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Mark T. Welch

FRANCONIA CANDIDATE | Independent | markforsupervisor.org

HOUSING FOR ALL

1) Transit-Oriented Communities

Providing homes in walkable, mixed-use, mixed income communities close to transit can provide more equitable access to opportunities, reduce reliance on driving, and improve environmental and social outcomes for residents. In fact, County plans call for inclusive, transit-oriented development near its transit stations and along its transit-rich corridors.

1a) Do you agree with the Comprehensive Plan's inclusive, transit-oriented communities goals?

Yes

No

Partially

1b) How would you improve on or change the County's approach to inclusive, transit-oriented communities?

I agree with the Plan's goals, including focusing high density land use close to rail transit stations and other areas with robust public transit, and ensuring all modes of transportation (including pedestrian and bicycle) have safe and direct access to transit. The most critical goal is to ensure inclusion of housing for a range of different income levels in transit-oriented development by leveraging County affordable housing funds to incentive such development. The Arden development near the Huntington Metro Station is an example of the type of development that is needed (demonstrating how transit can serve as a catalyst for creating livable and inclusive communities), and I would push for those kinds of projects as Supervisor.

2) Housing Goals

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), which includes Fairfax County, has committed to providing 320,000 more homes in our region by 2030 with 75% near high-capacity transit and 75% qualifying as affordable. Yet Fairfax County has not committed to meeting a specific share of this need and is falling behind on its own previously set targets. This contrasts with an earlier time when then-Chairman Connolly committed the County to planning for 48,000 additional households to ensure people could live closer to their jobs and reduce the traffic commuting into and through the County.

2a) Do you believe Fairfax County should be doing more to provide additional housing in the County?

Yes No Partially

2b) What housing and zoning policy steps would you take to fill the housing gap and construct more housing at all levels of affordability, including both committed affordable and market-rate homes? Would you support these changes County-wide or just in specific locations?

The County's goal of 10,000 net new affordable housing units is both aggressive and realistic. I believe the County can best meet and/or exceed that goal, and provide more homes of all kinds (i.e., including market-rate housing), by incentivizing new housing in vacant or under-utilized buildings. This needs to be done through both financial incentives and creative zoning and land use policies. It is apparent that offices are trending toward remote work which will increase the supply of such buildings. For example, the commercial percentage of the County's real estate tax base is steadily declining and the amount of empty office space in the County has recently increased by over 21 million square feet. It is imperative that the County work toward converting empty office buildings to housing (such as the long-vacant buildings at the intersection of Franconia and Backlick Roads), both to increase the amount of housing, but also to stabilize the real estate tax base.

3) Affordable Housing Funding

Fairfax County has adopted a minimum affordable housing production goal of 10,000 units by 2034, but the annual funding is still below the amount needed to meet that goal.

3a) If elected, would you support dedicated, sustainable funding to achieve the County's housing goals, particularly for those individuals and families at lower incomes?

Yes No

3b) What policies and programs would you consider to strengthen or add to address housing affordability in the County? How much money would you ask for in the County budget to build new affordable housing? To preserve/renovate existing affordable housing?

I support continuing the dedicated funding equivalent to a "penny" of the real estate tax rate (over \$30 million in FY 2024), and providing additional funds as was done in FY 2023 (\$48M in County funding) as possible, i.e., prioritizing affordable housing funding with other County priorities when allocating carryover funding. I do not support increasing affordable housing funding by raising real estate taxes; instead, it should be done by reducing County funding

elsewhere (see my Other Comments for additional information). IT IS A COUNTERINTUITIVE AND UNSUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING BY MAKING HOMEOWNERSHIP MORE UNAFFORDABLE THROUGH HIGHER REAL ESTATE TAXES.

4) Displacement Concerns

The County has pledged no net-loss of affordable housing but as needed investments are made in revitalization areas and transit corridors, older market rate affordable housing is being lost to newer and more expensive homes. This can lead to current residents being displaced from their communities because affordable homes may no longer be available in their neighborhood. They may even need to leave Fairfax County altogether to find more affordable housing, with profound negative impacts on intergenerational communities.

4a) Do you feel the County should do more to address displacement concerns and ensure more inclusive communities available to different income levels?

Yes No

4b) What tools would you use to help provide more housing options for a mix of incomes in areas facing redevelopment as well as support residents facing possible displacement?

