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

The Ag Reserve is the County's forward thinking, long term plan to protect green and rural space in its northern tier, representing one third of the state's land area. It ensures that agricultural and other low density uses of our land continue in perpetuity, offering a respite from more suburban and urban environments, and contains an abundance of recreational, as well as historical and cultural opportunities. It is a retreat, an economic asset, and an investment in our long term sustainability as a community.

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

In general, I think the County must continue to prioritize the preservation of open and green space (which represents 50% of the county's area) and act as a responsible steward of resources such as our waterways. Much of these decisions reside with the county because it is the land use and zoning authority, but at the state level funding programs such as Program Open Space--which we have restored over the past few years--and the Forest Conservation Act--which we are in the process of strengthening--can be vital.

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

Again, the County is the land use and zoning authority. I hope that the next Council and County Executive maintain the sanctity of the Ag Reserve. To the extent the state can be helpful in maintaining the Ag Reserve, I am happy to help. I have toured the Ag Reserve as a State Delegate--and of course visited in my personal capacity with my family as well--because I know its importance.

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?

The Ag Reserve is always under pressure from incremental developments nearby, loopholes that allow increased development/construction on subdivided property, and issues related to septic versus sewer. I will always work with our county partners to protect the Ag Reserve and maintain it as originally envisioned.

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

We can fund the Maryland Farms and Families Act to allow more people to purchase products at local farmers' markets from local agricultural interests. We can continue to allow the creation and expansion of

such farmers' markets. We can also prioritize local agriculture as part of our state commerce strategy to connect those farmers who are interested with larger scale economic opportunities.

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

This is a huge issue, as one state of Maryland study found that 2/3 of the waste that shows up at landfills could be diverted. The Maryland Recycling Act goals have been exceeded by Montgomery County, meaning the goal must be increased. Countywide composting must also be rolled out as countywide recycling was thirty years ago. The County's incinerator should be phased out as waste diversion efforts improve. I plan to focus on the Maryland Recycling Act if reelected to another term.

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 would be happy to work on this issue. I had some interaction with a farmer from outside the Ag Reserve (at Brickyard in Potomac) about expanding the Public School's programs for farming and agriculture. Continuing those efforts should be a priority for future school board and council members, as well as state officials.

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?

It requires a delicate balance to ensure that over-development of an area specifically set aside for preservation does not occur to allegedly benefit the preserved area. But licensing for breweries and wineries, as well as catering, restaurants, and party rooms/places should be as easy and cost effective as possible within the context of the existing Ag Reserve zoning.

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?

My regional transportation priorities remain focusing on public transit first, including our regional Metro system (I am the sponsor of legislation to reform and fund the agency that runs Metro), the Purple Line, and Bus Rapid Transit. That does not mean no roads or road related projects anywhere ever again, but they should not be the focus of significant investment as a second Potomac Bridge crossing or M83 would require. There are far better, more environmentally responsible uses of our tax dollars.