

## ETHICS BALLOT QUESTIONNAIRE

### County Council Primary 2026

Name/District: Janssen E. Evelyn (he/him) | County Council District 4

Campaign Address/Phone/Email: P.O. Box 10400 Shaker Drive No. 76, Simpsonville, MD 21150/Mobile: 301.512.1198/ janssen@janssenevelyn.com

### **Educational History**

I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, with a minor in African Diaspora Studies, from St. Mary's College of Maryland, followed by a Juris Doctor from Washington and Lee University School of Law.

My legal training, combined with over 14 years of senior county government experience, informs my work in land use law, housing policy, administrative procedure, labor relations, public safety, and governance.

### **Languages Spoken/Other Skills/Relevant Experience**

Originally from Barbados, I am a native English speaker.

Professionally, I bring deep broadbased expertise in government administration and public policy.

I have served in senior executive and legal roles in Howard County, Anne Arundel County, and Prince George's County, including as Assistant Chief Administrative Officer in Howard County and, currently, as Deputy Chief Administrative Officer in Anne Arundel County.

Across these roles, I have overseen or directly managed nearly every issue that comes before a county council, with particular depth in land use and housing, labor relations, procurement, human rights and equity, and public safety. I also served as the inaugural Executive Director of the Anne Arundel County Office of Police Accountability, responsible for establishing a new civilian oversight entity, ensuring compliance with state law and coordinating across departments.

That experience reinforced an essential truth of local governance: public safety, housing stability, land use, and community trust are inseparable.

From a volunteer service perspective, I have maintained long-standing community leadership alongside my professional roles.

I am the Immediate Past President of the Howard County Conservancy, having served as President from January 2024 through January 2026, and as a board member since 2019. In that role, I helped guide land preservation, environmental education, and stewardship efforts.

I also helped launch the George Washington “Growing Food Together” Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) during the COVID-19 pandemic, expanding food access while teaching sustainable growing practices and strengthening community connection.

In addition, I serve as Vice Chair of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, addressing statewide fair housing and access issues. Locally, I am a member-at-large of the NAACP, a board member of Columbia Community Care, and a former Hickory Ridge Village Board member. These roles keep me grounded in neighborhood-level concerns related to housing stability, food access, and hyper-local policy issues.

**1. Why are you running for this office? Non-Incumbents, please describe how your campaign is viable.**

Howard County is entering a period of transition, with multiple County Council seats turning over at a time when decisions about housing, land use, schools, infrastructure, and fiscal policy will shape the county for decades.

I am running because I believe deeply in steady, competent, people-centered governance. Our county needs leaders who can move from planning to implementation, who understand how policies actually work once passed, and who can balance growth with community stability, environmental stewardship, and strong public schools.

My campaign is rooted in a simple set of values: deliver for schools, build complete and connected communities, make housing attainable at every stage of life, and ensure growth pays its fair share. That means investing in school facilities and maintenance, aligning land use with infrastructure, expanding housing options without sacrificing neighborhood character, and using taxpayer dollars responsibly and transparently.

I am also running to help restore functional governance. With a largely new County Council ahead, there is a real opportunity to reset how we govern through collaboration, clarity, and respect for both the legislative and executive roles.

Ultimately, I am running to help ensure that Howard County remains a place where people can live, work, raise families, and age with dignity—where growth strengthens communities rather than divides them, and where public decisions are guided by fairness, foresight, and accountability.

This campaign is viable because it is grounded in experience and demonstrated voter support. In 2022, I narrowly lost to an incumbent, receiving 4,329 votes or 45.66 percent. That result reflected strong name recognition and community trust even against the advantage of incumbency.

This election is an open seat in a plurality race, which fundamentally changes the dynamics. In that context, experience, coalition building, and an established base matter more than name recognition alone. I am running a disciplined, well funded campaign using traditional campaign finance, have earned the coveted Apple Ballot endorsement from the HCEA, and have strong support across civic, labor, environmental, and immigrant communities with whom I have longstanding ties through service and advocacy.

**2. Non-Incumbents: What qualifications do you uniquely bring to hold this office? What experience**

**do you have with the County Council? Have you ever testified before the County Council? What positions did you take?**

I bring extensive, direct experience working with the Howard County Council both from inside county government and as a community advocate, with my positions clearly reflected on the public record.

In Howard County, while serving as Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, one of my responsibilities was acting as alternate to the Legislative Coordinator. In that role, I regularly represented the County Executive and Administration before the County Council, coordinated executive legislative communications, and supported Council deliberations on budgets, labor relations, procurement, human rights enforcement, and governance reforms.

In my current role as Deputy Chief Administrative Officer in Anne Arundel County, I work closely with the County Council as the County Executive's principal representative on land use, housing, infrastructure, and economic development legislation, testifying, negotiating amendments, and overseeing implementation.

