

2025 Madison Common Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Tag Evers

Aldermanic District *

District 13

Home Address *

[Redacted]

Email Address *

[Redacted]

Phone *

[Redacted]

Campaign website (if applicable)

tagevers.com (currently being updated)

Social media (Facebook, X [formerly Twitter], etc.) accounts, if any

<https://www.facebook.com/tageversformadison/>

Questionnaire - Part 2

Please state your position on the following issues.

Please limit answers to 500 words (approx. 3,500 characters). Any answers exceeding the word count limit will be redacted after 3,500 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?

To carry on the work I began when I was first elected to office in April 2019: addressing Madison's housing affordability crisis by building more housing at all price levels, expanding transit to accommodate the needs of our rapidly growing city, and representing the diverse needs of District 13 residents.

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

I started my own small business promoting concerts more than thirty years ago and currently own and operate True Endeavors Concerts LLC.

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

There are three commercial districts in D13: Monroe St, Regent St, and S. Park St. Businesses along S. Park expressed concerns about the potential loss of parking in the planning for the north-south BRT route. However, staff met with these business owners and a compromise was reached. Business owners along Regent have been active participants in the Regent Street Redevelopment Group helmed by Jason Ilstrup of DMI. I, too, have been an active from the beginning. Regent St will be reconstructed in 2026 and it will be essential that local businesses have a seat at the table. Reimagining Regent St has long been on my agenda; huge possibilities to see this street transition from its overdependence on Camp Randall to a vibrant year-around commercial and residential district. I'm not aware of serious issues facing businesses on Monroe St, but I'd argue there is potential for more 4-5 story projects on various parcels, allowing more density to further enliven commercial opportunities for restaurants and retail businesses.

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

Economic development is creating wealth for business owners, good jobs for workers, and positive benefits for the community while addressing the externalities that arise when social and environmental costs are not fully accounted for. Economic development rightly understood is a public-private partnership so that the social goods that the market cannot on its own deliver are in fact paid for by public investment, e.g., roads, police, education, etc.

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

Addressing our housing crisis should be our number one priority. Recruitment and retention will both be frustrated if we don't start flattening the curve on our rising housing costs. Our city has ongoing issues around racial equity, and Blacks in particular claim Madison is less than welcoming. 15% of Blacks own their own home in Madison, whereas 52% of whites own their own home. Our housing crisis disproportionately impacts people of color due to the historic racialized wealth gap and past discriminatory policies of redlining and restrictive covenants. We need to build a strong Black middle class, supporting the goals embraced by the Black Business Hub and the Center for Black Excellence.

****6. How would you characterize Madison's current workforce housing landscape? What strategies would you recommend for the city to meet the diverse needs of workforce housing?**

Our landscape around workforce housing is improving, but more work needs to be done. I'm particularly pleased by the plans for the redevelopment of the CDA Housing on the Triangle in D13 which will more than triple the number of residents there, with a big chunk of the increase going to workforce housing (defined as 80-120% of AMI). Similarly, I'm pleased about the workforce housing project at the Jensen Auto Body site on Regent by WHPC, which will provide housing options for nurses and other essential workers at Meriter and St. Mary's. Too many of our cops, firefighters, and teachers are no longer able to live here and are instead moving to the suburbs and exurbs, exacerbating congestion on the Beltline and arterial streets like S. Park, Monroe St and East Wash. Local businesses with a healthy balance sheet need to invest more aggressively in Madison Development Corporation's affordable housing investment fund. I sit on the board of the Community Development Authority and am pushing CDA to do more "social housing." Read more about social housing here: <https://isthmus.com/news/cover-story/can-social-housing-address-madisons-affordability-crisis/> and here: <https://tonemadison.com/articles/how-to-actually-solve-madisons-housing-crisis/>

****7. How do you view Madison's continued population growth? What are the opportunities and challenges that come with it?**

Our city is growing rapidly and those who think we can thwart that growth are sadly mistaken. The question is obvious: will we grow or will we groan? It's simply not possible to build a moat around the city limits and tell folks "Do Not Move Here -- We are all Filled Up!" Long-time residents who nostalgically long for the halcyon days when Madison was a small, hip Midwest college town need to accept reality. The city is growing and it's essential we plan for that growth. I've been a supporter of BRT as it's clear that we must align our transit system with the needs of our city's growing population. We must build more housing at all price levels throughout the city, particularly in locations served by transit. We will need to expand BRT to the north-south line, which may have to wait for a new administration. As we grow, we will need to be vigilant with respect to our natural resources, continuing to address PFAS contamination of our drinking water as well as the water quality of our lakes.

****8. What is your assessment of Madison's transportation system? What priority improvements are needed to support mobility for a growing workforce?**

Madison Metro did a solid job in implementing the Transit Network Redesign. Adjustments are ongoing, but the shift towards increased frequency at the expense of modest changes in coverage was well worth it. Likewise, the implementation of the East-West BRT line has been well executed, the predictable hiccups notwithstanding. Increased investments in expanding our Safe Streets Madison and Complete Green Streets programs are essential to creating a multi-modal transit network to serve the needs of our growing population. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements place necessary burdens on developers so that we are being forthright in building a city for the future, not just for the present and the past.

****9. With declining aid and rising costs, local leaders must find creative ways to be more efficient. Some examples include merging services or operational reforms. Please identify ways the City of Madison government can potentially be more efficient.**

It's a minomer to suggest the City has not been efficient. We have been doing more with less ever since Act 10 and the changes to the levy limit formula imposed by Gov. Walker and the GOP state legislature. We have approximately 215 less employees now than we would have if we had simply kept pace with our population growth. Fortunately, with strong support from the business community, the referendum passed. That said, we are still faced with a structural deficit that will rear its ugly head in a few short years if we are not successful in getting the state to allow us to have a regional transit authority combined with a local sales tax. Regarding the merging of services, there are no easy answers. The HR needs of the City and the County are vastly different. It would be extremely challenging, for example, combining employee groups. In like manner, I'm not sure there are savings in merging IT services that some have suggested. The city has identified a number of services that could be cut if needed in future budget cycles. I sit on the Finance Committee and remain hopeful we can avoid layoffs and cuts to essential services.

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

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