

Dane Dems Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking an endorsement from the Dane County Democratic Party. **This questionnaire is due by no later than Friday, January 24, at 11:59 PM.**

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 and mark the questions you do not feel are pertinent N/A. 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 *

derek.w.field@gmail.com

Candidate name *

Derek Field

Position you are running for (include municipality) *

City of Madison Alder, District 3

Campaign website

voteforderekfield.com

Professional Experience *

Master of Public Affairs Degree from UW-Madison's LaFollette School for Public Affairs, two years as a data and policy analyst at UW-Madison, a year and a half in a data management role at WI Department of Children and Families, WI five years in education data analysis and IT project management roles at WI Department of Public Instruction.

Political/Service Experience *

Two years elected as alder for District 3, participation in East Side Progressives events including canvassing and hosting a Baldwin for Senate event, election official, volunteered for Hillary 2016 and Obama 2012.

Why are you running for this seat? *

I'm running because the Eastside neighborhoods in my district are beautiful, affordable, and safe, and I want to keep them that way. I also strive to be responsive with my communications and in using City resources to respond to my constituents' needs.

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

1. Housing supply and housing affordability/access, 2. gun violence prevention, and 3. thoughtful City planning for my district to plan for service/infrastructure upgrades to support our growing community.

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

Climate resilience must be a key priority of the City's when investing in infrastructure and public spaces in our neighborhoods: flooding is already a serious concern and will become worse as the climate becomes more volatile, and cooling centers in every neighborhood will be necessary for the public to endure hotter summers. Finally, I want to see the City continue its work to reduce our community's greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable building practices and low-emissions transit options, investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy generating projects, and beginning to draw down carbon from the atmosphere through active, sustainable management of our community's natural spaces and planting more trees.

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

Supporting working and low-income families is one of my core moral values. I grew up on my parents' farm and put myself through college by holding multiple jobs and taking out student debt. I've spent my career in roles that use data and analytics to support human services policy in public education, child care, and child welfare because I believe in the policy goals of each and every one of these programs. I will put the needs of low-income, less powerful members of our community first and prioritize housing (and affordable housing), food security, and human services that reach these members of our community. I have been a champion for these services in my district and have supported similar citywide policy and budget initiatives.

What will you do to address racial inequality, promote restorative justice, and/or address racially biased policing?

I will continue to work with nonprofit service and advocacy groups who are in and who serve Madison's racial/ethnic group communities to understand their needs in areas like housing, neighborhood investments, nondiscrimination in City services, and will support all efforts that make the city responsive to the needs of folks of color in our community. I also support alternatives to police interactions where practicable. For example, I sponsored the evaluation of the CARES program (which found that the program is effective and successful at its goals), the budget amendment purchasing new vehicles for CARES, and the agreement with Sun Prairie to expand the service to Madison's neighbor. I sponsored the contract for a company to drive patients to Winnebago Behavioral Health Institute so that patients don't need to ride with police. In summary, I support the use of community-oriented policing and stratified policing models that aim to build relationships and to use data to target police services and police presence, specifically to avoid over-policing certain parts of town.

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

I support public health education efforts and health-oriented programs for the public like vaccine clinics in neighborhood centers and community centers. I also believe in environmental justice priorities like cleaning up sources of water pollution and other contaminants in runoff, and in reducing and preventing air pollutants because marginalized groups usually bear most of the impacts of water and air pollution.

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

I strongly support a frequent and convenient public transit system with coverage that meets residents' needs. I believe density should be encouraged along core, high-frequency transit routes to offer residents an alternative to single-rider car trips. We have several traffic safety problem spots in the district along roads experiencing hazardous driving behavior and excessive speeding, where I support traffic calming measures to get drivers to slow down and watch for bikes and pedestrians. Finally, I'm very excited for the possibility of bringing high speed rail to Madison and I look forward to the development of those plans! Improved passenger rail service would benefit the entire community and offer better alternatives to car trips on our crowded and crumbling road infrastructure.

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

During my alder service, the issue that I've worked on above all others is trying to improve the living conditions of Harmony Apartments residents in my district, most of whom are folks of color. They are stuck living in a part of town that is lacking basic resources with landlords who are neglecting the building and disrespecting tenants. I work VERY hard to keep the City's attention on the property with landlord accountability measures like building inspections (while informing tenants of their rights and protections against retaliation). I've also worked with City service-providing agencies and a variety of nonprofit partners to bring programming and other supportive resources to the property. I bring City agency staff and partners to the property for listening sessions and I've worked directly with Harmony residents to access City decision-making processes to advocate for their needs, examples: getting Parks staff to commit to hosting an input workshop for Harmony residents on new park features being built at nearby Galaxy Park (coming in summer 2025) and bringing resident voices to the Transportation Commission to secure approval for a speed bump needed on their side street, which didn't score well in the City's system for scoring projects. It's hard to keep up the momentum while property owners continue to undermine the work, so I'm now pushing the City to pursue legal measures that will hopefully result in finally getting competent property management.

Aside from my alder service, I've spent my career so far working in human services policy and data in areas like public education and child welfare, and have found that, due to systemic racism and similar factors related to racially-driven privilege, race is a key factor in determining child outcomes in both of these areas. From 2017 to 2021 I worked at the WI Department of Public Instruction analyzing student outcomes data and reported these trends to schools and to the public, demonstrating how schools performed serving their students - with a focus on target student groups like students of color, economically disadvantaged students, English learner students, and students with disabilities. This work of mine helped the public and helped school staff to understand the severity of Wisconsin's and Madison's achievement gap in academic assessments, graduation rates, and more. I joined technical assistance calls with school district leaders and educators to help them understand how they should use those outcomes data to target investments and improvements to reach the students who need support: in particular, Black students and students with disabilities.

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

I work very hard to share information about City business with my constituents through weekly updates blog posts sent to over 1,200 constituents. I do this because I want residents to know what the City can (and does) do for them and their neighborhood, and because hope to make it easier for residents to participate in local governments' decision-making processes on things that affect them. I am an experienced data and analytics professional in human services policy and I want to bring a data-driven mindset to policymaking in Madison. I want to help improve and support transparency in public decision-making through the use of, visualization of, and communication about data.

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