



## 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

**Candidate Name:** Danita Tolson

**Position:** County Council

**District:** 2

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### **What is your position regarding the Councilmanic Courtesy norm?**

Councilmatic courtesy can be useful when it encourages cooperation and it respects the local expertise. It should not override transparency, community voice, or sound policy. I believe every councilmember has an obligation to hear the voters and what best serves the county as a whole.

### **What concrete steps will you take to address the acute shortage of affordable housing in Baltimore County? Please include your position on the current Urban-Rural Demarcation Line.**

"To address the shortage of affordable housing in Baltimore County, I would focus on increasing supply, preserving existing affordability, and ensuring growth is planned and equitable.

I support strengthening and enforcing affordable housing requirements for developments that receive public funding, including ensuring that a meaningful percentage of units are affordable to households at or below 60% and 80% of Area Median Income. Public investment must produce public benefit. I would also support expanding the Housing Opportunities Fund and rural community land trusts.

I would also advocate for zoning and land-use reforms that allow more housing options within existing growth areas, townhomes, and mixed-income multifamily housing near transit and job centers.

I believe protecting current residents is essential but hear the community voice. I would support stronger fair housing enforcement, anti-displacement strategies, and programs that help low- and moderate-income residents remain in their communities..

Regarding the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL), I support maintaining it as a core smart-growth policy. The URDL protects farmland, natural resources, and rural character while encouraging more efficient use of land and infrastructure in urbanized areas. I do not support expanding the URDL as a solution to the housing crisis. Instead, I believe the county must fully utilize land within the existing boundary by allowing appropriate density, encouraging mixed-use



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development, and aligning zoning with our housing, listening to our community and transportation goals. "

**What resources are under-utilized in our County that could be used to increase economic growth?**

"Baltimore County has several underutilized resources that could be used to increase economic growth. These resources are vacant and underused commercial and industrial properties, which can be redeveloped into mixed-use, light industrial, and small business spaces. Our workforce is another key asset; stronger partnerships and collaborations between employers, community colleges, universities, and training programs can better connect residents to local jobs in growing industries; building relationships is key.

Small businesses need entrepreneur assistance when starting a business; especially a minority and women owned business; they are usually under-supported. Expanding access to capital, technical assistance, and affordable commercial space would stimulate neighborhood economic growth. Additionally, the county's strategic location near major transportation infrastructure and its publicly owned land offer opportunities for public-private partnerships/collaborations that can drive job opportunities and improve economic development."

**What is the greatest need in the district you are seeking to represent and what are your plans to address it?**

"The greatest need in the newly formed District 2 is stabilizing residents while addressing shared challenges carried over from the former District 4, that includes food insecurity, reinvesting in the communities, reviewing the commercial land lock, and review the loss of our homeowners and the reasons and how we can get them to return to Baltimore County.. I will address these issues by partnering and having the community organizations to expand food access, unlock commercial areas through targeted redevelopment, and advance policies that protect homeownership and prevent displacement."