

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COUNTY COUNCIL
CANDIDATES 2014 Elections
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**Beth Daly
Candidate
Montgomery County Council At Large**

Budget & Tax

1. What is your vision of taxation and spending in Montgomery County? Some revenue sources include property tax, bag tax or a potential business tax similar to what Fairfax County imposes. How do you think we should raise money?

The Montgomery County income tax rate is at its allowed maximum and our median residential property tax is high and very near the maximum allowed in the County charter. I do not support raising the residential property tax further, and I support the Homestead and senior tax credits. That said, we need to explore creative means to address revenue shortfalls without simply defunding important programs and initiatives. The County should more diligently and regularly appraise commercial properties to ensure that commercial landowners are paying their fair share. The County must examine implementing (with appropriate exemptions) use taxes and raising the fees for select public services. While the “taxes” raised by speed cameras are welcome, and I applaud the ingenuity, I question whether this regressive taxation is in our long-term best interest. In addition, I would like to see our delegation in Annapolis pass legislation to force the state to share corporate tax revenue with the counties and work to close combined reporting tax loopholes so that Maryland receives higher revenues.

2. In good times what are your spending priorities? How would they differ in hard times? If you ranked human safety net services, education, transportation and libraries for county spending, how would you rank them and why?

This feels like Solomon’s choice. And I don’t want to split the baby. These are all priorities—and the scale of dollars is so different: \$2B+ for education; millions for social services.

Montgomery County is committed to providing a safety net to its most needy residents. I have traveled across the County during my campaign and have been asked everywhere – no matter the zip code – about availability of affordable housing and services for the less fortunate. That is inspiring to me. The County needs to continue that commitment in the face of great demographic change that is bringing welcomed diversity and the inevitable challenges. Our County’s nonprofit and faith-based

communities have made enormous contributions, and we must support their efforts and keep open the lines of communication and collaborate to make sure that needs are being met. Many nonprofits with deep connections in our neighborhoods provide services in our communities. If elected, I would support continued funding for those imbedded and connected services that first make sure all Montgomery County citizens have basic needs met, like fair housing, healthy meals, and personal and property security.

Education is the backbone of our economic strength – and it is an important part of our Montgomery County brand. We must keep and grow our reputation as a nationally recognized high quality school system, to attract new business and to provide the creative workforce our region will continue to need. That status is threatened, however, by an achievement gap that tracks along racial and geographic lines in the County. Again, every huge bureaucracy has waste and duplication, including MCPS. I support third-party review of MCPS programs to improve outcomes and reduce costs.

Transportation is another fundamental requirement of a healthy economy. We must increase, not decrease, investment in public transit, focusing on getting people to work and home again on transit. We cannot continue to lose productivity, pollute the air, and corrode quality of life while our workforce sits in traffic jams. As legislative director of the Sugarloaf Citizens Association, I have testified on many transportation issues, including advocating for a third track on the MARC Brunswick Line and an extension of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to upcounty, where there is no public transportation.

Libraries are a highly valuable public service and community space. The library serves as a “third space,” learning center, and new American welcome facility for our County’s wonderfully diverse population. Libraries provide bang for the buck, bolstering the residents’ health, job search, English learning, achievement gap closing and other programs.

3. How would you ensure that taxes/fees do not unduly impact those with lower incomes?

I support the Homestead and senior tax credits to respect the members of our community that have already given so much. I think the County should better appraise commercial properties to ensure that commercial landowners are paying the appropriate amount as opposed to amounts on old assessments. I support the bills that were presented in Annapolis this season to differentiate tax rates between commercial and residential properties, to fund education and transportation infrastructure. I would like to see the County more aggressively work with utilities to implement energy saving measures in low-income homes and multifamily housing so the energy tax doesn’t hit these populations too hard. And I will consider bringing back a County-level tax credit for energy efficiency, though not at the previous level.

