

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Mark-Anthony Whitaker

Aldermanic District: *

12

Current Home Address: *

328 Kedzie St

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Campaign website, if any:

.....

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

www.facebook.com/anthonyforalder

.....

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

US Army Veteran, Current employee Meriter Hospital

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Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

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 for Alder because I believe that we need new, fresh voices on our city council to help shape the future of all our communities and all our families. As a Veteran, I understand that we can never leave a person behind. That's why I believe we must work together to find and implement solutions to tough problems that face our city. On the Common Council, I will be an advocate for our district and our neighbors; I will demand transparency, accountability and results.

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

I have never run a small business, but during this campaign I've seen up close the challenges our local businesses are facing. From crime to health care to loans and capital, small business owners are both hopeful for the future and concerned about the present. I am committed to making sure our local economy remains strong, listening to business owners about their issues, and providing solutions that work.

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

Our district businesses have a wide variety of concerns from healthcare to making sure employees are paid. However, our neighborhood has recently seen an uptick in crime and our local small businesses are understandably concerned. As a frequent supporter of many of these businesses, I want to ensure they are safe and accessible to the community and their customers.

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

I love Madison's small businesses. From local mechanics to local homemade home goods Madison is open for business. One of the more appealing things about living in the city is that there are always great recommendations for local eateries, wine and services. I think Madison business statewide has a mixed reputation. While the city certainly provides a great deal of economic activity for the state, Madison often gets an undeserved reputation for not being community or locally oriented.

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

Madison must make a concerted effort to ensure it has inclusive policies for all members of its communities. We cannot retain great people if persistent racial disparities are not dealt with, and the reputation that precedes such communities often reinforces stereotypes. However, if we commit to inclusive hiring, supportive environments, and proven solutions for reducing racial disparities, Madison will become a model for the Nation.

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

An inclusive economy is built on everyone's participation. Madison can accelerate growth by incentivizing on the job training. As an Army Veteran, I know firsthand how invaluable hands on training can be. As our population begins to age, new workers will need to replace those going into retirement. If we want to attract the best talent, we should not be afraid to train the next generation of employees and entrepreneurs. These actions will help build Madison's reputation as an inclusive, economically prosperous place to live, work, and do business.

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?

Madison should expand access to public transit and invest in regional public transit. We have seen in the past what can happen when state and federal funding levels decrease. By working within the county and across the Madison region, we can expand access to more people by sharing the cost burden between our neighbors. We can improve access, frequency, and routes by building regional transit. This will allow us to create both a rapid transit system and more interconnected neighborhoods.

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

I define economic development in how well a community can support itself. Communities should be tight-knit places where all members feel welcomed and opportunities exist for everyone to succeed. For Madison to experience true economic growth in all parts of our city, we need to expand our focus to under-developed areas and look at new solutions to old problems. From community co-operatives to increased recognition of local small businesses, every district can experience strong economic development.

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 fully support bringing the F35 Jets to Madison. This is a huge boon for the city. The selection of Truax to house the new aircraft could benefit our city for the foreseeable future. However, many residents, myself included, have concerns about the noise impact of the jets. Living on the North or East side, we have both commercial and private flights over our homes daily. While this may not seem important to those who do not live in this community, it's a very real issue. But you've got to admit, watching those jets fly over the city is cool!

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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