

*PD Candidate Questionnaire*  
*Grant Foster*  
*District 15 Alder*  
*1/9/19*

Campaign

1) Why are you running for elected office? What are your priority issues?

**I'm running for elected office, because it's the way I can have the biggest positive impact on my community. I've been a community activist most of my adult life and with a seat on the common council I will have an opportunity to effect change at a large scale. District 15 residents have struggled to stay connected with city government and many feel discouraged and suspect of city staff and processes. I want to reconnect D15 residents with their city government and raise civic engagement.**

**My priority issues are 1) land use and transportation 2) environmental health and 3) livable communities**

2) What is your campaign's strategy to be successful during the election?

**The underpinnings of the strategy are to learn from those that have led successful, progressive local campaigns in the past. The strategy itself focuses on using doors, mailings, and social media to connect with voters. It's a campaign focused on listening, demonstrating respect, and finding common ground.**

3) Who is on your campaign team? (Treasurer, Campaign Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, etc.)

**I have an engaged campaign team supporting all the needed work:**

**Bryn Thompson**  
**Dawn Cunningham**  
**Elly Hall**  
**Geri Justinger**  
**Jim Lorman**  
**Martha Kemble**  
**Matthew Calvert**  
**Serena Sato**  
**Steve Hiniker**

Legislative

4) There will be many new alders on the 2019 Council. If you are an incumbent, what challenges does that present and how will you respond? If you are not an incumbent, please describe the experiences that prepare you to hit the ground running as an alder.

**I served on the city's Ped/Bike/MV Commission and Long Range Transportation Planning Committee for 3 years. During that time I have also watched or listened to nearly every Common Council meeting along with countless others including: Plan Commission, Parks, ALRC, TORC, TFOSCG, OMSAC, and more. I have also developed relationships with many of the current alders and city staff and have a very strong understanding of city and legislative processes.**

5) What key recommendations are you looking for from the Task Force on Structure of City Government?

- **Size of the council and role of alder - I am currently in favor of keeping more alders with fewer constituents in a public servant role as opposed to reducing the number of representatives and converting them into full time positions.**
- **Opportunities to improve public access, participation, and engagement in city governance - I think there are big opportunities to improve access to information and to get to people where they are instead of relying on attendance at public meetings.**
- **Board/commission/committee structure - I would like us to continue to support our unique structure and maintain a high number of formally organized bodies, but we could consider organizing them in a way that doesn't require alder representation on all of them.**

6) What do you consider to be the key recommendations from the OIR Report?

**#1 is the creation of an overlay of civilian oversight that fills gaps beyond the PFC's statutory authorization ( independent police auditor, reporting to an appointed community review board). All of the other work depends in large part on establishing public accountability and oversight.**

7) The City's strategy for increasing affordable housing has relied upon Low Income Housing Tax Credit project developments. This approach is not creating enough units to meet the need. What alternative approaches would you pursue to increase low income housing to meet the need? Describe a model housing project, including location, design, unit sizes, rents, shared spaces, and funding sources.

**Madison's affordability problem is similar to that faced by many cities in the United States - market pricing of real estate limits affordability and national funding streams fail to fill in the gap. Madison should prioritize affordable housing in the budget by looking critically at where Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding and tax breaks are granted. We can also look for ways the city can support long-term affordability through cooperative housing and community land trusts. In contrast to Low Income Housing Tax Credits, cooperatives and CLTs continue to own the land in perpetuity, maintaining affordability for generations. The city already dedicates funding and technical support to worker cooperatives, and this "cooperative" branding could be extended to housing cooperatives in providing technical assistance to housing cooperative startups. To increase our support of these alternative long-term affordability models, the City could work with existing organizations like Commonwealth CLT and Madison Area Cooperative Housing Alliance to propose zoning and other policy changes that could make these developments easier. We could also consider new funding streams like a zero-interest revolving loan fund to start new long-term affordable housing projects.**

8) Attached is the Progressive Dane Platform for the City of Madison. Please review it and explain how you would prioritize and implement our platform positions. Is there any proposal you would not support? Are we missing something?

**All of areas covered in the PD platform are critically important and need to be pursued in parallel. Based on my areas of knowledge and experience I would have the most to offer in the areas of: OPEN AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, QUALITY HEALTHCARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH, and LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT and SAFE, EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION.**

**Regarding 8.6 - 'Adoption of a complete streets policy, including adequate sidewalks on all streets. Facilities investment and engineering, law enforcement, and public policy should facilitate bicycling and walking' - the city has already adopted such a policy. Perhaps this should be updated to 'Follow our adopted complete streets policy' or better yet 'Strengthen our adopted complete streets policy to ensure that all public rights of way include accommodations for safe and low-stress travel by foot and by bike for people of all ages and abilities'.**

Progressive Dane Involvement

9) What interests you in seeking the endorsement of Progressive Dane?

**I'm interested in working collaboratively with other progressives to move Madison forward. Being part of a PD caucus on the council would be a great way to get that started. The current council members that I most respect our PD members and I'd love to join that team:)**

10) How will you coordinate with other PD elected officials and the Progressive Dane Policy Committee to work on issues?

**Through regular meetings and cosponsoring legislation.**

11) We also do our best to keep members informed of civic issues. How will you help keep our members informed? Will you write an article for the PD newsletter or blog during the year and attend at least one General Membership Meeting (fourth Wednesday) to engage members on your efforts?

**Communication will be a focus area for me as alder and I plan to write regular updates. I would hope several issue-based articles could be used for PD member communications as well. Yes, to attending a GMM.**

12) If endorsed, will you assign a liaison from your campaign team to the elections committee to help inform our members about how they can support your campaign?

**Yes**

13) Are you currently a member of Progressive Dane? If yes, for how long? If no, are you willing to be?

**Yes. For a few years (can't remember the date).**

14) If you get the endorsement are you willing to commit to using it in your campaign materials?

**Yes**