

Madison Council Candidate

Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Erica Janisch

Aldermanic District *

20

Campaign website (if applicable)

ericaformadison.com

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

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 Alder in District 20 because I am committed to making sure District 20 is a place where people want to live and raise a family. I am blessed to work with a variety of groups of people in my community and I understand their concerns and needs. I know with my education, work experience, volunteerism, and commitment to my community, I am the right person to serve District 20 and bring everyone together.

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

As the Vice-President of the Falk Elementary PTO, I helped establish its non-profit status and by-laws to ensure its financial stability. As Vice-President of the Toki Middle School PTA, I help manage the money of our non-profit, which helps support over 600 students. I sit on the Toki Middle School Endowment Grant Committee where we are partnering with a local small business. I'm currently the Vice Chair of the Affirmative Action Commission where our subcommittee looks at city contracts.

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

The first issue facing our district is attracting and retaining a qualified and well-trained workforce. While the businesses in our district have been able to hire some of the best educated and talented people around, our district is having trouble retaining them. We also have issues with affordable housing, which isn't just District 20 specific. I believe that mending the Affordable Housing Crisis will help us attract, and maintain, our qualified and well-training workforce.

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

Madison is viewed as an accelerated model of success. Madison has been able to successfully use Tax Incremental Funding, TIF, to bring businesses to Madison and employ hundreds of educated and highly motivated individuals from across the nation. However, Madison is also known for having disparities, such as hiring people of color. If we can use successful employers who value their employees and bring success to the Madison's economy, Madison's business brand of success is unstoppable.

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

In order for Madison to attract and retain a diverse workforce we need to first work on equity in our communities. We also need to focus heavily on affordable housing and supporting MMSD's goals for having, "every school be a place where children, staff, and families thrive". Lastly, I believe we need to focus on a clean environment, particularly investing in clean energy and water.

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

An inclusive economy is one where everyone regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, or religion, can have financial freedom. This includes jobs that have a living wage. I believe that Madison should be promoting the use of Tax Incremental Finance, TIF. By bringing in these development projects we can hire people for jobs. Also, depending on the structure built (commercial or business parks), there may be room for long term job growth.

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

The city needs to invest in affordable housing units around the city. Housing that is affordable produces workers that are productive and retainable. We can use funds from TIF districts where growth has happened to build affordable housing. In addition, we should invest in eco-friendly public transit and bike paths. I believe that since transit happens through several districts, towns, and cities, the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce would be a great organization to help make this happen.

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

Economic development is increasing the standard of living by investing in everyone in Madison. Growing our middle class is going to be key to making sure our economy is strong. We can ensure this happens by offering a living wage and having affordable housing options. Another way we can accomplish this is by using TIF funding and sparking new economic growth. In addition, we can use economic growth from TIF funds in TIF districts to build affordable housing.

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

I believe that there are several things that the city can do to help these small businesses. First, we can order utility companies to keep lights and water on. In addition, we can waive fines for small businesses that aren't able to pay their taxes. The city can offer funding in the form of grants and small business loans with 0% interest. Finally, we can recommend that businesses utilize the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce website which has several resources for businesses.

**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?

COVID-19 is negatively impacting BIPOC, the elderly, and underserved communities the hardest. We must make sure they have easy access to testing and the vaccine. Next, the city needs to support small businesses by ordering utility companies to keep their lights and water on, waive fines for those unable to pay their taxes, and offer grants and 0% loans. Scientists have made clear that people's lives are at jeopardy, so wearing a mask is the number one way to gain the public's confidence.

**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.