



2022 Endorsement Questionnaire - Prince George's County Council
[All Responses Will be Made Public]

Candidate Name: JONATHAN WHITE
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Council Seat Sought: County Council At-Large

1. How does your life experience qualify you for the office you seek? **I am retired military and I have been an active member of our community through coaching in youth sports and serving on the board of our neighborhood security committee. I'm seeking office because I enjoy helping people, and I was raised to believe that serving the community as a politician is a way of giving back and being the voice of the community. However, I also believe that serving the community as a politician must be done for the right reasons. It should be viewed as a personal commitment to better our community, not to gain financially or professionally from it.**

2. What have the primary sources of your campaign's fundraising been, both in this campaign and past campaigns? **My campaign is funded by me, I do not take political donations.**

3. In 2018, the Prince George's County Council approved a small-donor public financing program for Council and Executive races to come into effect for the 2026 election. As yet, the Fair Election Fund Commission has not been set up and no funding has been allocated to the program. Do you support the small donor public financing program? If elected to the Council, will you work to ensure the program is funded each year leading up to the full funding needed for the 2026 election? **Yes, I support the small donor public financing program.**

4. In 1992, through a citizen-driven referendum, a two-term limit was placed on council members which the council repeatedly attempted to repeal over the years and repeatedly failed. As a result of the addition of two at-large seats on the council in 2016, the two-term limit has been diluted with council members allowed to jump from at-large to district seats and back without limit. Do you think district membership on the council is significantly different from at-large membership? Would you support or oppose the reinstatement of strict two-term limits? **I support reinstatement of strict two-term limits. Plus, I think that long serving politicians**

get monotonous and out of touch with the residents after too many years in a position. Plus, it opens too many opportunities to be manipulated to support people and ideas that might not be in the best interest of our county.

4. What is your position on the Maryland MAGLEV train proposal? **I DO NOT support the Maryland MAGLEV train proposal, this proposal would weaken current Amtrak and MARC service, plus Amtrak has just landed \$2.4 billion in federal funds toward large-scale upgrades along the Northeast Corridor.**

5. There is a great shortage of affordable housing in Prince George's County. What role can the County government have in creating policies that will provide affordable housing for residents at all income levels? How will you engage on this issue? **Ensuring residents are aware of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program.**

6. As part of the Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 (HB670-2021), the Maryland General Assembly requires each county to set up a Police Accountability Board (PAB). Prince George's County Council must pass legislation to fulfill this State mandate.

- a. Do you support incorporating the functions of the existing Citizen Complaint Oversight Panel in the PAB? **Yes**
- b. How would you ensure that the composition of the PAB reflects the community?
- c. Do you support a PAB with subpoena powers and paid investigators to effectively review complaints of police misconduct filed by members of the public? **Yes**
- d. Do you support adequate funding to staff the PAB to investigate the number of complaints filed, including budgeting for independent legal counsel? **Yes**

7. The County Council approved a councilmanic district map that was very different from the map created by the independent Redistricting Commission appointed by the council. The map was found illegal by two separate levels of our judicial system. Please share your thoughts on the Council's map, public opposition to the map, and the judicial finding. **I was upset at the gerrymandering attempt by a few of the councilmen and this is WHY Prince George's County needs change.**

8. The County has a massive backlog in school maintenance, renovation, replacement, and expansion, which former Board Chair and education stalwart, Dr. Alvin Thornton, has attributed in large part to 20 years of historical racial discrimination towards Prince George's students.

- a. The County's solution to part of this problem has been to engage in a Public-Private Partnership for the construction and maintenance of six middle schools - the first county in the entire country to engage in a P3 for school construction. Do you think that using private capital with significantly higher interest rates that places the burden on Prince George's taxpayers is a viable model to address historical racial discrimination or should the State make Prince George's schools whole through State funding? **I am not a fan of the use of the public-private partnership (P3) to bundle design, financing, construction, and maintenance of a group of schools. Five middle schools and one K-8 school are being built, and the maintenance contract will last 30 years. The total cost to the school district is \$1.23 billion, but the district hasn't spent a dime and**

won't until the schools are fully constructed and ready for students under the district's exact specifications. Based on the contract, we know the private partner agreed to a design-build price of about \$453 million for six schools. That is \$75.5 million per school. The national median cost to build an elementary and middle school combined is \$42.8 million. PGCPS is expecting to pay \$741 million over 30 years for maintenance services for 6 schools. That's a lot of money.

- b. What is the solution to fixing the huge remaining backlog in school maintenance, renovation, replacement, and expansion? **First, we must prioritize needed improvements, manage construction, and measure success of those projects. Next, we must reduce energy and operational costs by 20-30% and reinvest those savings to substantially improve school facilities.**
- c. What actions do you think the County should take to ensure that school capacity matches current and future demand? **We must make developers pay for school growth, a school impact fee. A charge per square foot on residential and commercial construction within a school district. These fees, charged both to developers of new properties and to property owners who remodel, are based on the premise that new construction will lead to additional students. Individual school districts decide whether to levy the fees and at what rate up to the maximum allowed by law. The maximum, adjusted for inflation every two years, is higher for residential than for commercial construction. Districts are required to substantiate the financial impact of new development and show that they have used the revenues to address that impact. Proceeds may be used for building or renovating schools and for portable classroom**

9. Should the Prince George's School Board be restored to a fully elected body? Why or why not? **A fully elected body is the best solution.**

10. Through legislation and through zoning and land use decisions, the Council plays a decisive role in county planning, and that planning drives transportation demand, demand for services and facilities, environmental and public health impacts, greenhouse gas emissions, and many other impacts. The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite eliminates the requirement that developers file Conceptual Site Plans (CSPs) for certain kinds of projects. CSPs provide critical opportunities for public review and comment on land use proposals early in the development process. Will you commit to working to restore the requirement for CSPs as soon as possible? **Yes.**

11. The County Council often uses Zoning Text Amendment bills to rewrite the Zoning Ordinance on the fly and to help developers advance certain projects without going through the normal public review process. ZTAs weaken the Zoning Ordinance and undermine the public's right to know and to have a meaningful say on development proposals. Will you commit to working to end or severely curtail the use of ZTAs and to ensuring that:

- a. Any ZTA bill filed includes a list and map of all of the potentially affected properties, as well as analysis of the potential impacts on communities, the environment, agricultural lands, and demand on public services and facilities? **Yes**
- b. For each potentially affected property, the Council notifies all adjoining property owners, local community associations and watershed organizations, and local municipalities, by

first-class mail and no less than 60 days prior to any public hearing on the ZTA? **Yes**

12. In May of 2021, the County Council unanimously passed CR-027-2021 in support of a single payer Medicare for All system at the federal level, becoming the first county in Maryland to support the federal legislative initiative. The resolution cited the increase in racial health disparities due to the pandemic that only a single-payer system could address. The resolution also pointed out that Medicare for All “would reduce County spending on healthcare and enable local governments across our state to invest additional dollars into education, environmental protection, housing assistance, and other critical services.” Will you join the County Council in calling on our Congressional delegation to support and enact federal legislation for a single-payer system? **Yes**