

Former Mayor Pro Tem Cristina Medina Dirksen

A native of San Francisco, Cristina has made her home in Monterey County for 27 years arriving in 1997 to work as a journalist during the epic storms that threatened to cut off the Peninsula from the Salinas Valley. The storms subsided, but Cristina didn't!

Cristina came to the area to work for the Salinas Californian covering law enforcement, government and more. She later went to work for the Monterey Herald, working more than 10 years covering all aspects of Monterey County, including Marina. It was through her work that she came to know and love Monterey County and despite not having any family in the area, decided to make it her home along with her husband and biggest supporter Doug.

A shift began journalism in the 2000s, with resources stifled under venture capitalist ownership. This led Cristina to leave local journalism in favor of law school. She attended Monterey College of Law and while attending school worked first in criminal defense before finding her passion in corporate law where she was part of an in-house team as a paralegal.



After having her triplet daughters, she stayed home to care and grow them and found another passion in volunteering in her community. As early as her girls being in their triple stroller Cristina was already taking them to library meetings when she joined the board of the Friends of the Marina Library where she became President and Marina City Council meetings where they successfully advocated for a crosswalk at Windy Hill Park. That triple stroller was a means for Cristina to get out into her community. Daily walks uncovered the dire need for improvements beyond crosswalks. In 2018 Her family circulated citizen-driven initiatives that led to the successful passage of Marina's measures N,V,P and X. In 2020 she ran for Marina City Council to be able to decide how funds generated would be spent and to be a voice for families.

Since her landslide win, Cristina's impact has been like the force of nature that she is. Among her accomplishments are pushing for hiring of key positions in the City and providing our dedicated employees with the tools and support they need to do their jobs.

Not doing any of this single handedly, but with the support and work of her City Council colleagues, she is most proud of:

- Securing funding for five new parks including a sports center and the opening of a pump track for families and putting city funding and resources to create the Martin Luther King Jr. sculpture garden as Marina's statement of being a welcoming and inclusive community.

- Being a champion of Marina's economic development by being supportive of Joby Aviation's expansion into Marina, serving on a working group that helped bring stakeholders to advocate for legislation supporting the emerging industry
- Elevating Marina's profile as a welcoming and ready-to partner city, creating relationships with every city in Monterey County and with organizations that had been estranged.
- Increasing involvement of citizens by keeping them informed with regular updates of city activity. With over 1,100 residents in her Marina resident contacts, Cristina has been able to effectively include residents in decision making, boosting a feeling of trust in government.
- Supporting art as a member of Marina Youth Arts board, making connections that have led to mural work and other public art.
- Being a collaborative voice for transportation projects as Marina's representative to the Transportation Agency of Monterey County
- Amending voting districts to accurately reflect communities with shared interests

Memberships:

- Marina Youth Arts, Board Member
- Hijos del Sol arts Productions, Treasurer Marina High Boosters
- Marina Kiwanis Club Monterey High School PTA
- Monterey High School Girls Tennis, Team MOM
- Monterey County Democratic Central Committee, Member (alternate)

Married to Douglas Dirksen, a Salinas Fire Battalion Chief

Daughters: Mariessa, Ruby and Viviana

Dogs: Honey & Jessie

Resident of 263 Young Circle, District 3