



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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Candidate survey – Sunshine Coast Regional Council (SCRC) Election 2024

Surname:	JENSEN	Given name:	CINDY
Position contesting:	Division 2		

1 About you:

Do you live in the Division for which you are standing?	YES/NO	No
Are you a member of a registered political party?	YES/NO	No
If so, are you endorsed or formally supported by that political party?	YES/NO	N/A

2 How will you deal with situations where you or your immediate family have assets, interests or affiliations that might be likely to present you with potential conflicts of interest in carrying out your tasks as a Councillor?

Comment:

As a note, I reside on the cusp of Division 2 and 3, in Little Mountain and am choosing to run for Division 2. My decision is rooted in my daily experiences – I shop and engage most frequently in Division 2, where I've observed significant issues that I am passionate about addressing.

I believe I would have limited conflicts of interest, however I commit to transparently declaring any that may arise.

3 If elected, how do you intend to engage with your community and/or the region?

Comment:

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 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.

Please note, I 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!

4 If elected as a Divisional Councillor, how will you advance the specific needs of your community?

Comment:

As a representative, my commitment is to be a proactive advocate for our community. While I may not fully understand all the intricacies of our diverse needs initially, I will prioritise ongoing engagement. I will actively seek input from residents through regular community meetings, surveys and open forums. By maintaining open lines of communication, I aim to continuously learn and adapt my approach to address the evolving concerns and priorities of our community.

I appreciate the engagement and interest shown in my perspective as a candidate for Division 2. It is heartening to witness the community's dedication to staying informed and involved in the matters that shape our region's future.

In addressing your queries, I wish to highlight that while I am honoured to share my opinions, it is crucial to recognise that, if elected, my role surpasses personal viewpoints. My commitment is to represent the entire community of Division 2 and the broader Sunshine Coast.

Rest assured, my decisions and actions will be guided by a commitment to the best interests of the community, prioritising collaboration, transparency, accountability and inclusivity. I value the diversity of opinions within our region and will work tirelessly to ensure that our collective voice shapes the path forward.

I am a doer and will continue to learn, collaborate, advocate and execute.

5 Why do you think that you are the best candidate for your Division or for Mayor?

Comment:

Throughout my vibrant journey, I've immersed myself in diverse communities worldwide, accumulating over three decades of professional expertise. My background spans graphic and product design, community and stakeholder relations, marketing, communications, event management and small business ownership. I've always prioritised fostering thriving communities, evident in my creation of a free-entry community event ten years ago, that evolved into a multi-award-winning major Queensland attraction. My previous role as a Community and Stakeholder Relations Specialist on the \$3.6B Victorian Desalination Project taught me the true essence of community engagement, highlighting the significance of not just listening, but also taking meaningful action.

I am not a politician and have no hidden agenda, instead I see myself as a change maker. My campaign is rooted in initiatives supporting the youth and ageing, small businesses, community and not-for-profit groups, the preservation of our environment and the overall prosperity of the Sunshine Coast. Advocating for a return to the core principles of municipal governance, I emphasise the necessity for Council to get back to basics, with asset upkeep and the need for proper community consultation at the forefront. My campaign also seeks internal change and an investigation into the perceived sell-off of public assets, budget spend that's incurred a \$450M debt, misuse of power by Council staff, procurement processes and more.

I am committed to being the catalyst for this change, advocating for and ensuring that the voice of our residents is heard and valued in decision-making processes. It's time to reshape our local leadership, placing the community's well-being at the forefront of every initiative and policy.

6 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning this section of the survey?

Comment:

I promise a dynamic and transparent leadership style, with an unapologetic approach and when elected, I commit to turning down the free car and its' associated expenses and initiating a full independent forensic investigation into this council's finances and operations.

I will also be using the platform to help the whole of the Sunshine Coast better understand the importance of making their vote count. Understanding who the candidates truly represent is crucial, as an educated vote is a better one. We must reject those backed by developers, aiming to put an end to the longstanding boys' club that has worked against the interests of our community for far too long.

