



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Agenda - Approved

COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?

Who does not have a voice at the table?

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

4:30 PM

201 City-County Building and via virtual meeting

Quorum of the Common Council may be present at this meeting

The City of Madison is holding the Common Council Executive Committee meeting in hybrid format.

Written Comments: You can send comments on agenda items to
ccec@cityofmadison.com

Register for Public Comment:

- Register to speak at the meeting
- Register to answer questions
- Register in support or opposition of an agenda item (without speaking)

If you want to speak at this meeting you must register. You can register at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/MeetingRegistration>. When you register to speak, you will be sent an email with the information you will need to join the virtual meeting.

Watch the Meeting: If you would like to join the meeting as an observer, please visit <https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Channel/common-council-executive-committee>.

Listen by Phone: (877) 853-5257 (Toll Free) Webinar ID: 810 3904 2355

If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this service, activity or program, please call the phone number below at least three business days prior to the meeting.

Si necesita un intérprete, un traductor, materiales en formatos alternativos u otros arreglos para acceder a este servicio, actividad o programa, comuníquese al número de teléfono que figura a continuación tres días hábiles como mínimo antes de la reunión.

Yog hais tias koj xav tau ib tug neeg txhais lus, ib tug neeg txhais ntawv, cov ntawv ua lwm hom ntawv los sis lwm cov kev pab kom siv tau cov kev pab, cov kev ua ub no (activity) los sis qhov kev pab cuam, thov hu rau tus xov tooj hauv qab yam tsawg peb hnub ua hauj lwm ua ntej yuav tuaj sib tham.

For accommodations, contact: Common Council Office, 608-266-4071,
CCEC@cityofmadison.com

Call to Order/Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

12/9/25 draft minutes: <http://madison.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Public Comment

1. [91492](#) Public Comment (1/13/26)

Disclosures and Recusals

Members of the body should make any required disclosures or recusals under the City's Ethics Code.

Items for Consideration

2. [91489](#) 2025 Alder Retreat Key Takeaways
Attachments: [Complete Report - Common Council September 2025.pdf](#)
Presentation by Abha Thakkar, Mosaic LLC
3. [91103](#) Amending Section 33.32 of the Madison General Ordinances related to the Joint Campus Area Committee to modify the composition and duties of the JCAC.
Attachments: [91103 Body](#)
4. [91351](#) Council Chief of Staff Annual Performance Evaluation Tool and Process
Attachments: [Council Chief of Staff Evaluation Tool Draft 12525.pdf](#)
5. [88520](#) Council Office Updates (2025-2026)
Attachments: [CCEC Chief of Staff Update 6-3-25.pdf](#)
[CCEC Chief of Staff Update 7-1-25.pdf](#)
[CCEC Chief of Staff Update 080525.pdf](#)
[CCEC Chief of Staff Update 091625.pdf](#)
[CCEC Chief of Staff Update 102825.pdf](#)
[CCEC Chief of Staff Update 120925.pdf](#)
6. [88519](#) Future Agenda Items (2025-2026)
Attachments: [Future Agenda Item Requests 2025-2026 updated 6-3-25.pdf](#)

Adjournment



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Master

File Number: 91492

File ID: 91492

File Type: Public Comment

Status: Public Comment

Version: 1

Reference:

Controlling Body: COMMON
COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

File Created Date : 01/08/2026

File Name: Public Comment (1/13/26)

Final Action:

Title: Public Comment (1/13/26)

Notes:

Sponsors:

Effective Date:

Attachments:

Enactment Number:

Author:

Hearing Date:

Entered by: kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com

Published Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 91492

Title

Public Comment (1/13/26)



City of Madison

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Master

File Number: 91489

File ID: 91489

File Type: Miscellaneous

Status: In Committee

Version: 1

Reference:

Controlling Body: COMMON
COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

File Created Date : 01/08/2026

File Name: 2025 Alder Retreat Key Takeaways

Final Action:

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2025.pdf

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Text of Legislative File 91489

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2025 Alder Retreat Key Takeaways



