

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Responses of Craig Rice, Democratic Candidate, Council District 2

Budget & Tax

1. Do you support raising revenues through more progressive tax and fee structures to preserve County services and programs instead of focusing solely on making cuts? How specifically would you do this without unduly adding to the burden of moderate and modest income County residents?

Yes, a progressive tax structure is important but what is most important is ensuring our plan is sustainable and is able to be effective in good and bad fiscal times.

2. Do you support, at the state level, imposition of a 'millionaire's tax,' requiring upper income residents to pay higher taxes?

I don't feel that we should balance or tax policy on any one particular class of people. Therefore I do not support a millionaire's tax.

3. If you believe that some cutbacks are necessary, please explain how you would prioritize cuts to the County budget, including cuts to "safety net" programs, education cuts, and other human services. What specific programs and services would you cut?

We need to address our duplication of services within and outside of our agencies.

Affordable Housing

1. What programs and policies do you support to preserve the existing stock of affordable rental housing in the County and stop its further decline? Do you have a plan for increasing the number of affordable housing units in the County? If yes, please explain.

We have a nationally recognized MPDU program and I intend to make sure that it is supported and enhanced. I'm committed to producing and retaining more affordable and workforce housing units and think we need to follow the example of using some of the property tax revenue to continue to support affordable housing initiatives.

2. Do you support mandatory reporting of rents and other increases by landlords with 4 or more units? Do you support making the County's voluntary rent guidelines mandatory based on the cost-of-living, or some other method of rent stabilization with reasonable exceptions?

I do not support rent control at this time but do support affordable housing options for all residents.

3. Have you read the March 2010 Tenants Work Group Report? (http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Content/EXEC/TWG/pdf/twg_report_3-2010.pdf) Which, if any, of the recommendations contained in the Report do you support?

No

4. Do you support State enabling legislation which would allow Montgomery County to pass county-level "just cause eviction" legislation to allow evictions only for specified

reasons such as non-payment of rent or on-site criminal activity? If the legislation is passed at the state level, would you support just cause eviction legislation in Montgomery County?

No. Yes.

Transportation & Infrastructure

1. Do you support the expansion of public transit, including building the Purple Line, CCT, and Bus Rapid Transit? Yes
2. What other ways would you expand the building and usage of public transportation in the County? Expansion of ride on bus routes in the Upcounty.
3. Do you support tax or other incentives to promote telework, vanpools, and carpools? Yes with other incentives

Education

1. What measures do you support to maintain the high quality of education in Montgomery County Public Schools, given the current budget situation?
The best investment that we can make in our children is a quality education. Montgomery County has long known this, which is why the public school system accounts for over 50% of the Count budget. In Montgomery County, we know that strong teachers make strong schools. Teachers must have the support they need in and out of the classroom.

New Development

1. Do you support the recent increases in school and transportation impact fees? Yes
2. Do you support assessments of infrastructure, service, health, environmental, human, and small business impacts prior to approval of new developments? Sometimes
3. What changes in the County Master Plan do you support to promote smart, sensible, environmentally sound, and managed growth? The White Flint revision is a prime example of smart growth.
4. How do you propose to prevent displacement in communities along the route of the Purple Line, such as Long Branch and Langley Park, if the Purple Line is built?
Sometimes displacement cannot be avoided but we must do what we can to try.

Elections

1. If State enabling legislation is passed, would you support campaign finance reform in Montgomery County, including publicly funded campaigns for County races? No.
2. Do you support such State enabling legislation? No
3. Do you support legislation making monthly reporting of campaign contributions mandatory for candidates for County office? Whether such legislation is passed or not, will you pledge to make such monthly reports in this and future campaigns? No and No
4. Do you support issuing a publicly-financed voter guide, prepared by an independent body, with candidate statements and information that would go to all registered voters?
No

Immigration

1. Do you support equal access to education and other County services for all County residents regardless of immigration status? **Yes**
2. Do you support the policy of not asking or checking immigration status unless there is a felony charge arrest? **Yes**
3. Do you support free, readily available English language classes and other education programs to help immigrants become full participants in the civic life of our County? **Yes**

4. Do you support legislation making Montgomery County a “sanctuary county?”
(In a sanctuary county, no agent, officer or employee of the county may assist the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the investigation or arrest of any persons for violation of the U.S. immigration and nationality laws.)

No. Agents of Montgomery County need to cooperate with authorities when appropriate.

Agricultural Reserve

1. Do you support the protection of the County Agricultural Reserve including additional protections against development for the Reserve or do you think current restrictions are sufficient?

Yes. We need to continue to protect the Ag Reserve.

Other

1. Why should an organization such as ours, which supports progressive policies and representatives, endorse you in this race?

As a current elected official, I have committed myself to safeguarding the quality of life we share and leaving the county a better place for our children and generations to come. In Annapolis, I found that working collaboratively, we can ensure the basic needs of residents and businesses in Montgomery County are met. I am confident that my passion, skills, accessibility and experience will serve our County well.