4. Do you have any innovative approaches to income and wealth disparities? Please share them.

Montgomery County is in the midst of a seismic demographic change. Our County is becoming increasingly urban and diverse – more than one-third of the County's current residents are foreign-born. While this diversity is a strength and should be embraced, it brings with it challenges, such as growing economic inequality. Reducing this economic inequality can be best accomplished through raising incomes, raising the education level of our youth, providing adult skills training, and ensuring that people who work in Montgomery County can afford to live in Montgomery County.

I attended rallies and supported the minimum wage bill the Council recently passed, although I still would like to revisit both the indexing and the tipped workers portion in future legislation. Without indexing, our hard-won minimum wage gain could be a wash ten years from now. I support the state minimum wage legislation.

I will continue to support efforts to reduce the achievement gap in schools and support initiatives such as the Career Lattice program (encouraging teachers to choose lower performing schools) and additional funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). I also support the "middle college" program being piloted at Northwest and Northwood high schools, where students can be enrolled simultaneously in MCPS and Montgomery College, saving them time and overall tuition costs – creating skilled graduates at an earlier age, a big help to families who depend on a service worker wage. At the same time, we need to increase accessibility to trade- and job-retraining programs. Montgomery College offers some of the nation's top adult education opportunities and we need to make these programs more accessible to our residents.

I also will work to create more affordable housing (see question 5). I support just eviction and anti-retaliation legislation so that tenants who seek better conditions or fair rents can maintain long-term residency in their communities and schools.

I would support the groups that help immigrants sustain their families and prosper. I support the County's Local Small Business Reserve Program and organizations like Latino Economic Development Center that help immigrants establish businesses. As long as they continue to be successful and show measurable impact, they should receive County funding. CASA de Maryland, of course, is one of the largest players in providing adult education, civic training and job placement. I would like to see an increased effort by nonprofits, facilitated by County funding and expertise, to increase civic leadership and involvement of immigrants in our County's robust civic life.

5. Affordable Housing

While renters in Montgomery County account for 25-30% of households, the affordable rental housing supply continues to shrink. In 2009 the Tenant Work Group, convened by Ike Leggett, expressed the following concerns:

- **Unaffordable rent increases**
- **Fear of retaliation for voicing concerns about the property**
- **Unreasonable month-to-month surcharges**
- **Crime and safety**

What can you and the County Council do to support the County's 250,000 renters?

I will work tirelessly to hold on to our existing affordable housing stock and to create new affordable housing. It is not fair that many hardworking laborers, service workers, schoolteachers, first responders, seniors, working class families, new Americans, and young professionals must live outside the County because of our scarcity of affordable housing. I support a multi-pronged approach to increasing the availability of affordable – including workforce – housing in Montgomery County. One of the best ways is to retain existing affordable housing when approving master plans in places such as Glenmont and Long Branch, where high rises are certain to replace garden apartments because the County Council upzoned the areas through recent master plans and the zoning rewrite, thus incentivizing gentrification. I would work to ensure a yearly, steady, and reliable funding source for affordable housing through the Housing Initiative Fund.

We need additional nonprofit and private sector partners to bring more value to each tax dollar invested. I would continue to look at appropriate and available County property as places where affordable housing could be built, such as the old District 3 police station in Silver Spring, or building on top of County-owned parking garages, and I will continue to support the county's Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU) policies.

I spoke at the Renter's Alliance Forum on March 5 in support of many of the Tenant Working Group's issues listed above. Specifically, I would work with stakeholders and legislators towards a goal of predictable rent increases. I support Sen. Jamie Raskin's just cause eviction and anti-retaliation legislation, which unduly affect lower income residents. I oppose landlord efforts to require tenants to purchase renters insurance making the landlord the beneficiary. I support the efforts of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) on community policing and initiatives to recruit officers who speak local languages. I would also call on the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) and the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) to work with property owners and landlords to improve enforcement of quality of life issues, including noise and trash, on the premise that a property that looks good has less crime. I also supported the council's and executive's efforts, bolstered by nonprofit and civic groups, to improve the creation of accessory apartments.

Transportation & Infrastructure

6. How do you propose funding the Purple Line and the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) RTS/BRT, as it has been accepted as a way to decrease gridlock in the future; how will you work to assure that funding is available and that communities are part of this solution?

