

2025 County Board Candidates Questionnaire

This February, the County Board adopted a [Climate Action Resolution](#) that calls for a whole-of-government, whole-of-community comprehensive energy and environmental strategy to address the climate crisis. With the federal government retrenching from its climate commitments and state actions stagnating in recent years, local action is critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building more resilient communities. County Board members will be expected to lead efforts to mitigate and adapt to these changing conditions. To assist voters in assessing how candidates will advance the County's climate goals for carbon neutrality, resiliency in the face of more extreme weather, and protection and enhancement of tree canopy coverage and natural resources, EcoAction Arlington and Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions request that you complete this questionnaire, which we will share with our membership and the public at large, by Friday, September 19.

Instructions - Please provide your name and answer to each question below and email to office@ecoactionarlington.org.

Jeramy Olmack

1. With Arlington already experiencing higher temperatures and more erratic rainfall (both heavy rains and weeks-long drought), the need to rapidly phase out fossil fuels, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and shift to more environmentally sustainable lifestyles is critical. What three strategies would you pursue to accelerate the County's transition to a carbon neutral community? How would you ensure that everyone in Arlington benefits from this transition while addressing past inequities that disproportionately burden disadvantaged communities with the environmental impacts?
 1. My first strategy would be to quickly pedestrianize Arlington's with the Ballston-Rosslyn Corridor and the Blue-Line/Richmond Highway Corridor by Summer of 2026.

1. This would establish a tactical plan to
 1. Close streets to through traffic
 2. Create vehicle points of entry
 3. Replace street parking with community and economic uses
 4. Restrict Privately Driven Freight Traffic between the hours of 6 PM and 4 AM
2. My Second Strategy is to use my influence to adjust the Planning, Land-Use and Development Comprehensive Plan so that it lays out a long plan that puts people and the environment over short term motives.
 1. I am working to influence more owned development across all types of properties to reduce the carbon footprint that the rental/leasing cycle produces.
 2. I advocate for a new county-wide vision that lays out a redesign of Arlington around the community and the environment. Including plans that
 1. Enables concentrated, comfortable and quality property development over the next 3 centuries.
 2. Greenways and transit-oriented streets.
3. My Third Strategy is to organize a Civic Culture Summit to see what actions County Institutions can and should take in our immediate and long-term planning.
 1. The summit will establish a Cultural Action Plan that lays out a comprehensive county-wide resolution to shift how residents, workers, and tourists experience Arlington.
2. In July, the County Board adopted the [vision and goals](#) for the updated Master Transportation Plan, calling for a transportation future when ***“People of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities can move safely, comfortably, and seamlessly in Arlington. Everyone can rely on a variety of high-quality, sustainable transportation options to get them where they want to go, when they need to be there, with desirable choices beyond using a car.”*** What

strategies would you pursue and how would you prioritize investment to advance this vision and to decarbonize the transportation sector, which currently accounts for about 36 percent of Arlington's greenhouse gas emissions?

1. Tying to the previously stated first strategy, I plan to push the pedestrianization of key Arlington Corridors that will enable a transition away from massive rubber tire vehicles to predictable railed vehicles. The initial strategy is to do a tactical plan while the long-term strategy will be to create permanent pedestrian transit methods.
3. Arlington continues to face significant development in residential and commercial sectors. While new buildings can be more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable, the tear down of existing structures have significant climate impacts and community displacement. Given private developers rights and significant leeway in choosing how to develop land parcels, if elected, what specific solutions and policies to the county's residential and commercial development would you endorse that best aligns with the County's climate goals and vision for a resilient and equitable community?
 1. Tying to the previously stated second strategy, I plan to heavily influence I have over land-use and development planning in Arlington to lay out a eons long comprehensive plan that puts people and the environment over short-term motives. To this end I'd would discourage approval of any project that only aims to be relevant for a few decades instead of the centuries we should be planning for.
4. Arlington's tree canopy and green spaces have been significantly diminished by rapid development, while stormwater impacts from impervious surfaces are increasingly severe. Site development, whether commercial or residential, usually results in clear cut lots and limited replacement of mature shade trees. The Forestry and Natural

Resources Plan, adopted in 2023, calls for restoration of a 40% tree canopy cover and overall improvement in our natural resources. What “new” approaches are needed to reverse the tree loss trends and gain the greater climate resilience benefits that mature tree canopies provide, particularly in Arlington's more disadvantaged neighborhoods?

1. Tying to the previously stated first and second strategies, I heavily advocate that we can restore and rebuild Arlington tree canopy by focusing on creating environmentally oriented streets instead of car-centric roads. Taking inspiration for Paris, I would use the ways they have created an urban forest along their streets have Arlington's tree canopy cover 40% by 2040 and 70% by 2050.
5. In the US (and Arlington is typical) over 4.5 pounds of trash per person per day is generated and 30 percent of food produced is never eaten: this waste contributes to a significant portion of GHG emissions, exacerbates environmental pollution, and increases demand for water and other scarce resources. What steps can Arlington take to reduce this waste and promote reuse, effective recycling, and the transition to a circular economy that meets its aspiration for a zero-waste community?
 1. Tying to the previously stated second and third strategies and an economic resilience plan, I push for a comprehensive development style that pushes people and environment over profits and gains. I fully believe we must create a civic change that fosters cultural and systematic changes. It starts with teaching the youth and adults how to engage early and empathetically.
6. Gas-powered leaf blowers create excessive noise which exceeds Arlington's noise ordinance, and has been associated with numerous health impacts, particularly with vulnerable workers. But anyone in close proximity, including homes, also suffer. In addition, these

machines emit excessively high levels of greenhouse gas and other pollutants. Alternatives are readily available including quieter battery electric blowers, an old-fashioned raking, or just leaving leaves and other plant litter to decompose and mulch where they lie. Nearby jurisdictions have begun banning, including D.C., Montgomery County, and most recently Alexandria City. What is your position on gas-powered leaf blowers, and what steps should Arlington take?

1. I stand firmly against gas-powered leaf blowers. Arlington needs to reconsider how we deal with natural decomposable materials. Arlington should take the following steps:
 1. Direct the Department of Environmental Services to establish a Land Management Service that takes over all public and private land management and regulations.
 2. Ban and create a fine for
 1. Planting non-native plants
 2. Disturbing natural cycles of hibernating plants & animals.
 3. Create a list of authorized private landscapers.
 4. Provide free/subsidized landscaping services through a joint effort between the Department of Human Services and the Department of Environmental Services