Regarding displacement, I would support funding to support non-profits that perform home repairs for low and moderate income households. By leveraging non-profits, the use of moderate County funding can have a multiplying effect on curbing displacement. I would also focus on requiring more aggressive proffers when County approval is required for developments.

5) Zoning for More Housing

Eighty two percent (82%) of Fairfax County land is zoned exclusively for single-family detached homes according to a [2019 Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance report](#). Expanding housing options in single family neighborhoods can make way for more housing, increase access to home ownership, reduce racial and economic segregation, and increase access to opportunity.

5a) Would you support a planning process to consider changes to the zoning ordinance to expand housing types in the County?

Yes No

5b) What are your thoughts on this issue in light of Arlington County's recent community study and vote to expand "Missing Middle Housing" options?

There is certainly nothing objectionable about considering the expansion of housing types, which must assess impacts such as traffic, stormwater, reduced green space, and school capacity, but expanding "Missing Middle" housing options County-wide is a mistake. Having once lived in a neighborhood whose character was adversely changed with the doubling of housing density (as a result of "grandfathered in" zoning exploited by a developer), I personally know that imposing by-right zoning changes is unfair to existing homeowners. There are reasonable zoning changes that can expand options in residential zoning regions without vastly compromising neighborhoods (e.g., the targeted use of accessory living units).

6) Homeownership Opportunities

Multiple studies have shown growing wealth and racial/ethnic homeownership gaps in the County. For Black families, this is due in part to the legacy of segregation through deed restrictions that prevented them from buying homes and building wealth.

6a) Do you support County policies to provide more opportunities for home ownership?

Yes No Partially

6b) What types of policies or programs would you propose?

First, the County's First Time Homebuyers Program needs to be enhanced to increase program income thresholds and to increase the housing price ceiling (which is currently \$300,000 and thus severely limits the available real estate options). Second, there needs to be more outreach about this program, and other federal/state programs so that prospective homeowners are better informed about the various government programs for obtaining financial and other assistance in purchasing a home.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

1) Improving Public Transit

Public transit is the backbone of a sustainable, equitable transportation system and a thriving economy, and Fairfax County has admirable plans to expand its bus rapid transit (BRT) network to ensure fast, frequent, and reliable service for residents. While public transit ridership on some systems has been hit by the pandemic with reduced commute trips due to increased teleworking, transit remains key for essential workers, and for supporting compact, walkable communities.

1a) Do you support increased funding for public transit to address budget shortfalls and make improvements to better serve riders?

Yes No **No answer provided**

1b) What is your experience riding public transit? What ideas do you have to improve public transit in Fairfax County?

I utilized WMATA [Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority] for over 30 years, commuting to work from the Huntington Metro station into downtown DC.

I support funding robust public transit but would first look to making transit improvements within current funding levels, before increasing funding through higher taxes. The premise of the question is that there are budget shortfalls, but the FY 2024 County budget provides monies to the County Transit Systems fund based on increased operating expenditures of \$19M (19%) from FY 2022 actuals. The amount the County funds Metro has increased 152% in the past five years! There needs to be a systematic evaluation of existing operations (e.g., the number of riders on Fairfax Connector routes) to determine what objectives are and are not being met within these (higher) current funding levels and whether funding can be reallocated accordingly, before determining the necessity of increased funding.

2) Active Transportation Funding

The ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan - the County's most significant overhaul of its bicycle, pedestrian, and trails plans - is expected to be finalized this year. The plan's recommendations address critical safety needs for residents who already walk and bike and also make improvements to allow more residents to walk and bike conveniently and safely for daily needs. Realizing the Plan's vision will require substantial, dedicated, and consistent funding.

2a) Would you support Fairfax committing dedicated annual funding to support the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan, even if that meant potentially delaying road expansion and interchange projects?

Yes No **No answer provided**

2b) What is your personal experience dealing with or advocating for pedestrian or bicyclist safety issues?

My answer to 2a is dependent on knowing the amount of dedicated annual funding and the safety and other impacts of delaying an important road expansion or interchange project - the questions cannot be answered generically. As a daily walker in the Springvale area, often dodging speeders who have little regard for pedestrians as I pick up litter, I am well acquainted

with pedestrian safety issues, and would advocate for responsible, cost-effective improvements consistent with the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan.

