

Public Safety

Crime is increasing in Fairfax County. County police statistics show that between 2021 and 2022, assaults increased 11%, forcible sex offenses increased 20%, larceny/theft offenses increased 29%, motor vehicle thefts increased 13%, and robberies increased 37%!

We need to give our police department the resources and support it needs to attract and retain the best officers to make our community safer, including battling these increasing crime rates, the opioid/fentanyl public health crisis, and gang activity. Yet how can the County effectively recruit when starting salaries for County law enforcement officers rank near the bottom across the Washington Metro area?

As Supervisor, I will fight to ensure that unjustified and unnecessary spending in other program areas will be reallocated to public safety to make the County a safer place to live.

Education

As a father of three, all of whom were educated in Fairfax County public schools and went on to graduate from Virginia public universities, I am a firm believer in providing FCPS with the resources they need to effectively educate our children. This includes providing funding for pay raises that will ensure we attract and retain well-qualified teachers. What I will not do, unlike the current supervisor, is commit to "fully funding" the proposed school budget, i.e., rubber stamp the proposed school budget without ANY meaningful analysis. FCPS has ended the last two fiscal years with balances averaging over \$300M, yet Supervisor Lusk has never proposed to reduce their multibillion dollar budgets by even a \$1.

Moreover, this excess funding is not used by the School Board where it matters - in the classroom. Instead, much of it is used to expand school bureaucracy. For example, compared to FY 2020, when there were 4.5% more students (and the same number of schools), the FY 2024 School Budget includes 61 new assistant principal positions, and 250 new "specialist" positions, including 83 new "business specialists". In none of the budgets since FY 2020 has the School Board articulated a need for increases in these positions.

By accepting the school budget as proposed, the Board cannot effectively prioritize the best use of taxpayer dollars. Could the funding used to expand the school bureaucracy have been better used for increased affordable housing, parks, and/or library funding? That prioritization analysis does not occur with the current Board.

As supervisor, I will serve as a check on the School Board to ensure we spend our education resources effectively and wisely.

Affordable Housing

I support the existing County goal of 10,000 net new affordable housing units by 2034. I believe the County can best meet or exceed that goal, and provide more homes of all kinds (i.e., including market-rate housing), by incentivizing new housing in vacant or under-utilized buildings. This needs to be accomplished through both financial incentives and creating zoning and land use policies. It is apparent that offices are trending toward remote work which will increase the supply of such buildings. For example, the commercial percentage of the County's real estate tax base is steadily declining, and the amount of empty office space has recently increased by over 21 million square feet. It is imperative that the County work toward converting empty office buildings to housing (such as the long-vacant buildings at the intersection of Franconia and Backlick Roads), both to increase the amount of housing, but also to stabilize the real estate tax base.

Economic Development

We need to continue to improve our zoning, permitting, and regulatory environment so we can create and grow businesses in the County by eliminating unnecessary burdens. Reversing the decline in the commercial tax base, as well as investigating new sources of revenue other than taxes, is imperative to lessen the tax burden on residential homeowners.

Parks and Libraries

Parks and Libraries together constitute less than 2% of the County's operating fund. Our parks and library systems are a major factor in making the County a great place to live and raise a family. How the County funds its programs must be reprioritized. Reallocating even a small amount of funding to Parks and Libraries is a no-brainer.

Bike and Pedestrian Safety

I support the County's *Safe Streets for All* program to make bike and pedestrian paths safer for people walking, biking, and using other forms of active transportation. I support implementing advanced technology such as Intelligent Transportation Systems to reduce congestion and make roads safer. Deaths and serious injuries from bike and pedestrian accidents are avoidable and unacceptable.

I also support the *Safe Routes to School* program, which encourages students to walk or bike to school for their health, including focused investments in sidewalks, crosswalks, etc., that facilitate students being able to safely bike and walk to schools.

Carbon Neutrality

I support the County's Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) which established a goal of carbon neutrality in the County by 2050. This plan makes both environmental and financial sense. For example, we should be putting solar panels on every County school as soon as possible. Given FCPS spends over \$30M/year on electricity, not only is investing in solar critical to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but it is also cost effective in the long-term.

Constituent Service

One of the most important responsibilities of a County supervisor is to provide effective constituent service. As a long-time manager of support operations for the Federal Government, I am very experienced at providing effective support to customers, i.e., agency program offices. I will utilize that experience to provide effective constituent support (e.g., ensuring staff logs all communications requiring a response into a database and providing me with a weekly status report on closed (i.e., resolved) or open items).

I can't pledge that you will like or agree with the response to a concern or issue, but I believe it is of paramount importance to provide a response, good or bad. ~~gs all communications requiring a response into a database and providing me a weekly status report on resolved (i.e., closed) and open items).~~