

Question 4:

While there is no shortage of people who can afford to buy or rent expensive homes in Anne Arundel County, there is an acute need for workforce housing at 80-100% of the area median income. Recent legislation allows 90% of new homes to be sold or rented at full market price, with only 10% sold and 15% rented at a moderate price. What will you do as County Executive to increase the supply of affordable workforce housing?

Question 4 responses

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

James Kitchin

We need to be laser focussed on building affordable housing - not just more housing. I don't subscribe to a supply side, trickle down approach (Housing Filtering) because that never works well for working families. We also need to hold the line on environmental protections in our land use processes. My approach includes (a) providing concierge service for affordable housing, (b) setting up a one-stop shop for information on the types of affordable housing you can build in Anne Arundel, (c) modernizing the permitting process, and (d) cutting unnecessary red tape, and (e) strengthening our current programs. Some of the specific tools we will use include: Putting public land to work for the public good; Using the county's bonding authority to create a larger pool of capital we can use to provide gap financing for affordable housing projects; Utilizing community land trusts to create permanent affordable housing and protect communities against the negative effects of gentrification; Incentivizing the building of accessory dwelling units (ADUs); Demanding a higher percentage of for-profit development projects to be offered at rates affordable to our workforce; Protecting tenants by outlawing price gouging for rental units.

Kyle Nembhard

I would prioritize workforce housing incentives near job centers and transportation corridors with existing and/or potential for viable transportation options to reduce car dependency. The key is to make sure developers do not exploit workforce housing provisions for profit.

Allison Pickard

Anne Arundel County needs more housing across the entire continuum, from supportive transitional housing and subsidized housing for our most vulnerable neighbors to

attainable workforce housing and market-rate housing. Teachers, police officers, firefighters, nurses, tradespeople, service workers, young families, seniors, and individuals transitioning out of homelessness all need housing options that are realistically within reach. The housing shortage and affordability crisis require us to use every tool in the toolbox to meet the needs of current and future residents. As County Executive, I will focus on increasing housing supply in a way that is practical, data-driven, and sustainable. First, we need a comprehensive housing needs analysis tied directly to the Land Use Map and zoning designations established in Anne Arundel County Plan 2040. The County should identify where current zoning aligns with projected housing demand, where gaps exist, and what policy changes are necessary to support a broader range of housing options across all income levels and life circumstances. Second, we must establish measurable goals for supportive and transitional housing, subsidized housing, attainable workforce housing, and market-rate housing production. A healthy housing market requires movement throughout the entire continuum. The County should track production targets, affordability outcomes, and geographic distribution so we can evaluate whether our policies are actually delivering meaningful housing opportunities. Third, we need to break down bureaucratic barriers that increase costs and delay construction. That includes streamlining approvals, reducing duplicative processes, revisiting outdated regulations, and creating clearer pathways for projects that provide attainable and workforce housing. Time and uncertainty add substantial costs that are ultimately passed on to renters and homebuyers. We should also continuously evaluate whether our existing policies and moderate-income housing requirements are producing enough units at truly attainable price points. If policies are not achieving real affordability outcomes, the County must be willing to adjust them. Finally, affordability depends in part on overall supply. If we fail to produce enough housing at every level of the market, costs will continue to rise across the board. The County should continuously evaluate its housing policies to ensure we are creating real housing choice, expanding affordability opportunities, and producing housing that meets the needs of Anne Arundel County residents at every stage of life and income level

Pete Smith

I have a comprehensive plan to increase the supply of affordable housing, which can be found on my website.

I will review surplus land to identify that could be provided to the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County and Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. to create a land bank that would provide financial leverage to create units that can include income restrictions that make them affordable. The commission can then use the funds to develop new affordable housing.

To accelerate the development of affordable housing, my administration will build and

strengthen partnerships with non-profit developers such as Habitat for Humanity, as well as major employers. These partnerships can expand the county's development capacity, allowing us to meet housing demand more efficiently now and in the future.

I will reexamine certain zoning categories to encourage mixed-use, higher-density projects near transit and job centers, while streamlining permitting to reduce costs and delays. Leveraging public land for housing, paired with state and federal tax credits, can attract private investment. Inclusionary zoning and density bonuses encourage developers to build affordable units.

I will also look for legislative solutions to create affordable housing, such as the Cottage Home legislation I passed last year, which will allow for the construction of clustered smaller units expected to cost \$200,000.

Dave Crawford -- Running unopposed in the Republican Primary

The current 10%/15% inclusionary requirement is inadequate for the scale of need our workforce families face. Teachers, nurses, firefighters, and service workers — the people who make Anne Arundel County function — are being priced out. I will pursue the following:

- Increase the inclusionary zoning requirement through negotiations with the Council and targeted incentives, aiming for at least 20% affordable units in large residential projects.
- Establish a Workforce Housing Trust Fund using restored impact fee revenue and federal HOME program funds to subsidize the affordability gap.
- Create a density bonus program that rewards developers who voluntarily exceed affordability minimums with expedited permitting and modest density increases on appropriate infill sites.
- Partner with Anne Arundel Community College and local employers on employer-assisted housing programs that help workers secure housing near their jobs.
- Prioritize redevelopment of county-owned or underutilized commercial properties near transit for mixed-income housing, reducing infrastructure costs while meeting need.

The goal: measurably increase the availability of homes affordable to families earning 80–100% AMI without displacing existing residents or overburdening infrastructure.