Although the Purple Line's capital cost estimates seem to be covered by a combination of state and federal funds, we are still not certain of the financial obligation of the County not only in the build phase of both the light rail and promised trail, but the cost of linking the Purple Line with the Metro's Red Line at Bethesda and Silver Spring stations. The state purportedly will pay the \$4 billion-plus availability costs for Purple Line over the next 30 years. However, I suspect that funds in the Transportation Trust Fund may not cover these payments without an infusion from Montgomery County.

There has been legislation introduced in Annapolis that would allow the County to apply differentiated rates between residential and commercial taxes. Apparently, commercial interests around the future Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) route proposed this, and are interested in making the investment so they can attain maximum densities. The only way we are going to pay for public transit is through taxes, whether they be County, state or federal. The Purple Line's cost for the next 30 years is huge; the concessionaire and their bankers will insist on a healthy return of investment.

I have called for transparency in public transit planning and financing. I would like to see an honest and complete public discussion about the real cost and source of funding for public transit.

7. What can the Council do to promote telework, vanpools, and carpools?

The council can pass legislation to model government work flexibility after what the Federal government has done. We must encourage stronger incentives and mandates for County employees to telework and use transportation options other than single-occupancy vehicles. Driving is too cheap and transit too expensive. This is the basic formula that needs to change over time. We must better publicize the County's commuting benefits program. One good idea is a program to have employer-paid transit benefits such as a pretax payroll deduction, one of the most effective ways of persuading employees to switch to transit. And more companies need to know about the County's SmartBenefit program, in which employers calculate the financial benefit of using public transit and transfer it directly onto the employee's SmarTrip card. In the zoning rewrite recently passed, most new development will be under the Commercial Residential (CR) zones, which reduce required parking by 20 percent, thus giving a driving disincentive to employees. And finally, as the council approves master plans and zoning, the council needs to stage all large-scale development such as White Oak so that the applicants are motivated to improve mode-share among their employees.

Education

8. School construction has fallen behind in projected capital budgets. How will you work with the Montgomery County delegation in Annapolis to ensure adequate capital budgets for MCPS?

The Montgomery County delegation went to Annapolis this year with the number one goal of returning with school construction money. It doesn't seem to be in the cards this year, but our delegates and the county executive laid the groundwork for Montgomery to get our fair share in the 2015 session. I attended the MCCPTA rally in Annapolis to lobby for more state funds for capital improvement.

What astounds me is why several members of the sitting county council are "surprised" that schools suddenly became overcrowded, despite the current council's inability to say "no" to unchecked development. I will work to make sure that smart growth means budgeting for and carefully considering the impact of growth, whether it be on roads or schools. We have 10,000 students in 458 portable classrooms now. (Reducing portables is one of the main reasons I chose to run for council, as you can see in my campaign video: www.bethdaly.org/why-im-running.) The Bethesda Chevy Chase cluster is a case in point. With many schools in the cluster over capacity, I don't understand how the planning board and council could approve the highly dense Chevy Chase Sector Plan, which will add almost 800 residences in the first phase, before the Purple Line is built, and many more after – despite warnings that there is no room for thousands more students. There are at least ten other developments, including a large sector plan featuring mixed uses and townhouses being discussed for Westbard. We need transparency in calculating school overcrowding, and I think we need a new method of school enrollment projections. One potential solution is to consider amending the Subdivision Staging Policy (formerly the Growth Policy) so that the moratorium in a cluster is based on each school rather than 120 percent cluster-wide capacity.

Going forward, the council, the executive, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and the Board of Education (BOE) need to continue the drumbeat for new school construction funds from the state through our Montgomery County delegation. I have strong relationships with many members of the delegation (including being endorsed by Del. Charles Barkley, D-39) and will do my part to lobby on this effort.

9. Since approximately half of the students in the County do not go to college what should the county be doing in economic development to ensure that these graduates find jobs?

