

Henrico county BOS candidates Questionnaire 2023

Henrico County is becoming a major internet hub with new data centers planned. Data centers are a major economic development focus for Henrico. Dominion Energy proposes to build out the electricity grid to accommodate companies like Facebook, EdgeConneX and others. Do you feel like Henrico County has done enough to educate residents and affected communities about these plans?

* In answering, please address,

-Who should pay for the Dominion's expansion of transmission lines to supply data centers?

- Are you aware of the environmental impacts of data centers on our air quality, our climate goals, water resources and health?

- How would you mitigate these environmental and community impacts?

- Would you support a required analysis of the expected cost of infrastructure expansion necessary to service data center demand for energy, water, transmission lines, sewer, new roads, energy substations to be conducted as part of the approval process?

State law allows local jurisdictions to adopt a plastic bag fee to encourage the use of reusable bags and to cut down on plastic bags in our waste stream. Would you support this local option legislation for Henrico County?

The 30 by 30 campaign is a conservation initiative intended to protect 30% of land for nature by the year 2030. The report states that 30% of the Earth's surface is the minimum that humans must protect in order to effectively fight climate change and prevent irreversible declines in biodiversity. As of 2021 the state of VA had only achieved 16%. Henrico county has only achieved 6%.

Follow up questions:

-Would you support setting a 30% by 2030 land conservation goal for Henrico County and put in place the mechanisms to achieve that goal?

-Are you familiar with conservation programs in the county?

- Can you list in what ways have you helped conservation efforts and what will you do to advance the goal of 30% by 2030?

Environmental Justice

THE EPA environmental justice community report shows great disparities in the most vulnerable populations in the county. (The report was provided with the questionnaire) (ETO, PFAS, etc)

Follow up:

- What steps will you take to ensure that disadvantaged communities and communities of color are not disproportionately impacted by decisions to locate industrial and other uses that emit pollution or significantly increase traffic or noise?

LAND USE:

Northern Virginia's sprawling suburban pattern of development has resulted in significant traffic and loss of farms and forests, causing many people to move to the Richmond region. How will your land use plans ensure we don't repeat the mistakes of NOVA?

In answering, please address:

-Will you support comprehensive plans and zoning to protect forests, farmland, and natural and historic resources?

-Will you support development patterns including mixed-use transit-oriented communities (TOD) projects that are also pedestrian and bicycle-oriented, that save land and reduce the amount that people have to drive?

Development pressures in the eastern portion of Henrico County which would significantly change the character of that community have prompted some residents to post signs saying "Don't Short Pump Varina". What is your position on development of the east end and the sentiments expressed by this sign?

Virginia law requires localities to develop long range comprehensive plans to address population growth and land use. Henrico County is currently in the process of formulating its 2045 plan during a period of accelerating growth and land conversion, particularly in the traditionally rural Varina district. The 2045 Plan, when finalized, will guide important zoning decisions and changes on the landscape for many years to come.

In answering please address:

-What are some of the dangers and opportunities presented by the comprehensive planning process as it plays out in Henrico?

-If elected, what actions would you take to ensure that Henrico's 2045 plan —and its use—embody the highest principles of good government and smart growth?

TRANSPORTATION:

Northern Virginia has built and widened dozens of roads and still has significant traffic. Henrico county plans and Central Virginia Transportation Authority priorities also include significant road expansion. What will be your project priorities for transportation to provide alternatives to driving and reduce emissions?

In answering this question, please address:

-What actions will you take to increase access to bus transit in your county?

-Our roads are increasingly unsafe for all users, but especially people walking and biking, and trying to use transit. What will you do to make our roads safer?

-Transportation is now the #1 source of greenhouse gas emissions. What steps will you take to help your residents reduce these emissions?

HOUSING

Henrico County, like other communities, faces challenges in providing affordable housing. What specific policies, funding, and tenant rights measures do you propose to increase the availability of affordable housing options, especially for lower income families?

In answering this question, please address:

-Would you be willing to identify affordable housing unit goals and targets?

-Would you create a housing trust fund and how would you leverage federal funds? (this question is only for Henrico)

-Would you create legal defense support for tenants who are facing eviction?

-How would you address issues of discrimination, and would you use public land available in conjunction with fire houses, government offices complexes, community centers to provide affordable housing?

PUBLIC PROCESS AND TRANSPARENCY:

How do you plan to increase transparency and the involvement of all residents, representing the full diversity of the community, in the decision making process?

In answering this question, please address:

-What additional approaches would you use for outreach to reach renters and lower income residents?

-Do you think the county website provides adequate information, and if not, how would you improve it.