

Arlington County Board Candidate Questionnaire on Cycling

1. Do you ride a bike? If so, tell us about your riding.

I do. I regularly take advantage of Capital Bikeshare. I love the program. On nice days, I enjoy riding the Four Mile Run Trail and Mount Vernon Trail. Biking within Arlington is a great way to exercise and enjoy our green spaces, and I look forward to working on issues important to cyclists if elected to the Arlington County Board.

2. What do you see as the role of cycling in Arlington?

Cycling provides so many benefits to Arlington. First, it's great for your health and fitness. This is one of the main reasons I love biking, and a healthy community is a happier community.

Cycling is also a wonderful way to reduce road congestion and our carbon footprint. I view cycling as an engine of our long-term economic growth. Arlington is in competition with other cities for the best and brightest. Often, younger individuals are turning away from car ownership and towards other means of commuting. Making Arlington more cyclist friendly will allow us to build upon our progress as an environmentally friendly and healthy community, while reducing traffic in our neighborhoods. Cycling in urban areas has made strong progress in safety and accessibility, and I believe Arlington should lead the way in furthering these efforts in the future.

Lastly, since cycling is a great, inexpensive way of commuting or even just exploring outside of your neighborhood, cycling can be a great benefit to our communities and local businesses. Venturing out past your neighborhood on a bike gives you the chance to explore other parts of Arlington at a very low cost, finding new neighbors, new parks, and new businesses.

3. What should the county do, if anything, to get more people to bike?

Improving safety should be Arlington's top concern for cyclists. We should continue to develop more bike lanes, while ensuring future and current lanes are safe for cyclists. Offset, protected bike lanes and increased fines for cars, trucks, or other vehicles blocking those lanes should also be a priority.

Another integral part of getting more people to bike is the improvement of our roads and streets. When bike lanes aren't available and cyclists ride in the roads, we need to ensure those roads are safe for all. Eliminating potholes, ensuring clear road markings, and maintaining our roads will go a long way towards ensuring cyclists' safety on our streets.

Arlington should also increase resources for reporting drivers who compromise cyclists' safety, as well as expand bike-safety awareness campaigns like the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) Safe Bicycling Initiative. Arlington should also become a member of the Vision Zero project, in an effort to coordinate with other communities on how to reduce all road fatalities to zero. If elected, I will work to ensure ACPD and all of our government services work with cyclists to help spread the message of cycling safety and the rights of those who choose to bike.

We should expand Capital Bikeshare. It's been a tremendous success and has helped reduce traffic congestion and Metro crowding. We should also consider inviting dockless bike companies—like LimeBike, MoBike, or Spin—to Arlington, as a lower cost means to expand access to bikes, especially in areas not conducive to placing bike docks.

4. How would you approach the decision making process on a project which puts two Arlington priorities at odds? For instance, a proposal to build an important trail connection which would require cutting down a large number of trees or a proposal to build an important bike lane connection which would require removing a large number of parking spaces?

My overall campaign theme is "Putting People First." Essential to this is including opinions and concerns from a wide swath of the community before taking action. I'm also always hopeful a middle ground that satisfies everyone is possible. For instance, perhaps the trail could be crafted around large, older trees with significant canopies; the other, smaller trees that are removed to provide a trail connection could be repurposed for local construction needs. An equal amount of trees could be planted elsewhere throughout Arlington to minimize the environmental impact.

5. What work have you done in the past - as an elected official, member of an advisory body, or as an advocate – to promote or support cycling as a mobility option?

When I was on the Montgomery County, Maryland school board we were sensitive to the benefits of cycling, so we built new facilities with ample rack space to encourage riding to school. As a staffer at the Embassy of Australia, I and other staff, were able to secure a shared-use embassy bike, complete with basket and helmet.

6. If elected, what do you hope to have accomplished to make Arlington a better place for cycling by the end of your term?

I think Arlington has been fairly progressive compared to surrounding areas, but there is room for improvement. We have over 89 miles of bike lanes and trails in the county, but I think we can increase that number to improve cyclists' safety. In addition to improving the physical infrastructure for cyclists, I want to work with the county board and the Arlington County Police Department to improve cyclist-awareness programs on our roads and have ACPD work with the cycling community to educate all commuters about how to remain safe on the roads.

I also support the expansion of bike-sharing programs in Arlington. Capital Bikeshare in Arlington accounted for over 500,000 miles of riding last year. That's a lot of pollution taken out of the environment and a good reduction in car traffic across the county, but I think we can double those numbers in 5 years if we make it a priority.

7. Arlington doesn't currently have a dedicated program or pot of money to build new, high-priority bicycle infrastructure. Would you support the creation of such a program, dedicated to the most-needed protected bike lanes and trails, in the Capital Improvement Plan?

Absolutely. A dedicated program for improving and expanding protected bike lanes and trails would allow these programs to move ahead without fear of losing funding. A dedicated program like this would show a long-term commitment to cyclists' issues in Arlington and would allow for greater long-term planning within our community. We should also pursue a sister-city biking program where we look at jurisdictions with excellent biking infrastructure, like Portland, and see what lessons we can learn from them.

As a progressive, I also believe that development should be done fairly and wisely. As developers build larger residential and commercial developments, the county board should look at ways to encourage these developers to incorporate bike-sharing arrangements and bike-care facilities, while also reducing traffic congestion that comes with the growth associated with these large developments.

8. Is there anything else you would like to share with the Arlington cycling community?

I'd like to thank the cycling community for taking an interest in our local elections. Democracy only works if we participate and vote. Cyclists are an important part of our community. The election wouldn't be truly representative without you, so please vote!

Cycling is integral to transportation in our community. As an inexpensive, healthy, environmentally-friendly way of getting around Arlington, cycling is sure to grow among our friends and neighbors. If elected, I plan to make cycling a key part of our county planning in the future and ensure that all who want to bike can and can do so safely.

My campaign is about putting the people of Arlington first. If you have any suggestions on how to improve the state of cycling in Arlington, please reach out to me. I'd love to get your thoughts. You can share your thoughts with me, learn more about my platform, and find out how you can assist my campaign at <http://VoteMcCullough.com> . You can also follow me on Twitter at [@VoteCMcCullough](https://twitter.com/VoteCMcCullough).