



2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Izzy Patoka

Position: County Executive

What urban planning model examples do you admire and would seek to adapt in Baltimore County? If your vision includes increasing the offer of “third places” (public gathering spaces), please include the actions you would take.

"I have always admired Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Concept that was proposed in 1929 as part of the "Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs". The Neighborhood Unit Concept recommended that elementary schools serve as the main focal point for communities. The school would be the centerpiece of the community. Although the plan is almost 100 years old, many of the concepts are adaptable and still make sense.

Schools do not facilitate this role in Baltimore County and I believe Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) would offer resistance. Baltimore County Public Libraries (BCPL) to some degree, does serve as a community center, staying open long after schools have closed. BCPL facilities generally do not have gymnasiums or auditoriums so there are severe limitations related to functioning as the community centerpoint.

I have always believed components of the Neighborhood Unity Concept as being implementable even today. It would take a huge political lift. As you can tell by my actions as a legislator, I am willing to take on issues that require political fortitude."

What concrete steps will you take to address the acute shortage of affordable housing in Baltimore County and what other measures would you take to encourage population retention and increase?

"I have worked as a county councilmember to create zoning tools to expand affordable housing with the following two pieces of legislation:

9-24 Mixed Used Overlay District: Allows for vertical zoning in addition to traditional horizontal zoning. This permits residential, office and retail to exist in the same vertical footprint. It also reduces parking restrictions and encourages transit use.

32-24 R.A.E. 1 Zone: Reduces the restriction for the location of Residential-Apartment-Elevator (RAE) Zone which allows for 40 units per acre so that it is more applicable to locations in Baltimore County.



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As County Executive, I will implement a total reorganization of the Permits Approvals and Inspection (PAI) Department which will include the creation of two high level ombudsmen positions to expedite and streamline the permits process."

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

There are three pillars of economic development: 1) Business retention, 2) Business attraction and 3) Workforce development. Baltimore County has been very strong on the third pillar, workforce development. However, Baltimore County has been weak on business retention and business attraction. As County Executive, I will retool our Department of Economic and Workforce Development (DEWD) to ramp up its focus on business retention and business attraction.

What law enforcement issues do you see as the biggest challenge in the County and how would you protect County residents from ICE raids?

"My parents were both Holocaust survivors and moved to this country because they wanted a shot at a normal life, a family, education and a chance at liberty just like immigrant families today. Now members of our community are being hunted down by masked federal agents every single day. They live in fear and are scared to send their children to school.

I was disappointed in the County Executive's decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with ICE and in the way they failed to communicate and consult with the County Council.

I sponsored and worked to pass the Trust Act in Baltimore County. It is a set of companion bills. Bill 97-25 codifies the Baltimore County Office of Immigration Affairs. Bill 98-25 sets guidelines and puts up guard rails on how our county can coordinate with ICE.

As County Executive I will continue to do whatever I can to keep ICE out of our communities."

Much is talked about protecting "mom and pop" businesses; in Baltimore County, however, big chains prevail. What is your vision and plan to address this?



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Many of the “mom and pop” businesses are located in older, inner beltway commercial corridors. I will create the Office of Community Conservation which will be a coordinating and highly influential agency that will primarily focus on our older and inner beltway communities and commercial corridors. There will be sector coordinators that will lead agencies including our Department of Economic and Workforce Development (DEWD). There will be a greater focus and an unprecedented level of resources allocated towards our inner-beltway communities. The sector coordinators will have a seat at the table as we craft our annual budget so that community and small business needs are met.