

The People's Voice, LLC

Ethics Ballot™

3600 Saint Johns Lane, Suite D, Ellicott City, MD21042

ETHICS BALLOT QUESTIONNAIRE

Howard County General Election 2022

County Council

Congratulations on your decision to run for Howard County Council. The People's Voice is a civic/political organization in Howard and Montgomery Counties. We have over 4,000 members in Howard County and sponsor the non-partisan Ethics Ballot. If you would like to seek endorsement please return this Questionnaire to EthicsBallot@Gmail.com by midnight September 20, 2022. Please note that all questionnaires are published on the website, www.EthicsBallot.com. We will be in touch regarding endorsement dates soon after getting the questionnaires back. We pride ourselves on working hard for our endorsed candidates, and look forward to hearing your positions on important County issues. THANK YOU so very much for your time!

Be sure to address all aspects of each question.

Name: [Christiana Rigby](#)

Campaign Address/Phone/Email:

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[Simpsonville, MD 21150](#)

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Educational History:

[Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies](#)
[University of Maryland, Baltimore County](#)

Languages Spoken/Other Skills/Relevant Experience:

[Howard County Councilmember, District 3 \(2018-present\)](#)
[Kings Contrivance Village Board \(2015-2018\)](#)
[Evaluation & Resource Allocation Committee Member, Board to Promote Self Sufficiency \(2015-2018\)](#)
[Board Member of Howard EcoWorks \(2016-2018\)](#)
[Emerge Maryland \(Class of 2017\)](#)
[Leadership Essentials Howard County \(Class of 2016\)](#)

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1. Why are you running for this office?

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I am running for re-election to the Howard County Council because I love our community, and I want to continue to make progress for and with Howard County residents. Over the last four years, I have worked hard to increase school construction funding, prioritize climate action, expand affordable housing opportunities, and make our streets safer for families in Howard County. I am running for re-election so that we can continue to make progress on these goals and ensure that Howard County is a thriving, safe, and inclusive community for all our residents.

2. Have you signed the No Dark Money, No Developer Money pledge or signed up for the Citizen Election Fund? If NOT how do you eliminate the appearance of conflicts?

I am participating in the Citizens' Election Fund program, which means that my campaign is only accepting campaign contributions of up to \$250 from individuals, and no donations from businesses, PACs, political parties, and unions.

3. If you are elected, what are your top priorities for 2022?

My top priorities for 2022 will be (1) supporting additional investment in our school capital and operating budgets, (2) reviewing and approving Howard County's next General Plan, and (3) advancing significant climate change legislation at the local level.

School funding: we have made important progress over the last four years by funding the construction of High School 13, Hammond High Renovations/Addition, and Talbott Springs Elementary School. We secured funding for these projects by increasing our school facilities surcharge on new construction, increasing our transfer tax, and working collaboratively with our state partners on school funding. There is still much more work to be done to advance additional school construction, address deferred maintenance, and invest in our classrooms. I am also committed to working with our County Executive and Board of Education to identify opportunities to increase county funding to meet the requirements of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

General Plan: reviewing, amending, and adopting the General Plan is going to be one of the most important responsibilities of the next Council. The General Plan is a state-required community planning document that sets our land-use and community vision for the next decade. I believe our next General Plan must lay out a comprehensive vision for the future of growth in Howard County that addresses schools, climate change, sustainable transportation/walkability, and access to open space.

Climate Change: Howard County has much more work to do locally to decrease our greenhouse gas emissions and chart our county on the course of net-zero carbon emissions well ahead of 2045, when required by the state. While we have made important progress through solar power purchase agreements (PPAs) and strengthening our forest conservation laws, I believe we must do more to directly address the primary drivers of greenhouse gas emissions in our community. That means taking more action to promote building electrification and efficiency, strengthen public transit, and invest in Complete Streets.

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4. What do you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the current County Council? How have you demonstrated your ability to work with people who have diverse opinions and party affiliations?

One of the strengths of this County Council has been our ability to adapt to an ever-changing work environment. None of the current Council had ever held elected office prior to starting this role in 2018, and just over a year into our term, we were launched into a global pandemic that forced us to rethink and change how we conduct business, attend sessions, connect with constituents, and expand access to residents. As a body, I think we have all reconsidered what it means to conduct outreach and include more community voices and perspectives as a result.

I think one area for improvement of the current County Council would be increasing collaboration and dialogue on legislation and policy priorities. I think that having more conversations and dialogue earlier in the process would lead to better understanding, more collaboration, and better outcomes for our constituents. There have been many instances where this has been done successfully. For example, I worked with my colleagues to introduce legislation to significantly increase the school facilities surcharge on new construction, which has helped direct millions more dollars to the HCPSS Capital Budget over the past three years. I have worked with each of my colleagues on legislation over the last four years, including efforts to promote affordable housing retention, reduce pollution, increase school funding, and improve council processes.

5. What are your funding priorities for the County? What changes do you believe should be made compared to past budget decisions?

My funding priorities for the County are (1) school construction and operating funds, (2) climate change and environmental sustainability initiatives, (3) affordable housing creation and preservation, and (4) Complete Streets infrastructure and transit improvements.

I think that this Council needs to take another look at how we can address the structural funding needs of our public school system. Working with our partners at the State level, I believe that we need to identify new funding streams to support the growing needs of our school system and the requirements set forth in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

6. Do you feel the amount of planned residential growth in the County should be increased or decreased? Explain why and include any changes you believe should occur to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) that regulates the timing of development.

