



2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Mandy Rimmell

Position: County Council

District: 1

What is your position regarding the Councilmanic Courtesy norm?

I don't support councilmanic courtesy because it shifts what should be a collaborative, transparent legislative process into the hands of a single elected official. In Baltimore County, land use and zoning decisions affect not just one neighborhood, but traffic patterns, school capacity, environmental impacts, housing availability, and economic growth across the entire county. When one council member effectively controls those decisions, it weakens the collective responsibility of the full Council and limits broader accountability. We have to change that!

Baltimore County's structure is designed so that zoning and development decisions go through defined processes including planning review, public hearings, and council deliberation. Those safeguards exist to ensure decisions are made based on established standards, long-term planning goals, and countywide interests not individual preference or political pressure. There are better and more transparent ways to ensure community input. Public hearings, structured planning processes, and open debate among all council members provide opportunities for residents to be heard without concentrating power in one office. Decisions that impact the future of the county should reflect careful, collective judgment not deference to tradition.

For me, it's about fairness, consistency, and maintaining public trust in how government works.

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 housing that working families can reasonably afford in Baltimore County, I would focus on practical, common-sense steps. First, I would require that new developments receiving county support include homes priced within reach for our class working families. Second, I would prioritize redeveloping vacant shopping centers and aging commercial sites into mixed-use communities with a range of housing options, rather than expanding into rural land. Third, I would streamline the approval process to reduce delays and costs, especially for projects that include workforce and attainable housing. Fourth, I would expand options like, duplexes, and other small-scale homes to give seniors, young families, and first-time buyers more choices that they can afford to age in place and start putting down roots in Baltimore



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county's. I support the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line to protect farmland and open space, but I also believe we must allow smarter growth within the existing boundary so we are not limiting housing opportunities where infrastructure already exists and could be an area for positive growth.

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

Baltimore County has strong assets, but some of them are not being fully used to drive economic growth. First, we have underused commercial corridors and aging shopping centers that could be redeveloped into vibrant mixed-use hubs with offices, small businesses, housing, and community spaces. We have workforce potential that isn't fully tapped including young adults, career changers, and skilled trades workers who could be better connected to employers through stronger partnerships with local schools, community colleges, and apprenticeship programs. We have industrial and logistics areas near major highways and the Port that could attract more advanced manufacturing, technology, and distribution businesses if we streamline permitting and modernize zoning. Finally, we have small and minority-owned businesses that often struggle to access capital and county contracts; by improving access to grants, technical support, and procurement opportunities, we can help local entrepreneurs grow and keep more economic activity within the county. Unlocking these existing resources rather than relying only on new development can strengthen our economy in a sustainable and balanced way and as the councilwoman, I want to do all I can to increase the knowledge and use of these wonderful responses we currently have in the county to help our residents and businesses.

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

"Right now, our district, D1 is facing a two-fold crisis: the rising cost of living and the lack of housing options people can realistically afford. Families are feeling squeezed from every direction from grocery bills to electric costs and many are struggling just to keep up. While we do need additional housing and stronger support for our growing communities, we cannot ignore the financial pressure residents are under today. As elected leaders, our first responsibility is to look for ways to lower and offset everyday costs wherever county government has influence.



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As a member of the Council, I would push for property tax relief measures for seniors and working families, review county fees and assessments to ensure they are fair, and support energy-efficiency programs that help residents reduce utility bills. I would also advocate for stronger partnerships with local food banks and community organizations to expand access to essential services.

At the same time, we have an obligation to create housing opportunities that allow residents to put down roots and build stable lives. That starts by taking a hard look at what we already have. Before expanding outward, we should focus on revitalizing vacant and blighted properties that are sitting unused in our own communities. As Councilwoman, I would support targeted redevelopment incentives, streamline approvals for projects that rehabilitate existing structures, and hold property owners accountable when neglect harms neighborhoods. By putting underused properties back into productive use, we can strengthen communities, increase housing supply, and grow our tax base, all without sacrificing rural land or overextending infrastructure.

Addressing both cost pressures and housing supply together is how we build a district where residents can not only live, but thrive."