

Responses cannot be edited

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Marsha Rummel

Aldermanic District: *

District 6

Current Address: *

1029 Spaight St #6C Madison WI 53703

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce 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 2015 answers.

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

I am seeking my 6th term on the Common Council representing the near east side of Madison. I enjoy being the interface between constituents, city stakeholders and city government to help resolve issues, plan for our future and advocate for the interests of residents and local businesses. I engage residents and stakeholders in neighborhood planning (land use, parks and open space, street reconstruction, licensed establishments, etc) and create opportunities for neighbors to participate in our local democracy. I also am honored to represent the views of a progressive district in policy and budget deliberations. I want to leverage the resources of the city to make sure we provide excellent services for everyone.

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

I worked for over 20 years as a small business manager for a cooperative bookstore that provided textbooks and general titles in downtown Madison. I struggled with the local and global changes in the bookselling industry – the concentration of media ownership, big box stores and internet sales- and employed strategies to remain competitive. I understand e-commerce is changing the retail landscape and how the deck is often stacked against brick and mortar retail stores that pay sales taxes, living wages and benefits, and keep money in the local economy.

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

The most important issue facing businesses is parking. I have responded to business owners who requested we eliminate parking meters in the Schenks Corner area and create 2 hour parking on E Washington to insure turnover. I have supported a parking structure in the Capitol East District to serve activities in the corridor. I have collaborated with local neighborhood and business associations to maintain vibrant business districts along the Williamson-Atwood corridor and develop the Capitol East District and E Washington corridor out to Hwy 30 and create a healthy mix of retail and office uses.

4. What is the City of Madison's role in growing the economy? How can the City of Madison best support the growth and retention of jobs?

The city's key role is land use and zoning and to insure that a broad sector of the population is involved in planning for density, and identifying our economic and social assets and needs. The city can leverage city, state and federal grant programs like Brownfield or façade grants to help revitalize environmentally degraded or blighted areas. TIF should be used strategically to grow new business, not just relocate existing businesses. We need to continue to fund affordable housing so that low and moderate people are not priced out of the local rental market. We need to approach economic development by focusing on our strengths and recognize that racial, economic, cultural diversity is a key to that strength. We need to understand the links between land use and transportation.

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

We need to insure that young people who go to school here, whether it is K-12 or college have the skills and opportunities to find sustainable and career ladder jobs. We need to insure that parents feel that our public schools will help their kids thrive and stay in the city. We need to offer cultural and social activities that reflect a broad range of tastes and interests. We need to build more affordable housing and provide accessible transportation options. The city should deepen partnerships with the UW, Madison College and other technical education programs to make sure we connect employees to employers with the skills they need.

****6. Do you support the use of TIF, and how do you believe it should be utilized moving forward? How would you rate the City of Madison's past use of TIF? (Would you describe the use of TIF as underutilized, over-utilized, or appropriate?)**

I support the judicious use of TIF to jumpstart residential and commercial development in blighted areas where the market has failed/abandoned neighborhoods, provide some of the gap needed to fund affordable housing, and offset the cost of shared parking in the central core of the city where land prices are high. There should be significant community benefits such as living wages, local hiring, quality jobs, environmental remediation, clean energy etc. We should close TIF districts as soon as we can and share the growth of tax base with the Madison School district and the other taxing jurisdictions.

7. What specific initiatives in the Connect Madison economic development strategy

(<http://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/economicdevelopment/economic-strategy-symposium/554/>) do you support, and which, if any, would you like to see modified? Why?

I appreciate the laser focus on strategies, priority work areas, and projects in the Connect Madison plan. In general, I agree with the strategies and have worked diligently on several of the projects such as revitalizing the Capitol East District and the planning for the Public Market. I support focusing on cooperative economic development as a way to enhance the clusters of healthcare, food, green infrastructure, and IT. I need to think more about how the proposed Madison Development District concept would work in the real world.

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

Wisconsin idea. Progressive oasis for tech start ups, local food and beer; wild fun at high school tourneys and Badger games; and, UW Madison as liberal college town.

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

A system of social organization that provides for human needs and well-being, respects the planet and its ecological limits, and engages people in a bottom up participatory process to make decisions that affect their future and future generations.

10. The Chamber believes that equity and social mobility are achieved through wealth creation and that the surest way is through an entrepreneurial class of color. The Chamber is launching initiatives to support this goal. What do you believe is the City of Madison's role in creating an entrepreneurial class of color?

I think the city needs to make sure we nurture kids of color so they can thrive and have support and resources to pursue their dreams and talents when they grow up, whatever they are. As someone who grew up on the South Side of Chicago in an neighborhood with majority African American professionals, I agree Madison should do what it can to create economic opportunities and expand the social power of people of color. We need to address racial disparities in health, education, wealth building, housing and incarceration.

11. How can the City of Madison provide better customer service to new or existing businesses that seek approval through the permitting and planning processes? How do you define customer service in this case?

Make sure our website is user friendly and staff who deal with the public are knowledgeable and effective at providing service and seek feedback. Make sure the approval process requirements are transparent and accessible. I support the proposed multi-agency Business Assistance Team in Connect Madison as a way to improve customer service.

12. 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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