

# Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: \*

Shiva Bidar-Sielaff

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Aldermanic District: \*

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Current Home Address: \*

2704 Kendall Ave

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Email: \*

[REDACTED]

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Phone: \*

[REDACTED]

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Campaign website, if any:

N/A

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

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

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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 have been fortunate to work with the full and extremely diverse spectrum of our community. My decision to run is anchored in my commitment to continue to work on issues of equity and economic opportunity for all Madisonians. As an experienced Alder who has been able to work effectively with residents, the business community, the non-profit community, council colleagues and city staff, I would like to continue to play a role in moving our city forward at a time where we will see tremendous change at City Hall.

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

I have spent the large majority of my career working in management positions for large organizations. I understand the implications of regulations, costs, personnel management and all aspects of operations that need to be in place daily to ensure a successful business. I have had many interactions with the small business owners in my district as well as across the City which have helped me become familiar with their needs and challenges. I have served on the City Alcohol License Review Commission for 8 years and hear monthly from a diverse pool of alcohol license applicants.

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

My district encompasses the western UW Madison campus and UW Hospital as well as a number of small businesses. Balancing the primarily residential nature of my district with the needs of businesses who rely on residents of the district as their employees and patrons is critical to the success of my district's businesses. One of the biggest challenges for the success of small businesses in my district is the lack of parking and thus the need for a pedestrian and bike friendly city infrastructure.

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

Positive but complicated. We have many assets but great disparities. We have a tremendous quality of life for some residents and a huge opportunity to extend that same quality of life to all residents. We are not always the easiest place to do business – sometimes due to valid reasons of planning and culture. We don’t always value the employers we have and the benefits they bring to our economy. The benefits of our brand need to reach everyone in our community, which they do not now.

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

We need to invest in what we know is important to our workforce:

- A community known for equity
  - Multi-modal transportation
  - Diversity in arts and recreation, especially entertainment for a racially and ethnically diverse audience
  - A thriving and successful school district
  - Focus on the needs of young families such as affordable day care and early childhood education
  - Clean environment
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**6. How can the City of Madison build an inclusive economy and ensure the advanced industries accelerating here provide opportunity for all?**

Businesses have strong education and job training partners in our region such as Madison College, the Latino Chamber of Commerce, Urban League of Greater Madison and Centro Hispano. Organizations such as the Chamber can be important catalysts, encouraging these partnerships and promoting successes. The City needs to continue investing in youth and adult employment programming as well as in early childhood education to help ensure we have young people attaining the best foundational education possible.

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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?

The city needs strong private and public sector partners to address the interrelated issues of employment, transportation and housing. The city should use tax incremental financing strategically to leverage funds for infrastructure improvement. We need to continue to pursue public transit that both meets the needs of our most transit-reliant citizens and also attracts a robust general ridership. Transit and housing both require a regional approach for which regional organizations such as the Chamber can play an active role in fostering collaboration.

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

Economic development has as its goal the growth and retention of jobs and businesses with the goal of a high quality of life for all members of the community. The keys to economic development are sustainability and equity, which are in my opinion intertwined. We need to create the type of businesses and jobs that are forward looking and that specifically create pathways to opportunity for people of color. We have to continue to look for strategies that help grow and sustain small businesses. We must advocate for regional, state and national resources for initiatives with broad benefit.

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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 support the presence of the Air National Guard in Madison and the upgrade to the new F-35A jets. The Air National Guard plays not only an important economic role in Madison but it also provides critical assistance during national emergencies. I see our relationship with the Air National Guard as a partnership, and it is my hope that they demonstrate that they are committed to be good partners to the City as we are asking for responses and cooperation to mitigate the toxic chemicals (PFAS) found in the groundwater originating from Truax Field.

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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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