Governance, Transparency and Ethical Behaviour

7 Are you aware of:

the Principles listed at the beginning of the Local Government Act 2009 and will you commit to abiding by these principles?	YES/NO	Yes
the relevant legislation and regulations that govern the conduct of Councillors and the activities of Council?	YES/NO	Yes

8 How do you see the above influencing your decision-making?

<p>Comment: Legal Compliance: I will ensure I comply with laws, regulations, and standards in my decision-making processes.</p> <p>Ethical Standards: I will avoid conflicts of interest and maintain public trust.</p> <p>Decision-Making Processes: I will ensure fair, consistent and lawful decision-making.</p> <p>Community Engagement: I will involve the community, seeking input on important matters affecting residents.</p> <p>Financial Responsibility: I will make decisions that align with fiscal responsibility and sustainability.</p> <p>Strategic Planning: I will consider long-term community needs and sustainability.</p> <p>Accountability: I will be aware of and responsive to accountability measures.</p> <p>Conflict Resolution: I will address disputes and maintain a harmonious working environment.</p>
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9 If elected will you:

support providing requested information (other than current commercial-in-confidence) to the community without the need for individuals and organisations having to resort to Right to Information applications?	YES/NO	Yes
support that community consultation will become routine and results respected and acted upon such that the public interest takes precedence over vested interests?	YES/NO	Yes
advocate to ensure consistent, high-quality, professional outcomes by requiring the planning and execution of all Council-initiated community engagement processes to be oversighted by the community engagement team of the Council?	YES/NO	Yes
commit to forensic scrutiny of projects and expenditure directions and the budget overall?	YES/NO	Yes
support the Environment Levy and its policies, including the continued acquisition of land for conservation, partnership funding for Land for Wildlife and other environment programs?	YES/NO	Yes

10 What do you mean by, and how would you measure sustainable development?

<p>Comment: Sustainable development, in my view, is about creating a thriving community that meets its present needs while safeguarding resources for the future. I would measure it through comprehensive assessments of environmental impact, economic viability and social equity, ensuring a balance that preserves resources and enhances quality of life over the long term. It is imperative that extensive community consultation is undertaken in order to obtain factual observation and outcomes.</p>

11 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning Governance, Transparency and Ethical Behaviour?

Comment:

Please refer to the attached media release pertaining to my candidacy announcement.

Climate Emergency

12 What do you see as the key impacts of Climate Change on the Sunshine Coast and how should the SCRC deal with this now and into the future?

Comment:

First and foremost, the impact to ecosystems and infrastructure from rising sea levels is a concern.

Council should continue to stay informed about the latest climate science, engage with experts and involve the community in decision-making to create effective, resilient and sustainable strategies for the Sunshine Coast.

Moving forward, Council needs to form collaborative relationships with community groups such as OSCAR and Beach Matters and encourage task force conversation.

Taking into consideration the overpriced and substandard solar farm that was built, Council needs to offer more transparency with regards to procurement and development of future projects. Reviews of successful case studies from other regions/countries are also imperative in the decision making process.

Creating and protecting green spaces, investing in sustainable water management practices and community awareness campaigns are also extremely important.

13 Do you endorse the Climate Change Emergency Declaration made by the current Council and will you advocate for a review of the scope, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the current corporate performance mechanisms to give effect to the Declaration?

Comment:

As a responsible candidate, I believe it is crucial to thoroughly review any policy, including the climate change emergency declaration, before offering an endorsement. When elected, I will be dedicated to championing a comprehensive review of all major policies and engaging with community and associated groups to ensure they align with the best interests of our community. Any decisions related to such critical matters will require careful consideration and evaluation by the new council to guarantee their effectiveness and relevance.

14 What role do you see for the SCRC and the Planning Scheme to accelerate the Sunshine Coast becoming a low emissions region by 2041?

Comment:

I appreciate the importance of transitioning the Sunshine Coast to a low emissions region by 2041. While I am not an expert in all fields, including environmental planning, I am committed to conducting thorough research and consulting with experts to formulate well-informed policies. When elected, I will collaborate with specialists and action groups, engage with the community and explore sustainable practices to ensure that any initiatives align with the unique needs and aspirations of our region. Addressing such critical challenges requires diligence and I am dedicated to making decisions that will positively impact our community and environment. With your help!

