

# Madison Council Candidate

## Questionnaire

The first section of the questionnaire is for your basic contact information and campaign media

Candidate Full Name \*

Ayomi Obuseh

Aldermanic District \*

8

Campaign website (if applicable)

ayomi4alder.vote

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) accounts, if any

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ayomiforalder>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Ayomiforalder>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ayomiforalder/>

## Questionnaire

Please state your position on the following issues. Please limit answers to 500 characters. Any answers exceeding the word count limit will be redacted after 500 characters.

If you have completed this questionnaire before, you may skip any question that is not starred (\*\*) unless you would like to modify or update an answer submitted in a prior year. If a question is skipped we will re-post the most recent submitted answer in its place.

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

I am running for District 8 Alder because I want to help connect students of UW-Madison to the rest of the city. The big gap between the two hurts both entities. I understand Madison at these levels and can prioritize families and the Madison community. It's important to have innovative ideas from youth, and as a black,

female immigrant I will be able to provide a different perspective. The role of an alder is to build coalitions between different groups, and I am equipped to do that.

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

My family currently owns and operates Full Spectrum Health Services in Madison, and I also have experience in entrepreneurship. This has led me to appreciate the difficulty in maintaining a small business and understand the value of quality work.

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

COVID restrictions on businesses present a problem in my district when our transient population has depleted due to remote school and work. This both affected the ability for businesses to operate even with the CARES Act and continues to impact us. Even before this, there has not been enough community support for small business owners in District 8. We need to develop stronger relationships with these small businesses, and ensure more availability of resources on money management courses.

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

On a national scale, Madison has unique values in that they try to cater to small businesses. With a local's perspective, we can do better to support BIPOC businesses with the city's financial investment and public awareness. Madison is a hub for those who want to start a business or try something different in the community. That being said, the city can do a better job with supporting them, such as working with local banks to provide loans as well as increased accessibility through zoning.

5. How can Madison best attract and retain a diverse workforce?

There needs to be programming centered towards citywide job fairs to attract and expand networks to diverse communities. Working closely with nonprofits like the Urban League will create healthier work environments and better retention. Community members must be in spaces to discuss equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as educating constituents about the benefits of these practices. Right now, there is a low retention rate for diverse workers due to insufficient emotional support systems.

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

Increasing minimum wage, increasing tax credits for small businesses that provide sick leave and hazard pay for workers, and increasing the ease to apply for Madison's Targeted Business Enterprise Programs are citywide issues I want to work on.

7. What strategies would you recommend for the city to meet the diverse needs of worker mobility and housing?

Strategies to meet these needs include partnering with local banks for micro-lending opportunities, working

with nonprofits, increasing Tax Increment Fund initiatives, and supporting more town halls for communication about concerns and needs.

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

Economic development is about increasing wealth while ensuring its longevity in the city. In Madison we need economic justice, which is giving the skills and resources to marginalized and BIPOC groups to thrive in their communities.

\*\*9. What can the city do to support small businesses, particularly those hardest hit by the pandemic?

We can grant loans and increase aid with Targeted Business Enterprise Programs. We must also promote the use of small and locally owned businesses; investing in these businesses in times of need is crucial for our community to thrive. Increasing accessibility to Wifi so that people can use more online services is also crucial to keep businesses afloat during this time.

\*\*10. As an alder, how would you work to achieve equilibrium in our local response to the pandemic in balancing the pivotal interests of public health, economic health and public confidence?

The city must respond to the pandemic with transparency and communicate safety procedures adequately to maintain public confidence. Aiding businesses ensures that these communities will be able to thrive in their city because of the crucial role small business plays in Madison.

\*\*If offered an endorsement from the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, would you accept it? \*

Yes

\*\*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 the Chamber will publish my answers to this questionnaire.