



## 2022 County Council Candidate Questionnaire

The Food Council invited all County Council candidates to complete a 9-item questionnaire, which was developed in collaboration with our community partners. Our goal is to provide information on local candidate's food system priorities and commitments. As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, we do not endorse candidates.

For more information, please contact Heather Bruskin, Executive Director at [hbruskin@mocofoodcouncil.org](mailto:hbruskin@mocofoodcouncil.org).

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Name: **John Zittrauer**

Campaign Website: <https://www.friendsofjohnzittrauer.com/>

Candidate for: **District 4**

1. Please describe your personal and/or professional engagement in any local food systems initiatives, policies, and programs.

**A: Aside from a little work at Shepherd's Table, my work has been as an employee trying to make ends meet, so my experience to this point with regards to financial hardship and food insecurity has been more about needing help, or associating with friends and coworkers who need help, than providing it.**

2. Please describe any plans you have for creating economic opportunities for individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latinx/Latino, and/or a person of color, particularly in food and agriculture?

**A: Regarding food accessibility, the county needs to do a better job promoting programs like SNAP to eligible residents and driving up its use. As for economic opportunities around food production, I would increase funding for new minority-owned businesses to purchase land for food production.**



3. Please describe your position on addressing income insufficiency, which is a major contributor to food insecurity in our County. Please describe any positions or initiatives in your platform that focus on food security.

**A: My whole campaign is focused on the residents of the county with the most need, and food insecurity deserves a brighter spotlight. Day one priorities involve drafting plans to combat homelessness and food insecurity, so an updated strategy has to be written immediately. Policies should include an increase in the usage of the county's basic income trial program and matching the minimum wage with an actual living wage in the county.**

4. What role should the County government have in improving resident access to federal benefit programs, such as SNAP and WIC.

**A: We need community outreach to go into cultural hubs (I'm thinking Progress Place and the Silver Spring Civic Center as examples) and employees (paid fairly) helping residents navigate the systems.**

5. It is likely that the impacts of climate change, national and global politics, and future disasters will further disrupt food production, supply chains, and food security networks. Please describe any policies and programs that you will propose or support to address local food system resilience?

**A: Investing in local and community food production can help mitigate supply chain issues**

6. Please describe any initiatives or policies you would propose to increase local food production and access to affordable agricultural land.

**A: Farm to Food Bank is right up my alley as my goal is not just to end hunger but supply the needy with healthy, responsibly sourced food. I want to help organizations like MHP and LEDC strengthen their alliances to promote job training and start-up grocer programs.**

7. Please describe any initiatives or policies you will propose to reduce food waste and advance zero-waste strategies.

**A: We need to make it easy for food service businesses to compost by helping them dispose of food waste through pickup programs without placing an undue financial burden on our small business sector. I fully support the increase of all composting programs. County compost collection, partnered with compost distribution to small farms and community gardens, should create an efficient pipeline.**

8. Where do you see opportunities for the County government to support food education? How can the County support residents in making healthy and sustainable food choices easier?

**A: The biggest obstacle I see to healthy eating is affordability. To fix that, the increase in SNAP and WIC recipients goes a long way.**



9. What do you see as the biggest food system challenges in the County and what do you believe is the role of the County Council in addressing them? How should community stakeholders be engaged in that work?

**A: Cost of living affects everything, especially food security. The county can increase the minimum wage to a real living wage and expand the basic income program. The level of participation from community stakeholders is important, but largely out of my hands. What I can control - the dedication and participation of the county council - is something to which I will fully commit myself.**