3) Low-Stress Bike Network

Fairfax County has committed to reducing the amount people have to drive and associated transportation-related carbon emissions. The County's climate plan calls for meeting a goal of 30% non-auto commuting trips by 2030. To make this shift, the County will need robust, accessible alternatives and bicycling is an ideal, low-cost, carbon-free alternative. But that mode shift requires dedicated infrastructure including an expanded network of trails and comfortable, protected, low-stress bicycle facilities - not just painted bike lanes or sharrows - to make bicycling meaningfully safer, more appealing, and more accessible and often requires roadway redesign that reduces parking and/or vehicle lanes.

3a) Compared to the current prioritization, do you think greater priority should be given to the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians in the County's roadway designs?

Yes

No

No answer provided

3b) How would you ensure that people of all ages and abilities have robust active transportation access to and along the County's major and most important thoroughfares and connecting streets?

Again, question 3a is a very board question and cannot be answered generically. I certainly support considering the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians in roadway designs, but those needs also must be balanced against overall traffic safety, funding constraints, and other priorities, given the circumstances of the particular road design. I would prioritize working with State and Federal partners to ensure optimal funding for providing safe, convenient, and equitable bike and pedestrian access.

4) Safe Streets for All

On May 10, 2022, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously endorsed the Safe Streets for All Program, a comprehensive initiative to address systemic transportation safety issues for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving. Included in the recommendations is a call for roadway infrastructure changes to slow traffic on our community's streets. Unfortunately, the County has not yet dedicated staff or funding to begin executing the program. At the same time, Fairfax County experienced a troubling uptick in traffic-related pedestrian fatalities in 2022.

4a) Do you support the full implementation of the Safe Streets for All Program in Fairfax County, including changes to roadway design guidelines and an expanded automated speed enforcement program?

Yes No

4b) What proven traffic safety improvement policies, programs, and/or technologies would you like to see implemented in your district and throughout the County?

Given the lack of clarity around who has the legal and budgetary authority to make roadway safety improvements stemming from state ownership of County roads, what steps would you propose to ensure that these roadway safety improvements are implemented?

I would like to see the implementation of traffic calming measures and the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (i.e., advanced technologies that provide real-time information about traffic conditions so that drivers can avoid congestion and accidents).

Recognizing that road safety is primarily the responsibility of the State, advocacy with VDOT [Virginia Department of Transportation] is a key part of a Supervisor's job, and I would work closely with them to make roadway safety improvements in the Franconia District.

5) Safe Routes to School

Trips to and from schools are among the best opportunities to reduce car trips in Fairfax County. A robust Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program can play a critical role in encouraging more families to walk and bicycle to school, which has been shown to increase confidence and sense of independence among children while also reducing pickup/dropoff vehicle congestion and associated carbon emissions. Unfortunately, the County's SRTS program includes just one dedicated staff position for a public school system that serves 185,000 students.

5a) Would you support expanding the Safe Routes to School program, including additional staff capacity, to get more kids to walk and bike to school?

Yes No

5b) What other policies or budget items will you pursue to upgrade transportation infrastructure so kids can safely walk and bike to school?

I support additional staff capacity, but not from additional funding derived from higher taxes or taken from other County programs. FCPS [Fairfax County Public Schools] clearly has excess positions that can be converted to the SRTS [Safe Routes to School] program as attrition occurs. For example, compared to FY

2022, the FY 2024 Adopted School Budget includes 61 additional assistant principal positions (with the same number of schools) and 83 additional business specialist positions (with essentially the same number of students). Compared to FY 2020, when there were 8,000 fewer students, the FY 2024 Adopted Budget includes more than 900 additional positions.

I support focused investment in sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. that would facilitate students being able to safely bike and walk to their schools.

CLIMATE MITIGATION, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN SPACES

1) Reaching Carbon Neutrality by 2050

*The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report made clear that tackling the climate crisis is **the** challenge of this century, and will interact with all others, from ecological to economic to social. Leaders who boldly act to reduce and prepare for climate impacts have the opportunity to truly preserve and create a better world for ourselves and our children. This starts with reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. The Community-wide Climate & Energy Action Plan (CECAP) established a goal of carbon neutrality for Fairfax County by 2050, with interim goals of 50% greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2030 and 75% by 2040. To reach these goals, the County requires actionable implementation plans, effective management, robust accountability mechanisms, a clear communication strategy, consistent metrics and monitoring, and sufficient funding to address the current challenges. We have just seven years to reach the first 2030 goal.*

1a) Are you committed to ensuring that Fairfax County complies with and achieves its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals by 2050?