I think the County should do a better job in identifying occupational skills training for mid-skill careers in the County, and connecting young people to them. There are skilled professionals like plumbers, electricians, security apparatus technicians, health care workers, and technicians in green industries that always will be needed, and for which we may not have enough trained young people.

The County should increase investment in occupational training, as well as team up with the private sector to share the cost. I will work to make sure that County residents are more aware of our excellent Thomas Edison High School of Technology, with programs in skill-based careers ranging from automotive technology, HVAC, and masonry to cosmetology and restaurant management. We should consider expanding such a program to another area of the County.

The “middle college” program I mentioned above can also allow high school students to enroll at Montgomery College, receiving an associate’s degree or certificate in one of their technical programs. Montgomery College had tuition incentives for students going into biotechnology, as the local companies in biotech are clamoring for entry-level employees with those skills.

The County relies on Montgomery College, unions, and technical schools to identify market trends and create training programs. I would like to see MCPS track the youth who don’t go on to college, try to stay in touch with them, or make sure they are linked with County economic development experts, so they are continuously aware of new opportunities.

New Development and the Environment

10. It is obvious that our infrastructure needs are not being met as the county continues to grow. How should and can the County Council review and impact proposals for development that will create significant infrastructure issues such as:

- **Traffic and transportation**
- **Water and sewer**
- **Power, gas, phone and cable**
- **Preservation of the environment**
- **Health**
- **Small business**

Given that new schools have portable classrooms on opening day, and our traffic is among the worst in the nation, I have to conclude these quality of life failures are due to poor planning. The County Council and Montgomery Planning need to use third-party analysis of traffic, such as the excellent University of Maryland model, so that we receive accurate analysis of queuing, intersections and overall traffic volume. And the Council must not issue exceptions or waivers, as the planning board unfortunately gave developers in the White Oak Science Gateway plan (now before the Council). If the developer is not paying into roads, transit, schools, or other infrastructure needs, then the rest of the County taxpayers will pay. In Northern Virginia’s Tyson’s Corner, developers paid \$60 million to help fund the Silver Line.

MCPS manages the student population projections. We need third-party review of the tools MCPS and the planning department use to predict the number of children coming to areas newly zoned for multifamily housing.

11. What changes in the County master plans are required to ensure that smart, sensible, environmentally sound growth is a continued priority? How will you support development that does not take down trees and disturb watersheds?

I believe the County should focus almost exclusively on redevelopment, especially downcounty, where the waterways are inundated with stormwater and the tree canopy is depleted. The County, through master plans, should designate as off-limits our riparian and internal forests, and our remaining meadows, tree groves and natural areas. Recently approved master plans are less explicit than their predecessors in recommendations to preserve and enhance the natural environment, which means communities must keep an eagle eye as development occurs in those sector plan boundaries. Development should be concentrated on current impervious surfaces and in Central Business District (CBD) areas where there is the opportunity to build up. I am a proponent of the “smarter” smart growth described by Kaid Benfield of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), who calls for a restoration of natural balance and human scale; unfortunately “infill + density + transit” has come to dominate even our newer planned areas like White Flint. We need a new way of thinking about growth.

On a more achievable scale, I think decision-makers must have the conversation about environmental impact before any zoning or rezoning approvals are made. The intense review of the Clarksburg/Ten Mile Creek Master Plan Amendment that included development around the County’s reference stream, Ten Mile Creek, set a new bar for awareness of the impact development has on our precious water and biodiversity. We must look at all development through that lens and protect and restore what we have left.

I would expand laws to ensure no net loss of tree canopy. I supported the hard-won tree bills that passed last year. But tree loss and environmental degradation can take other forms that are more subtle, as in the Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan when the Council voted (Riemer amendment) to reduce the tree canopy target from 30 percent to 25 percent. I would have voted against that amendment. I would also work on an urban native and diverse tree-planting program in areas such as Long Branch, where tree canopy is under ten percent in commercial areas.

With regard to stormwater and forest conservation, DPS and Montgomery Planning must better enforce the existing laws and place a premium on using natural features, including mature trees, from the beginning of the conceptual design phase.

