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## Dalia Palchik

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### HOUSING FOR ALL

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#### 1) Transit-Oriented Communities

*Providing homes in walkable, mixed-use, mixed income communities close to transit can provide more equitable access to opportunities, reduce reliance on driving, and improve environmental and social outcomes for residents. In fact, County plans call for inclusive, transit-oriented development near its transit stations and along its transit-rich corridors.*

1a) Do you agree with the Comprehensive Plan's inclusive, transit-oriented communities goals?

Yes

No

Partially

1b) How would you improve on or change the County's approach to inclusive, transit-oriented communities?

**I am a supporter of mixed-use development and believe that housing options should be part of a live work play model, accessible to transit, and acknowledges the reality that in order to build inclusive communities, we need connected and accessible communities. The County has recently expanded our fare-free program for Fairfax Connector riders aged 12 and under. This is a step towards making public transit more accessible and we must continue to explore ways we can make sure that public transit fares are affordable and won't be a barrier for the people who rely on them the most. This will also encourage more people to get on public transportation. Additionally, I will continue to advocate for investing in transportation projects that will ensure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. It is vital that we approach future projects and improvements in a way that we consider the experiences of all who use our roads, from walkers and runners to bicyclists, to drivers for both personal and business reasons.**

## 2) Housing Goals

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), which includes Fairfax County, has committed to providing 320,000 more homes in our region by 2030 with 75% near high-capacity transit and 75% qualifying as affordable. Yet Fairfax County has not committed to meeting a specific share of this need and is falling behind on its own previously set targets. This contrasts with an earlier time when then-Chairman Connolly committed the County to planning for 48,000 additional households to ensure people could live closer to their jobs and reduce the traffic commuting into and through the County.

2a) Do you believe Fairfax County should be doing more to provide additional housing in the County?

Yes       No       Partially

2b) What housing and zoning policy steps would you take to fill the housing gap and construct more housing at all levels of affordability, including both committed affordable and market-rate homes? Would you support these changes County-wide or just in specific locations?

**While we have made some progress in modernizing Fairfax County's Zoning Ordinance (zMOD) which allows Accessory Living Units in the home and our affordable housing task forces that work on strategies to preserve affordable units, I plan on encouraging our Board to do more. I would support additional countywide initiatives to build more housing at all levels. Importantly, we must not overlook affordable housing for larger families who often find their housing options to be few and far between, and rarely meet their needs. We must increase housing stock across the board.**

## 3) Affordable Housing Funding

Fairfax County has adopted a minimum affordable housing production goal of 10,000 units by 2034, but the annual funding is still below the amount needed to meet that goal.

3a) If elected, would you support dedicated, sustainable funding to achieve the County's housing goals, particularly for those individuals and families at lower incomes?

Yes       No

3b) What policies and programs would you consider to strengthen or add to address housing affordability in the County? How much money would you ask for in the County budget to build new affordable housing? To preserve/renovate existing affordable housing?

**Our Board has taken major steps to invest in housing affordability. The goal for affordable housing by 2034 has increased to 10,000 new units, and we have increased dedicated funding for affordable housing in our updated budget proposals. We dedicate a full penny to affordable housing funding, and we have committed to reaching two pennies on the tax rate by 2027.**

**We must also continue to leverage our partners, not only our non-profit developers and organizations such as Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), but also continue to incentivize and leverage our private partners to increase their affordable housing commitments in new developments and hold them accountable to those commitments. Lastly, grant funding from the Federal Government, including HOME funds, will be another source of increased funding as we move forward.**

#### 4) Displacement Concerns

*The County has pledged no net-loss of affordable housing but as needed investments are made in revitalization areas and transit corridors, older market rate affordable housing is being lost to newer and more expensive homes. This can lead to current residents being displaced from their communities because affordable homes may no longer be available in their neighborhood. They may even need to leave Fairfax County altogether to find more affordable housing, with profound negative impacts on intergenerational communities.*

4a) Do you feel the County should do more to address displacement concerns and ensure more inclusive communities available to different income levels?

**Yes**

No

4b) What tools would you use to help provide more housing options for a mix of incomes in areas facing redevelopment as well as support residents facing possible displacement?

