

# 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 \*

marsha.rummel@gmail.com

Candidate name \*

Marsha Rummel

Position you are running for (include municipality) \*

City of Madison Common Council, District 6

Campaign website

www.marsha4d6.com

Professional Experience \*

I am currently working as an LTE for the Department of Revenue processing individual income tax returns. Until last April, I worked for 7 years at DOR as a Revenue Agent. I conducted office audits of individual taxpayers. Previously I worked for over 20 years in downtown Madison as the financial manager of the Rainbow Bookstore Coop where I coordinated all aspects of operating a cooperatively owned social mission business from the nuts and bolts of daily operations to strategic planning and positioning in a changing marketplace in order to compete with big box stores and online retailers like Amazon.

### Political/Service Experience \*

I served as District 6 alder from 2007-2021. I have extensive knowledge about the city's zoning and land use entitlement approval process, urban design and historic preservation, economic development strategies like TIF, community services, protection of water quality in our urban wells and waterways, affordable housing strategies and implemented policies for community oversight of the police. I have taken leadership initiatives on urban revitalization strategies for the Capitol East District, helped create McPike Park, and have stewarded the Madison Public Market, the restoration of Garver Feed Mill and Union Corners redevelopment over several years and Mayoral administrations. After serving as alder for 14 years, I have a track record of accomplishments and proven service to constituents. I have worked collaboratively with neighborhood residents, local business owners, developers, and city staff on dozens of proposed infill projects to ensure new developments fit zoning and adopted plans. I enjoy engaging residents in local government, making sure everyone understands people have the power to shape and make policy through the democratic process. I served as Council Vice President and then President from 2016-2018. During my tenure in Council leadership I initiated a multi-year community process to review police policies and procedures after the 2015 officer involved shooting of Tony Robinson. This effort led to the creation of an Independent Monitor, the Police Civilian Oversight Board, and the establishment of CARES, the team of paramedics and crisis workers who respond to nonviolent 911 emergency calls for mental health emergencies. As Council President I initiated a process to collect comments to submit to the Air National Guard EIS preliminary review of siting F35 fighter jets at Truax Field. Our report included data about affected low-income neighborhoods and the toxic contamination of ground and surface water from PFAS at Truax. Once Madison was selected, I worked with my fellow east and north side alders to pass a Council resolution opposing the F-35 jets based on significant environmental impacts including harmful noise levels, adverse impacts on children and disproportionate impacts on communities of color and low-income residents. In 2011, I was awarded a DNR Wisconsin Forestry Council Distinguished Service Award for enacting construction specifications to protect Madison's street trees. From 2002-2007, I was President of the Marquette Neighborhood Association and participated as a neighborhood rep in the city's planning for the East Rail Corridor, the creation of TID 36, the Capitol East BUILD, and creating the master plan for Central Park, now McPike Park.

### Why are you running for this seat? \*

Redistricting left District 6 without an incumbent and I decided to run to continue the work to make a better city for residents. I want to focus on expanding our affordable housing efforts. I believe my progressive values and public engagement skills are a good fit for this forward thinking district.

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

Affordable housing. I want to scale up affordable housing efforts and create more non-market based affordable housing including partnerships with nonprofits and limited equity cooperatives, use land banking and land trusts, and expand homeownership opportunities with down payment assistance and lease to own programs. We need to better use Tax Incremental Financing. Linking transportation and land use helps reduce the need for a car.

Transit justice. As the new high-capacity bus routes are established and Bus Rapid Transit is rolled out, I will be paying attention to public feedback about how the system is working. We need to ensure service covers the city in ways that support greater use of public transportation and serves the transportation needs of those who rely on public transit. In many cases the BRT, despite shortening the actual ride, will add longer walking times which may have consequences for users with mobility issues. Adding the north-south routes to BRT is key to the long term success of the system.

Green New Deal City. We must mitigate the effects of the climate emergency and reduce the inequities for the most vulnerable. We need to accelerate the transition towards renewable energy, move to net zero emissions in new buildings, and improve health through environmental and labor justice. The city needs to continue to invest in a green fleet, solar and other alternatives like heat pumps for residential and business use, and ensure an equitable transportation system. Transportation planning must be connected to our climate justice work. Streets are our public space and should be for people first. The city must actively promote green infrastructure to ensure each neighborhood can achieve 40% tree canopy coverage.

### What are the largest environmental concerns you aim to deal with in office?

Safe drinking water and protection of aquifers and groundwater from urban and rural contaminants.

PFAS 'forever' chemicals used at Truax Field have been documented by the WIS DNR in high levels in the fish (eaten by subsistence fisher people) and surface waters of Starkweather Creek, area wells (Well #15 is temporarily closed due to PFAS contamination) and in stormwater discharge.

I will continue to monitor the construction of a treatment system of PFAS in Well 15 using granular activated carbon, report on WDNR testing results of fish in Starkweather Creek to inform local fisher people of "safe" consumption amounts, and urge cleanup of Truax Field by city, county, and Air Force..

