



David Horner (R), Montgomery County Council, District 4 Candidate

Environmental Views

1. Do you believe that the county is in a position to meet the challenges that growth has placed on our natural resources and neighborhoods?

Yes

2. Given that the pressures on Metro's Red Line have become severe in recent years, with the growth in Montgomery County's residential sector creating big increases in Metro ridership, which of the following policies will you actively support and promote:

Adopting policies to encourage jobs growth rather than housing growth in Montgomery, so that more riders on the Red Line will come north for jobs in the morning, and travel back south to the District or Prince George's County in the evening (the available capacity on the Red Line is in these directions and times).

3. What is your perspective regarding citizen activists in the county and their role in governance? Check all answers that apply.

We tend to see the "regulars" at hearings and meetings and it would be good to see more new faces.

I have marginal respect for most of the residents who are involved.

4. How would you rate the performance of the current Council over the past four years? If you are an incumbent, give your most candid assessment and supply comments to suggest ways the Council could improve as a body over the next four years. Also, please provide examples for your answers whether you are an incumbent or a challenger.

The Council has not always acted in the best interest of the public.

The Council has been irresponsible, particularly in financial matters.

The Council still has not made gains in terms of balancing growth against infrastructure needs in the county.

The Council complains every year that they must increase our taxes or else teachers, firemen and police will face layoffs. But none of the several thousand of other County Government employees seem to ever face similar layoffs. The County Council is dominated by the County Employees Unions and the Tax-Exempts (not-for-profits) and every four years promise them more money and benefits in exchange for their political support in terms of campaign funds, endorsements, and votes. The Council also talks a great story about controlled growth and managed development but every four years the incumbents raid the developers and realtors for campaign contributions while promising the developers less oversight. An then after the incumbents have won re-election, they are like Lucy and Charlie Brown's football -- They renege on most of their promises until the next election. It is time to stop this vicious cycle that benefits no one. The County is unfriendly to business which means that people live in Montgomery County but work in Virginia. Eventually, the only new residents in the county will be the illegals.

5. Please provide a brief assessment of the performance of the County Executive over the past four years related to environmental and quality of life issues. Supply comments if desired.

Environmental issues have not been a priority for the Executive.

Ike is a great guy and deserves a lot of credit for his business and personal wealth management. But he has been a disaster for the county during his 18 years on the County Council where his attendance record was very low and his 4 years as County Executive where his performance has focused on his personal perks.

6. If you are elected, will you introduce and support legislation geared toward quality of life issues as they relate to natural resource conservation? If so, describe in the comment field what you have in mind.

Yes

We need reasonable, responsible and responsive considerations towards our quality of life and how they relate to natural resource conservation. We need to plant more trees, but in our back yards instead of along power lines. We need to avoid "weed" trees like Bradford Pears and Poplars that are fast growing and pleasing to look at for about 15 years and then

they start to show wind damage and eventually break apart. We have done a lot to control flood and watershed issues. But massive parking lots that are unbroken by trees hold a lot of heat. We need to plant rows of trees as dividers in our parking lots.

7. Roughly 2/5 of the land that drains into the Anacostia River is in Montgomery County. The Anacostia is one of our nation's most polluted rivers. There is a plan to clean it up that recommends 3,000 specific restoration projects, including 1,700 "low-impact," green infrastructure projects like rain garden retrofits for parking lots. Will you support Montgomery County's role in the Anacostia Restoration Plan, including in allocating necessary funds from the County budget, along with working for State and Federal funding, in order to ensure that these crucial retrofits will be built?

Yes

8. The 2010 stormwater permit issued to Montgomery County by the Maryland Department of the Environment is the result of a four-year collaborative effort on the part of the Stormwater Partners, DEP and other agencies. In order to ensure the success of this important pollution clean-up mandate, will you support annual increases in the Water Quality Protection Charge (now at \$45.50 per household per year)?

