

Dane Dems Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking an endorsement from the Dane County Democratic Party. You do not need to answer all of the questions below, but please answer all of the ones you feel are pertinent to your campaign. We will ask more detailed questions and followups during our interview, if we choose to have one, so feel free to answer these questions as briefly or thoroughly as you desire. These answers will be shared in full with our membership before they vote on your endorsement.

Email *

juliamatthewsfor12@gmail.com

Candidate name *

Julia Matthews

Position you are running for (include municipality) *

City of Madison District 12 Alder

Campaign website

www.juliamatthewsfor12.com

Professional Experience *

Bachelors from UW-Madison in both Medical Microbiology and Immunology, and Molecular Biology. Most of my professional experience has been in clinical research and I currently work at the UW Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention as a programmer analyst (designing study databases and doing QA).

Political/Service Experience *

In undergrad, I was part of Alpha Chi Sigma (the professional Chemistry Fraternity) and served in multiple roles each semester. During that time I did a lot of science related outreach, tutoring, and other volunteer organizing. I also served on the housing board after graduating undergrad, and helped see a redevelopment project through the city process. I was also a City of Madison Lifeguard from 2010-2014 and have worked at all of the city beaches as well as goodman pool.

Why are you running for this seat? *

I want to serve as Alder because I love Madison and I think the city has a lot to offer, but there are many racial and economic disparities that need to be addressed for Madison to be great for all its residents. Acknowledging these disparities is only the smallest first step, but I will use that lens for every aspect of my work as Alder and every policy/development I am involved in advocating for (or against). Changes to the city and specifically District 12 will be necessary to accommodate Madison's unprecedented growth in the coming decades and it will be especially important to make sure those changes work to lessen existing racial and wealth disparities instead of making them worse. As a younger person, I am also passionate about the community engagement aspect of working as an Alderperson. I believe that all voices have value and want to make sure I am proactive about reaching people who have not always had the privilege, ability, or bandwidth to participate in city politics.

My financial situation has changed very recently which has allowed me to have the extra time and bandwidth to put into city government. There were multiple times in my life as a young adult where I only had extra time for work and would work as many hours as I could to barely make ends meet, so I am especially understanding that not everyone has time to jump through hoops to have their voices heard.

I am a lifelong Madison resident and during that time I've lived, worked, gone to school, and had to commute (with and without a car) all over the city. I have worked in a variety of fields, at varying levels of financial security, and almost always worked more than 1 job at a time. I am a renter and have both witnessed and experienced stable housing become more and more out of reach. As a younger person, I am especially committed to looking at the future of the city through sustainable growth, while still prioritizing the many features that make Madison a unique place. As Madison continues to grow, I don't want any existing residents to be pushed out and I don't want the only new housing stock to be so expensive that the only people able to move to the city are the people with the highest salaries. I also want to be sure that we are able to find a balance that doesn't sacrifice the green spaces and incredible nature that makes Madison such a lovely place to be.

What are the three most important issues in your race? *

1. Housing- We need more housing across all types and for all family incomes and sizes to address the housing crisis and the impending growth that is expected for the city
 2. Transportation- Increasing access to public transportation and especially working towards the North-South BRT as well as finding ways to reintroduce some access back into the north side. There is also a need to create better bike/pedestrian infrastructure in District 12 and many traffic related issues that could be improved upon.
 3. Noise Mitigation & environmental impacts of the incoming F35s- District 12 will be most impacted by the F35s and there is definitely a role the city should play in supporting access to noise mitigation funds and performing more stringent environmental studies.
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What are the largest environmental concerns you aim to deal with in office?

The continued PFAS pollution is a big concern for District 12 (with wells) and citywide (with impacts on the lakes and waterways). There will also be a need for study and remediation of contamination at the Oscar Mayer site in order to revitalize the area. I also support the city's efforts to increase sustainability across the board.

How will you use your position to create more equitable opportunities and help those living in poverty?

I want to make sure I am doing proactive outreach to folks in the community to raise awareness of existing services and to get more input from people who haven't been as involved in city politics in the past. The first permanent men's shelter is set to be in District 12 and I will advocate to see that to completion. I also support economic development in the district to bring more living wage jobs and small business opportunities to the area.

What will you do to address racial inequality?

Working to increase equitable access to housing and public transportation. I am also supportive of community oriented projects in District 12, such as the Warner Park Community Recreation Center Expansion and the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park.

How will you promote restorative justice and address racially biased policing?

I was just able to go to East High School for Moms on a Mission (MOMs) for the first time last week, and I am planning to regularly volunteer going forward. I am also supportive of increased transparency and oversight of MPD by the Police Civilian Oversight Board. I also support the CARES team and will support future expansion of the team.

How will you improve the public health of our community in your position?

The last couple years have shown the importance of investing in public health and since COVID is not going away, I want to make sure the city is continuing to support access to masks, vaccinations, and testing. I also support expansion of mental health services both for acute crises, but also for stable and ongoing care. Better access to stable housing and other support can also go a long way to supporting a healthy community.

What are the largest transportation issues you wish to work on and how will you address them?

I've mentioned some transportation related issues already, but I think it is especially critical to get better transportation services for people with disabilities. Especially with the closing of Green Cab, there are currently a lot of limitations on transportation for those who need accessible vehicles. There is currently a grant that was referred to the 2/28/2023 Finance Committee meeting (legistar # 75053) to help cab companies buy more accessible taxicabs, which I would support. I would also look at other ways for people to have impromptu transportation services instead of just pre-planned/pre-approved trips to give people more freedom and flexibility.

How have you elevated diverse voices in government and public discourse? How would you continue to do so if elected to this office?

Just in my personal life, I have sought out existing diverse organizations such as Freedom Inc., Urban Triage, and Reshaping Madison Together to look for places I can support, learn from, and share information from. As Alder, I would continue to look for the folks who are already doing the work and are already experts and make sure to do what I can to help elevate their voices.

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

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