

Montgomery County 2026 Candidate Questionnaire



Personal Information:

Name Teresa Woorman

What Office Are You Seeking in the 2026 Election? Maryland House of Delegates, District 16

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

Voters can learn more about my positions, legislative work, and campaign priorities at www.TeresaWoorman.com.

You can also follow me on social media for updates from Annapolis and around District 16, and sign up for my newsletter through the website to stay informed about upcoming legislation, community events, and opportunities to get involved.

For campaign questions or to connect directly, you can reach me through the contact form on the website.



Please Answer the Following Questions- responses will posted in their entirety and will not be edited. There are no word limits but please try to be concise.

(pictured above: One Acre Farm)

Please share 3 sentences that help us to know you better:

I am Delegate Teresa Woorman, and I have had the honor of representing District 16 in the Maryland House of Delegates for the past two years. I came to Montgomery County from Mexico when I was nine years old, grew up in our public schools, and built my career in state and local government because I believe policy should expand opportunity and protect community. I am running to continue delivering thoughtful, effective leadership that preserves what makes Montgomery County special while planning responsibly for the future.

When we recently surveyed residents throughout the County, they shared that their top priority was a lack of government transparency - How can Montgomery County ensure transparency in their legislative and land use decision making? How would you grade current public engagement? Do you support re-establishing the Office of the People's Counsel?

Transparency is essential, especially in land use decisions that shape communities for generations. Montgomery County can improve by requiring clearer plain language summaries of proposals, earlier public notice before key milestones, and easier online access to staff reports, amendments, and financial impacts. Too often residents engage only after major decisions are already in motion. Transparency must start at the beginning, not at the final vote.

I would grade current public engagement as uneven. In some cases the County does a strong job with outreach, but in others the process feels rushed or overly technical, which can discourage participation. We should be meeting people where they are, including better translation access, hybrid meetings, and proactive outreach to communities that are often left out of land use conversations.

Yes, I support re establishing the Office of the People's Counsel if it is structured to be truly independent and focused on representing residents in complex land use and utility matters. Development and planning decisions involve significant legal and financial expertise. Residents deserve an advocate whose sole responsibility is protecting the public interest and ensuring decisions are fair, transparent, and accountable.

Do you believe that the way that local government branches (executive, legislative and planning), and state entities currently interact can be improved? If so, what steps would you take to bring better collaboration?

Yes, it can absolutely be improved.

Too often agencies and levels of government work in parallel instead of in partnership. I see in my day job how implementation challenges surface after policies are already set, which creates unnecessary friction.

I would push for earlier coordination between executive, legislative, planning, and state partners before major proposals are finalized. That means shared data, joint work sessions at the front end of projects, and clearer communication channels so we solve problems collaboratively rather than reactively.



Source water protection is a priority for County residents. Rural residents are served by wells drawn from a federally designated Sole Source Aquifer. What specific actions will you take to protect groundwater quality and ensure a sustainable supply of drinking water for residents, farms and businesses? And what do you propose with regard to protecting the Potomac River, a drinking water supply for more than 5 Million people in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Given increasing drought conditions, growing data center water consumption, and projections that the Potomac River may not meet future demand, how will you plan for a water-constrained future? What policies or investments would you prioritize during your term?

Protecting our sole source aquifer and the Potomac River has to be treated as core infrastructure planning, not an afterthought.

For groundwater protection, I would support stronger monitoring and reporting requirements for large

water users, tighter review of septic density in sensitive areas, expanded conservation easements in recharge zones, and investment in well testing and aquifer data collection so decisions are science driven. Land preservation in the Ag Reserve is also water protection policy. Forests and farmland are natural filtration systems, and we should treat them that way.

For the Potomac, we need to plan for a water constrained future now. That means aligning zoning and infrastructure approvals with verified water capacity, requiring high water use facilities to meet strict efficiency standards, and fully evaluating cumulative impacts before approving major projects such as hyperscale data centers. We should also expand water reuse, conservation incentives, and drought contingency planning.

I would prioritize investments in watershed restoration, stormwater upgrades, forest protection, and regional coordination with neighboring jurisdictions. Growth cannot outpace water supply. If we want a sustainable future, our water resources must set the boundary conditions for development decisions.

