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Committee of 100 Debate Additional Questions for County Board Candidates

1. What are the challenges you would tackle in the area of affordable housing?

In the area of affordable housing, I would tackle these three main challenges:

Ensuring that developers pay their fair share:

- Increase the zoning fee for apartment developers who forego affordable units, as it is currently just 1/3 of the fee allowed under state law.
- Shift housing assistance funds to direct housing grants in order to support more residents earning less than 40% of the area median income.

Approaching certified and market rate housing with a multifaceted approach:

- Incentivize the development of multifamily structures designed to address senior mobility needs, as well as co-living spaces designed to meet the needs of young professionals.
- Ensure accessory dwellings become a viable option for housing while not contributing to parking and density concerns.
- Explore Housing Conservation Districts as a way to maintain larger-scale areas of market rate affordability with careful caution not to unintentionally make these areas into suburban ghettos.

Providing housing affordability programs to address the needs of low- and middle-income Arlingtonians:

- Develop new homeowner affordability programs to support community/developer partnership models like community land trusts and low-equity housing cooperatives.
- Bolster existing homeowner assistance programs that enable our teachers and first responders to live in the communities where they serve.

As a progressive, independent voice on the Arlington County Board, I have the ability to advocate for a variety of reasonable housing affordability solutions that “Put People First” instead of defaulting to developers’ demands.

2. What skills from your day job would you bring to the County Board?

Three of my strongest skills from my day job that I would bring to the county board are decision making, strategic planning, and relationship building.

- I know how to make balanced decisions. As board chair of the US Postal Service Federal Credit Union, I led the organization to implement new financial services providing economic relief to members in Arlington and beyond while maintaining strong reserves.
- I know how to conduct inclusive strategic planning that results in cost-effective responses to long-term societal challenges. As an attorney, I led the development phase of a multimillion-dollar, Gates Foundation-funded initiative to improve education quality.
- I know how to build mutually beneficial relationships that attract new businesses to communities desiring economic growth. As an embassy staffer, I helped forge partnerships between cutting-edge tech startups and Fortune 500 companies.

These skills and my well-rounded background will help the board craft policies that anticipate and address the challenges facing Arlington.

3. What is your vision and strategy for addressing opioid addiction crisis?

I envision an Arlington that has effectively implemented a national model for addressing the opioid crisis, returning opioid overdose rates to precrisis levels within one year and eliminating opioid overdoses in the county by 2021.

As an educator, attorney, and son of a police officer, I recognize opioid addiction as a public health emergency which Arlington must address with a three-pronged strategy:

- Through education initiatives Arlington should work with schools, community groups, and houses of worship to educate the public on the proper disposal of enabling medications and to assist those showing signs of addiction.
- Through outreach programs targeting addicts and their families, Arlington should offer treatment plans and training on how to use Nalaxone to prevent overdoses.
- Through partnerships with other local law enforcement agencies, nonprofits, and national grantmakers, Arlington should continue to evaluate and refine the existing Arlington Addiction Recovery Initiative to ensure the use of best practices, cost efficiency, and access to additional non-taxpayer-based funding.

**4. What, specifically, will you do to improve the quality of life for seniors in Arlington?
(Note that last few years, 2 senior centers have been closed.)**

Arlington's seniors are a growing, vibrant, and active community. Arlington should work more closely with our senior community to harness their creativity, knowhow, and wealth of experience so that they can age-in-place with dignity. To improve the quality of life of seniors, Arlington must focus in the following areas:

Preparing health and human services for the future:

- Fund and plan for the growth of existing housing, health/dental, and transportation programs that enable seniors on a fixed income to afford the costs associated with independent living.
- Expand programs that develop our own first responders and attract trained first responders from other jurisdictions to prepare for increased demand for emergency services.

Creating programs to address senior needs:

- Utilize a joint-use facility model for senior centers to maximize space as well as more efficiently provide access to health and human services.
- Develop companionship-building initiatives, such as regular meals and senior-only areas in facilities, that address depression among seniors.

Maximizing opportunities for seniors:

- Update and develop a more comprehensive Elder Readiness Master Plan to address how the county intends to coordinate and advertise services.
- Revise one-size-fits-all business regulations to make it easier for seniors to open small businesses for supplementary income or as a second career.