

2026 Madison Common Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Kate Blood

Aldermanic District *

District 14

Home Address *

[REDACTED]

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Campaign website (if applicable)

www.kate14district.com

Social media accounts, if any

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Questionnaire - Part 2

Please state your position on the following issues.

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 use your most recently submitted answer.

1. Why are you seeking this office?

I am running to try to ensure that all residents of this diverse district (43% Latino, 10% Black/African American; 34% white, 5% Asian) are heard and their needs adequately advocated for. I bring deep experience with affordable housing creation through Masters at UW School of Business, Real Estate and Urban Land Economics program, and through working at both WHEDA evaluating applications and allocating LIHTC awards and at DOA running the HOME rental housing program across Wi.

I am invested in representing all constituent groups of this district, especially marginalized Latino, Black and Asian residents who I don't feel have been adequately advocated for. I'm currently a Verifier for Voces de la Frontera to ascertain real versus perceived ICE threats for our Latino neighbors.

I also believe in 2nd chances and am a Peacemaker with a Restorative Justice diversionary program (Community Restorative Court) for young, 1st time offenders willing to be accountable for their mistakes, make amends to those they've harmed and repair the harm with specific actions .

I believe that my lived experience as a chaplain (at care center for memory care and end of life residents), my affordable housing experience, my Peacemaker role, mother of two bi-racial children, facilitator of women's 12 step recovery meeting at Dane County Jail give me a unique perspective into important issues for District 14.

2. What qualifies you to understand the unique needs facing small businesses?

I talk to shopkeepers, restaurant owners, small business owners and read local news to find out what their concerns are, what they'd like to see happen and then I advocate for them.

This was the situation when I talked to Quality Hardware on Park St. and heard their concern over potential loss of on-street parking adjacent to their store. Many business like Quality Hardware on Park St. are small, family owned businesses without the land to provide off-street parking to their customers. I signed up to present a comment at the Transportation meeting discussing this issue and with other speakers advocated for leaving the on-street parking available for these businesses. The committee heard these concerns and protected this parking for off-rush hour time slots.

Having observed friends and family start small businesses, I understand the uphill climb to become a viable business - the technical knowledge required, training required to understand the legal and administrative requirements, and the financing to start the business before the operation is fiscally operational. Having gotten my MS through the UW School of Business I know what it takes to "pencil out" projects and the additional burdens that first time business owners/entrepreneurs face with having to both look for start up money and also learn the ropes of starting a business.

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

Affordable rental and homeownership housing , bus rapid transit so employees can quickly and efficiently get to their work places, parking for the small businesses on transit corridors, especially on Park Street, and access to low-interest funding for start-up, training, expansion and supplies. I advocated for on-street parking on Park St. for the small businesses such as Quality Hardware (woman owned business) which don't have the land space for a parking lot for customers. This was heard by the City and on-street parking was kept except for high commute hours for the bus rapid transit (BRT).

In addition, providing marginalized communities a strong voice in community affairs, and making sure that resources are available for business start-ups is essential. Latinos are 43% of the constituency in District 14 however from my experience their needs and voices have not been adequately solicited or attended to. I'm working with Voces de la Frontera to both be an advocate for my Latino neighbors as a Verifier and to advocate strongly for their housing and business needs. This was the stance that I took in opposing the demolition of the Mexican/Columbian restaurant Pollo Rumbero (which had a 5 year lease and had invested significant funds in remodeling and renovations) - the City rejected the proposal to demo the restaurant.

4. How would you characterize Madison's current workforce housing supply? What strategies would you recommend for the city to meet the diverse needs of workforce housing?

The supply of current workforce housing is insufficient for the need. In order to be able to stimulate additional supply, we need to modify zoning to allow more duplex/triplex and four-plex housing in residential areas as well as higher density housing near transit hubs and especially employment hubs. The support of Bus Rapid Transit routes allows people to move outside the higher cost rental housing areas to lower cost neighborhoods while still keeping commute times reasonable.

We can also help first time low-income homebuyers with expansion of AHP funds for downpayment assistance, support expansion of community land trusts to decrease the cost of the housing (rental or homeownership) and use of PILOTs (payment in lieu of taxes) for low income affordable rental housing.

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

The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has improved the transportation from home to workplaces for many Madison workers. This type of innovative investment is one example of how the City can help workers to explore new housing locations and employment options beyond those closest to their work by decreasing commute times and parking fees.

I would support expansion of BRT along more transportation corridors to provide access to more housing outside the nearby neighborhoods to the employment hubs. I would also promote subsidized/free bus passes for both students and low- income residents to be able to get to school and to jobs, and allow expedited access to the work force.

6. 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 of Madison is aware of the challenge of making limited funding stretch to cover the needs of this vibrant city.