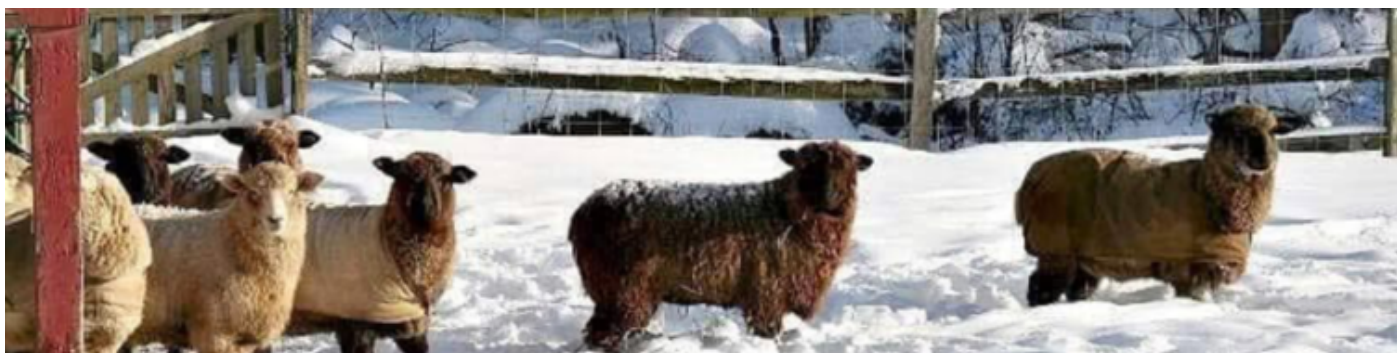
What role can the Ag Reserve play in helping our County address Climate Change? Do you have plans to bolster the county's funds to address climate change, i.e. expanded grant making, review of energy tax structure for high energy consumers such as data centers?

The Ag Reserve is one of Montgomery County's strongest climate tools. It stores carbon in forests and soils, reduces heat, protects waterways, and preserves open land that would otherwise generate far higher emissions if developed. Protecting it is not just about heritage. It is climate policy.

We should be supporting farmers who want to adopt regenerative practices, expand soil health programs, and participate in conservation initiatives that improve carbon sequestration and water quality. That means strengthening agricultural and climate grant programs and making sure funding is accessible to both established and new farmers.

On the revenue side, I believe high energy users should contribute proportionally to the climate impacts they generate. That includes reviewing our energy tax structure for extremely high consumption facilities such as hyperscale data centers and ensuring those revenues help fund climate resilience, energy efficiency, and renewable investments. If certain industries place greater strain on our grid and environment, they should help pay for mitigation and adaptation.

Addressing climate change requires both land preservation and smart fiscal policy. The Ag Reserve gives us a foundation. We need to protect it and pair it with investments that move the entire county toward a more sustainable future.



Do you support the long planned closure of the trash incinerator in Dickerson? Please provide some details as to why or why not. (pictured above: Shepherd's hey Farm)

Yes, I support the long planned closure of the trash incinerator in Dickerson.

For years, residents in nearby communities have raised honest concerns about air quality, health impacts, and environmental justice. Incineration releases toxic pollutants, contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, and does not align with modern waste reduction and recycling practices. Continuing to rely on it would mean locking in a facility that runs counter to the county's climate goals and public health priorities.

Closure must be paired with a real plan to reduce waste, expand recycling and composting, and invest in infrastructure that truly diverts waste from landfills and incineration. We can create smart alternatives that protect public health, support good jobs, and reduce our climate impact while honoring the voices of the community members most affected.

Should Montgomery County host hyperscale Data Centers? If so, what zoning standards and regulations should be established? Have we gathered all the necessary information to make an informed decision at this time?

No, Montgomery County should not host this.



Forests are a key tool for climate protection and protecting public health. How would forest protection and control of non-native plant species factor into your administration's goals? (Picture above - Wib Middleton)

Forest protection would be a core priority.

Forests are natural infrastructure. They store carbon, protect water quality, reduce flooding, and lower temperatures during extreme heat. Preserving mature tree canopy and limiting unnecessary clearing should guide land use decisions from the start.

I also support stronger enforcement of forest conservation laws and dedicated funding to control invasive species. Non native plants weaken ecosystems and reduce long term forest health. Protecting and restoring our forests is climate policy and public health policy at the same time.

Where do you stand on synthetic turf playing fields for school and community use?

We should not be using synthetic turf.



Challenges to current and future farmers are increasing. The average age of County producers is 59. The cost of leasing farm acreage (60% of farms are leasing) is skyrocketing while a diverse new crop of farmers struggle to afford farmland. Have you got any plans for how the County can help keep the industry healthy and promote expansion– with an understanding that resilience depends on local food and fiber production? (Pictured above: Afrithrive Farm)

Yes. If we want the Ag Reserve to stay strong, we have to make it easier for the next generation to farm here.

We should expand support for long term, affordable leases so farmers are not living year to year without stability. When most farms are leasing, predictable access to land is essential.

We also need to help new and diverse farmers get started through technical assistance, small grants, and shared equipment or infrastructure. Farming requires major upfront investment, and without support, many talented producers simply cannot enter the field.

The County can strengthen local food systems by buying more local products for schools and public facilities and by investing in the infrastructure that helps farmers process and distribute what they grow.