

Responses cannot be edited

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Zach Wood

Aldermanic District: *

8

Current Address: *

661 Mendota Ct

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

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 wish to continue serving the greater campus community and Madison as a whole. I'm proud of what I've been able to accomplish over the past two years, but there is so much more to do. I have been a strong advocate for campus safety, increased density, affordable housing and economic growth, and I will continue that into my second term.

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

As a downtown Alder, I represent a number of small businesses, and have come to know their unique circumstances and challenges quite well.

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

District 8's businesses primarily cater to students and the greater UW-Madison community. Consequently, the same issues facing students are the ones that face our businesses. Number one on that list is without a doubt public safety. Most of the district's businesses rely on steady streams of foot traffic as their primary source of customers and as such, the more students out and about, the better our businesses will do. The surest way to increase foot traffic, especially at night, is to continue to make public safety a top priority in the district. Additionally, I hear frequent concerns regarding rising overhead costs associated with development.

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?

I believe the City of Madison can and should play an active role in growing our local economy and tax base. A critical aspect of supporting growth is making sure all stakeholders have a seat at the table as we make decisions about the future of our city. We need to continue to work towards improving our public transit, our infrastructure, and protecting our environment while simultaneously working diligently to promote equity. The city must ensure that as we grow, we all benefit.

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

We need to continue to make our community a place people want to build their lives. That means supporting a diverse housing stock, investing in public transportation, promoting a vibrant nightlife and supporting a strong arts, culture and food scene.

**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 support the responsible use of TIF as a key tool in the City's toolbox. It gives us a great means of promoting development that wouldn't happen otherwise. I feel our TIF use has been largely appropriate.

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?

I support this strategy. I have always supported bringing stakeholders to the table, investing in transportation, creating opportunities for young people , and smart, targeted growth. I am very excited by the BAT in particular.

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

Madison has a strong business brand, and it will only get stronger as we move further into the 21st century. With a world class research university, a strong Biotechnology and Health IT sector, we are well positioned for the future. There is a reason we continue to grow, while the rest of Wisconsin lags behind.

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

Concerted policy efforts to "grow the pie." It's when we support development that grows our tax base, when we create and retain good paying jobs, and provide opportunities for our constituents.

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?

The City must walk the walk when it comes to equity. In this case, that means being a partner and a resource for entrepreneurs of color. We need lower the hurdles to starting a business, and be available to offer assistance with everything from the permitting process to potential financial assistance under the right circumstances.

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?

I would define customer service in this case as the productivity of the interactions between local business and the City. Increased consistency, transparency and accessibility would certainly help. I believe the BAT will be helpful in this regard.

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

Google Forms