The initiatives include instituting a performance based budgeting to identify fact-based performance outcomes in programs that merit increased spending rather than simply upping the budget across the board from the previous year. There's also a push to identify where programs/services can be merged to streamline the process and decrease redundancy.

Programs are also encouraged to trim spending by at least 1% while still providing the same level of services to the community.

While cutting costs is integral, so also is increasing revenue through increasing the tax base in underutilized areas, using TIF to encourage developments that otherwise wouldn't "pencil out", and using new state aid for services without placing all the burden on property taxes.

Exploration must continue to find means of creating savings through web based processes to switch from paper systems; decreasing the debt load of the City by reducing borrowing; using cooperative/state wide contracts to create more efficiency and focussing on the most essential services for the city (emergency medical care and affordable housing) while constraining other, less-essential services and programs.

The City is also looking ahead to anticipate upcoming maintenance and replacement costs for infrastructure and placing surplus funds into a "rainy day fund" - this will allow the city to control borrowing costs with lower interest rates and maintain its outstanding credit rating.

****7.** Do you consider Madison's property taxes to be too high, too low, or appropriate? Please explain your reasoning and provide specific examples of any fiscal changes you would recommend?

Personally my RE taxes have gone up significantly in the past 2 years as my home went from being in the Town on Madison to the City. The increase hurts! And yet, I also strongly support paying my fair share of taxes to allow the City to carry out important programs and services for us residents, and particularly for residents who have not had my generational privilege.

Further, I support PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) programs that allow affordable rental developments to keep their rents affordable for their lower income residents. In addition to PILOT, I also endorse the strategic use of TIF funds to incentivize development of projects that otherwise would not be financially feasible .

While I believe that Madison's property taxes are appropriate given the level of services provided by the City, I also would advocate for a capping of taxes for income-strapped senior residents who are homeowners. Many of these elder residents bought their homes when the prices (and property taxes) were significantly lower and have since paid off their mortgages. Being on fixed incomes many seniors are now paying more for their real estate taxes than they did for their mortgages and are struggling to make ends meet. Allowing elders to age in place, if feasible, is often more financially efficient and emotionally stabilizing than moving to a senior living apartment or care center.

****8.** The City of Madison is in the process of updating its economic development strategy. What policies or initiatives would you like to see incorporated into this plan?

[City of Madison Economic Development Strategy](#)

I love the emphasis on community involvement and input. I also applaud the desire to create an inclusive and sustainable development strategy . This approach will promote the interests and economic support of local businesses and industries, enable generational wealth building through housing and businesses, and further the creation of stable, well-paying jobs that can support families.

The trick, of course, is creating strategies that are actionable (not merely aspirational) and then allowing for flexibility in modifying these plans as results from implementation are observed.

The City of Madison is known for being forward thinking, innovative, and supportive of diversity, sustainability and walkable neighborhoods combined with rapid transit with BRT. We can promote municipal financial responsibility while also supporting small, entrepreneurial start-ups with micro-loan programs. We can also encourage collaboration between affiliated established businesses and start-ups, and incentivizing partnerships between the city high schools, Madison College, and the University of Wisconsin to create pathways for students into vocational training programs and mentorship opportunities in high demand fields. We can continue to invest in lower rent business hubs that can foster new businesses, especially for marginalized BIPOC groups.

****9.** While data centers are not new to Madison or the region, they are emerging as a major policy issue at all levels of government. What are your positions and views on data center development, and as an alder, how would you approach large development proposals like data centers?

If managed well by the municipalities and with agreements between the developer and City in place I think that data centers can possibly be employment boons for a City. If not managed well or regulated they can be a financial and infrastructure drain on the City that enriches only the developer.

I would suggest requiring developers be required to BEYONCE (Bring your own new clean energy) with solar, wind and heat pump development. They should also be required to limit water use with closed system water systems, and to pay for any additional energy use so that these costs do not fall on the residents.

****10.** How do you view Madison's continued population growth? Is it an opportunity or a challenge?

It's both.

The population is growing quickly - 1.47% annually due to good job opportunities, the University of Wisconsin, Madison enrollment along with Madison College, the health care facilities and the outdoor opportunities. This influx of new residents provides an increase in a tax base, greater consumer activity and a energized workforce for our city. The growing population also encourages the opportunity to create more mixed income housing options that provide diversity awareness and benefits to all the residents.

While this growth brings a vibrancy to the city with a diverse cultural and racial mix and increases the tax base, it also puts pressure on housing and infrastructure. More demand for housing increases the pressure for high density apartment development. More employment creates more traffic bringing more need for road expansion and additional bus rapid transit routes. the population increase will necessitate Infrastructure needing more updating/expansion to keep up with the needs of a population swell.

****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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