

# Madison Council Candidate

## Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name \*

Jael Currie

Aldermanic District \*

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Campaign website (if applicable)

[www.currieforcitycouncil.com](http://www.currieforcitycouncil.com)

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

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

## 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?

My career led me to serve those around me, but I soon realized that policy and local politics impacted my everyday work. I expanded my knowledge of how local government entities & processes function, & it fueled my personal passion for activism. I'm seeking this office because I've come to a crucial junction where I can no longer stay silent about system failures and the plethora of inequities that come as a result. I believe it is my ethical call to serve in this way, at this time.

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

I have dedicated my career to meeting human/social needs & eradicating racial, social, & economic injustices. In my role as housing director for YWCA, I manage a department of 10 housing programs, 12 staff members, and an annual budget exceeding \$3M. This experience has provided me with opportunities to hone my leadership skills, particularly in the areas of team development and inspiring staff to meet grant outcome goals while assisting clients through taxing barriers & challenges.

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

Due to COVID, generating revenue, being able to afford & retain staff, & the ability to receive economic assistance are the most important issues facing businesses. Several businesses, particularly in the restaurant & entertainment industries have been forced to close and/or operate at severely reduced staff & consumer capacities. I intend to collaborate w/the Chamber to inform my understanding of issues & needs & work towards solution focused outcomes to retain businesses throughout Madison.

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

Madison has passionate, driven business owners & opportunities for growth. Madison sits among the top of lists regarding best places to live/work/thrive. Madison also sits among the nation's top lists for its racial disparities across multiple sectors, including inequitable opportunities & access to starting & owning a business and/or property. If you do not possess/inherit capital, privilege, power, and have light/fair skin, Madison is likely not a city you feel the ability to thrive & belong.

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

Retention needs to be specifically focused on employees who represent diverse identities, perspectives, abilities, & cultures. Madison must start working towards ensuring both work & personal environments provide opportunities that support/enhance the same identities which lead to specified outreach & recruitment of those very populations.

This also includes support of apprenticeships & career training programs for individuals, with a focus on youth/young adults & underrepresented communities.

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

These are more important now than ever as we look towards a post-pandemic environment. Action focused solutions such as increasing the quantity, funding, & access to training & educational programs for youth & underserved communities is essential. As cited in the Chamber's legislative agenda, I would like to work on supporting the growth of new business ownership among women & BIPOC, leveraging public & private partnerships to provide equitable access to capital, mentoring & community resources.

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

Housing in Madison is not affordable for a majority of its residents. Redefining affordable housing to mean low-income residents will not be responsible for paying more than 30% of their income towards rent and utilities is a recommendation I will make. We need to increase the availability of all forms of housing affordable and market rate alike. We could look at streamlining the approvals process in the City of Madison to make it easier to build multi-family and mixed use developments.

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

Sustainable growth in local business that increases local incomes and boosts tax revenue which allows the City to support amenities that in turn support continued economic growth, such as transportation and infrastructure improvements.

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

The city has a critical role to play in supporting small businesses & ensuring an inclusive and equitable economic recovery. We need to look at support for businesses who haven't benefited from any economic relief yet, and those industries hardest hit by the pandemic.

\*\*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?

Making education materials and information readily accessible to all residents, which also includes outreach efforts, especially within communities and neighborhoods most devastated by public & economic health crises. This also includes strengthening and enhancing the existing partnerships between the city, county, PHMDC, and health care systems.

\*\*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.