



AIM County Council Candidate Questionnaire

Responses from Jill Ortman-Fouse candidate for At-Large

Affordable Housing

How would you work with AIM to increase the Housing Initiative Fund to \$100M by the year 2022?

It's a matter of budget priorities. We are short about 50,000 units of affordable housing in MoCo. I first learned the importance of safe, affordable housing as a full-time volunteer with Habitat for Humanity. I learned first-hand the impact safe, affordable housing has on people's lives. I read the well-documented research that showed improved health and academic outcomes, economic mobility, and overall well-being.

I've testified and submitted testimony in support of both State and Council legislation for greater renter protections. We have some high-poverty elementary schools with 25% mobility rates, meaning 1/4 students is moving in and out of the school during the school year for reasons from rent hikes and evictions, to poor conditions, to transit to job opportunity challenges. I supported testimony in Annapolis for Del. Jheanelle Wilkins' Just Cause Eviction legislation. We must have stable school communities to foster best conditions for student learning and social mobility.

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

It doesn't just have to be new units on public land. Preserve and support community-owned properties, save older buildings, increase height restrictions in exchange for MPDUs, incentivize job creation and amenities near most affordable housing in east county, plan for affordable senior housing in sector plans, incentivize developers for mixed use with tax credits.

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?

I love Excel Beyond the Bell! Changes can be made in program priorities within the Department of Recreation to fund new programs.

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 school board member I've witnessed the destructiveness of failed immigration policies, ICE raids and a national culture of fear of immigrants. It impacts our schools every day. We want our students to come to school ready to learn. It's very difficult when they are from immigrant families & carry with them the name of a friend or relative who can take them if their parents are taken. Some students run to



school out of fear of getting picked up. We have students with no legal council for court status check-ins. I've served on the Children Fleeing Violence from Central America work group for the last three years. I've heard from practitioners & educators the extraordinary trauma our residents have undergone & the challenges they face every day. We need to create the best conditions for all residents to reach their dreams. Only then can we have the brightest future for our county. I support our residents' right to legal representation, and partnering to fund that representation.

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

Yes.

Transportation

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

Yes

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

It appears that we will be getting a dedicated funding stream of \$167 million per year for WMATA, and I will continue to support that partnership and advocate for that funding. I would prioritize revenue by impact. We know that we need to make public transit easier to use, cheaper and more available as it is the foundation for economic access. When we can more quickly get residents to higher education opportunities, better jobs in more areas, and to shopping in areas that are underdeveloped (like the northeast corridor), we will expand economic opportunity and increase the tax base. In order to have the connectivity and opportunities for social mobility optimized, bus service must be expanded, not cut.

Democracy with Accountability

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

Absolutely