

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Kristin Johnson

Aldermanic District: *

10

Current Home Address: *

510 Piper Drive

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Campaign website, if any:

<https://www.kristinforalder.com/>

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

<https://www.facebook.com/kristinforalder> <https://twitter.com/kristinsjohnson>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kristinjohnsonfromwi/>

<https://www.instagram.com/kristinjohnsonfromwi/>

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

Will send resume.

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?

After 29 years of living, working, and raising two children in Madison, I felt it was the right time for me to give back to the community. As a single mother, an entrepreneur, and an active community member, I will bring valuable experience to the most diverse district in the city.

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

As a small business owner, working with employers and job seekers on their careers for the last decade, I understand the importance commerce and services plays in the local community. I know many of the challenges entrepreneurs, employees, and executives face. To boost our local economy, addressing those joys and needs of the members of the Greater Madison Area Chamber of Commerce will make a huge difference for the Madison community as a whole.

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

The biggest challenge that I've come across in my years in the small business and tech communities in Madison are insufficient access to capital or credit, and also a need for mentoring from successful business leaders.

Specifically, women and people of color express difficulties funding their businesses and operations in a consistent fashion. Business operations, financial management, and marketing coaching would be useful for many in District 10. Peer-to-peer mentoring with attention to gender and racial equity are essential for growth of the business community in Madison.

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

Locally, our city is more often seen as being traditional and conservative, with a sprinkling of entrepreneurship and startups. My perception is that Madison is working hard to address the challenges that face women and people of color in the business community. We need to continue this work and support businesses as they strive to provide more opportunities for those traditionally underrepresented groups in mind.

On a statewide and local level, Madison has been recognized for having a brand that is innovative and entrepreneurial. I love that image!

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

Encouraging public private partnerships such as with the Urban League and Latino Chamber of Commerce, can go a long way to supporting diversity and equity among small businesses. Attracting the talent Madison needs can be supported with incubator spaces and coworking facilities like 100state.

In addition, from my experience working with job seekers around the world, I know people want to come to Madison. To be a welcoming small business community, we need to open our hearts and our pocketbooks to make it happen. Having easy, accessible, and affordable transportation and housing options are critical to attract top talent.

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

Our district is the most diverse racially and socioeconomically. Encouraging entrepreneurs and small business in economically disadvantaged areas is critical to balancing the inequities that exist here.

Providing opportunity begins with our youth. Access to jobs for kids to improve their personal economic conditions, explore their own career interests, and develop their soft skills will give them the jump start they need to make it as adults. Establishing a youth jobs center would be important to explore. This idea provides a way for business leaders to be involved in supporting communities on their way to becoming more inclusive places.

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?

Creating additional housing units (market-rate and affordable) in Madison is critical to support growth. Having safe, sustainable, and attractive environments in which to live adds to the health of our neighborhoods. Accessibility from housing to workplaces by improved transportation, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), will allow working families and small businesses alike to thrive. Encouraging local commerce hubs, such as Madison's Public Market, in areas of District 10 could provide job opportunities and a solid economic base for the community. Walkable neighborhoods and designated bike lanes are also ways to improve transportation while not adding to Madison's carbon footprint.

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

One of my favorite jobs was working at LaBrioche Bakery, back when it was in the strip mall on Midvale Boulevard. I was able to come in after dropping my kids off at school. Earning money was the main incentive, of course, but I also learned about the business, gained food service skills, made friends, and became a better member of our community. I made lifelong friends and it turned my personal situation around, giving me the confidence to then go on to get a better-paying job when I was ready. This is what economic development means to me.

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.

As the base for government in the state, Madison has always had an important commitment to developing economic growth between state, local, and federal government entities. As a daughter of a Vietnam veteran and granddaughter of a WWII veteran, I support the international guard and the people who serve our country.

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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