

Responses cannot be edited

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Steve Fitzsimmons

Aldermanic District: *

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Current Address: *

5209 Odana Rd, Madison, WI 53711

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Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Candidate Questionnaire

Instructions: Please state your position on the following issues. Please limit answers to 100 words. Any answers exceeding the word count limitations will be cut after 100 words.

If you have filled out this questionnaire before, you may skip starred** questions or modify previous answers to those questions. If you skip starred answers on this questionnaire, we will re-publish your 2015 answers.

**1. Why are you seeking this office?

I strongly believe we must build a more visible public support between city leaders and Madison Police. I believe this will translate into a safer city with lower crime, happier citizens, lower taxes and higher property values. These are not empty campaign promises. I have seen such results in my two year neighborhood watch. I want to find solutions to the ongoing expensive and troublesome Emergency Detention process that pulls 320 MPD police officers off our streets annually. I want to end wasteful spending in the Council on surveys like the \$400,000 study into our Madison Police, a study citizens overwhelmingly did not ask for. I want to listen to you and my neighbors. I want to know what I can do to help make Madison better, what problems do you see that need to be addressed that I can bring before the Council on your behalf. I want to work for you and do right by you!

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

Every year I must balance my books, pay my taxes and bills and provide for my family. The same can be said of a small business. We all must balance our needs against our costs. I understand the value in lower taxes in that it provides more money for future business investments and growth. We must strive to keep our debt and borrowing low, seek new ways to keep the tax burden on small businesses low so our economy can grow.

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

High taxes, attracting new employees, high rent

4. What is the City of Madison's role in growing the economy? How can the City of Madison best support the growth and retention of jobs?

The city must keep the tax burden and debt low. That translates to every corner of the economy. That means finding new ways to support small businesses that will help Madison's economy grow more which in turn help lower the overall tax burden. Retaining jobs may require paying higher salaries if the business is competing with other businesses for similar jobs. The city should do whatever it can to keep those jobs in Madison. I would welcome the opportunity to work with you on possible solutions and bring them before the full Council.

5. How can the City of Madison best attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce?

As a graduate of a technical college, I believe in and support the many values such a college offers. Specialized skill sets and faster training get students from around Madison out into our workforce sooner. We need to keep looking for ways to keep our taxes low, that means not wasting tax dollars on unnecessary studies. We can continue to support and build on the arts, museums, our parks, and various entertainment opportunities. If you have ideas or suggestions, I'd be happy to hear them and work to make them happen. As a Madison resident, I too am interested in bringing the best to Madison.

****6. Do you support the use of TIF, and how do you believe it should be utilized moving forward? How would you rate the City of Madison's past use of TIF? (Would you describe the use of TIF as underutilized, over-utilized, or appropriate?)**

I believe the Tax Incremental Funding (TIF) has been a great benefit to Madison. If you disagree, I would like to learn more from your perspective on this and bring it before the Council. Your opinions matter to me.

7. What specific initiatives in the Connect Madison economic development strategy

(<http://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/economicdevelopment/economic-strategy-symposium/554/>) do you support, and which, if any, would you like to see modified? Why?

At first look at the detailed report, I see value in everything, but I'm not intimately involved in all the thinking or buying in that went into it. I would want to hear more from you on what you support or don't support because when I sit on the Council, I'm bringing your views to the floor first. Have you heard about Communities of Excellence 2026? It has a similar theme. There are a lot of positive ideas in both of these ideas and I like that they focus on the positive.

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

I believe Madison has a very positive business brand. You can see it all around in the new construction, home buying and growing population. I believe I can build on this by making our communities safer by working closer with our police. When the public embraces and trusts police, crime goes down, property values go up, taxes go down and more people want to move here. We must strive to build that public trust and that public support with police first. We need to grow neighborhood watch efforts to start this and I believe I can do this as alder.

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

Economic development is the process by which a city improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. One of the largest factors in this is the tax burden. If we lower the taxes we can be more competitive in both pay to employees and the businesses profits and help keep our economy going strong. That means stopping wasteful spending in the Council and spending tax dollars on projects that show return on investment. We can improve the political environment by putting in office people who fight to stop wasteful spending, who want to listen to their constituents and their business partners. We improve everyone's well-being in this way.

10. The Chamber believes that equity and social mobility are achieved through wealth creation and that the surest way is through an entrepreneurial class of color. The Chamber is launching initiatives to support this goal. What do you believe is the City of Madison's role in creating an entrepreneurial class of color?

Clearly to help any way we as a city can. Whether that be shown in public support, supporting those initiatives to meet your goals, or financial incentives or some other way. I will listen to your ideas and do what I can as a city leader to bring them forward. I want to help the Chamber succeed because when the Chamber succeeds, businesses succeed and then Madison succeeds.

11. How can the City of Madison provide better customer service to new or existing businesses that seek approval through the permitting and planning processes? How do you define customer service in this case?

Make the entire process as less painful, less costly and less time consuming as possible. Time is money and lost opportunity. I come from a Lean Government background. I will look for ways to make the entire process more customer friendly. Every process can be improved. Some processes that haven't been looked at in a while can see 90% or more improvement. That can translate to vast improvements and much better customer service. I can do this.

12. 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 that the Chamber will publish my answers to this questionnaire

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