

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Diane Farsetta

Aldermanic District: *

12

Current Home Address: *

213 N Fifth St, Madison 53704

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Campaign website, if any:

<https://dianefor12.org/>

Social media (Twitter, Instagram, etc.) handles, if any:

@Dianefor12 on Twitter and Facebook

Past education and work history (question optional; alternately you may send résumé to brett@madisonbiz.com)

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Instructions: Please state your position on the following issues. Please limit answers to 100 words. Any answers exceeding the word count limitations will be cut after 100 words.

If you have filled out this questionnaire before, you may skip starred** questions or modify previous answers to those questions. If you skip starred answers on this questionnaire, we will re-publish your 2017 answers.

****1. Why are you seeking this office?**

I'm running because the City Council faces major decisions - including around the Public Market and Oscar Mayer redevelopment - where District 12 could be an example for Madison and beyond. We must expand transportation alternatives, support small local businesses and add affordable housing. I've been an officer or council member of the Emerson East Neighborhood Association since 2007. I volunteer with the Occupy Madison Tiny Homes Village and Madison's East Timor solidarity group, serving multiple terms on the city's Sister City Collaboration Committee. I care about our area and will work hard to effectively represent it at the City level.

****2. What in your background or experiences qualifies you to understand the unique needs facing small businesses?**

My work experience is in the nonprofit and educational sectors. As a nonprofit executive, I hired employees, developed budgets, ensured our financial health and compliance with state and federal policies, and did extensive outreach to inform and engage the wider community. At the UW-Madison School of Nursing, I build campus-community collaborations to support older adult health, including with businesses and professional associations. As the lead on a School of Nursing project to develop an online tool for family caregivers of older adults, I went through the UW-Madison Discovery to Product Igniter program.

****3. What are the most important issues the businesses in your district face?**

District 12 is home to a broad range of businesses, from local restaurants and bars, to grocery and taxi cab cooperatives, to senior housing and the Dane County Regional Airport. The Northside Planning Council and Northside Business Association support economic development in part of our district. The district's identity is split between Madison's east and north sides. Better connecting bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure across the area would help develop a shared identity that local businesses would benefit from. The Public Market and Oscar Mayer redevelopment are great opportunities to develop and promote a shared local brand.

****4. What is your perception of Madison’s business brand? How do you think business in Madison is perceived locally, statewide, and nationally?**

Madison’s business brand is intertwined with the university, as a major economic engine and home to skilled innovators. Continued campus, public and private support for start-up businesses is key. For me and others locally, important distinguishing characteristics of Madison businesses include a strong sense of place and commitment to social and environmental principles. Statewide, Madison is known as an innovative engine and resource hub. Nationally, while we are known in some fields, such as agriculture or health care technology, I don’t know that there is an awareness of a Madison business brand.

****5. How can the City of Madison best attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce?**

We need to commit to the education and professional development of the diverse communities already living and working in Madison. The MarketReady program of the Madison Public Market is a great example of how targeted outreach and business support are effective in helping launch new businesses led by people of color. More than 80 percent of the first cohort of MarketReady participants are people of color. The involvement of groups experienced in addressing unequal access to business opportunities, like the Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation, helped achieve MarketReady’s early successes.

6. How can the City of Madison build an inclusive economy and ensure the advanced industries accelerating here provide opportunity for all?

As the Race to Equity report documented, there are two local job markets. One offers well-paying positions with benefits to highly educated, well-networked and mostly white people. The other offers low-wage positions, often without benefits, to people with fewer degrees, less experience and less social capital, which disproportionately includes people of color. To develop a more inclusive economy, Madison should work with unions and employers to develop supported career progression pathways for high school and technical college students and for lower-wage positions that are high in demand, such as personal care workers.

7. With Madison's economic momentum, a continued focus must be placed on infrastructure improvements. What strategies would you recommend for the city to meet the diverse needs of worker mobility and housing?

To ensure that major projects - like the Public Market, Oscar Mayer redevelopment and possibly bus rapid transit - don't lead to gentrification, I support establishing community land trusts for permanently-affordable housing and commercial spaces in areas of rising value. To increase the level of local funding available for affordable housing, I would explore revolving loan funds, general obligation bonds and development impact fees. As Madison grows, our roads and some bus routes are increasingly stressed. Public transit must be accessible and convenient across the city. Bus rapid transit would improve local and regional transportation options.

8. How do you define economic development? Please elaborate.

Economic development meets local needs for goods and services, while providing living-wage employment opportunities and adding to the vitality of our neighborhoods. Overwhelmingly, the revenue generated stays in the community and benefits diverse socioeconomic groups. It expands opportunity for other local businesses to launch and grow.

9. The 115th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard is an important driver of the Madison economy, providing an annual economic impact of over \$100 million, emergency and fire services for the Dane County Regional Airport, and over \$1 million in tuition assistance to area student guardsmen. Do you support the Wing as it seeks to continue its mission by acquiring next-generation F-35A jets? Please explain your answer.

I do not support adding the F-35 fighter jets to Truax Field. Many residents in our district are already impacted by airport noise. Adding the F-35 jets would likely increase noise and could stress the local environment, including Starkweather Creek. We are now debating the proper response to PFAS chemicals in our drinking water from well 15, which are spreading from Truax Field. In addition, public spending on the military is one of the least effective ways to create jobs. Public dollars spent on healthcare, education or energy efficiency would create significantly more jobs, while better serving community needs.

10. If offered an endorsement from the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, would you accept it? *

Yes

No

By submitting this candidate questionnaire, you agree that the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce may publish it with the intent of sharing it with its membership and the general public. *

I acknowledge that the Chamber will publish my answers to this questionnaire

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