



THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE – DISTRICT 4 SPECIAL ELECTION

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1) WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE ROLE THAT MONTGOMERY COUNTY WILL PLAY IN OUR FUTURE GLOBAL ECONOMY?

I AM A PRAGMATIST AND I CANNOT PREDICT THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL DYNAMIC IN UNCERTAIN TIMES. WHAT I CAN SAY IS THAT WE ARE POSITIONED WITH A STRONG CORE OF BLUE CHIP BIO TECH AND DIGITAL INFO SYSTEMS CORPORATIONS THAT ARE COMPLEMENTED WITH THE MOST AFFLUENT AND EDUCATED WORK FORCE IN THE WORLD. WE MUST CORRECT OUR TRANSPORTATION/ DEVELOPMENT INEQUITIES, RETROFIT AND UPGRADE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE, AND AGRESSIVELY COURT VIABLE GREEN MANUFACTURING TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AROUND. IF SUCESSEFUL, WE CAN BECOME A MODEL REGION THAT PROFITS FROM THE EXPORT OF PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS WHICH WILL ONCE AGAIN PUT AMERICA IN THE FOREFRONT OF PROGRESS.

a. WHAT WOULD YOU DO AS A MEMBER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL TO REACH THIS VISION?

IN ORDER TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY, MONTGOMERY COUNTY WILL NEED TO ATTRACT BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES THAT CREATE TANGIBLE, AND EXPORTABLE COMMODITIES EITHER PYHSICAL OR INTELLECTUAL. IF WE PROVIDE A POSITIVE BUSINESS CLIMATE AND IMPROVE OUR TRANSPORTATION/ CORE INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE REGION ATTRACTIVE TO SUITORS, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY SHOULD DEVELOP ACCORDINGLY. MUCH OF THIS IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON MAKING DISTRICT 4 AN ACTUAL PARTICIPANT IN PROGRESSIVE GROWTH. IT CAN NO LONGER CONTINUE TO BE PERPETUATED AS A HIGH DENSITY, JOBLESS, TAX AND SLEEP FARM WITHOUT PUTTING AT RISK THE VIABILITY OF OUR REGIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE SYSTEMS. WITH OUR NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC REALITY, I WOULD PUSH TO PUT ALL PROJECTS BACK ON THE TABLE AND RE EVALUATE ALL PROGRAMS. WE MUST FIRST FOCUS ON CORE SERVICES THAT THE TAXPAYERS HAVE PAID FOR AND EXPECT, I WOULD THEN DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ATTRACT BUSINESSES WITH TANGIBLE PRODUCTS TO ANCHOR A COMMUNITY AROUND, THEN INITIATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCONNECTED SELF SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE COUNTY.

2) DO YOU BELIEVE THAT PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR COMPANIES TO LOCATE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY?

ABSOLUTLY! TAXES AND PURE CONSUMER BASED ECONOMIES ARE INCAPABLE OF GENERATING SUSTAINABLE WEALTH. IF WE ARE TO ELIMINATE OUR CURRENT BUDGET DEFICIT, WE NEED A COMBINATION OF FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND REAL GROWTH. THERE ARE 2 TYPES OF INCENTIVES THAT ARE PROVEN MODELS THAT WOULD IMPROVE OUR COUNTIES ECONOMIC FUTURE. THE FIRST IS ECONOMIC “GO ZONES” THAT WOULD ELIMINATE BUSINESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE TAXES FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF BUSINESSES DURING A SPECIFIED DEVELOPMENT PERIOD. THE SECOND IS THE POWER OF CONTRACTING. THE COUNTY HAS THE BUDGET POWER TO GRANT CONTRACTS TO COMPANIES THAT WOULD LOCATE IN THE COUNTY AND CREATE PRODUCTS TO FULFILL THE COUNTIES NEEDS. ONCE UP AND RUNNING, THESE COMPANIES CAN THEN CREATE PRODUCTS TO BE SOLD TO OTHER MARKETS. BY UTILIZING CHARGES AGAINST FUTURE BUDGETS OR BOND ISSUANCE, THIS COULD BE EFFECTIVLY USED TO ACTUALLY ATTRACT AND DEVELOP GREEN INDUSTRY AND JOBS RATHER THAN TO JUST HOPE THEY MATERIALIZE OUT OF THIN AIR.

3) ECONOMIC DOWNTURN HAS RESULTED IN DECREASED REVENUES FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE BEST METHODS FOR BOOSTING COUNTY REVENUES? WHAT SHOULD BE TRIMMED FROM THE COUNTY'S BUDGET IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES?

FIRST OF ALL, I WOULD DIVERT FROM THE PRIMATIVE MENTALITY OF TAX AND SPEND AS FRAMED IN THIS QUESTION. THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO "BOOST" REVENUE , TO USE CHARGES AGAINST FUTURE BUDGETS TO INVERT COST/ CONSERVATION EXPENDITURES, CONSIDER PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH CERTAIN PUBLIC FACILITIES, AS WELL AS TO SHIFT SERVICE EXPENDITURE OFF OF THE BUDGET AND INTO THE PRIVATE OR NON PROFIT SECTOR. THE FAITH BASED COMMUNITY THAT IS THE HALLMARK OF DISTRICT 4 IS A CRIMINALLY UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCE THAT NEEDS TO BE TAPPED. ONE THING IS FOR SURE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE, AND VARIOUS ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE A 10-15% PAYCUT BEFORE REDUCING OR CHARGING THE TAXPAYERS FOR ANY OF THEIR CORE SERVICES.

4) GIVEN THAT MARYLAND'S INVESTMENT IN TRANSPORTATION CONTINUES TO DECLINE AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION REMAINS A HUGE CONCERN FOR VOTERS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, HOW DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE COUNTY COUNCIL SHOULD ADDRESS OUR TRAFFIC RELIEF?

