

# 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 \*

oconnor4mayor@gmail.com

Candidate name \*

Mary O'Connor

Position you are running for (include municipality) \*

Mayor of Monona

Campaign website

maryformonona.com

Professional Experience \*

Retired librarian

## Political/Service Experience \*

Mayor of Monona – 2017 - present; Alderman, City of Monona – 2012-2017; Monona Library Board – 1997-2012, served as President 2000-07; Founding board member and Treasurer, Monona Library Foundation (2007–2017); Secretary, Monona Grove Education Foundation Board (2011–present); Member, Monona Grove School District Facilities Advisory Committee 2015, 2017; Member, Friends of the Monona Public Library Board since its inception. Served as President and Treasurer at various times; Chief Election Inspector, (2007–present) at St. Stephens polling site in Monona; Former Girl Scout Leader & Community Cookie Chair.

---

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

While I have accomplished a lot during my first three terms as Mayor, there are some projects currently in process which I would like to complete before leaving office. Those are:

- Completion of the ongoing master planning process for the San Damiano property which Monona purchased in June, 2021
  - Approval of two referendums in Spring, 2024 – the first to increase Monona’s operating budget and the second for construction of a new public safety facility.
  - Implementation of a process to increase Monona’s supply of affordable housing.
- 

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

Madison Metro proposal, The future of the San Damiano property, Need for more affordable housing in Monona.

---

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

Keeping phosphorus and other debris out of Lake Monona by improving our storm water outlets and other efforts to keep the lake clean. Continue working to meet Monona’s goal of using 100% renewable energy for city operations by 2040.

---

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

I am in the process of developing a “toolkit” to help encourage development of more affordable/workforce housing in Monona. I support bringing Madison Metro to Monona which will increase access in the Madison area for all Monona residents. In addition I have worked to diversify city committees and city staff and will continue to do so.

---

What will you do to address racial inequality?

I will continue the work I’ve already started. In 2021, I appointed a Diversity & Equity Issues Committee to make recommendations for making Monona a more welcoming city. Upon acceptance of their report in July, 2022, I appointed an implementation committee of a diverse group of Monona residents to help make those ideas a reality. Monona contracted with the Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership in 2021. They have provided a variety of diversity training for city staff and council and continue to do so as well as facilitating both of our Diversity committees.

---

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

Monona has become an active participant in Dane County’s Community Restorative Court in recent years. We have worked successfully to increase diversity in our police force by funding police academy training for recent officer candidates, something Monona has never done before. It has resulted in the hiring of 3 female police officers, two of whom are persons of color. We have also provided diversity training for our officers and will continue to do so. In 2021 we hired a police chief who is a person of color who has instituted many policy changes within the department to help address concerns with racially biased policing.

---

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

Having led Monona’s response to Covid-19, I learned the importance of the work done by Public Health Madison Dane County. We will continue to work with PHMDC on their initiatives where appropriate.

---

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

I will continue to work to bring Madison Metro service to Monona while addressing community safety concerns. Monona has very few sidewalks and a population very interested in biking and walking. As Mayor, I appointed an Ad Hoc Bike/Pedestrian Safety Committee which spent 18 months working with consultants to develop a plan to develop safe routes to community destinations. We are gradually implementing pieces of the plan. I have included the construction of sidewalks and speed humps in targeted areas to improve safety in my capital budgets and will continue to do so. I have also worked with our police department to increase enforcement of traffic safety laws where appropriate.

---

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

I have worked to increase diversity in Monona city committees since I was elected Mayor and will continue to do so. I appointed a committee of diverse community members who are working to make Monona a more welcoming place. At my direction, we have expanded where and how we search for employees to encourage more diverse candidates to apply. The City has diversified its work force quite a bit in recent years and will continue to do so.

---

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

Monona is a small city in the middle of a large urban area. We deal with many problems faced by much larger cities. Monona needs and deserves experienced, common-sense, trusted leadership.

---

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms