



Montgomery County 2022 Candidate Questionnaire - Hans Riemer

Personal Information:

Name Hans Riemer

What Office Are You Seeking in the 2022 Election? County Executive

Where Can Voters Learn More About Your Positions Or Contact Your Campaign?

hansriemer.com

Please Answer the Following Questions- responses will posted in their entirety and will not be edited.

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

The Agricultural Reserve creates or preserves the opportunity for a rural way of life in Montgomery County. Not everyone wants to live in a city or a suburb. The Ag Reserve is intended to make sure that a rural and farming based community endures in Montgomery County.

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

I envision the Ag Reserve enduring while always evolving to meet new opportunities. That is why I have championed preservation and supported our agricultural producers while allowing modernizations such as farm breweries, winery facilities, composting and farm solar.

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

I have championed smart growth in Montgomery County, which seeks to locate future development along transit corridors such as the Red Line and Purple Line while enhancing natural resources such as forests and streams. I have worked hard to add funding to our Parks system, regularly enhancing Parks resources when the current County Executive has not fully funded their priorities.

What role will you play with regard to ensure that we safeguard our drinking water supply both surface and groundwater?

My concern for clean drinking water animated my strong advocacy for the Ten Mile Creek plan, that restricted development in that high quality watershed. That said, Montgomery County's water supply is impacted much more by what happens upstream on the Potomac River. We need to be effective advocates for regional clean drinking water plans. In rural areas where water supply comes from wells, we must also be mindful about pollution that could impact water quality.

What are your top priorities to help the County address climate change? What role will the Ag Reserve play?

I am a proponent of the Electrify Everything vision. We have it within our reach to reverse the trends that are causing climate change. To achieve that, we must shut down coal fired power plants first and foremost. Secondly we must shut down natural gas power plants. We must reduce driving and shift all transportation to clean energy sources. We must make buildings more efficient and remove fossil fuel heating equipment inside of those buildings and replace them with electric equipment powered by

clean energy sources on site or on the grid. To achieve this vision we must massively expand solar production in Maryland and in Montgomery County. I believe every community in Montgomery County should participate in that plan and contribute towards that goal. Urban and suburban areas should have solar on rooftops and parking lots. Rural areas should have solar on the ground. The recent UN IPCC report specifically called for blending farming and solar. Unfortunately oppositional voices in Montgomery County, including our County Executive, continue to resist this pragmatic approach to solving climate change. As County Executive I'll work with our agricultural community to adopt a plan and help this County live its values by allowing agricultural land owners to install solar arrays provided that they continue to keep the land beneath those arrays in agricultural production, most likely as sheep pasture.

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

I have always worked closely with our Office of Agriculture to find new ways to support farm operators in Montgomery County, and I have championed numerous initiatives over the years to help make farming more viable. I'll continue doing that. We need to be attentive to the needs of our rural communities. For example, Fair Access for Western Montgomery is making an important point that residents in the the upper Western areas of the County have challenges in getting health and other social services. We need to address that problem.

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 do not support M83 because I believe that transit on 355 provides a workable alternative. I do not support a second bridge across the Potomac. I think we need to focus on making the first bridge, the American Legion Bridge, functional, but the County Executive has resisted that mightily. See more about my transportation plans here, <https://hansriemer.com/transportation>

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

We should reduce our waste as much as possible by increasing recycling, creating curbside composting, and then managing what cannot be recycled or composted in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible. There must be a more environmentally and socially responsible solution than incineration, but we need to fully explore the alternatives and I look forward to doing that. The County Executive meanwhile pledged to shut down the incinerator as his top priority and yet it continues burning waste today.

What are your views on the general plan update "Thrive 2050," both the process and the draft now before the Council?

Thrive upholds the vision of our Agricultural Reserve. Thrive is a good plan and it can also be improved. I look forward to finalizing Thrive in the coming months.

Do you believe that the way that local government branches, state entities, and the public currently interact can be improved? If so, what steps would you take?

For many years I have championed increased broadband services in Montgomery County. We need to ensure that residents of our rural areas have access to the internet and can participate in distance learning, telework, and virtual opportunities for community and governmental engagement. As County Executive, I'll strengthen rural broadband services.