Summary of September 2025 Retreat

- **Madison Common Council members participated in a retreat on the topic of “Navigating Complex Constituent Dynamics” on September 13, 2025** designed by Abha Thakkar with Mosaic LLC.
 - The goal of the retreat was to give alders a space to explore the complexity of constituent dynamics, from healthy disagreement to conflict, and to provide tools for alders to develop clarity about their approach to being an elected official so that they can better:
 - Ground their process in their values and priorities
 - Proactively set boundaries and expectations in their public lives
 - Normalize public disagreement
 - Understanding these different aspects and approaches to the job can support alders in communicating their approach more proactively to constituents and therefore set appropriate expectations and shift from “reacting” to “responding” when disagreement arises.
- **The agenda included (see slide deck for details):**
 - **An opening reflection about their own expectations of city government** (themes summarized on page 2).
 - **An exploration of the Spectrum of Constituent Interactions** from Constructive Feedback -> Healthy Disagreement -> Tension & Frustration -> Disrespectful Behavior -> Harassment -> Threats -> Violence
 - **A review of concepts to establish a shared framework:**
 - Levels of Impact (Self, Relational, Institutional, Systemic)
 - Power and its sources
 - The Action / Reaction Cycle
 - A definition of “tension” in public life and the tensions that elected officials have to navigate
 - The spectrum of public to private relationships and the different needs and expectations that can get met in these different spheres.
 - The nature of making change in a democracy
 - The skills of emotional intelligence
 - **An overview and ranking of the different roles played by elected officials:** Constituent Service-Provider, Continuous Learner, Public Educator, Policy Maker, Ethical Compass, Message & Translator, Systems Thinker, Equity Champion, Public Trustee, Public Steward, Democratic Guardian, Bridge-Builder, Civic Culture Builder, Descriptive & Substantive Representation, Voice of the People, Responsive Listener, Feedback Looper
 - **An exploration of the specific tension between the delegate and trustee roles,** including a ranking of models that balance that tension in different ways: Trustee, Delegate, Ethical/Relational Leadership, Transformative Representation, Participatory & Deliberative Democracy, Politico Model (Hybrid), Substantive Representation (Shared Interests), and Descriptive Representation (Shared Identity).

Themes From Opening Reflection

Theme	The ways in which being an alder is similar to what was expected	The ways in which being an alder is different from what was expected
Helping & Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knew the role would involve helping neighbors and serving others - Expected to be able to make an impact - Advocacy and constituent service felt aligned with expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harder to get things done than expected - Must deal with a lot of small issues along with big ones - Less direct power to solve problems than imagined
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expected to hear diverse viewpoints and community concerns - Enjoyed hearing what people are passionate about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Didn't expect how many people would be uninformed, angry, rude, or resistant to facts - Some people don't use data or logic to make decisions
Meetings & Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knew there would be a lot of meetings - Expected ongoing work on many issues at once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More meetings than expected - Time commitment is much greater than imagined - Constant demands, pressure, and follow-up
Learning & Issue Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expected to be learning constantly across many policy areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning curve for process, procedure, and committee work was bigger than expected - Didn't realize how much behind-the-scenes work it takes
Government Structure & Pace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understood it would involve a lot of "layers" and procedural steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The amount of time it takes for small changes was surprising - Slow pace and bureaucracy felt more intense in practice
Compensation / Practical Realities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Low pay" was expected and confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater emotional labor and personal toll than anticipated - More pressure not to make mistakes
Respect & Human Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expected a wide range of viewpoints and requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surprised at how much incivility and polarization they encounter - Some people assume bad intent, don't come with curiosity
View of Public Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Felt good about being of service and doing meaningful work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gained greater appreciation for staff and public servants - Realized how much invisible labor makes government function

Alder Role Exploration

We then explored the different aspects and roles of being an elected official (see slide deck for description of roles). Each alder ranked the roles in terms of importance (scale of 1 to 5) and their comfort with that role (scale of 1 to 5).

The following table is sorted in order of importance of the roles. The roles that alders indicated the highest gap between importance and comfort were:

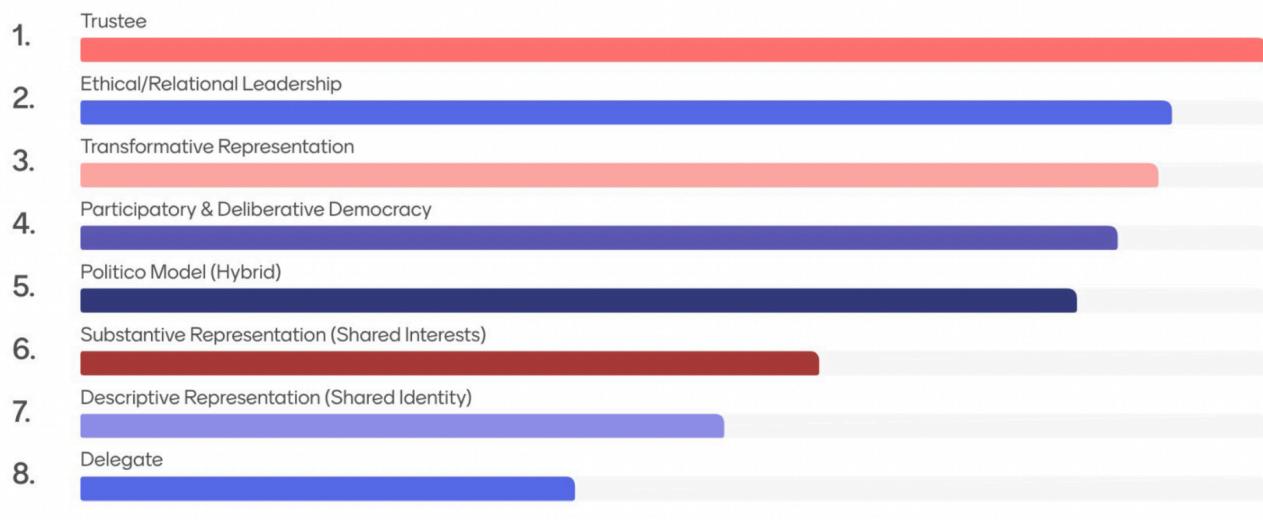
- Messenger & Translator
- Public Trustee
- Constituent Service-Provider
- Descriptive & Substantive Representation

