

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Avra Reddy

Aldermanic District: *

District 8

Current Home Address: *

Room 1146 615 W Johnson St 53706

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Campaign website, if any:

www.avraformadison.com

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

www.facebook.com/ReadyForReddy

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

Illinois District 127 School Board Rep: 2 terms; Helped organize food drives in Grayslake, IL;
Current Freshman at UW-Madison

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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 for city council to amplify the voices of people living in the Eighth district. The representation of the Eighth at the city level should have an acute understanding of the unique issues that face students in Madison. I believe that I can represent students because I've been listening to their concerns for months now: about housing, safety, transportation, many other issues. Furthermore, I believe that we all have a duty to serve our fellow citizen when possible, and I believe that my skills and passions would make me an effective public servant to the people of Madison.

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

As a regular patron of the many businesses that add so much value to the Eighth District, I'm well aware that students make up a large part of the workforce for small businesses in the area surrounding UW Madison. In times like these, when demand for labor at every skill level is so high, it is my belief that investing in our public transit would extend the geographical range of possible employment for UW students, giving them access to better opportunities and allowing more small businesses access to a motivated and educated labor force.

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

One of the largest industries in the Eighth District are the restaurants, bars and cafes that cater to student and citizen alike. These amenities are a crucial part of the character of the campus area. As of late there have been some concerns about the granting of liquor licenses in certain areas both inside and adjacent to my district. I believe that the granting or denial of these licenses should be carried out in a manner that is fair, responsible, and transparent, and upon election I would apply those criteria.

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

Madison is well known around the state and nation for its established technology sector. Large, industry leading firms and emerging start-ups alike are making Madison their home, and the city is better off for it. Upon election, I will support Madison's image as a hub for innovation and encourage further investment in Madison and its workforce.

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

Beyond fostering a business-friendly environment to create jobs in the first place, a crucial element in attracting a talented workforce is developing the Isthmus in a thoughtful way so that newcomers have access to a reasonable housing market. Having our city on an Isthmus constrains us geographically, making it all the more necessary for us to prioritize high-density, anti-scarcity development policies as we prepare for certain population surges in the next ten years. In addition to providing ample housing, another way to attract talent is to encourage the development of diverse amenities that enhance the quality of life in Madison.

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

As a student myself, I realize the incredible value education can bring in inclusion. The effort to close the considerable gaps that exist in Madison must start at the earliest possible age and continue from there. Supporting the education and career training of Madison's youth with an equity lens in mind is crucial to building an inclusive economy. I support initiatives like the Pathways Programs at certain Madison schools that allow students to personalize their education to their future career interests and connect them with local businesses and organizations.

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?

As Madison grows and the need for density becomes more pressing, we must commit all necessary resources to continuously improving our public transit. Initiatives like Bus Rapid Transit, which would put limited stop buses on high traffic corridors, are a valuable step in this direction. Bus Rapid Transit would cut down on the need for bus transfers for people who live farther from the city core, allowing for people to live farther from the city without congesting its roads with additional car traffic. High density development coupled with robust public transit is how we handle Madison's progress responsibly.

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

Put plainly, economic development is the process or policies by which a governing body increases the economic well-being of all its people: its business-owners, workers and citizens alike. There are a variety of strategies that a municipality can use in the pursuit of economic development, whether it be through investing in infrastructure, developing a workforce, TIF Districts, etc. When I'm in office, I'll look into any strategy I believe will improve Madison's economy for everyone.

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.

The decision to bring F-35 jets to Truax field is one which will pay tremendous dividends to Madison and Dane County. The cost savings to the airport alone is of considerable benefit to any resident of Dane County, not to mention the well paying jobs the addition of the jets will bring. I am eagerly looking forward to the results of the environmental impact study of this addition, and when the impact of the addition of the jets is shown to be negligible to the city, I am fully prepared to support it.

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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