Yes No

1b) What specific policy actions and/or programs would you undertake as supervisor to accelerate and/or achieve the aggressive carbon reduction goals?

I would advocate for a stronger commitment to solar power. For example, we should be putting solar panels on every school in the County as soon as possible. Given FCPS [Fairfax County Public Schools] spends over \$30M/year on electricity, not only is investing in solar critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but it is cost-effective in the long-term. Also, the County needs to transition county-owned vehicles to an all-electric fleet and incentivize the provision of EV [electric vehicle] charging stations as part of land use decisions.

2) Climate Resilience

In 2022, Fairfax County adopted Resilient Fairfax, a roadmap to help residents and infrastructure adapt to an increasingly warmer and wetter climate. Ensuring our County is

implementing the necessary measures (such as providing emergency relief hubs, planting trees, and improving stormwater management) in the face of a changing climate is important, particularly for disadvantaged communities who are identified as the most vulnerable.

2a) Will you support the plan recommendations of Resilient Fairfax?

Yes No Partially

2b) How would you further fund and support equitable resilience investments to implement the Resilient Fairfax plan in communities most affected by climate impacts?

I support the One Fairfax Policy that requires the consideration of equity in County decision-making, and consistent with that policy, believe investments should be prioritized where needed most, predominately in the most vulnerable communities where funding has historically been lacking. I would support additional funding to implement Resilient Fairfax, but not at the expense of raising real estate taxes, i.e., either from additional revenue sources (e.g., state or federal grants) or additional County funding that is budget neutral.

3) Climate Impacts of Land Use and Development

Every land use decision is an environmental decision. To meet both our climate and resilience goals, the County can take actions through the development process such as prioritizing compact development and land use patterns, which have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions and on protecting current natural resources. To do this, we must ensure the implementation of energy efficient buildings (such as green buildings and the use of solar and other renewable energies), eliminate any building or development in Resource Protection Areas, reduce the amount of impermeable surfaces, and increase native tree canopy and natural landscaping.

3a) Are you committed to utilizing the development process to reduce carbon emissions and minimize environmental impacts on our natural resources?

Yes No

3b) How would you utilize the development process to achieve CECAP and Resilient Fairfax goals?

The existing land use process contains mechanisms to achieve the CECAP [Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan] and Resilient Fairfax goals, when adhered to. My experience is that waivers to certain land use requirements are granted much too liberally and need to be the exception rather than the rule. Proffers in applicable developments are also a great instrument to incentivize greener development (e.g., energy-efficient buildings, green spaces, greater tree canopy) and I would aggressively advocate for their inclusion to approve land use cases before the Board.

Also, I am pledging to serve only one term if elected, so I would have no real or apparent conflicts of interest to disclose when considering land use decisions, as current Board members must often do.

4) Tree Canopy and Forest Management

Trees help mitigate climate impacts by sequestering carbon, mitigating heat island effects, and improving stream valley integrity, thus improving drinking water quality and minimizing flooding. The result is a healthier, more friendly, and more resilient urban habitat. CECAP calls for a minimum of 50% tree canopy coverage in every census block by 2050, prioritizing areas of highest socioeconomic need first. Data from 2015 to 2018 shows that the County lost 2.6% of our tree canopy, which will make reaching these goals even more challenging. Relatedly, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) owns nearly 10% of land in Fairfax County, including stream valleys and forested areas, yet faces significant budget challenges that impact its ability to manage and protect its natural resources.

4a) Are you committed to protecting and increasing Fairfax County's tree canopy?

Yes No

4b) Which actions would you take to protect and grow the County's tree canopy, particularly in areas with the lowest tree canopy coverage?

First, the County needs to limit, to the maximum extent practicable, the removal of old-growth trees during development, particularly infill development. The tree destruction the County has allowed with infill development in mature neighborhoods such as Hollin Hall in the Mount Vernon District is reprehensible. Second, the County must use proffers as well as other available options to increase/preserve tree coverage in new developments, as well as extracting meaningful penalties for non-compliance.

