



## MCMC: MoCo Council Candidates Questionnaire - 2026 Primary

The Montgomery County Muslim Council (MCMC) is a 501c(4) civic-engagement organization located in Montgomery County, Maryland, focused on elevating the needs and topics related to the Muslim Community and broader community in Montgomery County. MCMC engages with local elected officials, advocating for and representing our residents, institutions, children/students, and more.

On behalf of the Montgomery County Muslim Council (MCMC), we present the following set of questions to all Montgomery County Council candidates, both At-Large and District seats, who are running during the 2026 Primary elections. We greatly appreciate your participation and responses to these questions, as it will allow our community to be informed about issues pertaining to them, and the positions taken by each candidate. MCMC plans on publishing responses to its website.

Please return your responses via email to: [president@mcmcmd.org](mailto:president@mcmcmd.org)

\*\*Please return your responses by: **Wednesday, April 29 2026 (COB)**

### Question 1

Topic: Civil Rights

*Montgomery County is one of the most diverse counties in the nation. Accordingly, many MoCo residents who are members of the Arab and Muslim community have engaged in public protests but have unfortunately experienced a curtailing of their first amendment rights to free speech. This includes doxxing, student and teacher suspensions, unequal response by local police.*

1. What are your thoughts on the county's response thus far, in light of what was just shared? What has worked? What has not worked?
2. What specific steps will you take to protect the free speech of residents and students, regardless of their positions on issues? What is your stance on the county's response to peaceful advocacy and protests? How will you protect the free speech rights of residents on local and global issues?

Response to question 1: I believe that our county representatives always say the right thing, but their actual actions fail to live up to the rhetoric given. I think what has worked has been the rudimentary investigation of break-ins, and basic vandalism; I believe what has failed is the lack of public expression related to the importance of these basic civil rights, and promotion, by local government, of anti-defamation statements from our county officials.

Response to part 2 of question 1: I think this is an issue of enforcing federal and state constitutional free speech protections. However, if needed, I will personally protest with any group of residents who are being denied their human rights.

## Question 2

Topic: Non-Profit Support

*Many Muslim-led non-profits, like MCMF (Montgomery County Muslim Foundation), provide critical social services that the county cannot. Some may not even be aware of grant funding opportunities let alone have experience applying for competitive grants.*

1. How will you ensure an equitable approach to communicating and granting funding for faith-based community organizations?

Response to question 2: I think the key to making sure opportunities for non-profits, who want to acquire funding, must include making the procurement process transparent and competitive; the problem is making these opportunities visible for all, and having help for those who want to become eligible. I do not know how these contracts are promoted, but I do believe they should be open to all and competitive. It will be a cornerstone of my time on the council to create equality and fairness in all county branches.

## Question 3

Topic: Housing and Displacement

*Montgomery County is becoming increasingly unaffordable.*

1. What do you propose to prevent current skyrocketing housing costs across Montgomery County, especially with residents facing record high interest rates?

Response to part 1 question 3: I think we must understand that we are in a situation where 85% percent of the developable land, in the county, has been utilized, and we are already the most populated county in the state. I think we must look at under-used industrial and commercial areas, and we must have the county take direct control of land development. I have pushed for the reclamation of the Lake Forest Mall site and the building of 1200 to 1300 new homes. I mentioned this in my 2022 council run years ago, and that property is still sitting derelict. Yet, this alone will not stop price increases, but I think the county acting as a good faith broker that controls a higher portion of the housing market, due to the lack of housing stock, must be done. I do not believe in total government control of anything, but this is a problem created by government neglect.

2. What is your plan to prevent the displacement of immigrant and low-income families, who have been disproportionately impacted?

Response to question 3 part 2: In my last run for council, I proposed an emergency fund

that would be available to county families who have run into financial difficulties to help those families get back on track. I also believe that we must increase educational opportunities, for graduating students and adults, that enable upward employment opportunities. Finally, we must increase our economy so that more money is circulating in our county. I believe we must raise living standards for the lower portions of our barbell economy.

#### Question 4

Topic: Housing and Displacement

*For many families (1st generation, 2nd generation, immigrant, etc.), transit is a lifeline.*

1. What are your specific plans to improve the reliability of public transportation (such as the Ride-On bus system and completion of Purple Line, and more), as well as pedestrian safety in all parts of the county, but especially in the Up-County region?

Response to question 4: I think the first thing that must be done is making our public transport system reliable; I am a regular user of Ride-On and public transport and the major issue is the lack of on time transit. Thus, we must make our public transit systems dependable. Also, with respect to the Purple Line, it appears that the system is finally moving toward completion, but it is at least five years behind, and I do not know how much it will help with people movement. So, my input on the purple line will be monitoring ridership, and determining its effect on congestion.

#### Question 5

Topic: Healthcare Access

*Health insurance - and healthcare costs generally - continue to rise, making access to healthcare nearly impossible for some in our county.*

1. What legislative measures will you support to bridge the gap in healthcare access for uninsured or under-insured residents in our community?

Response to question 5 part 1: I am in favor of expanding our local basic medical clinics so that they offer preventative and basic medical care for low or no cost. This would relieve the pressure on our emergency rooms and lower the cost of care for our residents.

2. What legislation could you introduce or expand to bolster funding for free or reduced cost health clinics run by nonprofits in our county, such as medical clinics run by MCC (Muslim Community Center) and ICM (Islamic Center of Maryland)?

Response to question 5 part 2: I would be in favor of creating a system of medical service centers which rely on preventive service locations that can be run by non-profits, and local clinics.

#### Question 6

Topic: County Budget

*Fiscal responsibility and balancing the budget in coordination with the rest of the County Council and County Executive is a paramount responsibility of the County At-Large seat.*

1. Do you support tax cuts, tax increases, or maintaining the status quo? 2. Regardless of your approach, how would you propose paying for many of the county's programs?

Response to question 6: I truly support both; I believe the resident homeowners of the county are paying enough in taxes, and their property taxes should be reduced. However, I believe that we must get a return on the land usage, by developers, in the county; thus, I think we need to increase taxes on large private development companies who are not based in our county or state. Additionally, I am in favor of reducing local taxes on residents as they remain in our county based on years in the county.