

Question 1:

Overdevelopment remains among the top concerns among Anne Arundel County voters. In your opinion, how well has the County balanced the need for growth with the adequacy of infrastructure to support it?

Question 1 responses, listed in alphabetical order:

The following four candidates, listed alphabetically, are running in the Democratic primary:

James Kitchin

The Pittman Administration has made good progress in balancing the need for growth with the adequacy of infrastructure to support it. When County Executive Pittman took office there was a backlog of infrastructure projects due to decades of underinvestment by previous administrations. I am proud of the work we have done to begin to catch up and am honored to have been part of the team to do it. In his first budget we created the Permanent Public Improvement fund to make real investments in catching up our school, public safety, and road infrastructure. We are better off today because of those investments. But there is still more work to be done. We have not done a good enough job at ensuring that private, for-profit developers contribute adequately to the infrastructure upgrades that their projects make necessary. This means that even as the county invests in projects to catch us up on where we need to be, the new growth that is happening is disrupting the balance even further. It doesn't have to be that way, and getting this balance right - so we grow in a sustainable, smart way that works for the people of this county - will be a year one priority of my administration.

Kyle Nembhard

The County has a history of poorly balancing the need for infrastructure to support development.

Allison Pickard

Anne Arundel County has tried to strike a middle ground between accommodating growth and protecting infrastructure. But make no mistake, we are facing a housing affordability crisis that is pushing young people out of the market while making it incredibly difficult for older adults to downsize and remain in the community. There is no other candidate in this race with a stronger track record or clearer commitment to making housing more affordable and accessible for the families and workers who call Anne Arundel County home. We cannot give in to the NIMBY politics of yesteryear that created the crisis we find

ourselves in. But many residents understandably feel the balance has tilted too far toward approving development before roads, schools, and utilities are fully ready. We have one of Maryland's strongest Adequate Public Facilities (APF) systems. New projects are tested against school capacity, traffic impacts, water/sewer availability, and other infrastructure benchmarks before receiving approval. I have also been a strong advocate for revitalization efforts in already-developed corridors and town centers which is a much more sustainable long-term strategy instead of continued greenfield sprawl. Traffic, overcrowding in schools, strains on our infrastructure and more are all legitimate concerns that must be addressed. That requires action. Unfortunately, because the conversation around Housing is so difficult, many politicians choose to do nothing. I believe doing nothing will only exacerbate these challenges. I've spent 8-years having the hard conversations and forging ahead on Housing, championing clear best practices like transit-oriented development that gets cars off our roadways, promoting redevelopment of underutilized spaces so that we can fight blight and preserve greenspace, and implementing mixed-use developments that create more walkable, safe communities where residents have access to the services that make for vibrant communities. Every step on that path to progress has required tremendous care and many emotional conversations with residents who are deeply invested in their neighborhoods. I believe it is essential we continue moving the ball forward, rather than taking the easy way out and choosing to do nothing. Whether it's our children trying to purchase their first homes, or our parents hoping to retire in dignity, we owe them progress.

Pete Smith

Infrastructure building and development take place over decades-long timeframes, and the condition that Anne Arundel now finds itself in will take years to remediate. Over several decades, the source of funding for infrastructure has shifted. Where once Anne Arundel received significant resources from the State of Maryland for schools, roads and more, the state has cut back its commitment and the burden has fallen more heavily on the local level. The predominant philosophy in Anne Arundel during that time has been to keep taxes low, and to consider caps on taxation which limit revenues and investment. Over the last few years, Anne Arundel leaders made some attempts to bridge the gap, including by altering funding mechanisms for capital programs. We changed the terms of our general obligation bonds from 20 years to 30 years, lowering annual payments and making more money available for borrowing. But still, many residents feel frustration over traffic, and the recent announcement of a sewer moratorium in the northwest portion of the county including Hanover shows that elements of our infrastructure are lagging behind our needs. Overall, Anne Arundel County remains a highly livable community with an excellent quality

of life for all, but there is without doubt room for improvement in balancing residential and commercial growth with infrastructure needs

Dave Crawford – Running unopposed in the Republican Primary

Frankly, the County has not balanced growth and infrastructure adequately. For too long, development has outpaced the roads, schools, stormwater systems, and public services needed to support it. The result: overcrowded classrooms, congested corridors, and flooded neighborhoods. Residents feel the consequences every day — and they're right to be frustrated.