No

9. Our region has experienced a record number of water main breaks in recent years, some of them catastrophic, and WSSC has warned repeatedly that this trend will accelerate unless we approve the funding increases necessary to fill the massive backlog of deferred maintenance. WSSC has for many years, requested that both of its counties, Montgomery and Prince Georges, support and enact an Infrastructure Renewal Fund. While Montgomery has traditionally supported higher rate increases for WSSC than has Prince George's, neither County has yet supported or achieved establishment of the absolutely crucial Infrastructure Renewal Fund at the levels requested by WSSC. Will you support establishment of the WSSC Infrastructure Renewal Fund at the level required to rebuild and maintain our water and sewer infrastructure?

Yes

But we need better oversight of the WSSC management

10. Montgomery County faces a conundrum when it comes to future land use. We have residential green wedges and the Agricultural Reserve to protect. In the 1980s, the county lost a significant amount of forests to development. The Forest Conservation Law has made some progress in terms of protecting or replanting forest in the Up County. However, with shifting development patterns and about 6% of land left in the county for new development, there is a need to protect trees in urban areas. What approach would you recommend increase the tree canopy in the Down County?

Encourage residents to plant appropriate trees in their yards but away from power lines. Stop new development along the RT-29 corridor. The high density housing along with the ICC is too much. We really need to develop a more business friendly (for-profit) environment in Montgomery County so that there will be more employment opportunities along the I-270 corridor. We need to stop providing incentives to a few targeted business and provide the same incentives to all businesses. The County is proud of the 1000 plus tax exempt entities (non-profit) in the County with over \$1.9 billion in payrolls and \$4.5 billion in spending. Most of these are great organizations, but many receive significant funds from the County out of our taxes plus these entities pay no taxes. It would be great to have 1000 new tax paying (for-profit) businesses in the county with \$1.9 billion in payrolls. More tax paying businesses means more employment and more money to fund worthy conservation efforts.

11. What types of development would you be most supportive of from the list below? Choose two.

Redevelopment/adaptive re-use of previously developed land (Downtown Silver Spring is a good example.)

Business and industrial or technology centers

12. Ten Mile Creek in the Clarksburg area, straddles the Agricultural Reserve, and is the last best creek in Montgomery County, according to surveys by both County biologists and citizen stream monitors. Ten Mile Creek has more diversity and abundance of fish, aquatic bugs, and amphibians than other creeks throughout the County, and it is part of our Little Seneca Reservoir backup Drinking Water Supply. Montgomery County has proposed a huge bus depot and transportation equipment maintenance facility for the Ten Mile Creek watershed, near the existing County Jail. Environmental and civic groups have called on Montgomery County to find another location for the depot and to split up the dual-purpose facility if that is what it takes to protect Ten Mile Creek. Do you support moving the proposed County Bus Depot to a location outside of fragile Ten Mile Creek watershed?

Yes

13. As called for in the 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan, Montgomery must now apply the lessons learned from Clarksburg Town Center development, including the pollution of streams and loss of groundwater, in deciding how to proceed for Ten Mile Creek. The Ad-Hoc Water Quality Working Group report was issued in July 2010 to the Council. In this report, members of civic, environmental groups and county agencies called for a Master Plan amendment (already recommended by the Planning Board in the summer of 2009) that will enable the County to apply protections proven to work in Upper Paint Branch and Upper Rock Creek. Will you support a Master Plan Amendment in order to apply necessary protections to Ten Mile Creek? Please explain why or why not.

Yes

It a great idea.

14. Do you believe Montgomery County goes far enough to work collaboratively with adjacent jurisdictions (meaning other counties, cities and towns and state and federal parkland) to address environmental/quality of life concerns? Use the comment field to be more specific about our current efforts.

No, we can do more and should reach out to our adjacent counties more for information-sharing and best practices.

15. Does Montgomery County do a good job of integrated regional planning when it comes to setting the policy agenda for natural resource issues? Please explain your answer in the comment field and provide ideas as to what more we can and should be doing in this regard.