As a community advocate, I have testified multiple times before the Howard County Council, consistently supporting Patuxent Commons apartments, advocating for inclusive, affordable housing aligned with updated student generation data, proximity to schools, and community integration. I have testified in support of education funding, including opposing cuts that would have eliminated the Climate Educator position housed at the Howard County Conservancy. I have supported APFO reform, advocating for a shift away from blunt moratoria toward smarter, multimodal, infrastructure aligned tools. I also testified in opposition to CB 9=2022, rejecting the false choice between strong schools and affordable housing and affirming that housing is essential infrastructure.

These positions align with HoCo by Design, fiscal responsibility, and long term community stability.

**3. Are you using the Citizens Election Fund (CEF)? Why or why not?**

No. I am using traditional campaign finance.

Given my professional background, public service record, and deep community relationships, this model allows me to run a transparent and competitive campaign while fully complying with all ethics, disclosure, and reporting requirements. Throughout my career, I have demonstrated independence in decision-making, whether overseeing procurement, enforcing civil rights laws, or negotiating complex policy issues, and that same standard guides my campaign.

Ethical governance is defined by conduct, transparency, and accountability, not by a single funding mechanism. I am committed to full disclosure, strict compliance with campaign finance laws, and making decisions based solely on the public interest.

**4. If you are elected, what are your top priorities for 2026? Discuss at least three areas in need of change, under the purview of the County Council, and how you would address them.**

First, I will focus on fixing broken growth and housing tools that are no longer delivering the outcomes Howard County needs. This includes reforming the County's fee in lieu structure, which currently fails to reflect real

housing costs or generate sufficient resources to meaningfully expand accessible housing. Growth must be managed in a way that is fair, predictable, and aligned with infrastructure capacity, while ensuring that accessible housing is built into communities as a standard practice rather than treated as a special category or isolated solution.

Second, I will prioritize fully funding and supporting public education, including both operating and capital needs for Howard County Public Schools. Education funding is a core value for me and must remain the County's top priority. This means investing in school facilities, addressing deferred maintenance, and ensuring that growth and housing policies contribute appropriately to school capacity so that families of all abilities and income levels can live near strong schools.

Third, I will work to move HoCo by Design from vision to implementation. That requires updating zoning and development regulations so adopted plans are executed consistently and predictably, and in ways that support placemaking, walkable neighborhoods, complete communities, and housing that serves people across abilities, ages, and life stages.

Finally, I will focus on restoring functional governance. With a largely new County Council ahead, there is an opportunity to reset how we govern by rebuilding collaboration, clarity, and mutual respect so complex issues, like the aforementioned ones, are addressed constructively and in the public interest.

**5. 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 positions?**

The Council's strength has been its willingness to engage complex and consequential issues. Its weakness has been structural dysfunction, particularly in how decisions were made and communicated.

Despite being a four to one Democratic Council, it often operated in split decisions, effectively allowing the sole Republican member to serve as a tie breaker. At the same time, communication between the Council and the Executive Branch broke down on several difficult issues. That failure rests with both branches.

With four new Councilmembers expected, experience will matter. I am the only District 4 candidate with senior local executive public policy and government operations experience, including land use, housing, labor negotiations, procurement, civil rights enforcement, and police accountability. In those roles, I worked daily with people holding different priorities and perspectives, often under significant pressure. My approach has been to listen carefully, negotiate in good faith, and focus on solutions that can actually be implemented. That ability to build consensus and translate policy into operational reality is what I would bring to a new County Council.

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

My funding priorities include education, infrastructure maintenance, public safety, and accessible housing tools that deliver measurable outcomes. These are the foundations of a functioning county and the areas where underinvestment shows up most quickly for residents.

Compared to past budget decisions, I believe the County needs to be more disciplined about long term planning and follow through, particularly on capital maintenance. Too often, we defer routine investments and end up paying more later. I support multi year fiscal planning, clearer evaluation of capital projects, and better alignment between operating and capital budgets so resources are directed to long term needs rather than short term fixes.

**7. Do you feel the amount of planned residential growth in the County should be increased or decreased? Include details, such as, overall versus regional goals. Explain your reasons for your positions, and include any changes you believe should occur to APFO. Be sure to include your opinions about the major areas of recommendations by the 2025 APFO Review Committee.**

At an overall level, the County needs to continue adding housing to address affordability and workforce needs, but that growth should be targeted rather than scattershot. I support directing new residential growth to areas with existing or planned school capacity, transportation options, and services, while limiting growth in areas where infrastructure constraints remain unresolved.

Regionally, this means prioritizing redevelopment, infill, and mixed use areas, and allowing a broader mix of housing types in those locations, while being more cautious about greenfield development that increases costs and strains public facilities. This approach supports affordability, reduces sprawl, and strengthens existing communities.

