

2025 Madison Common Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Regina Vidaver

Aldermanic District *

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Home Address *

[Redacted]

Email Address *

[Redacted]

Phone *

[Redacted]

Campaign website (if applicable)

www.Regina4Madison.com

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

Regina for Madison (Facebook, Instagram)

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 seeking re-election to the Madison Common Council to continue the great work I've been able to accomplish to date. I am so proud of my record, including tripling Madison's Affordable Housing Fund, championing the Madison Public Market - an incubator for local entrepreneurs, starting a new zero-interest loan program for child care centers in underserved areas, and expanding the CARES program, which sends behavioral health specialists rather than police to appropriate calls. These common sense initiatives are possible because of the commitment I bring to ensure Madison continues to be a vibrant, inviting community that cares for its residents.

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

For ten years I ran a non-profit business. When I started, I was the sole employee and had a budget of \$250,000; during my tenure I grew the organization to over 20 employees, and a budget of \$4.5M. I understand issues related to staffing, licensing, financial reporting, space and equipment, and HR. Small businesses are essential to creating wealth and health in our community.

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

Multiple small businesses in my district have recently closed, with a few new ones coming in their place. It is a challenge to run a business in today's environment, where interest rates and inflation are high. Staffing also continues to be a challenge; Wisconsin's very low unemployment rate means people generally have their choice of jobs, and may not take on those that are more service-oriented. With the high cost of housing in the area, many people who could potentially work at these businesses have to live long distances away, and therefore the available workforce in the immediate area is limited.

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

Economic development occurs when policies and systems facilitate the economic health and vitality of a community. For example, the city of Madison has multiple programs designed to facilitate capital acquisition and improvements, improve local sourcing, and provide technical assistance to local businesses. These programs help our businesses thrive. When our businesses thrive, our community is strong.

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

We constantly and consistently must hold up diverse role models as people to herald in our community. The more we promote the value that diverse individuals and approaches bring to our community, the more we will be able to attract people who share our diversity, equity, and inclusion values.

****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?**

There is insufficient stock of workforce housing in the city. The City of Madison has worked hard to increase availability of affordable housing, both by building new and rehabilitating existing dwellings. We have made changes in zoning to increase density, and are working to reduce the time it takes to get developments through the planning process. Even small changes, like removing steps in the demolition process, can help promote new and improved housing stock. I plan to work to increase our engagement with community land banks and promote co-operative housing in the next council session.

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

Madison, and Dane County as a whole, continues to grow in population. Madison is expected to add 100,000 new residents in the next 15 years. The opportunities include increased business diversity, new amenities for the area and region, such as new sporting, arts, and cultural initiatives, and a higher availability of a local workforce. There will be more taxpayers too. However, there will also be a corresponding increase in the need for city services as the population grows, so the city's ability to meet its needs to balance the budget will continue to be stretched. But the number one challenge is housing - we have to continue to build new and rehabilitate old dwellings to keep up with the demand. Until prices of construction materials and labor fall, the cost of development will continue to increase. Rising interest rates also are a challenge.

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

For those who use the new BRT line, it is a substantial improvement. However, the likelihood of the next phase of BRT is in doubt with the new federal administration taking office. I will do all I can to support the B line, if that is feasible. If it isn't, we will need to double down on our efforts to improve how our existing bus system can best meet the needs of our community. I will be working to ensure data on usage are transparent and accessible, and that routes are reviewed and revised on a regular basis to best meet the needs of people seeking to use public transportation. We are already a platinum city for bicycling, however there remain gaps in the bicycle network. I will work collaboratively with community members and city staff to ensure those gaps are closed over time.

Whether we are able to actually get an Amtrak station in Madison is questionable, but we do need to be prepared for the potential, by doing the needed work to prepare for the siting of the new station.

****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.

The city is constantly and consistently looking for ways to improve efficiency. There will be efforts to streamline IT across departments, improve data capture and communication, and exploration of other efficiency methods. We are actively working to reduce the number of city boards and committees to reduce staff burden and streamline approval processes. I will continue to support these efforts during my next term.

****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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