

# 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:	Sue Etheridge	Date:	22 February 2024
Division contesting:	Division 10		

## 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 Yes

If YES what?

The Heavy Rail duplication needs to be included to Nambour as well, and electric buses (including electric trolley buses) need to be utilised to provide efficient and less impactful (to existing infrastructure and the environment) transport options. Electric AI vehicles are the future.

- 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:

Public transport needs to be frequent, reliable and affordable - even free for children, seniors, and off peak trips. Utilise smaller buses as required with direct routes to major services (e.g. hospitals).

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

Response:

Electric AI vehicles.... Public transport needs to be more frequent, more reliable, fast, and universally free. Feeder and community buses and taxis should be incorporated to service the diverse needs of both the Hinterland and Coastal areas.

## 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:

Q6. I do acknowledge that some new arrivals want to live close to the beach, and we need to find a way to facilitate this without increasing the urban footprint. Some densification will be necessary - but not 'at the beach'. We need to plan to improve overall liveability.

Q7. It is not 'how many storeys' - it is the overall height of the building. The current planning scheme and the current hard cap are appropriate - we need to ensure we 'stick to the plan'.

**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?

Increasing densification should occur close to existing public transport infrastructure (in consultation with communities), and away from the coastal strip. This will reduce impact on our natural and built environment. The coastal strip is one of our main attractions, and it is vulnerable to extreme weather events/climate change.

**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:

Ensure broad community input and consultation in regard to planning, noting gentle densification in some areas will be required. And then, 'stick to the plan'. The Sunshine Coast attracts visitors and residents because we are more family orientated and not the Gold Coast - e.g. NO Casinos for the Sunny Coast.

**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?

There are far too many instances of the planning scheme being overridden. The planning scheme needs reinforcing and applied correctly. State Laws need an overhaul (so consider this when voting in the State Election in October 2024) so that wealthy developers can't easily go to the Planning and Environment Court to have Council decisions overturned. This happens quite frequently, and we are

	told that Council does not have the resources to fight these developers in Court. The whole system is flawed.
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**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>Minor development applications that do not impact neighbours do not need notification. However, when development applications do impact neighbours and the broader community, and Council should automatically notify residents by electronic means (where known) of all code assessable planning applications within 500m in High Density, to 10km in rural, on a sliding scale. Distance should be quadrupled for impact assessable applications to capture more of the community, thus reflecting the greater impact</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>The Council needs to take in the social and environmental impacts in all planning and development decisions. The 'pursuit of sustainability' creates opportunities for growth and adaptation in the design of buildings and other infrastructure and Council should 'lead by example'.</p> <p>I will advocate for a First Nations Liaison to be in Planning and Development to ensure consultation with Traditional Owners to conserve and celebrate places with cultural significance.</p> <p>As your representative in Council, I'll stand up for people, not profit. I'll give locals a real say in decisions and how we plan for the future. I'll ensure our community is active, sustainable and connected.</p>
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