**Private developers are always looking for land to buy in our county and that has caused many residents to be displaced by rising rents and luxury buildings. We must protect our residents by strengthening their position, including supporting and funding nonprofits engaging in home repairs and creating affordable housing stock in redeveloped locations to ensure residents have somewhere to go where they do not need to move from their community. In addition, we must review and enhance our homeownership programs, and advocate for additional state and federal support for this measure.**

## 5) Zoning for More Housing

Eighty two percent (82%) of Fairfax County land is zoned exclusively for single-family detached homes according to a [2019 Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance report](#). Expanding housing options in single family neighborhoods can make way for more housing, increase access to home ownership, reduce racial and economic segregation, and increase access to opportunity.

5a) Would you support a planning process to consider changes to the zoning ordinance to expand housing types in the County?

Yes  No

5b) What are your thoughts on this issue in light of Arlington County's recent community study and vote to expand "Missing Middle Housing" options?

**Watching Arlington address head on their affordability crisis demonstrated the importance of our elected officials taking an aggressive stance to create more affordable housing to build a more accessible and inclusive community. While policies that work in Arlington do not always work in Fairfax, I believe we can follow Arlington's lead and creatively pursue zoning policies that increase affordability in our community. Our zMOD changes were a good start, and we will need to do more to increase our available affordable housing stock. Zoning changes won't fix affordability tomorrow, but they will help create an opportunity for greater affordability down the road.**

## 6) Homeownership Opportunities

Multiple studies have shown growing wealth and racial/ethnic homeownership gaps in the County. For Black families, this is due in part to the legacy of segregation through deed restrictions that prevented them from buying homes and building wealth.

6a) Do you support County policies to provide more opportunities for home ownership?

Yes  No  Partially

6b) What types of policies or programs would you propose?

**Fairfax County's first-time homebuyers program assists in supporting residents, particularly those who have not had access to capital beforehand. We need to continue to augment these programs and use our One Fairfax Equity policy to consider demographics as we look to improve our programs and home ownership. After speaking on a panel on this topic at the recent Housing Summit, I have begun conversations with stakeholders to learn what is working and how we can enhance access, this should include mixed for-sale units in rezonings, as well as partnering with private, non-profit, and public partners on**

**reviewing new applications as well as county-owned land for homeownership opportunities.**

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

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### 1) Improving Public Transit

*Public transit is the backbone of a sustainable, equitable transportation system and a thriving economy, and Fairfax County has admirable plans to expand its bus rapid transit (BRT) network to ensure fast, frequent, and reliable service for residents. While public transit ridership on some systems has been hit by the pandemic with reduced commute trips due to increased teleworking, transit remains key for essential workers, and for supporting compact, walkable communities.*

1a) Do you support increased funding for public transit to address budget shortfalls and make improvements to better serve riders?

**Yes** No

1b) What is your experience riding public transit? What ideas do you have to improve public transit in Fairfax County?

**I began riding transit as a child in Buenos Aires, rode transit growing up in Fairfax (when heading downtown), and rode it exclusively while I lived in DC. Since moving back to Fairfax, I bought my first condo close to the INOVA bus stop in order to be able to ride the bus around the county and to the Metro for work. It was on one of those trips when I first decided to run for office.**

**We need to make sure that public transit reaches our most vulnerable populations. I am proud to be chairing the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as we look at three separate bus transformation projects in the region, as well as the future of the Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit, and fare options for children, families, and all riders. We are in the midst of a \$700m shortfall for WMATA, and our work in the next year will help cement future commitments to Metro moving forward. We also need to look into increasing trip frequency that would attract and retain more riders. We need to ensure that public transit is and continues to be a reliable option for the community, and the economic engine of our state and region.**

### 2) Active Transportation Funding

*The ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan - the County's most significant overhaul of its bicycle, pedestrian, and trails plans - is expected to be finalized this year. The plan's recommendations address critical safety needs for residents who already walk and bike and also make*

improvements to allow more residents to walk and bike conveniently and safely for daily needs. Realizing the Plan's vision will require substantial, dedicated, and consistent funding.

2a) Would you support Fairfax committing dedicated annual funding to support the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan, even if that meant potentially delaying road expansion and interchange projects?

Yes      No      **No answer provided**

2b) What is your personal experience dealing with or advocating for pedestrian or bicyclist safety issues?

