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What office are you seeking?: Montgomery County Council At-Large
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: <http://www.robertdyer.net>

2 **Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?**

It was an innovative attempt to preserve farmland and open space, isolated from development pressure. The Agricultural Reserve is essential to having a productive farming sector in our local economy.

3 **What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?**

We need to not only maintain the resources we have, but also expand the total amount of green space and parkland in the County. Did you know that after 8 years of Councilmember Hans Riemer in office, there are now **less** square feet of parkland in Bethesda than when he was first elected? The current Council considers postage-stamp size green squares to be parks. I don't. Parks, even in our urban areas, need to be an escape from concrete and exhaust, not an extension of them. Yet the Council has approved plan after plan with laughably-small "parks." If elected, I will vote against such plans. I believe there should be a park within 1/4 mile of every home in MoCo. We should be targeting litterers and polluters, rather than making watershed volunteers spend their weekends picking up trash.

4 **What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?**

Ideally, we will keep it intact. I predict that once the "infill" development rampage ends downcounty, that similar arguments will be made about why we must now develop the reserve. So it is critical to elect councilmembers who, unlike the current council, know that infinite growth is a fantasy. We must "pull up the ladders" at some point. I want to instead concentrate on bringing high-wage jobs to the county, rather than focus on residential development for revenue. MoCo hasn't attracted a major corporate HQ in two decades. Our private sector economy is moribund, as jobs flow instead to Northern Virginia and D.C. I would also like to have the County acquire Ag Reserve land for public park use in the future.

5 **Can you identify some of the top challenges to the Reserve's local agriculture and what actions you would take, if elected, to address them?**

In speaking to farmers, they have complained about the often-absurd over-regulation of their activities - regulation that frequently interferes with day-to-day farm operations. We also need more economic outlets for farmers. We should be using as many made-in-Montgomery County food products as possible in our public school lunches. And we need to work at the County and state levels to pare back regulations that hamper farm operations, or which prevent farmers from dealing with pests that cause severe damage to crops.

6 **What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?**

Lowering property and energy taxes, which I would do incrementally over four years.

7 **How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?**

Any way we can capture energy from trash is critical. Composting is great if pests can be controlled in residential areas. Frankly, downcounty, the County has had problems picking up the recycling. Residents were left with 3 or more weeks' worth of recyclables in 2016 in Bethesda and Silver Spring. Let's elect folks who can actually execute the basic functions of government this time.

8 **How can we expand the role the County's schools play in the support of a healthy local food system and the success of local agriculture? Do you support a rural schools' policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools acknowledging the unique nature of schools in region set aside for farmland and open space preservation?**

Yes, as I mentioned earlier, we should be making some land acquisitions in advance for parks and schools. As I also mentioned earlier, we should expand the use of fresh foods our farmers are growing in our school lunches.
Finally, we should have FFA chapters active in every public school.

9 **Currently the County is exploring how best to support a strong agricultural economy through agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on farm breweries and wineries. What are your thoughts about how best to advance on farm activities within the context of the master plan?**

I believe these uses are compatible, and there should be no problem if we take a common-sense approach. We need to create a more business-friendly climate in the County. Our current anti-business Council is hurting us from farms to city streets countywide.

10 **What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?**

I strongly support construction of M-83 on the master plan alignment. A new Potomac River crossing is also essential to the economic development we need. Importantly, approval of such a road and bridge must stipulate that it is purely a transportation facility - no additional development or upzoning should be allowed along the route of the "outer beltway" within rural areas.
I also strongly support Gov. Hogan's Express Lanes plan.