



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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

Surname:	Natoli	Given name:	Joe
Position contesting:	Division 4		

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	No

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:

I would declare any interest and would exclude myself from voting if ever an issue came to council which involved that family member

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

Comment:

I have always made myself available to meet with anyone from any Division. I manage my own Facebook page and on big issues I have and will continue to put a press release out. I have also maintained two meet the councillor session per month, one at Kawana Library the other at Cotton Tree Library. I do go to many invited events like Chamber of Commerce, and other community-led events, but not limited to my Divisional boundary.

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

Comment:

The battle front initially will be the draft town plan which I am keen for the new council to review and reduce the excessive density in Division 4. I am also mindful that the Central Meeting Place and Seawall timeframe is challenging for the community and I am happy to push for a delay until the community is comfortable with what council is proposing. I will make sure when the draft town plan finally is out for public consultation that I notify owners on every street in my division where change is intended to happen and let them know what the current building height is and zoning and what the proposed changes are.

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

Comment:

I have demonstrated I understand the key issues my community are faced with and during the last term I was able to voice strongly my objection to the direction the council was heading with Mass Transit, the New Town Plan, the foreshore works at Mooloolaba, the sale of the residual Brisbane road car park, the reduction in height and density on the northern part of the Buddina Urban Village, the Pt Cartwright and La Balsa Park Master Plan, the initial M2M bikeway just to mention a few. I have committed to a very high level of customer service where I attempt to respond to all my emails on a daily basis except for Friday night, however by Sunday evening all emails are done and actioned. I have a very high level of attendance to many community and business events. I have 15 years of experience and my decision making process always puts the interests of the community first.

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

Comment:

My 15 years as a councillor and as mayor of Maroochy Shire, speaks for who I am and what I stand for. I am committed to honest, accountable and transparent government. If elected the next four years will be more of that hard working commitment and service to the community. My decision making has always been balanced between the need to grow sustainably, ensuring the environment does not suffer as a result of that growth. My voting has always been made on the basis of what is best for the majority within our community, and I have never voted for the purpose of being reelected.

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?

Comment:

I have a very high level of commitment to the principles of the Local Government Act. As an example of this I voted against the Corporate Plan at the February 2023 Ordinary Meeting when it was clear the council was going to deliver the high density in the Coastal Urban Corridor to underpin the Mass Transit Detailed Business Case even though the draft planning scheme was not yet out to public consultation. I argued that one of the principles of the Local Government Act states that when council undertakes public consultation it must be done in a meaningful way. I could not see this was possible when the Corporate Plan was set to deliver that level of density irrespective of what the community might say during the Planning Scheme round two public consultation period.

It is important for a councillor to maintain a high level of awareness as to ensure compliance to the legislation and regulations that govern the code of conduct and activities of council is upheld at all times.

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?

Comment:

Sustainable development is what I aspire to achieve, I look at all developments on how they impact the surrounding community and the environment. I consider the ecological footprint and in particular design for our climate. I consider distances to services and what the carbon footprint will be in travel miles. I take in the impact on our existing infrastructure and whether it can cope or have a negative impact. The final measure is the impact on lifestyle of those who live around a particular development, in all of these measures I evaluate whether it would lead to a positive or negative outcome.

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

Comment:

Too often confidentiality is used to avoid proper scrutiny. The state government must make it mandatory for a planning report to indicate if a direction has been given by the CEO or the CEO's representative to a planning officer to provide a recommendation against the officer's professional opinion and recommendation. The front page must contain the planning officer's professional opinion and recommendations and reasons for it, and it must then state clearly that the CEO is recommending an alternative recommendation. This must be legislated and failure to disclose this would result in a criminal offence with a mandatory jail sentence if found guilty.

Also any conflicts of interest on any DA by a mayor or councillor triggered by an election donation should not be put to the vote by councillors if the councillor or mayor believe they can make an unbiased decision, but an automatic exclusion to participate and vote should occur.

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:

The severity of storms is of enormous concern for me on coastal communities which will be subjected to storm surges, gale force winds, tidal inundation, flooding. The settlement pattern set by the 2016-20 council places a very large amount of our future infill density along these low lying areas and places this population right at the front of any severe cyclonic event with potential massive impacts. My greatest fear is that many of these residents in the future may not be offered flood insurance. Building on any flood plain is crazy and should be avoided completely. I have openly supported density around passenger rail away from the coast. There is an opportunity to build a modern city around density at Beerwah East from the beginning. It is the most cost effective way to manage growth and lessen the impacts on the coastal frail edge.

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:

Yes, I seconded the original motion moved by Cr Law, and I have taken a key interest to ensure council can deliver on the objectives set.

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:

Getting the population settlement patterns right for a start will do more for establishing a much better public transport network, with the priority being to shift greater numbers towards public transport. The council must play an active role in promoting the benefits of reducing energy cost and the savings which can be made in doing so, it is a win-win for all involved.

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

16 Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning Climate Emergency?

Comment:

State government must mandate energy efficiency in hot water systems, house appliances. I believe green hydrogen is the future for council's heavy vehicle fleet and council needs to explore this more aggressively. The same with working with Energex to convert all street lights to LEDs.

Planning issues

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

Comment:

It is best to use an example. Twin Waters West should never have been moved from rural to Future Urban. Any development on that site with recommendation of approval is hard to support the planning scheme when it is clear such a development will have impacts on those properties below the highest probable flood level. Knowing these homes may never get flood insurance it was impossible for me to support the planning scheme based on a bad previous council decision to allow urban development on this land.

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>The community never had a chance to make any comment about the expansion of the northern part of Yandina. I struggle to see how the intrinsic values of Yandina can be maintained with this expansion and impact it will have. The Sunshine Coast needs a major review and understanding on the growth impacts to our region, our brand and our point of difference to the Gold Coast. We need to define clear boundaries which are inpassable. These boundaries define what are the Sunshine Coast values and lifestyle worth fighting for and maintaining forever. This then drives all decisions on growth in the future. The boundaries must be well articulated and the community must have strong ownership of them.</p>
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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?

Comment:

Yes I will oppose it. These areas must remain low residential to avoid large buildings being built on them. It should even exclude dual occupancy on them as well, minimise any potential loss if erosion threatened property. Move taller buildings away from sensitive coastal areas.

- 22 How can the Planning Scheme support the biosphere?**

Comment:

The planning scheme needs to acknowledge human impacts and the impacts of the built form on the natural environment. The planning scheme should be sympathetic to the turtle nesting beaches and not support tall buildings which impact the beaches by increasing the skyglow. It should reduce heat sinks in built up areas with more deeper plantings and the promotion of an urban forest.

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

Comment:

There are too many code assessable developments which remove third party appeal rights. Council should agree to notify neighbours to a code assessable application being lodged. The discretion by officers to interpret a code assessable application is extraordinary. Relaxations in density and site coverage have gone beyond what one would believe is reasonable. I believe if any application requires a relaxation of 15% or more on some of the key fundamental components of a planning scheme like density, site cover and boundary relaxations this should automatically trigger the DA being declared an impact assessable application.

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: It is clear that public transport planning and delivery has been lagging for decades. The signal to the government needs to change to one of infrastructure and transport before growth can occur.</p>
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Thank you for your responses. We appreciate your time commitment to complete this survey.