



AIM County Council Candidate Questionnaire

Responses from Hoan Dang candidate for At-Large

Affordable Housing

How would you work with AIM to increase the Housing Initiative Fund to \$100M by the year 2022? The Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) provides flexible loans and grants to help create and preserve affordable housing for the County's families, singles, seniors and people with special needs. The 2018 County budget proposes roughly \$60M for the HIF, which includes about \$23M from the General Fund. Because the dedicated funding source, including 2.5% of the County's property tax revenue, is dependent on the overall economy, the goal to reach \$100M by 2022 would be challenging. However, as a budget expert, I'm committed to finding creative approaches involving private partnerships to reach the \$100M goal. As a Councilmember, I will work with housing advocate organizations, including AIM, to seek additional funding sources. One of my past strengths as a community organizer is ideal for bringing together all partners and public entities together to address the growing need to provide affordable housing for those who need it.

How would you work with AIM to put 200 units of affordable housing on public land, in the development pipeline each year?

I support reviewing the inventory of public land in the County to assess land that could be developed for affordable housing. For example, I support using part of the public land which previously housed the old Silver Spring Library for affordable housing. This is one way to address a critical need for affordable housing in the Silver Spring redevelopment zone.

The County owns property in every area of the County. Although there will be debates on the use of land designated for possible sale and redevelopment, my priority will be to use these properties for public needs (e.g., housing, parks, or County services) before putting them on the open market. These decisions will be difficult because many of the properties are MCPS sites that are unused now but may be needed in the future. This requires long-term planning and working with all agencies and private entities to make sure decisions are for long-term growth and not just to fill an immediate need.

Equity in Schools

How will you work with AIM to expand the Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary program to four additional Title I elementary schools each year so that the program serves 2,400 students by the year 2022?

Since the 2012 pilot Excel Beyond the Bell (EBB) program in middle schools, EBB has grown and currently serves 2,400 students in 8 middle schools. The EBB elementary school program (EBBE) pilot began in FY17 at two elementary schools. EBBE's success led to the program expansion to another two elementary schools in FY18. The County has committed to continue expanding EBBE based on its success in currently enrolling 760 students.

As a Councilmember, I will work to increase the number of EBBEs, specifically Title I elementary



schools. The EBB program is funded across County agencies, MCPS, and the private Montgomery County Collaboration Council. Thus, increasing funding or participation will require bringing together many stakeholders to gain support for expansion. I'm experienced in working with stakeholders to pursue common goals and will make sure AIM has input in this process. AIM's goal to increase the EBBE to 2,400 students by 2022 is reasonable and achievable.

Protecting Immigrants and Refugees

Many Montgomery County families are living in fear of one or more parent being separated from their children because of deportation. How will you work with AIM to include funding for deportation defense and family preparedness in the county budget, as well as work with AIM to find private funding for these efforts?

As a former refugee from Vietnam, I am sensitive to the fears these families have, and I also understand the acceptance and tolerance of most County residents to help them become integrated into our society. For nine years, I served as Chair and President of a non-profit organization that re-settled more than 25,000 refugees and immigrants in Maryland. I believe immigrants in our County serve a valuable service to our social, economic, and religious structures. I will do everything possible to work with the Council and AIM to include funding for deportation defense in the County budget. I also have many years of experience in securing private funding for these issues, providing housing, jobs, and support for educational opportunities for various immigrant communities.

Will you commit to work with AIM and Montgomery County landlords to house refugees in Montgomery County?

I will commit to work with AIM and other organizations to seek support from landlords for housing refugees in the County. My past experience shows that I not only have the experience to take on this difficult task, but I also have the willingness to persevere in working in this difficult area. I also have worked with the network of housing advocates that can support this mission.

Transportation

Will you work with AIM to protect good transportation jobs from privatization?

I will support AIM's efforts to protect good transportation jobs from privatization because we need to provide better pay, more health care coverage, and better retirement benefits to our workers – which the private sector may not provide.

Our transportation system in the County, as well as METRO, has problems regarding funding, efficiency, and service, but there are no obvious solutions that could be achieved through privatization. Studies on privatizing public services strongly support the concept that private managers will always act in the best interests of their shareholders, not the public. One of my main concerns about privatization of transportation is the reduction of services to those residents who need public transportation the most. One example is the privatization of public bus services in various cities that saw a reduction in service to poorer areas of the cities because they were not as profitable as those serving higher-income neighborhoods.



How will you hold WMATA accountable to prevent cutting bus service in the county, particularly to low-income areas?

My experience as a Commissioner of the Washington Suburban Transit Commission (WSTC) working with diverse agencies and cross-governmental bodies will be helpful for making sure the County has a voice in decisions made by WMATA. Of some concern is the current WMATA leadership trying to manage an inadequate budget to perform needed maintenance on the METRO system, which has caused them to look at reductions in service in other areas of the organization, such as bus service. Invariably, cuts tend to be on those bus lines serving smaller, low-income communities and those not connected to the METRO system. This is a concern that I will work to address. These decisions should not just be economically based, especially in areas such as the Each County that do not have ready access to the METRO system.

Democracy with Accountability

Do you commit to meeting with AIM within a month of taking office, and on a quarterly basis subsequently?

I will commit to meet with AIM within a month of taking office and on a quarterly at your request.