

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:	Cindy Jensen	Date:	21 February 2024
Division contesting:	Division 2		

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?

I hold the view that the proposed mass transit route lacks comprehensive consideration for the diverse needs of Sunshine Coast residents and commuters. While it addresses coastal and inland areas, there seems to be an oversight regarding hinterland areas. I will advocate for a more inclusive and thorough assessment that takes into account the entire demographic landscape of our region. My vision is to ensure that the mass transit system serves the entirety of the Sunshine Coast, providing efficient and accessible transportation options for all.

- 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:

While I acknowledge that as an individual, I cannot unilaterally change the public transport system, I am committed to championing initiatives that could lead to improvements. This includes advocating for an increase in additional service options to enhance the accessibility and convenience of public transport. Drawing inspiration from successful models observed during my travels, I believe we can explore innovative solutions, such as enhanced connectivity, extended service hours and improved infrastructure, to make our public transport system more efficient and commuter-friendly. Collaboration with stakeholders and learning from best practices globally will be key in shaping a comprehensive and sustainable approach to enhance our public transport services.

Encouraging a mode shift from private to public transport involves a combination of strategic planning, infrastructure development and community engagement. Before this can take place, the development and enhancement of a comprehensive public transportation network that covers key residential and commercial areas is imperative. Drawing from my extensive travel experience again and exposure to various communities, here are just a few ideas to address the mode shift:

1. Ensure that public transit routes are convenient, well-connected and serve a variety of destinations to meet the diverse needs of the community.
2. Implement fare structures that make public transport more affordable, particularly for frequent users.
3. Introduce incentives such as discounted passes and loyalty programs for individuals who choose public transport regularly.
4. Launch public awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of using public transport, including reduced traffic congestion, lower environmental impact and potential cost savings.

5. Share success stories from other communities where a successful mode shift has occurred.

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

Response:

Improving public transport and upgrading our road systems are paramount for the Sunshine Coast. I strongly oppose the light rail project and advocate for alternatives such as electric buses and trackless trams, with accessibility, extended timetables, increased frequency and expanded service to additional locations across our community.

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:

High rise, to me, aligns with the community sentiment on the Sunshine Coast, which prefers low-density development. I believe that any increase beyond the current allowable limit could compromise the unique character, aesthetic and lifestyle that residents cherish in our region. It is crucial to respect and preserve the coastal identity that makes the Sunshine Coast a special place to live.

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

YES/NO No

Explain why?

While I believe medium-density zoning can be a viable solution, high-density zoning should not be approached. Re-zoning should only be considered with the presence of robust public transport infrastructure and an enhanced road network.

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:

To preserve our unique environment and lifestyle, a strategic approach to population management is essential. I firmly believe that any strategic direction for urban expansion must be approached with utmost responsibility and consideration for community input. It is imperative that decisions regarding population growth and dwelling requirements align with the needs and aspirations of Sunshine Coast residents. Additionally, comprehensive planning, particularly for critical infrastructure such as sewerage treatment, is paramount to ensure sustainable growth and a high quality of life.

I DO NOT SUPPORT A CASINO DEVELOPMENT

I DO NOT SUPPORT RE-ZONING OF LOW DENSITY AREAS FOR HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

I DO NOT SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT IN COASTAL HAZARD AREAS

I DO NOT SUPPORT BEACHFRONT HIGHRISE DEVELOPMENT

I DO NOT SUPPORT THE LIGHT RAIL

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?

<p>YES/NO Yes</p>	<p>Why?</p> <p>I do believe the current planning decision-making process is too lenient for developers and my concern stems from a perceived lack of genuine community engagement in the decision-making process. It is crucial for the community to have an opportunity to provide input and have their voices heard when it comes to planning decisions that impact our neighbourhoods. Furthermore, transparency and accountability in the decision-making process are essential to building trust between the community and council. I believe a more inclusive and transparent approach to planning decisions is necessary to ensure that the diverse perspectives and concerns of residents are adequately considered and addressed in the development process.</p> <p>I also believe the 'Have Your Say' surveys issued by Sunshine Coast Council are a farce, because they're laid out and have multiple choice answers to the questions. They are clearly designed for a pre-determined outcome, so Council always wins! This needs to change!</p>
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13 Do you think all Development Applications should require Council to notify all adjoining neighbours?

<p>YES/NO Yes</p>	<p>If YES, what will you do to try and make this happen?</p> <p>My vision is to prioritise transparency and inclusivity in decision-making, ensuring that residents have a voice in the process. I will work collaboratively with experts and community members to develop a vision for densification that enhances our urban environment while preserving the unique character of our community.</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>While recognising the importance of growth and progress, I have reservations about endorsing new high-density development without thorough consideration of essential infrastructure, roads and entry/exit points. Effective urban planning is paramount to the success of any development and it is crucial that the necessary infrastructure is adequately addressed from the project's inception. Insufficient attention to roads, entry/exit routes and overall traffic flow can lead to congestion, inconvenience and a strain on community well-being. Further, the imposition of fines on property owners due to vehicle length issues is a concerning aspect that I've been made aware of recently. Taking all of the above into consideration, it is imperative for both the council and developers to prioritise the community's well-being over financial gains when planning future developments.</p> <p>My advocacy would involve engaging with experts and community groups, seeking community input and collaborating with stakeholders to ensure that any project aligns with our community's values and needs. Together, we can work towards planning outcomes that prioritise sustainability, inclusivity and the overall well-being of our residents.</p> <p>COMMUNITY CONSULTATION IS KEY!</p> <p>I intend to actively engage with the community through a multifaceted approach. Regular community engagement sessions will provide opportunity for open dialogue, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard. Additionally, my commitment to an open-door policy encourages community to approach me directly with their concerns. Furthermore, I will leverage social media</p>

platforms to disseminate information and gather community feedback. Face-to-face meetings will be scheduled to foster more personalised and in-depth discussions. As part of an extended engagement strategy, I will explore the implementation of community workshops and online surveys to enhance inclusivity and gather comprehensive input from residents.