



# AIM County Council Candidate Questionnaire

Responses from Graciela Rivera-IOven 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 requires a clear communication channel. As an elected official you need to work closely with groups such as AIM to achieve results. Affordable Housing is one of the top issues I am hearing most of in the community. Putting AIM in touch with other leaders in the community to enhance more support for the Housing Initiative is vital. I have always pride my self in being accessible to the community I will bring the same philosophy to the County Council.

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

I am a very resilient individual. Having 30 years of advocacy experience will come in handy with this issue. We need elected officials who need to express our housing issues with passion. Involving our communities of color in the process is very important for this process to work. I will like to know more about the plan that AIM has in mind.

## **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?*

Well, Title I schools are a lifeline for many students who reside in poverty. Is not just working with AIM but also with MCPS. As County Council Members we need to ask our school system how they are engaging the families (parents) in the process. Again empowering our communities of color in the process is a must. I will work closely with AIM and other organizations that would like to see this happen. In my opinion is sad that we have not expanded this program already.

## **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?*

I could talk about this issue for ever. As an immigrant myself I know the hardships and the legal costs that thousands of families are facing. My community is only a phone call away and I get many calls about this issue. We have talked for the past several years about having this fund but we did not see any progress until recently. I believe the county council is currently working on this. Having advocacy groups like AIM involved in the process is crucial because you need to have a pulse of where and how it will be implemented. The Latino Health Steering Committee sees many of the families that are separated by such actions the mental health services they provide is due to trauma do to separation such trauma have a long term impact. We reside in a county where we have many foundations, large private corporations. I



will like to connect the dots with them and the reality of thousands of our residents who work for such companies bringing such folks to the table is crucial .

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

Absolutely!

### **Transportation**

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

Absolutely!

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

We need to be more pro active when it comes to advocating for our low income-residents . Again empowering our residents to be part of the political process is vital . I will like to create a residents advocacy group when it comes to transportation in areas such as White Oak, Germantown and others . With the help of AIM and other non profits and houses of worship we can change the paradigm .

### **Democracy with Accountability**

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

Yes I do.