An effective APFO is essential to this strategy. I have administered and reformed School and Transportation APFOs, and I support the major recommendations of the 2025 APFO Review Committee, including clearer adequacy standards, multimodal transportation metrics, and greater predictability for residents and applicants.

APFO should function as a growth management tool, not a blunt instrument that freezes housing or shifts costs onto families. When designed well, it supports housing production in the right places while protecting school capacity and public investment.

**8. What is your position on locations for new multiplexes and/or ADU's? Include issues of owner occupancy and by right versus conditional use.**

I support detached accessory dwelling units and missing middle housing as intentional tools to expand housing supply, improve affordability, and integrate accessible housing while preserving neighborhood form and character.

These housing types are most effective when allowed by right with clear form and design standards, infrastructure alignment, and predictable rules for residents and builders alike.

Detached ADUs represent invisible density. When properly designed and regulated, they add housing supply without changing neighborhood form, support aging in place, caregiving, and multigenerational living, and generate minimal school and infrastructure impacts. They also provide opportunities to incorporate accessible design features that allow residents to remain in their communities as their needs change.

I also support missing middle housing typologies, including duplexes, triplexes, small multiplexes, and pocket

neighborhood style development, particularly near transit, services, and employment. These forms allow multiple homes to be arranged around shared space in a way that strengthens community connection, supports walkability, and preserves a human scale. From a policy perspective, they address the housing crisis from a supply, workforce housing, affordability, and accessibility standpoint while remaining compatible with existing neighborhoods and consistent with Columbia's original vision of mixed housing and inclusive communities.

In Anne Arundel County, I helped implement the Housing Attainability Act, which legalized missing middle housing through by right rules with clear guardrails. That experience informs my approach in Howard County: focus on form, scale, and outcomes rather than rigid use categories, so we can add housing in ways that feel intentional, well designed, and community centered.

### **9. How do you think the County can best increase the supply of more affordable housing units?**

Increasing the supply of affordable housing requires expanding overall housing production while directing growth to the right locations.

Howard County should prioritize redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional properties, particularly in areas with existing infrastructure, transit access, and proximity to schools and services. These sites offer the greatest opportunity to deliver mixed income, mixed ability housing without expanding sprawl or overburdening public facilities.

Public private partnerships and strategic use of public land should be central to this strategy. When the County contributes land, zoning flexibility, or infrastructure investment, it should secure long term affordability, accessible units, and clear public benefit in return.

I have implemented similar approaches professionally and understand that while the principles transfer across jurisdictions, Howard County solutions must reflect local infrastructure capacity, school enrollment realities, and community context.

### **10. 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 control, would you sponsor or support to implement your positions?**

Howard County faces a clear shortage of housing that is affordable not only to very low income households, but also to the workforce households that sustain our schools, public safety, health care system, and local services. That gap sits above traditional MIHU levels and below market rate housing, and it is where many teachers, first responders, nurses, and county employees are being squeezed out.

I support strong, enforceable inclusionary zoning requirements that prioritize producing affordable units on site, paired with long term or permanent affordability controls and active monitoring. Where fee in lieu options exist, those payments must reflect actual construction costs and demonstrably result in additional housing supply. If fee in lieu is routinely being used to avoid building units, particularly accessible units, the Council should be willing to limit or remove that option in certain contexts so policy outcomes match policy intent.

At the same time, housing policy has to be designed so projects can still pencil out. In Anne Arundel County, I

worked on housing legislation that paired clear affordability requirements with appropriate incentives, including density flexibility, zoning relief, streamlined approvals, and predictable rules. That balance allowed projects to deliver workforce units while remaining financially feasible, which is essential if the goal is production rather than symbolism.

Howard County's MIHU program is an important foundation, but it does not fully address workforce housing pressures. I would support exploring additional workforce housing tools, such as expanded income tiers, overlays, or conditional use standards, paired with incentives that make it possible to deliver these units at scale. Those incentives should be transparent, predictable, and coordinated with land use planning, infrastructure capacity, and placemaking goals so housing strengthens neighborhoods rather than functioning in isolation.

Housing and schools are not competing priorities. Housing is infrastructure. Without stable, affordable, and accessible housing across income levels, Howard County cannot retain the workforce that makes schools strong, neighborhoods safe, and communities thrive.

### **11. What is your position on County-funded housing trusts? Should fund usage be public, private, or both and why?**

I support County funded housing trusts as a tool to expand affordable and accessible housing when they are tightly aligned with land use policy, redevelopment goals, and long term affordability requirements.

A housing trust should be structured to leverage public land, require permanent or long duration affordability, prioritize households at or below sixty percent of area median income, and ensure that accessible units are delivered as part of mixed income developments, not isolated or siloed projects. That integration matters for both equity and community stability.