No

16. M-83 is a proposed highway project that could slice across parts of the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, increase sprawl in the Up County, and otherwise wreak havoc on our remaining high-quality rural streams in its path. Environmental groups including Audubon Naturalist Society and local landowners, including Day Spring Silent Retreat Center, oppose M-83 and want it removed from the plans. Do you support or oppose M-83? Please state your reasons in either case.

Support

Down county sprawl and congestion is great but Up County sprawl is bad. Let's get real -- Either a county wide building moratorium or let development proceed throughout the county. We really need another Potomac River Crossing to relieve pressure on the beltway. The daily migration from Gaithersburg and points west down I-270 and around the beltway to jobs in Virginia adds to pollution and lowers our quality of life. We need to extend the ICC across the Potomac to the Dulles Toll Road or add a Potomac crossing south of Germantown. Otherwise, Montgomery must revise our spend and tax policies and become business friendly so that Montgomery County residents can be employed in Montgomery County instead of Virginia.

17. What do you think are the two most pressing issues facing Montgomery County in terms of quality of life and protection of our natural resources?

The division between County Residents who speak English and those who speak Spanish. Immigrants from all over the world come to Montgomery County and become legal citizens by passing a citizenship exam and an English proficiency test. Nearly all new, legal US Citizens speak English. The exception is the poor, uneducated, Spanish speakers who work as day laborers, maids, and lawn maintenance personnel. Our politicians want to keep these folks segregated and speaking Spanish so that they will become a permanent dependent class that votes a straight Democratic Ticket. This leads to major social problems and unemployment issues when the economy declines. This leads to gangs, crimes and long term poverty as the children of these illegal Spanish speaking aliens feel more and more isolated from the English speakers in Montgomery County. We need to end the employment of illegals and end the sanctuary status for illegals in Montgomery County. We should welcome legal Spanish speakers just as we welcome all legal immigrants. Would the county be equally welcoming for thousands of illegals from Africa, China, India or the middle-east? I suspect the answer would be a resounding NO. The second issue is how our County Council operates. I realize that most Montgomery County residents favor higher taxes and socialism. Hippie communes in the 60's and 70's were fun for a while. But then everyone got older and the fun seemed to evaporate. We have one party government in Montgomery County. Council members start out as one-note community activists and typically migrate through the Board of Education and onto the County Council. Few leave the Council except by death or a higher elective position. There is a deadly pact between Council incumbents and the County Government Employee Unions. It is fun while the funds last. With our currently new County taxes, State Taxes and the huge increase in Federal taxes in 2011 the funds are starting to shrink. We are in this together and we need to work together. What happens to a 75 year old retired teacher, fireman or police officer when the retirement monies run court? Let's work together and fix these problems now while we can. Let's avoid new spending programs until we get our current spending under control.

18. What role do you see the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission in regarding the relationship to the Council in the future? Would you like to see changes at M-NCPPC? If so, please explain in the comments field.

M-NCPPC role should be a strong partnership with Council.

M-NCPPC has outgrown its usefulness as an agency and should be restructured.

19. Montgomery County has been losing its street trees at a rapid pace, with the rate of replacement far below the rate of tree removal. Which of the policy options listed below do you support to replant and support a vibrant street tree program? (Check all that you support):

Reorganize: Take the street tree program out of DOT and move it to the Parks Department or back to DEP.

Change the current default situation: When a street tree is cut down, a tree is replanted only at the owner's request. Change this to a requirement for automatic replanting where a street tree has been taken down.

20. If you were to recommend budget cuts and could make cuts in one of the following program areas, which would it be? And please tell us why in the comments field.

Environmental education in county schools

Environment education in county schools is political indoctrination instead of education. Schools need to educate and provide students with the tools to succeed not the indoctrination to blindly follow a one-party socialist movement.

21. Please rate your level of concern on each of the following environmental issues:

	Not concerned (1)	Somewhat unconcerned (2)	Somewhat concerned (3)	Very concerned (4)
Watershed protection and stormwater management			X	
Loss of tree canopy in the County			X	
Impacts of climate change and the need for county action	X			
Condition of street trees in County neighborhoods				X
Sustainable transportation				X
Parks and green space preservation				X
Energy efficiency in Montgomery County businesses and homes				X
Smart growth land use planning				X
Citizen involvement in environmental and quality of life issues			X	
Walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods			X	

Other (please specify):

22. If you were to rank and prioritize the following in order of the top three most important, how would you rank these areas?

