

2025 Madison Common Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Barbara Harrington-McKinney

Aldermanic District *

District 20

Home Address *

[Redacted]

Email Address *

[Redacted]

Phone *

[Redacted]

Campaign website (if applicable)

mckinneyformadison.com

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

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?

I am an experienced community organizer, first elected in 2015 to District 1. In 2023, after Redistricting, I ran for the new District 20. My platform was "unfinished business". I am seeking this office in 2025 with a sense of urgency. Determining factors in my decision to seek a one year term, is the uncertainty following the 2024 Presidential Elections, the Spring 2025 election for even districts is a one year term. I am qualified ready to immediately serve, bypassing a necessity of the new alder's learning curb. Priorities have not changed, in some cases many of these priorities have expanded. Public Safety, quality city services, access to affordable housing and employment opportunities. In 2025 these priorities have expanded within a city where residents expect more transparency in city government. City growth is projected to grow to approximately 385,269 by 2050. The Common Council can be a challenging environment to navigate. The Alder representing District 20 must be prepared to navigate along side residents as we go through the Southwest Area Planning process.

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

I have been a small business owner. Small businesses need capital, strong marketing strategy to help define their produce or service. Small businesses often fail due to cash flow issues. Understanding how to raise, spend and invest money is critical and a strong marketing strategy. Connecting with training and mentoring opportunities to help create a sound business plan. Starting, maintaining, and growing a small business takes more than just passion and vision. The Office of Business Resources and the Chamber are central points of contact for business assistance in Madison.

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

District 20 does not have a stock of businesses. Small businesses across, but the public market may be a place for start-ups. Affordable housing, traffic concerns, employment opportunities and public safety and navigating the expanding developments on the southwest side are district 20 priorities.

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

Definition for economic development is the process of improving the economic wellbeing of a community, creating a climate that will allow growth, creation and support of job opportunities. Creating jobs and creating opportunity for wealth. In district 20, addressing the economic problems facing residents: unemployment, earning a livable wages, and lack of affordable housing options. Economic development must include growth, and improvement in the wellbeing of all people. Many people in District 20 are struggling to live in Madison.

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

Retaining and attracting a diverse workforce in Madison requires intentionally welcoming an inclusive culture where people from all backgrounds feel welcomed and valued. Affordable housing options, community establishments that promote an ongoing sense of community belonging across the city vs concentration in designated pockets of the city. Efforts are being made to reflect diversity in employer hiring and promotion practices. The reality of the shift at the federal level from intentional diversity and inclusion efforts makes what is ahead uncertain.

****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?**

Madison is becoming unaffordable. Homeowners are struggling, seniors complain of inability to live in retire within their homes, first time homeowners find the market out of reach. Expanding housing affordability across incomes, especially affordable workforce housing options.

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

I am challenged with how to respond. Madison's population is projected to increase over the next 10 years. The challenges that comes with the growth is concerns with the wellbeing of our workforce and living in Madison becoming less affordable. Access to affordable housing options across varied incomes continues to be more challenging. It is important that the city balance the needs, then wants, then wishes of its community. Spending priorities around public safety within neighborhoods, community policing and maintaining high-quality city services are important. Expanding housing affordability across income streams, especially affordable workforce housing options is critical.

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

The transportation system was in need of updating. The need to develop and maintain a safe, efficient, equitable, sustainable transportation system for city residents is important. The implementation of 20 is plenty through residential neighborhoods across the the city is an important of Vision Zero. Traffic continues to be a challenge across the city. District 20 has had its challenges with reckless driving. I continue to receive questions about the empty buses. The anticipation of the changes in federal funding is uncertain.

****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.**

Transparent and Inclusive city government with a wide range of viewpoints at the Council and community level has diminished. The concentrated council environment has been toxic with a concentrated leadership where community voices seems not welcomed.

**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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