

Name: **Hoan Dang**
Address: Silver Spring
What office are you seeking?: Montgomery County Council, At-Large
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: www.VoteDang.com

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

My Response would be that the Ag Reserve is a precious County resource and one of the best examples of land conservation policies in the country. It is important because the Montgomery County Ag Reserve helps retain over 500 farms that contributes millions of dollars to Montgomery County's annual economy. Additionally, the Ag Reserve protects over 1/3 of our County's land resources which preserves our public water access, tree canopy and provides access to green open spaces for all county and state residents to enjoy.

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

One of my top priorities is the protection of the Ten-Mile Creek located near Clarksburg MD. Ten Mile Creek is one of the healthiest waterways remaining in the entire Chesapeake Watershed and supports a greater amount of aquatic life than anywhere else in Montgomery County. Yet Ten-Mile Creek watershed is constantly under threat of development proposals that can lead to environmental degradation and water quality issues due to runoff. This is especially important considering Ten-Mile Creek is the cleanest tributary flowing into the Little Seneca Reservoir, the closest emergency drinking water supply for the 4.3 million residents of Washington DC, as well as a popular area for recreational use by our Countys residents. Additionally, the protection of the Ag Reserve is a top priority of mine as over 1/3 of our County's land resources resides within this protected area that represents a majority of our open sp

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

My vision for future of the County's Agricultural Reserve is to maintain the great agricultural tradition of this area. The Ag Reserve is currently home to over 500 farms that provide a source of fresh and locally sourced produce to our County's residents (especially for those down-county). You would be hard pressed to walk through a farmers market in Bethesda or Silver Spring and not find local fresh produce from our Ag Reserve. However, the of the agricultural workforce combined with the skyrocketing cost of land in the Ag Reserve threatens the future existence of these farms. To continue our County agricultural tradition, we must support our County farms and those interested in continuing this tradition

- 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?**

As mentioned in my response to Question #4 above, I think keeping our Countys farms viable is one of the top challenges to the Ag Reserves local agriculture. One the primary reasons for the viability issue of our

Countyfarms is the skyrocketing cost of land in the Ag Reserve. Much of this is due to long time farmers retiring and selling their land to those who have no intention of continuing the farming of the land, but for building upon the land. That is why I was supportive of the Building Lot Termination (BLT) program that restricts residential, commercial, industrial and other non-agricultural uses on a given property. I would also support a study to re-evaluate the dwelling unit to acreage ratio in the Agricultural Zone (AR), Rural Zone (R), and Rural Cluster (RC) to see if a change in requirements would help ease the skyrocketing cost of land in the Agricultural Reserve.

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

I believe that one thing we can do to support our local farm business and rural communities is to help keep the cost of acquiring farm land at attainable levels, so the next generation of farmers can thrive on the Ag Reserve. I also believe we need to increase the awareness of the Ag Reserve and the economic, social and environmental benefits that it brings. Many people that I talk to in the down-county simply do not understand the size, scope and benefits derived from our Ag Reserve. I would like to work with the Montgomery County Department of Agriculture to showcase the beauty, fun and excitement of rural Montgomery County and the Ag Reserve. From the Sugarloaf Vineyard to Truffula Farm to the peach orchards along Peach Tree Road; there is something for everyone's farm businesses, rural communities and Ag Reserve to thrive, we need buy-in from all of our residents.

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

I support closing down the Dickerson Waste Incinerator, which is one of the worse pollutants in Montgomery County. The 22-year-old plant incinerates more than 600,000 tons of commercial and residential waste annually and converts the heat into electricity. Unfortunately, the plant was not in operation for nearly one third of the 2016 year due to low availability of replacement parts. As a result, more than 12,000 tons of waste piled up, and the plant caught on fire in December 2016. Since the fire was not inside the incineration chamber, it burned out of control for nearly 11 days and released tons of toxic and hazardous smoke into the air.

I believe our recycling program is currently running well with an actual waste diversion rate of 61% in 2016 and a target rate of 70% by 2020. I look forward to expanding our County's composting program, in the years to come, by making it less

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?

I believe there is a role for our County schools to play in the support of a healthy local food system. I would support a pilot program to supply fresh and seasonal produce to our Countyschools to determine the feasibility of such a program. I also believe that teaching our children about the Ag Reserve and local agriculture is important. Since 1990 the annual Montgomery County Farm Tour and Harvest Sale help connect our County residents with the Ag Reserve and its local businesses. I would also like to see a Farm Tour for MCPS students.

I do support a rural schools policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools that acknowledges the

unique nature of schools in the region set aside for farmland and open space preservation. I would like to expand MCPS Choice programs and vocational/technical programs, such as those at Thomas Edison High School of Technolo

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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 appropriate on-farm and agritourism activities, such as farm wineries and farm breweries. Agritourism and commercial activities in the Reserve should be consistent with the promotion and preservation of agriculture, and they should comply with the zoning codes established in the master plan.

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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?**

We need to reduce traffic congestion and increase transportation options by taking a comprehensive and holistic approach to our transportation infrastructure. We need to invest in all transportation modes including trains, buses, roads, bike lanes, sidewalks and everything in-between, including promoting remote work options. Specifically, I would:

- Adopt a multi-modal transportation approach including innovative bus-rapid transit (BRT) systems in key corridors, Corridor Cities Transit (CCT) public transit, and other master-planned road, transit, bike, intersection and pedestrian improvements.
- Have planning policies that allow for more high-density and smart growth development near transit hubs while protecting fringe residential neighborhoods and ensure that new developments are accompanied by new investments in transportation infrastructure and new schools.

I neither support an additional Potomac bridge crossing nor an outer beltway. At this time, I am unde