

Name: **Bill Cook**
Address: Bethesda
What office are you seeking?: County Council, District 1
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: www.cookinthecouncil.com

2 **Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?**

Parts of the county that preserve agricultural land. The Ag Reserve benefits our community by protecting our environment, preserving our history, providing recreation and access to locally produced farm products like fruits, vegetables, dairy, and wine. The MoCo Ag Reserve is one of the largest and most successful reserves in the country.

3 **What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?**

We must do all we can to protect our environment and natural resources. We must limit the use of pesticides and ban harmful chemicals while encouraging organic and sustainable methods in the ag reserve.

4 **What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?**

We should encourage agritourism in the ag reserve. And, when/if cannabis is legalized in Maryland, we should foster the production of cannabis to increase economic benefits of the reserve.

5 **Can you identify some of the top challenges to the Reserve's local agriculture and what actions you would take, if elected, to address them?**

One challenge is the public perception of the Ag Reserve. The County should have a public campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of the Ag Reserve and increase agritourism.

6 **What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?**

The county should provide funding assistance and education to help keep farming viable in the reserve.

7 **How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?**

We can reduce trash/waste by limiting the amount of trash pickup for each household - additional waste beyond a set threshold would incur additional costs while recycling will be free and unlimited. This will encourage more recycling and less trash.

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- 8 **How can we expand the role the County's schools play in the support of a healthy local food system and the success of local agriculture? Do you support a rural schools' policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools acknowledging the unique nature of schools in region set aside for farmland and open space preservation?**

Yes, agricultural education should be offered in our schools - particularly in the areas closest to the reserve.

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- 9 **Currently the County is exploring how best to support a strong agricultural economy through agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on farm breweries and wineries. What are your thoughts about how best to advance on farm activities within the context of the master plan?**

I support the efforts to boost agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on-farm breweries, wineries, and cannabis production.

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- 10 **What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?**

I would only support a second Potomac crossing if it does not impact the Ag Reserve in any way. I am undecided on the M83 highway. The area needs help alleviating the traffic but many residents, who live in that part of the county, tell me that the M83 is not necessary; that expanding/optimizing existing roadways could solve the problem.