We need to bring stronger community participation back into the planning process. For example, the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan advisory group was heavily weighted to development interests, with only two or three civic residents represented during the discussions. Montgomery Planning is pursuing a collaborative charrette approach to the Bethesda Downtown Plan, seating civic representatives and development industry together in small groups to solve specific issues. I will be watching to see the results of this technique.

12. How would you ensure that the Agricultural Reserve continues to be viable as an economic center and environmentally protected area?

I am the only candidate for Montgomery County Council who lives in the Agricultural Reserve. It is a model for our nation, and our County should be promoting its products like any other business sector. Many County citizens are also unaware that the Ag Reserve is an economic engine – nearly \$250 million – and provides 10,000 jobs in its over 500 farms and Ag-related businesses. I will advocate for giving our local farmers and producers the tools they need – Ag Services and extension support for the next generation of farmers; aggregation of food at hubs to ease economies of scale and distribution challenges; connection to new, emerging consumers and markets (MCPS, immigrant communities); and access to new technologies. We need to foster a relationship where our farmers are sustaining our community and our community is sustaining our farmers.

Immigration

13. What can the County Council do to support our immigrant community? 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? What other approaches do you favor?

I am fully supportive of CASA de Maryland and other nonprofits and faith-based organizations serving our immigrant communities. The County provides strong immigrant services – but we need to do a better job of publicizing them. Long term, everything the County does to help immigrants succeed economically will reap the reward of growing the tax base to fund services for those who need them.

I support expanded funding for nonprofits such as Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) to increase its ESOL classes. The County should also support MCAEL's efforts to find additional classroom space to accommodate the waiting lists of adult learners. Again, the upturn in the economy has resulted in extended library hours, where some classes take place.

Within the schools, I would like to see restored the hundreds of full-time positions that were eliminated during the recession, focusing on those critical to assisting students

who need academic help, like academic intervention teachers, counselors, ESOL, reading recovery and special education teachers and staff. Schools with high Latino populations should have Spanish-speaking counselors. The Intervention Network, which depends on a committed team of school administrators, teachers, PTA and families, achieves its holistic approach by bringing in social services. This is where the Council can have some impact, funding and focusing social service programs and identifying need.

I believe we need to continue to expand resources beyond the County's bank account. If elected, I would support collaboration to save money and strengthen ties between culturally different populations. Our County has a framework for this – "Nonprofit Montgomery" – but perhaps they need a challenge to be issued, linked to funding. I would support targeted grant-writing and fundraising workshops for all nonprofits, as County funds are limited. I would work with the private sector – businesses and churches – as well as the County general services office to identify in-kind support for nonprofits, such as physical space, which is worth its weight in gold. I would expand collaboration with our Montgomery County delegation in Annapolis to help us identify state monies or in-kind resources that can be used to increase the valuable services our County nonprofits provide to our large immigrant community.

And lastly, I will work hard to get immigrant communities more involved in County Council decisions, through creative noticing and outreach – and possibly transportation. This week's \$58 million capital budget bequest to build the new Wheaton Recreation Center and Wheaton Library came about largely because the community reached out to Latinos, African-Americans and local businesses and mobilized support. This level of participation is rare, but it should be top-down from the council not just from the community up.

Elections and Transparency

14. Maryland is making many improvements in transparency at the state level regarding hearings and legislation. Given the fact that currently many hearings and council meetings are televised, how would you improve this process in the county?

I think the Council does a good job televising through cable and internet what they consider to be important hearings. I would counter that probably all hearings and worksessions on legislation and other critical topics should be recorded. Translation technology is improving, so making this information available to our diverse community will be easier.

The County Council website must be upgraded. The video archive of meetings is unwieldy – a citizen should not have to fast-forward through hours of video to find his issue. We must employ better technology to make access to our councilmembers' words and votes easy for anyone to see. All votes in committee must be added to the website. Most of the real discussions and decisions are made at the committee level. The information packets are online in PDF, a format which some call the enemy of

transparency. Although the County is making an effort to put data sets in the public realm, these critical hearings are still really available only to a few.