As a growth management tool, APFO is intended to ensure that adequate public facilities exist to support the increased demand in public services (like public schools) from new development. I do not believe that the existing APFO law has fulfilled that vision, and I believe that improvements should be considered when APFO is revisited next term. One area that needs improvement are housing allocations. We currently approve housing allocations by region. I would like to explore changing the allocations process to approve housing allocations by unit type instead of region. This would help the county more thoughtfully plan what types of housing units are permitted, and in turn will help us better understand

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the impact of those housing allocations on increasing school capacity. Additionally, I would like to see our APFO law address public transit and multimodal transportation instead of expanding roads and intersections. As we strive to me a more sustainable and climate-friendly community, we can use our adequate public facilities law to meet our infrastructure needs and encourage more sustainable modes of transportation.

7. The upcoming development planning changes called HoCo By Design had four density scenarios. Which one do you believe is best and why? Are there any changes to residential or commercial land use you would like to see in the plan before it is implemented?

Of the four planning scenarios, I believe that Scenario C offers the best vision for future growth through its prioritization of transit-oriented development and more focused growth in walkable areas with access to employment opportunities. However, I think there are serious shortcomings in each of the proposed scenarios, and I would support a “Scenario E” that incorporates the positive elements of the other scenarios in the final plan, along with the other policy priorities that have been highlighted throughout the HoCo By Design process – affordable homes with access to nearby schools, parks, transit, Complete Streets, and employment opportunities.

8. What, if any, new storm water management or forest conservation regulations do you believe should be in the General Plan?

Most future growth in Howard County will take the form of redevelopment. Most of Howard County was developed before updated stormwater regulations and forest conversation regulations were approved. As we consider redevelopment, we can make significant improvements in managing stormwater on currently-unmanaged sites and plant more trees in our eastern watersheds.

9. What positions do you hold regarding the current levels of low and moderate income housing in the County? What changes to specific policies, that the Council can legislate, would you sponsor or support?

Our current supply of low- and moderate-income housing in Howard County is completely insufficient. Howard County’s most recent Rental Survey indicated that there is a shortage of nearly 6,500 units for households making less than \$60,000/year, and roughly 75% of our workforce currently commutes into Howard County from other jurisdictions. I support several changes to our county laws and policies to improve access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. First, I support expanding the types of homes that can be built in our community. Single-family detached homes are some of the most expensive types of homes that are built in our community, they generate the highest number of students per home, and they have large carbon footprints. Despite this, single-family detached homes are the only type of home permitted in most zoning districts. I would like to see more affordable types of homes in more areas, including townhomes, multiplexes, and cottage communities. These homes are inherently more affordable and promote affordable homeownership. I also support making improvements to our inclusionary zoning requirements and MIHU program to encourage more affordable homes are built when new development occurs.

10. Do you believe that County funded housing trust funds should be utilized to provide affordable housing? If so, should they be restricted to government usage and not private projects? Why or why not?

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I support county-funded housing trust funds as a tool to create and preserve affordable housing units, and I was pleased to see \$5 million dedicated to the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund in FY23. When possible, I would prefer to see these funds prioritized to support affordable housing projects that are built by nonprofit organizations, the Howard County Housing Commission, and other public partners.

11. How do you feel about large-scale commercial uses on Preserved Agricultural land, such as solar panels or mulching, beyond farm uses?

I believe that we should continue to work with the agricultural community to identify ways that we can support our local farms and farmers in Howard County. For many farmers, this involves re-imagining the ways that agricultural land can be sustained financially and kept in preservation. I support allowing solar-power generation on farmland, especially when there is a policy interest for Howard County to green our grid and encourage solar generation that provides clean and renewable energy to county government operations.

12. Do you support the creation of an independent office of inspector general in Howard County?

I would need to know more about the details of this policy proposal. Primarily, I would like to better understand how the role and responsibilities of an inspector general would differ from the role and responsibilities of our County Auditor, whose office is enshrined in our charter and has the authority to conduct audits and investigate fraud and abuse. I support measures to increase access to government and promote accountability, and I look forward to learning more about this proposal.

13. What are your views on current County taxes and services? Are there any taxes you would propose to change? How would services or programs be impacted by your decisions?

I am interested in restructuring our existing tax rates so that they are more equitable for residents in Howard County while generating revenue to maintain and expand services in our county. Howard County has high impact fees and excise taxes, however our recordation fee is one of the lowest in the state. I am interested in restructuring our recordation fee so that low- and moderate-income homebuyers pay a smaller fee when buying a home while more expensive properties are assessed at a higher fee. I believe that we should also work with our State Delegation to progressively restructure our income tax to achieve a similar outcome. Both these measures would reduce the tax burden on lower-income residents while growing our General Fund, which is used to fund our school system's operating budget and other critical county services.

14. What do you believe the County should be doing to address climate change concerns?

I believe the County should be doing a lot more to address climate change concerns, especially by reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are produced by our buildings and transportation system. Regarding buildings, I support moving toward all-electric new building requirements in Howard

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County. I also support strengthening incentives to build net-zero and LEED certified buildings and encouraging existing buildings to retrofit with energy efficient improvements. Regarding transportation, I support making significantly higher investments in expanding our public transit system (first by increasing route frequency and reliability) and building complete streets infrastructure throughout the county to improve safety, connection, and walkability. Together, buildings and transportation account for the vast majority of our greenhouse gas emissions, and we need to tackle both issues comprehensively to make a meaningful dent in our local contributions to climate change.

By Authority: The People's Voice, Lisa Markovitz Treasurer