

## Rita Burks

**Candidate for:** Seaside City Council

**Email:** electritaburks@gmail.com

**Occupation:** Public School Principal

**Years in the Area:** 15

**Education:** Master of Arts in Education - Educational Administration

### HOUSING POLICY

#### **What is your position on affordable housing? Please be specific with regards to policies you support or oppose**

I have a lot to learn about policies, but the most important issue affecting my city is the lack of affordable housing. We need to elect individuals who will be fierce negotiators and innovative thinkers on housing issues. We cannot continue to give sweetheart deals to the developers. We need stronger inclusionary housing ordinances, mixed use developments, increased density and meaningful community benefits agreements. In addition I would advocate for partnerships with nonprofits to build 100% affordable units. We must also be very innovative and have the city create models for appropriate accessory dwelling units, so that people can create extra living space in a safe and lawful manner.

#### **Do you support modifying city policies or regulations to make it easier and cheaper to build housing? If so, what specific policy changes do you support?**

Yes, we need to make sure we are actively working towards meeting our housing goals but also be mindful of upholding environmental protections.

#### **Do you support requiring that “inclusionary housing” units be made permanently affordable, even upon resale? If not, please explain.**

Yes. We have to do everything we can to keep communities affordable for current and future residents.

#### **Do you support requiring developers of hospitality, commercial and industrial projects that significantly increase demand for already scarce housing resources to pay housing impact fees to finance workforce housing or to build such housing themselves?**

Yes.

#### **How should local governments finance affordable housing?**

This is an area I need to learn more about and I am open to exploring options/learning from other cities.

**Throughout Monterey County, local governments have approved ~21,000 single family homes that haven't been built, and another ~13,000 are proposed. The median home price in Monterey County is ~\$850,000. Do you support adding more single family homes to the unbuilt pipeline or zoning for more affordable apartments, condominiums, and townhouses?**

I do want more community members to have the opportunity to become home owners vs only renting, but single family homes need to be made affordable.

**What other housing policies do you support or oppose?**

I also am in favor of the use of commercial linkage fees to support affordable housing.

### **WATER POLICY**

**What specific proposals do you support to ensure your community can meet its water demands without increasing the overdraft of the County's groundwater aquifers or violating the SWRCB's Cease and Desist Order regarding taking water from the Carmel River?**

Water Conservation is a stat. I have learned, the Monterey Peninsula significantly reduced water use through water efficient appliances, planting flowers, shrubs and trees compatible with our climate. Improved irrigation techniques has allowed agricultural production to greatly expand with a less than commensurate level of water use. There is undoubtedly more that can be done, including conservation and planting less water intensive crops. In addition, there is solid innovation in the intersection of waste water and drinking water supply. Again, the Peninsula is purifying recycled water and some storm water to drinking standards.

These are all ways to meet water needs and decrease impacts on our overdrafted aquifers.

**For Peninsula Candidates:**

**Do you support expansion of Pure Water Monterey as an alternative to building the desalination plant approved by the CPUC in 2018 but now stalled before the Coastal Commission? Why or why not? On what estimate of water demand is your position based, the estimate made by MPWMD or by Cal-Am? If you support the Cal-Am desalination project, how large should it be? Who should pay for the excess capacity from the desalination project until demand materializes for its water, Cal-Am shareholders, business ratepayers, or residential ratepayers?**

This is a topic I need to learn more about and I am open to working with the community better understand.

## GROWTH POLICIES

**Do you support the creation of “urban growth boundaries” or expansion of the existing boundary as a way to prevent urban sprawl, and to insure that future growth is compact, efficient, and protective of the environment? If not, what measures would you support to prevent urban sprawl? If yes, will you sponsor an urban growth boundary in the upcoming year, and make it one of your top three priorities?**

I am against urban sprawl. Yes, I support Urban Growth Boundaries and I will sponsor it if elected.

**Poorly planned, non-infill commercial developments and hotels create more trips and additional vehicle miles traveled on already overcrowded roads and highways. Both residents and visitors pay the price of delay and increased pollution. What specific traffic congestion relief solutions do you support?**

I support transit oriented development, smaller roadways, and creating walkable communities. We need to promote more public transportation and create developments that make it easier for people to walk to their destinations. The less need for driving the better.

## TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

**Do you support roundabouts on Highway 68 and other roads? What other transportation policies or practices have you seen that local governments should incorporate?**

I do support roundabouts. I am a strong supporter of public transportation and walkable communities.

## CANDIDATE PRIORITIES

**If you are elected, what will be your top three priorities?**

Affordable Housing, Infrastructure, and expanding community programs.

**What land use policies would you champion for the community?**

Smart planning, walkable communities, increased density, and transit oriented development.

## CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

**What accomplishments in your career or public service are you most proud of?**

As a public school principal of the only Dual Immersion program in MPUUSD, I am very proud of the work I have done around realigning the program to our mission and vision which are directly connected to the strong instructional practices my staff demonstrate

on a daily basis. Our program has been able to expand down to early childhood programs.

### **Experience**

15 years in education as a teacher, academic coach, Assistant Principal and Principal