

Questions for 2022 ACT Scorecard

By: **Natali Fani-Gonzalez**, NataliforCouncil.com – MoCo District 6

Toll Lanes

1. Will you oppose all plans for toll lanes built by "public-private partnerships" on I-270, the Beltway, or the American Legion Bridge?

YES – I have a strong record on this matter as a Park and Planning Commissioner. Also quoted by press:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/transportation/2018/08/23/they-must-have-some-idea-residents-want-more-details-about-proposed-widening-beltway-i-/>

<https://wtop.com/maryland/2020/07/park-agency-pushes-back-on-plan-to-widen-i-270-capital-beltway-in-md/>

MARC

2. Should all-day two-way MARC service be the county's highest-priority goal for rail transit expansion in the I-270 corridor? Do you support a request for capital improvements to increase the number of trains per week as a high priority in the transportation priorities letter?

YES, absolutely. I'm strong supporter. I also worked on the MARC rail communities sector plan.

Halting construction of new state highways and arterials

3. Do you support removing new county and state highways and arterials from county plans, including M83, Observation Drive Extended, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange, Montrose Parkway East, and the 355 Bypass in Clarksburg?

YES, I even added language on this in Thrive 2050.

Land Use

4. If your only choice was whether or not to approve Thrive 2050 as currently written, would you vote yes or no?

I worked on Thrive 2050 as the Vice Chair of the Planning Board and I'm proud of our draft.

Pedestrian Safety/balanced transportation/climate change

5. Do you support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if it might cause vehicle delay and/or reduce parking?

YES, and I have a strong track record on this while in Park and Planning.

Omar Lazo Candidate for County Council District 6

Questions for 2022 ACT Scorecard

Toll Lanes

1. Will you oppose all plans for toll lanes built by "public-private partnerships" on I-270, the Beltway, or the American Legion Bridge? I will oppose plans for toll lanes built by public-private partnerships on I-270, the beltway, or the American Legion Bridge. I believe our focus needs to be on different modes of transportation and expanding our public transportation in order to get cars off of the road instead of focusing on accommodating for more cars.

MARC

2. Should all-day two-way MARC service be the county's highest-priority goal for rail transit expansion in the I-270 corridor? Do you support a request for capital improvements to increase the number of trains per week as a high priority in the transportation priorities letter? I agree that expansion of the MARC service should be a top priority. I lived in Montgomery Village from 2000-2007 and worked for the Department of Justice in downtown Silver Spring. The metro was not an option for me because the red line would have to go through all of DC to get to Silver Spring and it would take too long. I would take the MARC train on occasion, but the lack of flexibility of the schedule is one of the main reasons I did not ride the MARC more regularly. I would be willing to support a request for the CIP.

Halting construction of new state highways and arterials

3. Do you support removing new county and state highways and arterials from county plans, including M83, Observation Drive Extended, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange, Montrose Parkway East, and the 355 Bypass in Clarksburg? I would support removal of new county roads from the county plan. If we take an aggressive approach to improving our public transportation options and building around transit centers, many of the needs for these roads should be eliminated. My campaign is about local representation and I have lived or worked in my district for over 33 years. I think it is important to note that many of these roads are not in my district, but I would work closely with the councilmembers of those districts to make sure that equity, environment, and economics are considered.

Land Use

4. If your only choice was whether or not to approve Thrive 2050 as currently written, would you vote yes or no? I agree with the proposals in Thrive 2050 especially when it comes to the commitment to invest in other modes of transportation other than automobiles. We need to focus on providing quality transportation to all our residents. It's a matter of equity, economics,

environment, and quality of life. In the creation of more housing and specifically more affordable housing I also agree with taking an aggressive approach to tackling this issue. I would approve the plan but would want to make sure that there are safeguards in place so that we do not end up with much more housing but not at affordable rates. Running for a District that includes the Wheaton and Glenmont transit centers, I would just want to make be 100% sure that there are checks and balances in place that would guarantee that a good percentage of the housing being built will truly be accessible to all.