15 The Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS):

Will you ensure that the current CHAS is regularly updated as new Climate Change information and IPCC reports become available, and ensure CHAS updates are incorporated in the Planning Scheme as soon as possible after updates occur?	YES/NO	Yes
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16 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning Climate Emergency?

<p>Comment:</p> <p>I recognise the urgency of addressing the climate emergency. When elected, I am committed to learning from and collaborating with experts and the community to implement responsible policies. Together, we can work towards a sustainable future for the Sunshine Coast, preserving our environment for generations to come.</p>
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Planning issues

17 What is your understanding of when it is appropriate to override the Planning Scheme (PS) when there are conflicts?

<p>Comment:</p> <p>I am not a specialist in this field but ultimately I believe the decision to override a planning scheme should be well-justified, transparent and guided by a commitment to the best interests of the community. I also believe a thorough examination of the specific circumstances, potential impacts and adherence to legal processes would also be expected.</p>

18 Do you agree that:

Development Applications (DA) that conflict with the relevant PS Performance Outcomes and other planning instruments should be refused unless there is an overriding need in the public interest?	YES/NO	Yes
the community should be able to make formal public submissions and have the right of appeal to the Planning and Environment Court for development applications involving major impacts on the community and the environment?	YES/NO	Yes
Councillors rather than Council staff should decide such major development applications?	YES/NO	Yes
development that is vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Change such as flooding, inundation, coastal erosion, landslip and bushfire hazard should be prohibited?	YES/NO	Yes
financial contributions in place of the provisions of onsite parking should not be allowed unless improvements are provided within 200 metres of the development?	YES/NO	Yes
longer public submission timeframes than the statutory minimum times concerning amendments of the PS and for the proposed new PS should be implemented and consultation time for the new PS should be longer than the statutory timeframes (currently a minimum of 40 business days) to allow time for the community to understand and make an informed response?	YES/NO	Yes
further development on the floodplains should be prohibited and not approved?	YES/NO	Yes
a thorough review of the proposed Draft of the new PS, including the assumptions underlying it and the provision of infrastructure on which the proposed Draft PS is relying should be undertaken by the new Council? These include for example, the proposed rate of population growth specified in the SEQ Regional Plan Update to be accommodated on the Sunshine Coast and the impact of that rate of population growth in the region including the increases in dwelling numbers and densities mandated in the Update.	YES/NO	Yes

where community expectations about the PS are inconsistent with the planning directions and expectations of the State Government (eg in the SEQ Regional Plan Update or State legislation or policies), you will advocate strongly to ensure that the State accommodates the expressed planning wishes of our regional community to the greatest practicable extent?	YES/NO	Yes
Halls Creek should not be recommended for residential development and should remain part of the Inter-Urban Break as per the long-held view of the SCRC and supported by OSCAR?	YES/NO	Yes
there should be a level playing field for all quarry operations in the Sunshine Coast region by ensuring that the new PS has the same zoning for all quarry operations and the same level of development assessment for their operations?	YES/NO	Yes

19 Concerning the South East Queensland Regional Plan (Shaping SEQ) Update of December 2023, what are your views on the strategic directions for the Northern Subregion, the expansions of the Urban Footprint at Yandina, and the population and dwelling requirements for the Sunshine Coast region?

<p>Comment:</p> <p>While I may not have detailed insights into the specific provisions of the South East Queensland Regional Plan, I firmly believe that any strategic direction for urban expansion in areas like Yandina 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 our residents. When elected, I am committed to gaining a comprehensive understanding of the regional plan, engaging with the community and advocating for responsible development.</p>

20 Given the focus on increased densification via higher buildings and/or “gentle density” as per the SEQRP2023 Update will you commit to:

the development of careful guidelines for “gentle density” and that this type of development is not just seen as “accepted development”/“as of right”?	YES/NO	Yes
ensuring that SCRC undertakes a pilot project for higher density living that demonstrates the best in planning outcomes as per the ELS policy?	YES/NO	Yes

21 The coastal hazard “erosion prone area” is defined by the Queensland Government. The State Planning Policy Guidance states redevelopment is to “avoid urban footprint expansion into erosion-prone areas while the State Policy prohibits this land “to be used for urban purposes” unless already located in an urban area or urban footprint in a regional plan.