All Councilmembers' meeting schedules should be published online (within a predetermined timeframe), so that the public can see, without having to file an information request, who is meeting with their government decision-makers. And the County should collect and publish data when developers or other entities receive exemptions from stormwater taxes, forest conservation easements, APFO/TPAR or other mandates.

15. Should elections be financed with public funds? Should limitations be placed on private funds, money from development interests and PACs? Explain why you support a particular option. How can the voters be assured that elected officials keep the public interest as a priority?

I support legislation recently proposed by Councilmember Phil Andrews to allow public funding of campaigns. The only way voters can be assured that elected officials prioritize the public interest is to eliminate campaign contributions from PACs and special interests altogether. I would be interested in pursuing such legislation and Phil Andrews' legislation, if passed, could pave the way.

Experience

16. Please describe your professional experiences that will allow you to be an effective member of the County Council. What organizations have you worked with and why will that help you to serve the public?

Like many Montgomery County residents, I came to the area because of a job in the federal government – on the staff of U.S. Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio). After my job on the Hill, I worked as a media professional for Democratic candidates and progressive causes. In 1993, I was named a "Media All-Star" by *Media Week*, for my team's work on the 1992 Clinton-Gore national advertising campaign, where I supervised a staff of more than 40.

As a media professional who managed multi-million dollar advertising budgets for national campaigns and most recently for the Spanish language television network, Telemundo, I am careful about spending clients' money and accounting for every penny. I take this discipline seriously, and as a County Council member, I will do the same for you.

I initially became involved in County government while working and raising two boys, first in Kensington and Bethesda, and now in the Agricultural Reserve. For the past decade, I have rolled up my sleeves in Montgomery County as a community advocate and civic leader on environmental, land use and transportation issues. Along the way,

the county executive appointed me to the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board, which reports to the county council and county executive. I also was selected to serve on the Community Leadership Institute of the regional Transportation Planning Board; I became the legislative director for Sugarloaf Citizens Association; and I am a member of both the Dickerson Facilities advisory group and the Save Ten Mile Creek Coalition. I care about the community I live in and have enjoyed volunteer work at my church, the PTA, and as a hospice volunteer.

17. Progressive Neighbors is committed to supporting progressive candidates and issues. Why do you think that this organization should support your candidacy?

The most important reason for people to vote for me is that I want to change the way the County Council does business – especially when it comes to land use issues and transparency. I was prompted to run by school overcrowding and the excessive number of portables. I will insist on balanced development by making sure the school and traffic tests in the Subdivision Staging Policy reflect what actually is happening on the ground, and I will work to ensure that there is adequate funding for school construction ahead of development, not years later.

Currently, three of the four at-large members reside in Takoma Park – and all four live south of White Flint Mall. I am uniquely positioned to run for an at-large seat on the council because I have lived both upcounty (14 years) and downcounty (ten years). As an apartment dweller in downtown Bethesda, a new mother of two boys in a single-family home in Kensington, and now an empty nester in the heart of the Agricultural Reserve, I have experienced Montgomery County’s variety, and I appreciate that we are all – regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or any other difference – in this together.

Give an example of a progressive issue that you have supported in the past 5 years.

I would say, our environment. Land use is the best tool to preserve green spaces. As legislative director of the Sugarloaf Citizens’ Association, I have testified before the Montgomery County Planning Board and Montgomery County Council on many environmental issues – ranging from battling a proposed mega-church in the Ag Reserve to my opposition to M-83. I am on the board of the Dickerson Facilities Implementation Group, which addresses community environmental concerns with the County’s solid waste facilities in Dickerson. I am an active and founding member of the Save Ten Mile Creek Coalition. I testified about the need not only to preserve the creek itself but about protecting the aquifer and seeps below and around the creek. Engineered stormwater remediation will never replace what nature does in filtering and protecting water and the aquatic life within. The *Gazette* recently published my letter regarding the dangers of artificial turf fields to the environment and health of County residents (see article, below). We need to have a better-coordinated plan for environmental protection in

Montgomery County. We have the expertise in the County to do better; it is much cheaper to protect than fix the environment.

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