

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:	John Connolly	Date:	25 January 2024
Division contesting:	Division 4		

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?

Yes, I think the system is good however, the question will not be clear to some people. We need a bus system that connects Caloundra, Nambour and North of the river to the Maroochydore City Centre. Complimenting that is the express train service branching from Beerwah to Maroochydore. Generational Infrastructure has been neglected, so a lot of work needs to be done on the bus arteries coming from Caloundra, Nambour and north of the river.

- 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:

Obviously public transport is a state government issue with DTMR, most people will probably understand this. So, I will work with local members to improve this, understanding what are state roads and council roads is very important.

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

Response:

A spotlight on the size of the vehicles used depending on the needs of the community, and vehicles that are environmentally friendly. Working with the state government to ensure there is a road network that can support the needs of community. Reliable and dependable transport services that run on time and ensure outlying communities are linked to the main city.

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:

Depends on the location. We have many communities that require different needs on the Sunshine Coast. We have buildings that are 50m tall in places like Moolooaba, (which has approximately 20m dedicated to tourism). In Buddina I would expect no height increases to the current planning scheme. I would expect little too, no change, the people of Buddina should be encouraged read and understand the planning scheme. "It is the law of the Land".

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?

I do not believe that many people will want live along a rail line, except maybe those who want to walk to the station, which more housing will be beneficial.

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:

This is always raised as a scare monger by people who want to cause trouble. If the planning scheme is correct and understood, this will never happen. If you read the planning scheme, understand it, you will see the shape of the Sunshine Coast for the next decade.

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?

Developers are tied to the planning scheme in terms of how high they can go and what they can do. The planning scheme needs to be changed on setbacks, and side boundaries to allow us to have bigger yards, wider footpaths and better roads.

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

YES/NO

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

It would not harm to do so, as long as the applicant adheres to the planning

	scheme in terms of height and setbacks. However, in some cases it would not hurt.
--	---

14 As a Divisional Councillor, what will you do to achieve better development outcomes for the region and your Division?

Response:

All regions have different needs and many cases require different outcomes, whether it is residential or industrial and the separation of the two. Encouraging council officers to ensure better quality building and architecture is very important, as we move forward with the hundreds of houses required in the next 15 years. Ensuring everything fits neatly around the planning scheme.