

1. What is the most important issue facing Cecil County and what specific steps would you take you resolve it?

There are two important issues the county is currently facing. Drug abuse and closing the infrastructure gap in the growth corridor. Regarding Drug Abuse, it's been estimated that at least 80% of our inmates at the Detention Center are there due to drug abuse related issues and in 2011, Cecil County was second only to Baltimore City for intoxication deaths in the State of Maryland. By effectively addressing drug abuse, we will spend less on crime, social services, emergency services and other county supported programs. The first step will be to educate the community on the real situation of drug abuse in the county. Then we need to educate the public on what they can do to fight drugs in their neighborhood and what options are available to address drug abuse effectively. Too many are skeptical of the drug treatment programs offered in the county and instead chose to go out of county for treatment. Therefore, drug treatment programs need to be assessed on the State level and if they are not effective, provide programs that have been proven effective in other areas. Additional tools need to be available for our law enforcement community such as nuisance laws or attaining the HIDTA (Federal High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) Designation. The nuisance laws helps to shut down properties which have been cited with repeat drug activity and the HIDTA Designation provides additional federal resources and revenue to support the Drug Task Force. In reference to closing the infrastructure gap, there has been a misconception that Cecil County does not have infrastructure in the growth corridor. But we do have infrastructure and the goal is to strategically close up the gaps. Because the County retained ownership of all the sewer plants, we are in the drivers seat of determining where the infrastructure will go. However, in the Artesian contract, Cecil County was at the mercy of Artesian in determining when they would provide infrastructure in the growth area and they were very clear that they would not provide a timeline. The County Sewer Infrastructure Plan separates the growth corridor into "areas" so the county can strategically determine which of these areas will be developed first by determining demand, public/private investing or economic development opportunities. Cecil County should also explore other sources to fund the infrastructure (such as video lottery revenue) to ensure the tax payers will not bear the majority of the costs. Additional infrastructure will also be made available once we promote the reclamation of brownfield sites. There are available incentives and funding by the State of Maryland and thirty percent of the brownfield sites already have existing infrastructure.

2. In your view, does increased residential development provide a larger tax base for the county or put a greater strain on county resources? How would you plan to balance these competing forces?

It depends on what type of residential development is occurring and where it's located. If it's high density growth in areas not equipped to manage it, there will be increased costs to the county for additional infrastructure to roads, schools and emergency services. Controlling sprawl and directing growth to the designated growth areas, puts less of a strain on county resources and effectively manages growth. The transfer of development rights program would provide for incentives to develop in the growth areas when development rights are purchased in the preservation areas. While some residential development does provide for a larger tax base, economic development contributes more

effectively to the tax base because they require less public services. Investing in agriculture preservation is also a positive investment for expanding the tax base because it provides the infrastructure necessary for the continuation of farming and the agriculture industry is revenue positive while residential development is usually revenue negative with respect to increasing the tax base.

3. How would you approach *funding* for the Watershed Implementation Plan?

Federal, State and grant funding will be available to partially fund the estimated \$600 million cost for Cecil County's Watershed Implementation Plan. The costs are associated with upgrading sewer plants, replacing septic systems and the overwhelmingly most expensive cost is storm water management which has an estimated \$424 million price tag. To offset the cost for the WIP, we should encourage volunteer initiatives such as planting tree buffers around streams or wetland plantings to naturally clean up run off. Cecil County will aggressively pursue flush tax revenue to exchange septic systems in the critical area for the best available technology systems and federal and state grant funding to support retrofitting of storm water systems. We should also collaborate with the local watershed associations for grant funding to hire consultation on watershed assessments to identify restoration project site opportunities. Cecil County Government can and should provide resource support for Homeowner Associations to repair and upgrade their storm water management systems. We need to also educate the citizens that they are responsible for the maintenance and repair of these systems and it would be much cheaper for them to repair than if the county fixed and placed a lien on each of the properties.

4. What specific economic development initiatives would you support to bring more jobs to the county? Are there any "downsides" or "costs" to these initiatives and how would you balance these?

As mentioned before, Cecil County is in control of implementing infrastructure in the growth corridor and we have the opportunity to strategically invest in the targeted areas to close up the gaps. Our economic development office will play a strategic role in negotiating with potential businesses to communicate what areas are currently available for economic development and what areas are targeted for infrastructure in the near future. Attracting high quality jobs should be a priority and we should aggressively market our proximity to APG. In the past we have attracted large distribution centers because of location to I-95 and Rt. 40. However, this type of business requires large tracts of land, creates large amounts of truck traffic and doesn't provide many jobs in return. There needs to be a conscious decision to target higher quality jobs and industry. I support the continued promotion and expansion of our tourism industry which provides economic returns on many different levels. Promoting both of our State Parks and our many attractions brings additional visitors into the county that spend their money on our local businesses but do not require any of our services. We also have growth potential in the agricultural industry by promoting value added opportunities to our local farmers.

5. How would you assure that county departments can effectively analyze financial and environmental impacts of development proposals? What sort of organization do you envision for this work?

To properly manage and accommodate for future growth, you have to realistically assess a development's impact and I would support making this a part of a comprehensive development process. Currently, there are requirements during the development process to provide information regarding financial and environmental impact of a development proposal. This includes a traffic impact study, impact to local schools, road improvements, storm water management, forest conservation, buffers, etc. I agree that an in depth financial analysis is warranted for development proposals especially if they are trying to earn the designation of a Planned Unit Development. Previously, the applicants for a PUD have only provided the property tax revenue and do not take into account the costs in services the housing development will require. The intention was that the PUD had to earn the higher density by providing an economic development component and providing for a live/work community. A change does need to be made to the ordinance to clarify more restrictive economic justification. Environmental impacts must be anticipated in the development process to properly plan for placing the burden for required maintenance and improvements on the Homeowner's Associations and not Cecil County. I do not support growing government so I would propose that this expanded financial and environmental analysis of development proposals would be reviewed by our existing departments of DPW and Planning & Zoning but developed and submitted by the developers. If the information in the analysis is found deficient, the developer has the burden of resubmitting.

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