**I would be hesitant to support delaying road expansion and interchange projects to fund the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan but I am willing to consider each project on a case-by-case basis, as well as ensuring additional grants and set aside funds for these projects. Each project is unique and has its own pros and cons, and I would prefer to examine each individually. We have embarked on a comprehensive study of Gallows Road, and I believe the same needs to be done for Route 29 to ensure we are providing for the multimodal needs of our community in years to come.**

**I have and will continue to advocate for investments in multimodal transportation, and pedestrian and bicyclist safety. A connected community can help reduce the cost of transportation for our residents. I have been working with the Virginia Department of Transportation on a few safety improvements in the Providence district including the Blake Lane corridor, which is currently undergoing a Road Safety Audit, and the Shreve corridor. I will continue to work with all stakeholders and advocate for improvements at the local, state, and federal levels on these issues.**

### 3) Low-Stress Bike Network

*Fairfax County has committed to reducing the amount people have to drive and associated transportation-related carbon emissions. The County's climate plan calls for meeting a goal of 30% non-auto commuting trips by 2030. To make this shift, the County will need robust, accessible alternatives and bicycling is an ideal, low-cost, carbon-free alternative. But that mode shift requires dedicated infrastructure including an expanded network of trails and comfortable, protected, low-stress bicycle facilities - not just painted bike lanes or sharrows - to make bicycling meaningfully safer, more appealing, and more accessible and often requires roadway redesign that reduces parking and/or vehicle lanes.*

3a) Compared to the current prioritization, do you think greater priority should be given to the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians in the County's roadway designs?

**Yes**      No

3b) How would you ensure that people of all ages and abilities have robust active transportation access to and along the County's major and most important thoroughfares and connecting streets?

**We have some great projects coming online this year, including the I-66 Trail, and the Route 50 walkways in Providence District. In addition, we are currently embarking on the Gallows Road study, and I believe a study is also needed of Route 29 in Providence in order to ensure safer access to pedestrians and cyclists, many of whom do not own cars. We need to continue our commitment, but it will also be critical to secure State and Federal level funds for the installations of necessary safety improvements, as well as approvals and funds for protected bike lanes.**

**I am open to looking at different options and having productive discussions to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to engage in active transportation. We have a long ways to go but also have the most dedicated and active support I have seen in my thirty years of living in the county.**

#### 4) Safe Streets for All

*On May 10, 2022, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously endorsed the Safe Streets for All Program, a comprehensive initiative to address systemic transportation safety issues for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving. Included in the recommendations is a call for roadway infrastructure changes to slow traffic on our community's streets. Unfortunately, the County has not yet dedicated staff or funding to begin executing the program. At the same time, Fairfax County experienced a troubling uptick in traffic-related pedestrian fatalities in 2022.*

4a) Do you support the full implementation of the Safe Streets for All Program in Fairfax County, including changes to roadway design guidelines and an expanded automated speed enforcement program?

**Yes**

No

4b) What proven traffic safety improvement policies, programs, and/or technologies would you like to see implemented in your district and throughout the County?

Given the lack of clarity around who has the legal and budgetary authority to make roadway safety improvements stemming from state ownership of County roads, what steps would you propose to ensure that these roadway safety improvements are implemented?

**This needs to continue to be a joint effort as this is a partnership between VDOT [Virginia Department of Transportation] and FCDOT [Fairfax County Department of Transportation]. The county recently launched the Speed Camera Pilot program**

**with the goals of improving safety, reducing accidents and injuries, and improving driving behavior. Currently, there are speed cameras in eight locations, and cameras are to be installed in two more locations soon. These required authority from the General Assembly, and as we implement this and other measures, we need to continue to advocate to expand safety improvements and funding streams.**

**While the state is responsible for most roads, the County takes the necessary steps to make sure roads are safe for all residents. I would be happy to work with interested partners to ask for state support in addressing safety issues.**

## 5) Safe Routes to School

*Trips to and from schools are among the best opportunities to reduce car trips in Fairfax County. A robust Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program can play a critical role in encouraging more families to walk and bicycle to school, which has been shown to increase confidence and sense of independence among children while also reducing pickup/dropoff vehicle congestion and associated carbon emissions. Unfortunately, the County's SRTS program includes just one dedicated staff position for a public school system that serves 185,000 students.*

5a) Would you support expanding the Safe Routes to School program, including additional staff capacity, to get more kids to walk and bike to school?

Yes

No

5b) What other policies or budget items will you pursue to upgrade transportation infrastructure so kids can safely walk and bike to school?

