



## Montgomery County 2022 Candidate Questionnaire Sharif Hidayat

### Personal Information:

**Name** Sharif Hidayat

**What Office Are You Seeking in the 2022 Election?** County Council Distict 7

**Where Can Voters Learn More About Your Positions Or Contact Your Campaign?**

<https://votesharif.com/>

Please Answer the Following Questions- responses will posted in their entirety and will not be edited.

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

The Ag Reserve was created in 1980 and represents everything right about Montgomery County for preserving and recognizing the benefits of our green space. Our farmers make significant contributions to the local economy while simultaneously providing our residents with resources to food. Aside from the economic benefit, the Ag reserve represents a community value to our kids and future generations that responsible land stewardship is an important value to have.

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

My vision for the future of the Ag Reserve is to enhance the ideas and aspirations of those who are custodians of the Reserve. I do not think politicians should be telling our green space ambassadors what vision they should have for the reserve but to take a supportive role in how the government can support your efforts in maintaining the reserve.

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

I would have to rely on the subject matter experts like Caroline Taylor, Kristina Bostik, Lee Langstaff, Joyce Bailey, Carole Bergmann, Cynthia Mackie and many more green space ambassadors to address priorities regarding stewardship. All to often people assume policy makers and politicians are better suited to address these issues. I disagree. I believe that the stewardship and its priorities should come from those who are actually the stewards. My role on the council would be to always provide a welcoming seat at the table so that my vote on any issue involving the Ag reserve is a thoughtful, educated, and responsible vote that puts the Ag reserves welfare as a number one priority.

**What role will you play with regard to ensure that we safeguard our drinking water supply both surface and groundwater?**

This question is easy. Water management should be clean and sustainable. Everything living comes from water. Any policy that works opposite to providing safe, clean and sustainable water is DOA when it comes to my vote.

**What are your top priorities to help the County address climate change? What role will the Ag Reserve play?**

1. Working with the County Unions to figure out how to best encourage telework for our County

Employees. I believe we can cut emissions significantly if we take what worked during the pandemic with telework and find solutions on reducing the amount of vehicles commuting back and forth to an office.

2. Removing the County Executive SUV from the County Fleet. There is no need for a County Executive to be driving in a gas guzzling SUV. The optics are horrible to people that are concerned about climate change and there is no reason why an electric car can't be substituted.

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

I really believe the best thing to support our local farm businesses is to ask the farmers themselves how we can help. Once the farmers provide that information, we should seek out assistance by applying for Federal, State and local funds to demonstrate that support. The non-profit sector can also be a great asset as well in providing that support. The best way to collaborate such efforts is to meet on a regular basis, exchange information and have open lines of communication. Working with MAP will be critical to achieving this kind of support.

### **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?**

Regional transportation is an issue. I personally know several people that commute from Virginia to Montgomery County to work in an office. I go back to my original comment about climate change. I believe the solution isn't to create more roads, highways and bridges but to reduce the amount of unnecessary vehicles on the road. I believe this can be achieved if we focus on the labor force that commutes to county government buildings when the work could be done elsewhere.

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

The County should take an active role in properly managing waste. I do believe the County actually does a decent job with their recycling efforts. However, there is always room for improvement. This issue is one of those issues that will require more education on my part. However, I do believe that we should set some reasonable goals and try to achieve them in a matter that doesn't have harmful effects to our environment.

### **What are your views on the general plan update "Thrive 2050," both the process and the draft now before the Council?**

The current draft of Thrive 2050 would be DOA if it hit my desk. The process is only as good as the Council allows it. My commitment is to always ensure that the custodians of our green space will always have a seat and say on any land issue discussions.

### **Do you believe that the way that local government branches, state entities, and the public currently interact can be improved? If so, what steps would you take?**

Absolutely! There is always room for improvement when it comes to communicating and interacting. All egos need to be checked at the door, sleeves need to be rolled up and productive conversation need to take place. I personally recommend that this be done over food. I look forward to grilling steaks while talking to all of the stakeholders. I am looking forward to working with all of you on preserving what we know as the Ag Reserve.