

# 2025 Madison Common Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name \*

MGR Govindarajan

Aldermanic District \*

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Home Address \*

[Redacted]

Email Address \*

[Redacted]

Phone \*

[Redacted]

Campaign website (if applicable)

mgrfordistrict8.com

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

Instagram: mgrfordistrict8\_, twitter: mgrfordistrict8 (I mainly use 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'm seeking re-election to continue uplifting the student voice. My district is one that makes up a large portion of economic activity in Downtown Madison. I'm running to continue pushing for our priorities, such as safe and affordable housing, public safety around state street, creating a vibrant state street, and improving public transportation

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

My family runs a restaurant in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. I've worked at this restaurant through high school and have grown up with my family working there. I was there to help and support during the COVID-19 Lockdowns, and continue to play an active role where possible.

I understand the commitment it takes to run a business and know how many sacrifices it requires. Small businesses are the heart of Madison, especially around the campus community, it's something I will continue to support. I've been able to build strong relationships with the Madison Business Improvement District, Downtown Madison Inc, and more through my past two years on the Common Council.

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

Rising rents, out-of-state/town businesses coming in and displacing local ones.

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

The ability for local businesses to thrive in their existing business, with ample ability to grow further within the community.

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

Better utilizing the influx of inward migration. UW-Madison and Madison Area Tech Colleges bring some of the most talented folks into our City, our businesses can better create partnerships to build and retain a diverse workforce.

**\*\*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?**

I'm most familiar with the scene downtown. It is a diverse and young population, with businesses owned by local leaders, some of whom have built their businesses through generations.

I continue to champion policies that would help local businesses, bring more safety to business centers (such as state street, Monroe street, etc.), and promotion of activities happening nearby in order to get more foot traffic in doors.

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

It's a good problem to have. Dane County is expected to have more than 500,000 residents by the end of 2050, with Madison hosting the majority. The problem comes in because we don't have enough housing for all those folks just yet, but we're slowly making progress.

My priority with higher-density housing is that when you build an apartment, you should also create space and opportunity for businesses to thrive. I have been a supporter of ground-floor commercial zoning, including basements for bars, nightclubs, arcades etc.

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

Downtown is great to get around, but the outer parts of Madison need more work. It must become easier for those living in the outskirts to get downtown easier and vice versa.

I currently also work in the State Capitol as a legislative staffer. Though I don't vote on policies myself, I get to actively provide perspective through an experienced lens. I know how local governments function, I know what Madison needs, and I know what the State Government can do in order to better help our city. This has been noted in several conversations I've had with state legislators within my role.

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**\*\*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.

Running a city requires two perspectives: long term and day-to-day.

I believe that historically Madison has focused too much on making sure the day-to-day functions work, while compromising on the long term stability of our budget. I want to move towards a 5-year budget plan (note: this doesn't mean the budget happens once every 5 years, it just means we plan for 5 years).

I want to focus more on lobbying the State Legislature through our partners and organizations (including the Chamber of Commerce). By ensuring we get Shared Revenue restructured, the Municipal fund restored, or a regional transit authority we can plan better to support our city.

I currently have a unique perspective on the Common Council as I'm the only member currently involved in State-level policy making. This has allowed me to better work with state partners and easily understand the problems we have, while also being able to focus on finding solutions.

**\*\*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.

This form was created inside of Wisconsin Alumni Association.

Google Forms