

2014 ACT Candidate Scorecard

1. Why does ACT put out a scorecard?

ACT puts out a scorecard to inform Montgomery County voters on the candidates' support for transit, walkable development, safe school zones, and smart growth.

2. What information did ACT use to score the candidates?

ACT used the candidates' voting records, questionnaire answers, records in office, and public statements, including at candidate forums and in the news media.

There have been a considerable number of candidate forums and other opportunities to hear candidates speak. ACT board members have attended as many as we could.

We found that some candidates were inconsistent in their positions on these issues. If a candidate's statements at a public event conflicted with the answer they gave on the questionnaire, we took that into consideration when rating the candidate.

Some candidates answered "yes", and then followed that with an answer that made it clear they didn't get it. For example, an imaginary candidate who responded to the M83 question by saying "Yes, there should be no further spending on M83. The money should go to a highway that runs from my house to I-270," would receive a minus because they do support building more highways in our county.

3. What does a plus or minus for "Purple Line" represent?

ACT asked, "Do you support funding and advancing the Purple Line to groundbreaking as described in the Locally Preferred Alternative and the Environmental Impact Statement without qualification?" The Purple Line will be a light rail line from Bethesda to New Carrollton, includes an at-grade light rail line with a trail alongside it on the Georgetown Branch right of way between Bethesda and Silver Spring. ACT asked this question because people frequently say that they support the Purple Line, but only with qualifications – for example, that it should be heavy rail or buses, or that it should run on a different route, or that it has serious problems that require further study. Others have said they supported the project but then added qualifications that neatly dovetailed with the arguments opponents were making against the Purple Line.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate supports the Purple Line without qualification.

4. What does a plus or minus for "People Before Cars" stand for?

ACT asked, "Would you support more transit, pedestrian, and bicycle-friendly road design in our school zones and urban centers even if it slows drivers down?" Support for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle-friendly road design frequently vanishes once it becomes evident that this would slow down drivers.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate supports complete streets policies even when they slow down drivers.

5. What does a plus or minus for "Buses Before Cars" stand for?

ACT asked, "Do you support changing existing traffic lanes to dedicated bus lanes for BRT?" The basic idea of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is that road space is used most efficiently by rapid transit vehicles that carry many passengers. This requires dedicated bus lanes, because otherwise the buses are stranded in the same traffic as

the cars. To get dedicated bus lanes, either roads must be widened, or all-purpose lanes must be converted to bus lanes.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate supports creating dedicated bus lanes by converting existing all-purpose lanes.

6. What does a plus or minus for "Opposes M-83 Highway" stand for?

ACT asked, "Will you support stopping all spending on the M-83 highway?" M-83 is an outdated, ineffective, environmentally-destructive highway that would run from Montgomery Village to Clarksburg and cost Montgomery County at least \$350 million dollars to build.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate opposes all spending on M-83, including capital funding, operating funding, and funding for studies.

7. What does a plus or minus for "Housing Near Metro" stand for?

ACT asked, "How would you increase the housing supply in our urban centers?" For transit to work, it has to be where people can use it - near their homes. And if more people live near transit, then more people can use it. But transit-accessible housing is currently in short supply, which means that only affluent people are able to live near transit.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if candidates specifically supported more development near transit. In the downcounty, candidates' statements on the Chelsea townhouse development in Silver Spring, and the Chevy Chase Lake redevelopment in Bethesda were considered when we rated them on this issue.

8. What does a plus or minus for "Opposes 2nd Bridge" stand for?

ACT asked, "Would you support a 2nd road crossing of the Potomac?" The idea of an additional road crossing of the Potomac between the American Legion Bridge and Point of Rocks frequently comes up at meetings of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. An additional road crossing would cost money that could be used for transit and would encourage more driving and more sprawl.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate opposes an additional road crossing of the Potomac.

9. What does a plus or minus for "All-Day MARC Service" stand for?

ACT asked, "Do you support including the 3rd track needed to allow all-day MARC service?" The MARC Brunswick Line currently runs only during limited commuting hours on weekdays, and only in the main commuting direction. Because the CSX freight railroad owns the current two tracks, all-day service is not possible unless Maryland adds a third track.

ACT gave a plus for this question only if the candidate supports Maryland's addition of a third track to the MARC Brunswick Line.