



## 2026 Candidate Questionnaire

**Candidate Name:** Caridad Santiago

**Position:** County Council

**District:** 7

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

It effectively takes away from the rule of majority or supermajority vote. If, as a county, we're going to defer to the district's representative as the only voice that matters, why have a collective council?

### **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.**

"There are a lot of designs in the 2030 master plan. We need to focus on not just quantity, but quality of housing and building/redesigning walkable communities where infrastructure already exists.

I am glad the language allowing what amounts to 'veto power' was removed from bill 19-25. Decisions about moving the URDL need to be made by the entire council, again not giving one district power over the greater good."

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

"Community. Localized leaders and elected representatives need to proactively work together to support our communities. One very specific way that representatives can do this is by hosting more information and training session, specifically about how to apply for grants at all levels of government and hear feedback from leaders about the needs in their very local communities.

The partnership between BCPS and CCBC is one example of community support aimed at ensuring graduating seniors have access to career training. "



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

"District 7 is a very diverse area, with farmlands in the West and North and high-density housing in the South and East. Historically, the representative in this area have focused on down-zoning and protecting property values in rural areas while overlooking the needs of the urban constituents.

The focus needs to be brought back to lifting up everyone in the district and my focus is on raising transparency and accountability within BCPS (and the council). We should not be increasing class sizes or pulling away staff from forward facing positions. We should be taking a critical look at how BCPS is spending taxpayer dollars and figuring out how we can provide a quality public education that supports our staff, students, and families. We are losing quality teachers, and this is only going to increase the burden on existing staff and further decline the quality of our schools. I am in support of SB0015 that is currently in legislation. "