



# MCCC 2014 Candidate Questionnaire

**Name:** Nancy Navarro

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**Office you are seeking:** County Council **District:** 4

**Years of residence in the district in which you are running:** 11

## Education Information

**College, Post-graduate, Technical School or Certificate Program you completed and the degree(s) you attained.**

-Bachelors of Science in Psychology at the University of Missouri (Columbia), 1987 -Public Education Leadership Project, Harvard University, 2007, 2008.

## Employment Information

**Current Occupation:** Councilmember **Current Employer:** Montgomery County

**How long have you been employed here?** 5 years

**If less than two years, please provide immediate previous employer:**

## Questions

**In your opinion, what are the key issues facing the business community in the district/county/state you seek to represent?**

The business community faces a range of issues that County Government can help address. Businesses need a qualified, educated workforce. Toward that end, education has always been my top priority. From quality early childhood education to a world-class school system and community college, Montgomery County should be a leader in producing the workforce of the future. Local business owners also need to be in a better position to compete for County contracts. As chair of the Government Operations Committee, I am working to improve and streamline the procurement process. In addition, I recently sponsored successful legislation that gives local businesses an advantage in higher procurement process in the event of a tie bid. The bill also requires the request for proposal to clearly explain the process for a tie bid.

**What do you believe are the core responsibilities of the position you seek and what will you do to carry these out?**

The most fundamental role of the Council is to approve a balanced budget each year. Since I joined the Council in 2009, we have had to make incredibly difficult decisions by balancing priorities. As chair of the he Government Operations and Fiscal Policy committee, I led the effort to create--for the first time--a 6-year fiscal plan for the County. Those difficult years during the Great Recession enabled us to come out of the economic crisis stronger and on a more fiscally

sustainable path. Montgomery County is one of only 40 large counties to maintain its AAA bond rating from all 3 major ratings agencies.

**Please explain your budget priorities and describe your approach to the role you will play in impacting the County/State budget.**

My top budget priorities have been and will continue to be investing in our schools and funding the social safety net for our most vulnerable residents. I have been a consistent supporter of enhancing our public safety agencies, even during the most difficult years of the recession. One of the most significant economic development initiatives in District 4 is Wheaton Redevelopment. Since Wheaton became part of my district, I have fought tirelessly for funding a comprehensive revitalization effort that will create jobs and enhance existing businesses in the greater Wheaton area. The Council is set to approve \$144 million over the next few years for this exciting project. On a related note, the Council passed Bill 6-12, which I sponsored, establishing the Small Business Assistance Program. This new program will provide capital and technical assistance to eligible small businesses that are negatively impacted by County redevelopment projects.

**What improvements do you believe are needed to the transportation infrastructure in Montgomery County and Maryland? Please list them in your priority order.**

I have always supported the Purple Line and Corridor Cities Transitway. I support full implementation of the Bus Rapid Transit plan recently approved by the Council. I believe transit and transportation infrastructure is key to the economic development priorities of our County. Transportation projects have the potential to catalyze economic success in long-neglected parts of Montgomery County. In particular, I strongly support building out BRT along the Rt. 29 corridor to support economic development in the East County and BRT routes connecting Wheaton to both Rockville and Olney.

**If elected, how do you plan to address the perception and reality of Montgomery County and Maryland having a less competitive business climate?**

Business climate is about more than tax rates. Since I joined the Council, we have approved more master plans and sector plans than in any time in recent memory. We have been an incredibly pro-business Council in terms of up-zoning commercial properties and encouraging smart growth in our urban hubs. Even at times where our positions may be at odds--such as raising the minimum wage or providing affordable health insurance to employees of contractors--I have always tried to maintain open communication and dialogue with the business community.

**How do you define economic development?**

Economic development means creating new jobs and attracting new businesses to Montgomery County. Economic development is only possible with a strong, vibrant private sector. Government can help create an atmosphere for economic development, but cannot do it alone. Montgomery County has a multifaceted economic development strategy through economic development grants, ongoing procurement reforms, and, most significantly, land use decisions allowing smart growth and sustainable development.

**What role should government play to help attract, grow and retain business?**

As discussed in the previous question, the County employs a variety of strategies to promote economic growth. The Council has a unique responsibility as the body with the final say in land use decisions. Through this tool, the Council has approved numerous master plans, sector plans and zoning change requests that enable smart, sustainable growth in our urban hubs and economic development opportunities.

**What current economic development initiatives do you support?**

I strongly supported the creation and expansion of the Montgomery Business Development Corporation. I have also consistently supported economic development grants that create and retain jobs in Montgomery County.

**What new economic development initiatives would you propose?**

I look forward to continuing my work to streamline and improve the County's procurement process. I will also pursue funding for the Small Business Assistance Program in the FY16 Operating Budget for impacted businesses in Wheaton during construction.

**Please use this opportunity to provide any other information you would like MCCC members to know.**