

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:	Dr. Suzie Campin	Date:	12 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 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?

The Sunshine Coast Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) pays little attention to the north of the region. There is a Northern Sunshine Coast Transport Strategy in development that needs to be part of the ITS. The current ITS also needs to be reviewed as it is dependent on an incomplete planning scheme, uncommitted funding, the outcome of forthcoming Local, State and Federal elections and assumptions about population growth and housing needs that are unconvincing. The SEQ Regional Plan is also under review. I would advocate that all plans and strategies at Federal, State and Local levels are aligned. This doesn't mean the Sunshine Coast needs to cave in to State priorities.

- 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:

One estimate is that a combined total of \$40m+ has been spent on studies, strategies and "community consultation". Imagine how much could have been achieved with these funds on alternatives such as supporting modal shifts and negotiating improved services with the State Government. Before we spend a cent more on studies we could improve public transport throughout the region starting NOW by timetabling more buses more frequently. I would support a free ride trial for children and pensioners and look towards low-cost public transport for all. Simultaneously we could start on known road improvement opportunities that would assist public and private transport flow.

We should work with our existing transport infrastructure, encouraging modal shifts and use transport levy funds for trials as was the commitment when the levy was introduced. The mindset behind recent transport strategies, plans, drafts and the like seems to assume away government responsibility to address public good and to shift responsibilities to the private sector. I do not support this. I also do not support the many apparent TMR and Council assumptions that seem to suggest that the citizens of the Sunshine Coast can't or won't change their behaviour. I see the opposite - people choosing more and more to live by stronger environmental ethics everyday, being outside and getting more exercise using bikes and scooters, shopping locally, working from home etc. Transport planning needs a mindshift.

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

Response:

Technologies are changing fast and by the time the next strategy is produced it could be another twelve years and a very different world. By then much more sustainable, environmentally friendly options could be available supporting climate change advances and rational, informed

thinking about transport planning in the twenty-first century. Gentle density increases could mean that the need for big engineering solutions and big developers can be rethought.

More highly populated areas measure the success of public transport based on user numbers but in the hinterland we need connectivity aswell. We also need more taxis and courtesy buses. I would convene discussions amongst people outside the usual inner circle who have been involved to date to break this "getting nowhere fast" impasse and get some practical, innovative and relevant solutions that are future looking and affordable.

I will not support any densification that leads to coastal and habitat intrusions and would aim to insure funds spent actually achieve the opposite such as turtle-friendly lighting along coastal paths and 'no-go zones' during nesting season.

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:
More than six levels

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?

This needs to be considered in more detail and ensure the communities involved support this but I see this as a much more sustainable solution (outline flood and landslip areas). I would do all I can to ensure such development included affordable housing.

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:

If we keep our precious coastline clean, protected and our citizens feel a pride in being responsible for it, it will remain an international attraction, most likely hosting visitors with a higher spend. We do not need high rise buildings that shadow the beach and suggest a dystopian future. I will ensure the zoning and development approval measures are in place to ensure densification of the coastline does not occur. I would also look to keep a balance between residential and commercial development and ensure sustainable management practices are in place and monitored.

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

Why?

I would take advice from the community, peak environmental protection groups and experts in the field (including from outside the Council) on this as part of a review of the Draft 2024 Planning Scheme.

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?

I would work with other Councillors and staff to review current practices and

	regulations, lobby the State Government and use whatever formal and informal mechanisms I could in the immediate and longer term.
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14 As a Divisional Councillor, what will you do to achieve better development outcomes for the region and your Division?

Response:

Firstly I would work with the Council and Councillors to fully review existing community engagement practices. I believe the commodifying of these processes has led to too much ticking of boxes and not enough rigorous, evidence-based information that assists both the citizens of the Sunshine Coast and the Councillors. Using community consultation statistics about numbers of meetings held and numbers of "likes" is tokenistic and not good enough. The community wants to be informed and educated as we tackle complex issues. I would support community groups, organisations and all citizens to be involved in decision-making rather than feel deliberately excluded as some do now. The existing engagement practices are not going deep enough. I would "lift the lid off City Hall" - meaning I would open all Councillor meetings and aim to provide greater access to professional staff other than when legal requirements do not allow. If our strategic decisions are based on real evidence informed by great achievements (internationally, nationally, statewide and locally), citizens who are committed, trust and respect, we will grow and evolve together as a community and a place to achieve better outcomes at every step.