I support allowing housing trust funds to be used in both public and public private projects. In practice, the most durable affordability outcomes often come from models where the public sector retains a long term ownership or stewardship role while partnering with nonprofit or private developers. Howard County can learn from regional examples such as Montgomery County's approach, including developments like The Laureate, where the County acts as a long term owner or steward of housing. That model preserves affordability over time, protects residents from market volatility, and treats housing as essential public infrastructure rather than a one time intervention.

From an implementation perspective, housing trust dollars should be deployed only when projects meet clearly defined affordability targets, accessibility standards, and long term compliance requirements, with regular public reporting on units produced, income levels served, and the duration of affordability.

Used this way, a County funded housing trust becomes a durable tool for housing access and community stability. Used without these guardrails, it risks becoming disconnected from planning and failing to deliver meaningful outcomes.

### **12. How do you feel about large-scale commercial uses on Preserved Agricultural land, such as solar panels, mulching, alcohol production uses?**

Preserved agricultural land exists to support viable, working farms over the long term, and uses on that land should strengthen agriculture while advancing broader community goals like environmental stewardship and climate resilience.

I support agriculturally compatible solar, including agrivoltaics, when it allows farming and grazing to continue, protects soil health, and is designed to be reversible over time. Solar can provide an important supplemental income stream for farmers, but farmland should not be the default location for large scale energy development. As a matter of sound land use, the County should prioritize community solar on parking lots, commercial rooftops, and other already developed sites before turning to preserved agricultural land.

Other uses should follow the same principle. Mulching or composting operations are appropriate only when they are limited in scale and directly tied to on site agricultural activity. Alcohol production and tasting uses can be appropriate when they are clearly connected to crops grown on site. I support responsible agritourism and value added agricultural uses that help farmers remain economically viable while preserving rural character. The guiding question should always be whether the use keeps the land working for agriculture and for future generations.

**13. What is your position on using PayGo funds for deferred HCPSS maintenance? What percentage would you choose to use for that purpose this year? Are there other budget areas you would prefer to see that money fund, or be added to the priority list?**

PayGo is one of the County's most important tools for taking care of the public assets we already have, especially our school buildings. When routine maintenance is delayed, things like roofs, HVAC systems, and basic safety infrastructure fail, and the cost to fix them only grows. More importantly, it disrupts learning and affects the day to day experience of students and staff.

I support using a meaningful share of PayGo this year for deferred HCPSS maintenance, in the range of 30 to 50 percent of annual capital PayGo. That reflects both the size of the maintenance backlog and the reality that school buildings are some of the County's most valuable investments. Addressing these needs now is more responsible than pushing them off and paying more later.

PayGo dollars should be focused first on the kinds of repairs that keep buildings safe and functional, such as roofs, HVAC systems, and other critical infrastructure. I also support using PayGo for accessibility improvements and upgrades that extend the useful life of our schools. Where it makes sense, these investments should also strengthen schools as community anchors, supporting shared use and neighborhood connection.

At the same time, PayGo cannot be a single purpose tool. The County also needs to invest in transportation, public safety facilities, and other core infrastructure that supports strong, connected communities. The goal is balance and clear priorities, not choosing one need at the expense of all others.

Supporting our schools means pairing strong operating funding with steady, thoughtful capital investment. As an Apple Ballot endorsed candidate, I believe school maintenance and facility quality must remain a top priority, and PayGo should be used intentionally as part of a long term plan rather than treated as an

afterthought. That plan should be clear, transparent, and easy for residents to understand.

**14. What is your position on the Engineering News Record cap on the Council's ability to increase building excise taxes and moderate income housing unit fee-in-lieu rates?**

The ENR cap provides predictability, which is important for both the public and the development community, but predictability alone is not a substitute for adequacy.

Howard County must ensure that growth contributes appropriately to the real cost of schools and infrastructure. I support maintaining the ENR cap while regularly evaluating building excise taxes and MIHU fee-in-lieu rates to ensure they reflect actual capital costs, construction realities, and enrollment impacts, rather than lagging years behind current conditions.

Any modernization of these revenue tools should be coordinated with land use and housing policy so that housing production, school capacity, and infrastructure funding move together rather than at cross purposes. When these systems are aligned, the County can support growth, protect education investment, and maintain fiscal responsibility without defaulting to broad-based tax increases.

**15. Do you believe that County volunteer boards should have legal/regulatory training? What is your opinion of the current procedures of the Board of Appeals?**

Yes. Volunteer boards should receive consistent legal and regulatory training, particularly when serving in quasi-judicial roles. Clear standards, procedural guidance, and ongoing education improve fairness, consistency, and defensibility while protecting both applicants and the public.

I support targeted procedural reforms to improve transparency, predictability, and timeliness at the Board of Appeals so decisions are made based on the record and within reasonable timeframes.