

Madison Council Candidate Questionnaire

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

Candidate Full Name *

Kim Richman

Aldermanic District *

16

Home Address *

[REDACTED]

Email Address *

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Phone *

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Campaign website (if applicable)

KimRichmanFor16.com

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

Friends of Richman for District 16

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?

My motivation to run for Madison Common Council is to represent the residents of the 16th District, and bring the entire city together I decided to run because I see and hear about many unaddressed needs, including community engagement and representation, fiscal responsibility and accountability, neighborhood safety, housing options and opportunities, and environmental stewardship with the expansion of a landfill in my district

I will collaborate with city stakeholders to improve our district and the city as a whole I believe in neighbors getting to know one another and working together with local elected officials so we can develop new solutions for current and future problems, concerns, and issues Together we can make a better Madison that works for all of us

One of my goals is to make city government more user friendly, transparent, and accountable Enough with late night deals without the opportunity for public input

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

I recently retired after 40 years in wholesale sales, marketing, advertising, merchandising, and customer service in the soft drink and specialty food industry. My career provided me with the skills to work with people from large chains to small urban and suburban independents.

I especially enjoyed working with the independents because I understood their struggles with the large chains, and had the freedom of working with them on unique-to-them sales programs to enhance their bottom line. I feel the pandemic hurt the small businesses especially hard, and while most of them are coming out of it, we should support all small, local businesses the best we can.

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

Finding the right employees and retaining them is the most frequent topic They're doing whatever they can by increasing wages, benefits, and incentives to stay Some business owners said they're "burned out" because of the hours they're keeping Fatigue in ANY situation isn't healthy

With inflation and rising interest rates, they've had to find the right balance to raise prices (which potentially cost them consumers) and absorb some cost increases

Many mentioned supply chain issues, which has gotten a little better

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

Each community has its own priorities, opportunities, and challenges. The private sector & local government can work together to reinforce equitable growth, build a stronger community with higher standard of living. This creates more jobs, with more people & businesses paying taxes. Keeping businesses in Madison and welcoming new businesses brings people to Madison and feeds our local economy. For continued economic development, we need to attract start-ups, create more jobs, and provide a strong support structure for our entrepreneurs and innovators.

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

I like the diversity of locally owned businesses from many different cultures spread out across the city. If there's something missing in the Madison business community (clothing, dining, culture) an entrepreneur steps up to fill the gap. With small businesses, the large corporations, the UW, city, state, and county offices, it offers something for everybody. Because of all of those factors, it's no surprise that Madison is on many "Best Places To..." lists, which shows its national reach.

Madison has a thriving economy, attracting people from all over the nation to start their businesses here in our city. Being among the top growing start-up cities in the country is something to be proud of. It helps us retain college graduates and draws people from across the nation to our wonderful city.

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

At least 75% of the people looking for jobs (and those currently employed) say that a diverse workforce is very important and are checking on diversity when they research a business and during job interviews. If not already in place, the city and businesses should create a very clear diversity & inclusion policy and the commitment should be highlighted. Be a part of honoring each of our contributions at work, providing job access to everybody and use that to recruit new employees.

Initiate and build partnerships with multi-cultural organizations, nonprofits, or academic institutions that serve predominantly minority populations. This can help cities & companies reach potential candidates. Efficient, affordable, easily accessible transportation to jobs is always a factor.

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

It's getting increasingly difficult for low-to-middle income workers from all backgrounds to buy or rent affordable housing near their jobs. In cases where that's an issue, an efficient, cost-effective transit system is needed.

Repurpose vacant city land and retail space.

Recently, there's been a discussion to change land development codes to encourage development in already urbanized areas. If code change is considered, ALL parties involved should have a seat at the table, not just city committees, and complete transparency should be a priority.

****8. In what ways can city government support entrepreneurs of color working to start and grow an emerging business in Madison?**

Entrepreneurs of color need and deserve action to ensure that people from all backgrounds and ethnicities can start and maintain new businesses.

Establish policies that encourage venture capital and tax incentives for innovative products created by businesses owned by people of color. Establish and financially support new types of loans that provide an initial repayment grace period or moratorium, then a subsequent period of no interest or low interest levels after that.

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

Madison has always been committed to a public transportation system, and huge changes are underway. My concerns with the coming Bus Rapid Transit system and metro redesign is that routes are being diminished and cut to certain neighborhoods. If we are committed to attracting a diverse and growing workforce, we need to make public transportation safe, easy, and accessible to every neighborhood. I am more concerned about older adults and people with disabilities having to walk 20 minutes to the bus stop, than I am that the bus is 5 to 10 minutes faster. As Alder, I would have listened to residents' concerns about shrinking accessibility and the fact that we need more north to south routes, not just east to west. Our jobs and work opportunities are not just limited to downtown and the campus area, but spread out widely throughout the city. I also would have listened to business owners on State Street who did not want the BRT going right down the street, lining a busy and popular pedestrian area with large bus hubs and increased motorized traffic.

****10. A challenge that often comes with growth are issues impacting crime and safety. Some of these challenges are real; others perceived. In either case, it impacts livability and our ability to recruit and retain talent to Madison. Do you view Madison as a safe community and what is the Common Council's role in building safe communities?**

Madison is a relatively safe community, but as Lee Atwater stated, "Perception is reality."

I attend many community meetings and the very first concern brought up is shots fired incidents followed by stabbings, assaults, stolen vehicles, and reckless drivers. These are not perceptions; they're happening. One shot fired, one homicide, one stabbing, one carjacking, one stolen car is one too many. This IS NOT acceptable in Madison and we must continue to investigate what's causing these events.

One of the roles of a Common Council is to keep the community safe and I believe many alders aren't addressing the issue or just using "Band Aids." I support appropriately funded first responders (MFD/ Paramedics, MPD, CARES), and oppose any budget amendments to redirect any funding from one first responder to another, unless a substantial drop in calls for service to one agency are proven (with data and over time), to reflect that transfer in calls for service, and the agency being reduced can absorb the cut. If we aren't safe, or we don't feel safe, in our own neighborhoods, residents won't venture out. ALL local businesses will suffer or are already suffering.

****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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