Will you oppose increases in the urban footprint and the density of medium and high-rise mixed-use residential buildings in these designated coastal hazard areas to reduce overall risk – and if so, how?

<p>Comment:</p> <p>I am steadfast in my belief that our coastal land should be treated with the utmost respect and celebrated for its natural beauty. I oppose increases in the urban footprint in coastal hazard and beachfront areas, particularly when it comes to high-rise developments. When elected, I will seek a comprehensive understanding of relevant state planning policies, liase with the community and my decisions will be guided by my commitment to preserving the distinctiveness of our Sunshine Coast and safeguarding its coastal heritage for future generations.</p>

22 How can the Planning Scheme support the biosphere?

Comment:

Planning plays a crucial role in shaping our community's future and it should be aligned with principles of responsible and sustainable development. While I may not have an in-depth understanding of the specific planning scheme details, I believe it should support initiatives that prioritise environmental conservation, biodiversity protection and sustainable practices. It's essential to strike a balance between development and environmental responsibility, ensuring that our region continues to thrive without compromising the natural assets that make it unique. When elected, I will work to promote policies that foster responsible development practices, taking into account the long-term well-being of our community and its environment.

23 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning Planning Issues?

Comment:

I was asked in survey by Andrew Wallace, MP about my thoughts on the suitability of a casino on the Sunshine Coast. Given this is a development that has long been a desire of the current Council, I find this forum fitting to express my adamant stance against the establishment of a casino on the Sunshine Coast and note that I am aware of the consistent non-support voiced by community.

I recently made a public announcement as part of my campaign, highlighting the approved crematorium in Caloundra west and the ongoing issues relating to ash and odour. The crematorium does not adhere to guidelines and is situated directly next door to other commercial tenancies. This is just one of many examples where Council has not adhered to guidelines, consulted the community and/or provided adequate care, support and concern. I will ensure these residents receive the associated report and action and continue to advocate for responsible development, transparency and meaningful community consultation.

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

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.

Transport Infrastructure and Service

24 Given the Australian Government has withdrawn financial support for all but one of the 5 major transport projects on the Sunshine Coast and has reduced Federal contributions from 80% to 50% for approved projects, and given the strong nexus between land use planning decisions and the provision of transport infrastructure, do you agree that:

all the current regional transport projects should be reassessed to identify and “lock in” the most effective and affordable project or projects that realistically can be delivered with Federal and State funding?	YES/NO	Yes
accurate budgeting with realistic cost increases and contingency funding must be included in this reassessment process?	YES/NO	Yes
projects that meet the need to efficiently move large numbers of Olympics 2032 spectators to, from and within the Sunshine Coast and that deliver a significant “legacy” transport benefit to the region must be a major decision-making consideration?	YES/NO	Yes

any reassessment should explore some options that do not involve the high capital cost, fixed transport infrastructure projects currently under consideration eg significant increases in the regional public bus network with small and large battery buses on more routes, servicing all major regional destinations, with greater frequency and express services, and with bus right of way clearways at peak periods and priority at traffic lights?	YES/NO	Yes
that ratepayers should not be subsidising major infrastructure projects that traditionally have been funded by the State and Australian Governments through an increase in Council debt or increases in the Transport Levy?	YES/NO	Yes
given the importance of synchronising and integrating land use planning and development approvals with the planning, funding and delivery of transport infrastructure and services, you will support including in the proposed new Planning Scheme medium, high and gentle density land use changes only where the relevant transport infrastructure and services are guaranteed to be funded and delivered in a synchronised way?	YES/NO	Yes
Active transport and Accessible transport should be made priorities in any transport infrastructure projects?	YES/NO	Yes

25 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning Transport Infrastructure and Services?

<p>Comment:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>I also believe we also need to take inspiration from European places like Amsterdam and Spain, where active transport and motorised/electric scooters are celebrated and actively promoted as a preferred mode of transport. There are many associated benefits, including a reduction in traffic congestion and air pollution and better public health outcomes.</p>

Thank you for your responses. We appreciate your time commitment to complete this survey.