AS AGRESSIVLY AS POSSIBLE! DUE TO DECADES OF POOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY HIGH DENSITY HOUSING PROJECTS BUILT RIGHT TO THE EDGE OF MAJOR ARTERIES. THIS PRACTICE MUST BE STOPPED. OVER UTILIZED ROADS SHOULD BE UPGRADED BEFORE TAKING ON CLEAR CUTTING MAJOR HIGHWAY PROJECTS. THE PUBLIC WILL HAVE TO BECOME INVOLVED AND MAKE A CONCIIOUS OVERT DECISION ABOUT TOTALLY REWORKING THE WAY WE WORK AND TRAVEL WITHIN THE COUNTY. THIS WILL INVOLVE COMMITMENT TO A NEW PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SCHEME. THIS WILL NEED TO BE DONE SOON AND IT WILL NEED TO BE DONE RIGHT. ANOTHER UNDER DISCUSSED ISSUE IS THAT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY. OUR PROXIMITY TO THE NATIONS CAPITOL AND THE FACT THAT WE ARE THE HOME TO THE WORKERS WHO RUN THE GOVERNMENT MAKES THIS AREAS TRAFFIC ISSUE A NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT. OUR TRAFFIC PROBLEMS COULD BE USED A WEAPON TO SHUT DOWN THE GOVERNMENT FOR A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD OF TIME. THIS IS AN UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION AND MUST BE RECOGNIZED AND ADDRESSED ACCORDINGLY.

5) WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON SOME OF OUR KEY TRAFFIC RELIEF PROJECTS INCLUDING THE PURPLE LINE, CORRIDOR CITIES TRANSITWAY AND THE WIDENING OF I-270?

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- TRANSPORTATION RELIEF IS THE KEY ISSUE IN OUR AREA ... PERIOD! YOU CAN WIDEN 270 TO THE POTOMAC FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, BUT IF YOU DON'T ADDRESS THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCONNECTIVE SELF SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES, WE WILL BE DOING NOTHING MORE THAN CREATING THE WORLDS LARGEST PARKING LOT. I HAVE SEEN INTERESTING PROPOSITIONS ON FIXED LANE HIGH SPEED BUS SERVICE. IN SOME AREAS LIKE THE RT29 CORRIDOR, DUE TO POOR PLANNING, THIS MAY BE THE ONLY VIABLE MASS TRANSPORTAION SYSTEM THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO ALLEVIATE THE UNBEARABLE CONGESTION. THE PROPOSAL OF A MIXED RAIL/BUS PURPLE LINE IS AN INSULT TO THE CITIZENS OF MY DISTRICT. (PLEASE SEE QUESTION 7)

6) PLEASE DISCUSS YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE MASTER PLANS THAT WILL COME BEFORE THE COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2008 INCLUDING: GAITHERSBURG WEST, GERMANTOWN AND WHITE FLINT, AS THESE AREAS ARE ALL OPPORTUNITES FOR IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

I WOULD SCRAP IT AND PUT EVERYTHING BACK ON THE TABLE. WITH THE NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC REALITY A HALF A BILLION DOLLAR DEFICIT, AND THE BALL AND CHAIN OF PAYGO INFRASTRUCTURE LIABILITIES, WE WILL NEED TO REPRIORITIZE ALL PROJECTS. REVITALIZATION OF AREAS SUCH AS WHEATON ARE AN IMMEDIATE NECESSITY. UNLESS SOMETHING IS DONE TO MITIGATE THE SOCIO ECONOMIC DECLINE OF CERTAIN AREAS, WE RISK THE CREATION OF MAJOR ZONES OF BLIGHT WHICH WILL BE EVEN MORE EXPENSIVE AND PAINFUL TO CORRECT (SEE Q. 7 FOR DETAILS).

7) WHY WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL AND WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH?

THE CONTENT OF THIS SURVEY IN ITSELF IS INDICATIVE OF EVERY FACTOR THAT PROPELS ME TO RUN FOR THIS OFFICE. I AM RUNNING FOR A DISTRICT 4 SEAT, NOT ROCKVILLE, NOT GAITHERSBURG, NOT POTOMAC, YET EVERY QUESTION DEALS WITH THE WESTERN HALF OF THE COUNTY! WE LIVE HERE, WE PAY TAXES, WE WANT NICE STUFF TOO! WE HAVE THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGES OF MINORITY CITIZENS, PUBLIC HOUSING, CRIME, THE WORST TRAFFIC, LOWEST RATIO OF JOBS PER HOUSEHOLD YET IT SEEMS AS THOUGH NO ONE CARES. A 900 ACRE EQUESTRIAN CENTER WAS JUST PROPOSED IN BEALLSVILLE AND THERE IS TALK OF JAMMING A WALMART IN BURTONSVILLE, GEE THANKS! IS THIS EQUITABLE LAND USE? I WAS SHOWN A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL DOCUMENT FROM THE COUNTY REGARDING A PROJECT IN FOUR CORNERS THAT STATED "TAKING INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY WOULD SET A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT". SINCE WHEN DON'T WE HAVE A SAY IN WHAY HAPPENS WHERE WE LIVE. I AM SICK AND TIRED OF WATCHING THIS SIDE OF THE COUNTY BEING USED AS A PIGGY BANK TO PAY OFF POLITICAL FAVORS. WHAT DO I INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH? I INTEND TO FORCE THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THE TAXPAYERS EAST OF ROCKVILLE PIKE THE SAME PONY RIDE FOR THEIR QUARTER! I AM RUNNING BECAUSE I WANT GOOD GOVERNMENT, I LIVE HERE, AND I CARE!