

### **Jo Ann Bollen, Candidate for Yucca Valley Town Council, District 3**

*What is your vision of the role of rural character in your community as it relates to progress and economic well-being, and how might you attain that vision as a Council member?*

I think the rural character of our community is so important to preserve! Some issues I'd like to work on:

1. If we could improve our tech infrastructure, such as power and internet we could attract more small and medium sized businesses that would offer better paying jobs and benefits. I was told by a member of the Planning Commission that the majority of those upgrades could be done within existing right of ways and any impacts on the desert would be minimal. We can work to be better connected to the world, while retaining our small town charm.

2. I'd like to help work towards the repurposing of abandoned buildings for new small businesses, affordable housing, and a homeless shelter. Perhaps some of the TOT taxes collected from Airbnb type rentals could be used toward affordable housing. The Airbnb type rentals displace year-round renters, and I think this housing shortage has to be addressed.

3. I would like to see any new structures that are built be in line with the visual look of a small town, such as the VCA Veterinary building. When you contrast that building with, say, the old Walmart building, the difference in street appeal is enormous, similar to how Old Town is so much more cool looking than the more eastern shopping corridor. If the store fronts were more welcoming, the businesses along the highway would benefit with increased tourism, while those sales taxes could help pay for these improvements that Yucca Valley needs.

4. It would be wonderful if we could get some art installed on the medians. this would be great exposure for our many talented artists in the area and would be beautiful to look at.

I believe it's so important to preserve our night skies, native plant life and small town feel, and to fight to make sure that our desert lands are not exploited by big corporations, like Cadiz.