**I look forward to continuing to work with the new Safe Routes to School team to get their thoughts and feedback on program areas that might need improvement or support. As experts, they would be the best partner in determining policies that can help improve safety for kids. In addition, we need to ensure that funding through local and state budgets continues to target safety improvements. I also believe we need to have our police and safety teams review and provide process improvements for our Crossing Guard program.**

## CLIMATE MITIGATION, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN SPACES

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### 1) Reaching Carbon Neutrality by 2050

*The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report made clear that tackling the climate crisis is **the** challenge of this century, and will interact with all others, from ecological to economic to social. Leaders who boldly act to reduce and prepare for climate impacts have*



the opportunity to truly preserve and create a better world for ourselves and our children. This starts with reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. The Community-wide Climate & Energy Action Plan (CECAP) established a goal of carbon neutrality for Fairfax County by 2050, with interim goals of 50% greenhouse gas emissions reductions by 2030 and 75% by 2040. To reach these goals, the County requires actionable implementation plans, effective management, robust accountability mechanisms, a clear communication strategy, consistent metrics and monitoring, and sufficient funding to address the current challenges. We have just seven years to reach the first 2030 goal.

1a) Are you committed to ensuring that Fairfax County complies with and achieves its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals by 2050?

**Yes**       No

1b) What specific policy actions and/or programs would you undertake as supervisor to accelerate and/or achieve the aggressive carbon reduction goals?

**We have been making enormous progress as a Board and as a county and my hope would be to continue that success and build on it. That includes our 5% bag tax, the Gas Powered Leaf blower reduction by the county that we hope to build on, and the many initiatives championed by our CECAP [Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan] task force that brings the community to the table in developing strategies for the County to meet its mitigation goals. Fairfax County committed to carbon-neutral government operations in 2021 and the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) continues to provide feedback to the Board.**

**Moving forward, I want to build on CECAP's success involving our community, particularly by working closely with our climate and environment-oriented groups to develop new initiatives and include environmental impact as a major decision-making factor in new projects.**

## 2) Climate Resilience

*In 2022, Fairfax County adopted Resilient Fairfax, a roadmap to help residents and infrastructure adapt to an increasingly warmer and wetter climate. Ensuring our County is implementing the necessary measures (such as providing emergency relief hubs, planting trees, and improving stormwater management) in the face of a changing climate is important, particularly for disadvantaged communities who are identified as the most vulnerable.*

2a) Will you support the plan recommendations of Resilient Fairfax?

**Yes**       No       Partially

2b) How would you further fund and support equitable resilience investments to implement the Resilient Fairfax plan in communities most affected by climate impacts?

**Our One Fairfax Policy requires us to consider equity in County decision-making. Too often, the environmental conversation is dominated by higher incomes communities, and our communities that don't have the opportunity to speak up are not afforded the same level of investment in their greenspaces, their stormwater measures, trees, and parks. I am committed to holding myself and my colleagues accountable for ensuring engagement from all communities, and to making decisions relating to resilience so that all of our Fairfax Communities, regardless of background, are sufficiently protected and prepared.**

### 3) Climate Impacts of Land Use and Development

*Every land use decision is an environmental decision. To meet both our climate and resilience goals, the County can take actions through the development process such as prioritizing compact development and land use patterns, which have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions and on protecting current natural resources. To do this, we must ensure the implementation of energy efficient buildings (such as green buildings and the use of solar and other renewable energies), eliminate any building or development in Resource Protection Areas, reduce the amount of impermeable surfaces, and increase native tree canopy and natural landscaping.*

3a) Are you committed to utilizing the development process to reduce carbon emissions and minimize environmental impacts on our natural resources?

**Yes**

No

3b) How would you utilize the development process to achieve CECAP and Resilient Fairfax goals?

**The development process allows us to require appropriate mitigation and environmental contribution from our developers. Their developments must conform to significant environmental standards, and we can use those opportunities, through proffers and other tools, to require our developers to reduce their environmental impacts further. We can also make improvements to past impacts, such as stormwater management and transportation, through new developments. Most importantly, we can focus on transit-oriented development that ensures housing is primarily focused close to transit to reduce the carbon footprint created by transportation.**

#### 4) Tree Canopy and Forest Management

Trees help mitigate climate impacts by sequestering carbon, mitigating heat island effects, and improving stream valley integrity, thus improving drinking water quality and minimizing flooding. The result is a healthier, more friendly, and more resilient urban habitat. CECAP calls for a minimum of 50% tree canopy coverage in every census block by 2050, prioritizing areas of highest socioeconomic need first. Data from 2015 to 2018 shows that the County lost 2.6% of our tree canopy, which will make reaching these goals even more challenging. Relatedly, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) owns nearly 10% of land in Fairfax County, including stream valleys and forested areas, yet faces significant budget challenges that impact its ability to manage and protect its natural resources.