Protect aquifers and lakes/watersheds from fecal contamination, pharmaceuticals, nitrates and other industrial and ag contaminants, vehicle generated pollutants, road salt, and phosphorus from leaf debris

Improve transit use to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips and reduce our collective carbon and fossil fuel footprint..

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

The city's RESJI tool/ Racial Equity Social Justice Initiative has been a good model to inform external and internal policy and programming decisions. Internally by working to create a diverse city workforce that reflects the city's demographics (what we look like), remove roadblocks for hiring, and create opportunities for career advancement. Externally we should prioritize to the degree possible, opportunities to create generational wealth for African American residents through home ownership and other programs to improve overall economic security. The guaranteed income pilot is important and I will be interested in learning if and how we can continue it. It has significantly reduced poverty in reviews of the program. Improving the health of moms and babies.

I support ongoing efforts to reduce barriers such as language, access to transportation, absentee voting, making buildings accessible, and access to affordable childcare. I support efforts to include more residents in decision-making processes by utilizing different strategies of engagement.

I am proud of the work the city did to develop the Market Ready program for new vendors in the Madison Public Market. Most of the cohort of new businesses that were mentored were people of color. I believe the program showed how applying an equity lens to our work resulted in innovation. The city should continue to use community and economic development funds to assist entrepreneurs of color.

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## What will you do to address racial inequality?

Support the proposed Truth and Reconciliation process to establish community conversations to take steps to dismantle the historic legacy of racial disparities and segregation.

Reduce childhood poverty through programs like guaranteed income pilot and encouraging families to apply for new federal child tax credit.

Enhance income and employment opportunities for youth

Create stable housing and safe neighborhoods

Advance health equity

Support motherhood and infant wellness programs

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

I believe in a community care approach. This means the city with our community partners need to work upstream to prevent violence before it occurs. I support funding peer support and transformative justice programs that disrupt cycles of violence and build community capacity to problem solve. Successful community building programs must help identify emerging leaders and connect the community around issues that affect families. We need a multi-pronged approach that includes early childhood development, motherhood wellness, fatherhood peer support, food security, employment and training, affordable childcare, and youth programming.

As alder, I helped initiate a multi-year community process to review police policies and procedures after the 2015 officer involved shooting of Tony Robinson. The Council created an Ad Hoc committee composed of residents that conducted a thorough review of MPDs policies, procedures, culture and training and proposed 177 recommendations. We've seen the fruit of this effort in the creation of an Independent Monitor, Police Civilian Oversight Board, and the establishment of CARES, the emergency mental health first responders program composed of paramedics and social workers instead of armed police officers.

Racial disparities in policing are embedded in our culture and history, they will require an ongoing community commitment to discuss how we want to be policed and how we want to address the history of Two Madisons. If elected, I will continue the work started by District 6 Alder Brian Benford to initiate a community based Truth and Reconciliation process to repair the harms to the Black, Indigenous and other people of color.

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

I support the Public Health department's Roadmap to Reduce Violence that seeks to address gun violence, sexual violence, intimate-partner violence, self-harm and suicide. This approach understands that violence is a public health issue that has profound and cumulative negative impact on people's health and well-being, education, employment and housing.

Stable and affordable housing should be a cornerstone of our approach to public safety. Lack of stable housing seriously disrupts peoples' ability to keep a job or get a job or to make sure that children are able to attend and focus on school. Whether it's difficulty paying rent, overcrowded living conditions, eviction, or homelessness, housing insecurity exposes individuals and families to increased stress and mental and physical health problems.

I support the expansion of the CARES (Community Alternative Response for Emergency Services) pilot to create a city wide program with 24/7 staffing of paramedics and mental health professionals to respond to behavioral health emergencies. Instead of sending an armed officer in response to a 911 call, this team can deal with a broad range of non-criminal crises including mental health, suicide prevention, homelessness, intoxication, substance abuse and dispute resolution. The pilot has shown success in diverting people away from emergency rooms and jail.

I support programs like Vision Zero, a data driven strategy designed to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on roadways, bikeways and sidewalks and promote smarter and safer streets that serve all users. We need to prioritize pedestrian safety over driver convenience and speed. Traffic safety affects everyone.

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

Equitable transit system as mentioned in previous answers. I will track feedback as BRT and Metro high capacity bus routes are launched.

Vision Zero initiative is a data driven strategy designed to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on roadways, bikeways and sidewalks and promote smarter and safer streets that serve all users. I will prioritize pedestrian safety over driver convenience and speed.

Location of Amtrak station. I look forward to the results of the study the city is conducting.

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

Yes. I believe in open and accountable government and spend a lot of time providing info to residents so they are informed and can give feedback. As alder, I will have a deep commitment to improving people's life chances and bring an anti-racist, social justice, and environmental lens to my work. Building worker and community power at the local level is the best way I know to make a better world.

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

F35s. This so-called next generation fighter jet wastes an incredible amount of fuel and produces a ridiculous amount of CO emissions per flight. The program has been beset with mind-blowing cost overruns and technical glitches. I support changing the mission of the WI 115th Fighter Wing to medical and climate emergency response instead of contributing to the US's function of policing the Global South and around the world. Siting F-35s at Truax Air Base will create an adverse impact to public health on the north and east sides of Madison.

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