications are very minor in nature - a shed, a relocated driveway, a residential house on a vacant block, an extension. However, it would be good if code assessable applications that demonstrate quite an increase/change in nature be required to advise neighbours similar to impact assessable applications. A number of councillors post recent applications to also advise their communities of applications if they don't have searches set up on Developmenti.</p>
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**14 As a Divisional Councillor, what will you do to achieve better development outcomes for the region and your Division?**

<p>Response:</p> <p>I have consistently voted against applications that did not adhere to the town plan. I have worked with the good design team and the planning team to instill where possible, better design outcomes to be integrated into the draft planning scheme.</p>
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