Pedestrian Safety/balanced transportation/climate change

5. Do you support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if it might cause vehicle delay and/or reduce parking? **Yes.** I believe that once you have a more expansive transportation system that gives you time saving and money saving options with things such as dedicated lanes, that most people will use public transportation. This will lead to a reduction of vehicles on the road. This coupled with building more housing around transit centers will also promote people using other modes of transportation other than cars. This needs to be done in conjunction with adding more frequency to our routes, adding more routes, and making sure our public transportation is accessible to all.

Marice Morales

Questions for 2022 ACT Scorecard

Toll Lanes

1. Will you oppose all plans for toll lanes built by "public-private partnerships" on I-270, the Beltway, or the American Legion Bridge?

Yes, I will oppose. We need to reduce the amount of vehicles on the road. Private partners who run toll lanes are dependent on the idea that our area will always be congested. This keeps them profitable. Adding toll lanes does not help to reduce our carbon emissions or our environmental impact because it does not reduce traffic, especially when you are committing the state to nine to ten billion dollar projects like the American Legion Bridge (ALB). That money could be better spent on other traffic-reducing and environmentally conscious projects, while still limiting money needed to be used out of the Transportation Trust Fund.

MARC

2. Should all-day two-way MARC service be the county's highest-priority goal for rail transit expansion in the I-270 corridor? Do you support a request for capital improvements to increase the number of trains per week as a high priority in the transportation priorities letter?

No, I would not consider it to be the highest priority. Encouraging more people to move into the area and increasing the commuting options for rail services for the MARC Brunswick corridor is important. However, I would not consider it to be the "highest-priority" for the I-270 corridor. That being said, adding additional stops for commuters would be ideal for those using the MARC service between Silver Spring and Germantown. Improving transit rider experience and making it more convenient to live car-free is absolutely worth the cost of paying up for.

Having trains running all day may not be ideal if most workers will be teleworking still, as many have been choosing to do during the pandemic. More people working from home translates to less people commuting, and so increasing the number to a few extra trains per week on the Brunswick, Camden or Penn Lines would depend on commuter usage as we emerge from the pandemic. Increased spending may not make sense right now, yet I am not totally against it, if it gets more cars off the road. The benefits of adding more trains for peak and off-peak commuting hours is an attractive sell to commuters that won't feel the need to rush home if they are socializing in the area.

Halting construction of new state highways and arterials

3. Do you support removing new county and state highways and arterials from county plans, including M83, Observation Drive Extended, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange, Montrose Parkway East, and the 355 Bypass in Clarksburg?

I would defer to other council members and members of the state delegation for most of these plans, since they are outside of my district. However, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange plan has a large presence in my district, and I strongly urge the SHA to hold multiple accessible public hearings to get the input from the community. As my team and I have canvassed our district, we've noticed that there's a strong consensus around road improvements especially on Veirs Mill, Connecticut and servicing roads, as local traffic demands are spilling over into residential streets. Addressing potholes and updating speed limits to protect pedestrians and increasing pedestrian visibility devices would be some of my first priorities rather than road expansion, unless it's for the reason to make space for BRT lanes and CCT expansion.

Land Use

4. If your only choice was whether or not to approve Thrive 2050 as currently written, would you vote yes or no?

I agree with the overall goal of building affordable housing in high density, mass transit centers. However, I have concerns around gentrification and displacement of lower income earners, communities of color and vulnerable communities. We need to improve economic diversity in the county. We can increase affordable housing in the county by building for more density. If the people who are educators, officers and hourly workers can't live here, then we risk becoming like DC where people have to commute long distances to work. There needs to be more assurances that this plan will include people of color and not displace the most vulnerable among us, in accordance with the preliminary [racial equity analysis](#) by the Office of Legislative Oversight. Through talking with neighbors on the doors, listening to trusted community leaders, and heeding the advice of Council Member Nancy Navarro, I believe we should be working to improve aspects of community feedback in the plan, as well clarify the role that developers will and will not have in the process. I agree with the overall concept of Thrive and believe it has many exciting ideas for future growth, but there are many concerns about displacement and gentrification amongst community residents that remain to be addressed.

