

**Richard E. T. Sadowski**

**City Council Candidate**

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### **Candidate Introduction and Statement**

My name is Richard E.T. Sadowski. I'm a former Morro Bay Planning Commissioner and now running for City Council. I have been a resident of Morro Bay for over 18 years. I consider Morro Bay my home and have been working both privately and publicly to better our community. In addition to the Planning Commission, I have served on the Water Reclamation Facility Citizen Advisory Committee.

I am also deeply involved in working to help feed and deliver food to our community residents. I am currently a member of the Shoreline Calvary Church, where we organize to help our community members on a volunteer basis weekly.

I am a current business owner in the city and share many of the concerns of my fellow business owners as they relate to the future of Morro Bay.

I am running for City Council because I feel we need greater fiscal responsibility and decision making. We are a city of approximately 10,000 people yet we are spending like we are Santa Barbara. I see a current administration who, in the past 4 years of leadership, have managed to pave a couple of miles of roads but have achieved nothing else. I see us trying to raise more funds to increase our budget with no services being increased for our community members. I hear homeowners complain about the cost and difficulty to attain permits.

When elected, I intend to work with my fellow council members to improve services, reduce cost and time for permits and streamline our budget such that, we don't have to put a band-aid on poor planning like the upcoming sales tax or potential increase to TOT's.

**Question: Do you think our four economic centers (Downtown, Waterfront, Quintana, and North Morro Bay) are healthy and successful? If not, what three things are needed to improve business conditions in the city?**

Great question, I recently went to talk to local business owners in the city and received some good input. In speaking with our small business owners, there were a few issues that everyone seemed to have. The largest issues were a lack of parking and the trash on the minds of the business owners. While I am not of the mindset that the city needs to spend millions on structures, I do feel that we could make it easier for private owners of small, vacant lots, to be permitted to operate a parking lot. I also feel that, as we are a tourist destination and the current COVID situation has led to greater use of



disposable containers and plastics, we should allocate our existing resources to doing a far better job keeping our commercial areas clean.

I also heard our business members, an across the board, request for increased restroom facilities. Many are shops with one or two employees who simply lack the ability to sanitize their existing restrooms after each use. As a result, they have closed their facilities off to the public, creating a bottleneck for those businesses who do keep their facilities open which are mostly restaurants.

Morro Bay is seeing a reduction in visitors from higher spending areas such as Los Angeles and the Bay Area. As a result, in areas where I can help to reduce rents, such as the harbor side of the Embarcadero, I would work to lower rents. Regardless of where our businesses are, they have invested a lot into Morro Bay, and I feel that we should invest in them. I have only had a chance to speak with a handful of businesses, I intend to visit and hear from every business owner in Morro Bay these next few months.

**Question: If you received a \$1 Million dollar grant to use for the city any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why?**

If I were to control a \$1 Million grant, I would focus on a few key areas. As we all sadly know, with our city, we do not seem to get much in the way of services for this amount recently. With approximately 30% of our residents age 65 and older, and many residents without access to a vehicle, I would put \$240,000 to provide 96,000 free rides to our seniors, the disabled and income qualified residents with our dial-a-ride program which offers door to door access to Morro Bay over the next 4 years. This would equal 2,000 free rides per month and can assist with local shopping needs, local doctor appointments and pharmacy pickups.

While walking around and speaking with local businesses, I noticed a significant problem with the cleanliness of our public restrooms and the increase of trash from the upsurge of disposable cutlery and containers due to the COVID outbreak. I would also spend \$480,000 in hiring 4 new staff at \$15/hr to assist in trash pickup and keeping our public restrooms sanitary over these next 4 years.

In hearing that our veteran's weekly dinner, provided by Community Resource Connections, is currently running low on funds. I would contribute \$500/week over the next 4 years to support these valued members of our community.

With the significant rise in our local water bills over the last few years, I would establish a fund to assist our fixed income and income qualified residents with the remaining \$180,000. I feel that none of our most vulnerable residents should be subjected to the indignity of having their water cut off.

**Question: In seeking your position as an elected decision and policy maker in this 2020 election, what do you think are your shortcomings or lack of expertise and how do you intend to deal with them?**

A shortcoming I have is a difficulty working with dishonest people and those not fit for purpose. I intend to deal with this shortcoming by running for City Council.



**Please describe your business experience**

I have previously owned a coffee shop and recently started a new business. With my coffee shop, which was in Pismo Beach, I dealt with many similar issues that the businesses I have spoken with are facing. I was lucky in that my employees were wonderful, and I see a lot of great employees at the businesses I have visited in our city. And, like the businesses I have spoken with, parking and increasing a local customer base were my main concerns. In operating my coffee shop, my focus was on reducing cost of operations while maintaining a high quality of service. The location quickly became a local hangout which helped me through Pismo's off-season.

With my new business, Morro Solar, I am addressing what I see as a need. A few years back, I spent nearly \$25,000 installing solar at my home. While I was and still am excited to be carbon neutral, I was unfamiliar with these systems and after the installation, I did quite a bit of research as I was fascinated with my new system. While further looking into solar (research I should have done before the purchase), I found that I had overpaid significantly which I would call both a mistake and an opportunity.

I put the time in and found that I could create a business that would be significantly less expensive for better equipment which would make solar much less expensive for people. It's all about sourcing and making sure to get the same or better quality for a lower cost. This is the same thing I will do for Morro Bay when I am elected. I will work to cut our costs and increase our services without having to bandage our budget with more taxes.