I am also committed to working with the Fairfax County Park Authority to address budget challenges that hinder forest management and combatting the spread of invasive species issues. In fact, as detailed on my campaign website (www.markforsupervisor.org), if elected, I am pledging to donate my entire Supervisor salary to Fairfax County charities, including 25% of my first year salary to the Fairfax County Park Foundation, Inc., which supports the Fairfax County Park Authority.

FOOD SECURITY

1) Inclusive and Accessible Community Gardens

The Fairfax County Park Authority has 10 community gardens, but only one is near communities where the residents struggle to get enough to eat. Additionally, almost all of the

gardens require a car to get to and have multi-year waiting lists.

1a) What County actions would you advocate for in order to increase residents' ability to grow their own food, particularly food-insecure residents?

There should be sufficient community gardens so participation is available to all who are interested - in Fairfax County, anybody who wants to grow their own food and needs a land resource, should have it. I would support setting aside more County land, removing any existing zoning or other land use barriers that may exist, and exploring opportunities for private-public partnerships. I would also explore the feasibility of incentivizing community garden space as a standard part of land use plans for new residential developments.

2) Urban Agriculture

The pandemic showed how fragile local food supply systems are. However, County zoning rules can severely limit entrepreneurs who want to start commercial agricultural operations that would help build a more robust food production system locally. Fairfax County also lags behind its neighbors in providing incentives for would-be commercial food growers, who may be unable to finance the upfront technology and equipment needs or support an agricultural operation for the length of time it takes to become sustainable.

2a) What regulation changes or incentives would you endorse to facilitate innovative urban agriculture in Fairfax County?

I would support removing any existing zoning or other land use barriers that may exist in order to facilitate urban agriculture within the County, particularly as they pertain to initiatives such as rooftop gardens and vertical farming. Additional outreach would also be beneficial (e.g., information on applying for USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] urban agriculture grants).

3) Food Insecurity

The demand at local food distribution sites has not yet fallen back to pre-pandemic levels, likely due to inflation and employment insecurity in low-income neighborhoods. Yet federal programs for extra food as well as rent relief have ended, leaving many residents worse off than they were before the pandemic.

3a) Do you support additional County funding for food assistance to meet the current needs?

Yes

No

3b) What policies or programs would you support to make sure the lowest income families have access to food?

I support the necessary funding for FCPS [Fairfax County Public Schools] to ensure the needs of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch are met - no child should go hungry in Fairfax County. Partnering with our faith communities is also important in addressing food insecurity issues.

OTHER COMMENTS

Are there any other comments you would like to provide? (optional)

Accomplishing the vision articulated by Fairfax Healthy Communities Network will require additional County funding. Reasonable people can differ on the amount of this funding, but the source of this funding cannot be from additional taxes. Real estate taxes have increased 18% over the past three years - continuing to raise taxes to that degree impedes the goal of increased housing affordability. The main obstacle preventing a greater allocation of County funding to affordable housing, sustainable transportation, climate change mitigation, and food security is the current Board's policy of FULLY FUNDING FCPS (which comprises 52% of the County operating budget). I advocate for FAIRLY FUNDING FCPS [Fairfax County Public Schools], i.e., providing the funding resources they need to effectively operate the schools, including giving well-deserved compensation increases that retain staff. The Board's policy of fully funding proposed school budgets (which historically contain inflated costs and unwarranted contingencies) as submitted, with no review or analysis for reasonableness, appropriates excess funding that could have been allocated for healthy communities' programs. In addition, every year those surpluses are routinely reappropriated to FCPS for additional spending, with no discussion of funding other priorities. For example, FCPS ended FY 2022 with \$295M in unspent funds, excluding an additional \$154M in unspent Federal COVID relief funds, which was reappropriated for FY 2023 expenditures. Just a tenth of that \$295M could have doubled the contribution to the affordable housing fund. As someone pledging to serve one term, I will not be politically constrained in holding FCPS accountable to reasonable budgets, unlike the current Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide answers to these questions. I am running as an Independent candidate to focus on providing common-sense solutions for the residents of the Franconia District, unconstrained by party politics. Please visit <https://markforsupervisor.org> to learn more about my campaign, including my pledges to only serve one term and to donate my Board salary to Fairfax County charities.