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)
Watershed protection	X		
Climate change impacts			
Increasing the county tree canopy		X	
Developing alternatives to reduce the number of daily car trips in the county			X

Other (please specify):

23. Montgomery County has an award-winning park system of nearly 35,000 acres. The Parks Department, under M-NCPPC, has demonstrated a strong commitment to stewardship of the wide range of natural resources within our parkland. But the County Council recently made budget cuts severe enough to endanger the continued maintenance of these resources. Do you support restoring vital funding to maintain our parks?

No

24. If you have any other environmental concerns/issues, please list them below.

No Response

25. What will get Montgomery County to the target of 80% in reduction of greenhouse gases by the year 2050 that is cited in our county Climate Action Plan? Choose the following policies that you will commit to supporting.

Increasing tree canopy to a healthy countywide percentage

Going full scale on community and business education on energy efficiency

Offering tax credits as incentives to businesses and residents reducing energy consumption

26. Are you supportive of the carbon tax recently passed in Montgomery County? Please tell us why you are or are not supportive of the legislation?

No

The Carbon Tax was simply another money grab by the Spend and Tax County. None of the Council Members have a technical education or background. They are simple one-note community activists who need a new tune to play. Following Al Gore who has absolutely no technical education or background (even though he claims to have invented the internet and reinvented the federal government) is following a Pied Piper down the road to failure. The UN Climate Change guru is an economist with no technical background. We need to be more efficient in our energy usage. But setting an arbitrary Carbon Tax is foolish. We will suddenly discover that the elderly on fixed incomes will stop using their air conditioners in the summer because they cannot afford to pay the new Carbon Tax and they will start dying. Then we will need a new program to round up the elderly and transport them to cooling stations. In the winter we will find them dying of the cold

and again we will need a new county program to round them up and take them to warming shelters. Suddenly we will need a new tax to pay for the cooling and warming shelters. At the end of the day the Carbon Tax will have amazing unintended and expensive consequences that will require more spending and more taxes and in the end will accomplish nothing useful.

27. The current Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law only applies to tracts of land that are 40,000 square feet or larger, approximately one acre. Would you consider lowering the threshold to protect more forest?

No

28. Please tell us what you would consider to be a reasonable threshold for triggering a forestry law.

40,000 square feet or more

29. Have environmental concerns changed your voting patterns in the areas listed below? If you are not an incumbent, then please skip to the following question.

	Yes	No
Watershed protection		X
Green building and Low Impact Development or LID		X
Climate change impacts in and around Montgomery County		X
Increasing tree canopy		X
Energy efficiency		X
Land use planning		X
Pedestrian safety		X

Other (please specify): I am a candidate not an incumbent

30. Please rate your agreement with the following statement:

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I would vote to support legislation that would strengthen tree and forestry laws in Montgomery County.			X	

31. If you are not in favor of adopting stronger tree and forestry legislation, please explain your position and how you have come to this conclusion.

Instead of jumping to the conclusion that stronger tree and forestry legislation is needed, I would prefer to discuss it with my constituents. Too often our County, State and Federal governments are ramming unwanted and in many cases unneeded legislature down our throats.

32. Should the State have more jurisdiction to regulate natural resources in Montgomery County?

I am not confident in the ability of state legislators to provide oversight and guidance in our county.

33. Does the county need to be more active in terms of educating residents about energy consumption? If yes, please provide ideas as to how.

No

34. What are the solutions to addressing the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay? What role should Montgomery County residents play, if any?

This needs more consideration and explanation than is possible in this survey

35. Can you recommend a proposal for action within the legislative and Executive branches of government in Montgomery County to address Chesapeake Bay restoration?

No Response

36. Please provide any additional comments you care to provide.

No Response

37. Please fill in your name.

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