

County Board Candidates Questionnaire on Environmental Issues

Name: Mike Cantwell

1. Achieving the County goals for renewable energy and carbon neutrality:

This year has seen some of the most brutal heat waves of all time across the globe, massive wildfires and unprecedented flooding in the United States and around the globe, all tied to climate. How should Arlington address climate change and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to achieve its goals of 100 percent renewable electricity by 2035 and carbon neutrality by 2050 and what policies would you promote to meet those goals?

- a. Climate Change is real and individuals, local, state, and national governments must act now to reduce CO2 emissions and ultimately remove CO2 from the atmosphere. The incumbent, Takis Karantonis, is a self-described Urban Planner and continues to promote the rapid urbanization of Arlington. Recent studies show that the production and transportation of the materials used to construct new multistory steel, concrete, and glass structures greatly increase CO2 emissions in the atmosphere. Arlington should encourage the renovation of existing structures and the preservation of green space.

2. Incorporating nature into development and protecting green spaces: As

Arlington develops, the detrimental impact to our tree canopy, streams and waterways, and open spaces is increasing. In 2020, Arlington joined the Biophilic Cities Network, committing to integrate nature into its urban environment. What strategies and policies would you pursue to improve and protect Arlington's natural resources, expand its tree canopy, and incorporate nature into its urban design and how would you ensure equitable access to these resources for all Arlingtonians?

- a. Arlington's projected population growth rate is unsustainable. Rather than encouraging more people to move to Arlington, we should discourage rapid population growth. Schools, infrastructure, parks and recreation, and open space cannot support the projected growth models. My favorite question to rapid urbanization proponents, "where will we put the forth comprehensive high school."
- b. If I am elected, I will hold the County Board accountable for the commitments they made in the Urban Forest and Open Space Master

Plans. The current budget has zero dollars budgeted for park land acquisition.

- c. I'm a big supporter of Urban Agriculture. I'm fortunate to have a backyard large enough to grow vegetables in two raised beds. The Arlington government should continue to promote integrating living things into the urban environment.
 - d. Under the current County Board, Arlington continues to see a decline in the Tree Canopy. The county government should assist the private sector in creating legally binding tree preservation covenants.
 - e. I fully support the 15-minute city concept. ALL Arlingtonians should be within a 15-minute walk of open space or parks. I fully also support creating a seven-acre park at 26th Street & Old Dominion Blvd. The Arlington County Government missed an opportunity to purchase a 9-acre parcel of privately-owned land (Rouse property) located in the Dominion Hills neighborhood. This land could have been turned into a neighborhood park.
 - f. I'm a huge supporter of the Tree Canopy Fund. Ecoaction Arlington planted a Sycamore Tree in my front yard three years ago. The tree is now over 30 feet high!
3. **Moving to more sustainable transportation options:** Transportation accounts for almost 40 percent of Arlington's greenhouse gas emissions. How can Arlington meet the transportation needs of those who live and work in the County while reducing the climate and environmental impacts that current transportation modes create?
- a. The Arlington County government should set the example. If I am elected to the County Board, I would advocate for the elimination of a third of the county vehicles and encourage county employees to move about the county by walking, biking, or taking public transportation. I would also encourage police officers to spend more time on foot than in their cars.
 - b. Over a decade ago I contacted Dr. Murphy, the APS superintendent and proposed the elimination of "yellow school buses" for APS High School students. APS High School students who live beyond walking distance would be required to take (free) public transit. Several senior APS staff members are advancing this concept. Implementing this concept would

increase ART usage, reduce diesel pollution from yellow school buses, and teach high school students about the benefits of public transit.