4a) Are you committed to protecting and increasing Fairfax County's tree canopy?

Yes      No      **No answer provided**

4b) Which actions would you take to protect and grow the County's tree canopy, particularly in areas with the lowest tree canopy coverage?

**Trees are imperative to our environmental longevity here in the County. In addition to the Fairfax County Boards' tree canopy goals, I will continue to work closely with developers to see the preservation of trees as a primary focus of development conversations and focus on how to preserve our trees from other County projects. When that is not possible, I will work to ensure our County takes an aggressive look at opportunities to plant new trees in targeted and equity-conscious locations and continue to fund and promote our invasive management program. Lastly, we will continue to promote the importance of our tree canopy from an educational standpoint, such as when I joined Mantua elementary school for tree planting with their students and had the opportunity to talk to them about the importance of native trees.**

## FOOD SECURITY

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### 1) Inclusive and Accessible Community Gardens

The Fairfax County Park Authority has 10 community gardens, but only one is near communities where the residents struggle to get enough to eat. Additionally, almost all of the gardens require a car to get to and have multi-year waiting lists.

1a) What County actions would you advocate for in order to increase residents' ability to grow their own food, particularly food-insecure residents?

**I am strongly in support of the County facilitating the creation of additional community gardens together with residents. These community-led projects are beneficial to our entire community, and I will advocate for funding for these**

**gardens as well. Eating local is an important value here in the County. I have worked closely with Hands on Harvest and will continue to advocate for community gardens like the one they have helped plant in collaboration with the community at Kingsley Commons. As the BOS [Board of Supervisors] liaison to the Fairfax Food Council, I will continue to collaborate with the various organizations involved in food access, and ensure that we search for new opportunities to bring urban agriculture to our communities across Fairfax.**

## 2) Urban Agriculture

*The pandemic showed how fragile local food supply systems are. However, County zoning rules can severely limit entrepreneurs who want to start commercial agricultural operations that would help build a more robust food production system locally. Fairfax County also lags behind its neighbors in providing incentives for would-be commercial food growers, who may be unable to finance the upfront technology and equipment needs or support an agricultural operation for the length of time it takes to become sustainable.*

2a) What regulation changes or incentives would you endorse to facilitate innovative urban agriculture in Fairfax County?

**I believe we have many opportunities to be creative by filling empty garage space, empty office buildings, and empty parking lots with urban agriculture. I would like to better understand some of the challenges facing our local food supply systems, especially hearing directly from our commercial agriculture operations that have struggled to find opportunities for growth in the county. I would be open to adjusting ordinances or zoning regulations in order to better facilitate a welcoming environment for these entrepreneurs.**

## 3) Food Insecurity

*The demand at local food distribution sites has not yet fallen back to pre-pandemic levels, likely due to inflation and employment insecurity in low-income neighborhoods. Yet federal programs for extra food as well as rent relief have ended, leaving many residents worse off than they were before the pandemic.*

3a) Do you support additional County funding for food assistance to meet the current needs?

**Yes**

No

3b) What policies or programs would you support to make sure the lowest income families have access to food?

**While replicating federal aid is not fully possible, I want our county to look for as many opportunities as possible to address the needs of our residents who are most vulnerable. Our County will continue to provide funding for crucial non-**

**profits, such as Food For Others and Capital Area Food Bank, other food distributors, and food banks, who do lifesaving work providing food for those in need. We must expand our County's outreach efforts to engage and interact with low-income families to better understand how they would like us to meet those needs. That includes language resources, and involvement in our communities to demonstrate ourselves as trusted partners. Additionally, we must partner with our faith communities, one of our strongest partners in humanitarian efforts who have a close relationship with many residents that we may not reach on our own. Food to those who need it is a primary concern of mine for the entire county.**

## OTHER COMMENTS

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**Are there any other comments you would like to provide? (optional)**

*No response provided*