Pedestrian Safety/balanced transportation/climate change

5. Do you support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if it might cause vehicle delay and/or reduce parking?

Yes, I support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if in some scenarios it might cause a vehicle delay or reduced parking. I am focused on getting more cars off the road, and minimizing traffic congestion, road rage and pedestrian deaths. It is necessary that we provide more BRT options with queue jumps and bicycle lanes. Building more sidewalks and motorist speed-reducing mechanisms will improve pedestrian safety and get us closer to the Vision Zero goal. In the Corridor Forward plan that was recently passed by the County Council, I was thrilled to see that the Veirs Mill BRT was named as part of the priority projects. There is great opportunity for dedicated bus lanes on this road, and it will have a tremendous impact for key EFA's in the district.

Candidate Name:

Steve Solomon – County Council District 6

Questions for 2022 ACT Scorecard

Toll Lanes

1. Will you oppose all plans for toll lanes built by "public-private partnerships" on I-270, the Beltway, or the American Legion Bridge?

It depends. I am opposed to the outrageous tolls that exist in Northern Virginia. In many states, tolls of \$0.25 or \$0.50 are used. They are still a way to make money for the state, but are not gouging the citizens.

MARC

2. Should all-day two-way MARC service be the county's highest-priority goal for rail transit expansion in the I-270 corridor? Do you support a request for capital improvements to increase the number of trains per week as a high priority in the transportation priorities letter?

We need to expand the MARC service. It is a high priority and would require capital improvements.

Halting construction of new state highways and arterials

3. Do you support removing new county and state highways and arterials from county plans, including M83, Observation Drive Extended, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange, Montrose Parkway East, and the 355 Bypass in Clarksburg?

It depends on the county and state highway project. But now with BRT and hopefully expanded MARC in the future, we can remove these plans.

Land Use

4. If your only choice was whether or not to approve Thrive 2050 as currently written, would you vote yes or no?

If it was a simple approve or not approve, then at this time with how it is currently written, I would vote no on Thrive 2050.

Pedestrian Safety/balanced transportation/climate change

5. Do you support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if it might cause vehicle delay and/or reduce parking?

It depends on the location and the project. Bus lanes and bike lanes are useful and appropriate in many places, but don't work everywhere.

Candidate Name:

 Vicki Vergagni

Questions for 2022 ACT Scorecard

Toll Lanes

1. Will you oppose all plans for toll lanes built by "public-private partnerships" on I-270, the Beltway, or the American Legion Bridge?

No.

MARC

2. Should all-day two-way MARC service be the county's highest-priority goal for rail transit expansion in the I-270 corridor? Do you support a request for capital improvements to increase the number of trains per week as a high priority in the transportation priorities letter?

I am not familiar with all of the options related to rail transit; however, that having been said, I see tremendous value in encouraging workers to locate outside of Montgomery County and commute to travel to work via rail – although I think that COVID is going to be a game-changer with regard to telecommuting that will provide a net decrease in congestion.

Halting construction of new state highways and arterials

3. Do you support removing new county and state highways and arterials from county plans, including M83, Observation Drive Extended, the Norbeck/Georgia grade-separated interchange, Montrose Parkway East, and the 355 Bypass in Clarksburg?

Individuals purchasing/renting homes and commercial entities determining where to locate their businesses included "transportation" in those decisions. It is not reasonable for the County that is benefitting from the collection of impact taxes associated with that development to pull the rug out from under those who invested in homes and businesses based on expectations fueled by the County.

Land Use

4. If your only choice was whether or not to approve Thrive 2050 as currently written, would you vote yes or no?

No.

Pedestrian Safety/balanced transportation/climate change

5. Do you support the reallocation of existing road space from cars to sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus-only lanes, even if it might cause vehicle delay and/or reduce parking?

Only if there is sufficient evidence that the sidewalks, bike lanes and bus-only lanes would contribute significantly to a reduction in vehicle traffic.