Role	Importance Score	Comfort Score	Gap
Constituent Service-Provider	4.8	3.9	.9
Continuous Learner	4.8	4.4	.4
Public Educator	4.7	3.9	.8
Policy Maker	4.6	3.9	.7
Ethical Compass	4.6	4.1	.5
Messenger & Translator	4.6	3.5	1.1
Systems Thinker	4.6	3.9	.7
Equity Champion	4.6	3.9	.7
Public Trustee	4.6	3.6	1.0
Public Steward	4.5	4.1	.4
Democratic Guardian	4.4	4.0	.4
Bridge-BUILDER	4.3	3.6	.7
Civic Culture Builder	4.3	3.8	.5
Descriptive & Substantive Representation	4.3	3.4	.9
Voice of the People	4.2	3.7	.5
Responsive Listener	4.0	3.8	.2
Feedback Looper	3.6	2.9	.7

Models of Representation

Finally, we explored various representation models (see next page for description of the models), and alders selected the model that best fits their values and goals. The models of **Trustee, Ethical/Relational Leadership and Transformative Representation** were the most selected models for the kinds of representative alders want to be, though the top 5 selections were closely ranked.

Please rank these based on what kind of representative you want to be.



Common Council Retreat

Models of Representation

September 2025

Delegate vs Trustee Model

Core Question: Should officials enact the will of the people or use their own judgment?

- **Delegate:** Officials act as a mouthpiece for constituents — they vote and advocate strictly according to the preferences of the electorate.
 - “I’m your voice.”
 - Pro: Honors direct democratic accountability
 - Con: May ignore long-term needs or minority rights
- **Trustee:** Officials are entrusted to use their judgment and conscience for the greater good, even if it contradicts public opinion.
 - “You elected me to lead.”
 - Pro: Allows for ethical leadership and expert decision-making
 - Con: Can feel unresponsive or paternalistic to constituents

Politico Model (Hybrid)

Core Idea: Recognizes that most elected officials blend delegate and trustee roles depending on:

- The salience of the issue
- Their own expertise or experience
- The clarity of constituent opinion

Example: A city council member might act as a delegate on zoning issues (highly local, clear public feedback) but as a trustee on complex budgeting decisions.

Descriptive Representation (Shared Identity)

Core Idea: Representation is also about embodied experience — people should be represented by officials who share their backgrounds, lived experiences, or community identity.

- Important for historically excluded groups (race, gender, disability, income)
- Pushes back on “neutral” expertise-only models of leadership
- Can shape trust, legitimacy, and what issues get surfaced

Substantive Representation (Shared Interests)

Core Idea: Goes beyond identity: officials are effective if they act in the interests of a group, even if they don’t personally belong to it.

- Often used in equity or allyship conversations: “You don’t need to be from my community if you fight for what we need.”

Transformative Representation

Core Idea: Drawn from social justice movements, this framework challenges the status quo of what is considered “representative.”

- Officials should:
 - Challenge oppressive systems
 - Lead for liberation, not just consensus
 - Be accountable to marginalized communities, even when unpopular

“Leadership is not about pleasing everyone. It’s about bending the arc of justice — even when it breaks norms or traditions.”

Participatory & Deliberative Democracy

Core Idea: Representation should be shaped by constant, structured input from constituents — not just periodic elections.

- Emphasizes co-creation, town halls, listening sessions, surveys, participatory budgeting
- Promotes two-way communication and relationship-based politics
- Elected officials are stewards of public dialogue, not just decision-makers

Inspired by scholars like Jane Mansbridge and Iris Marion Young, who argue for inclusive, dialogic approaches to representation, especially across lines of power and difference.

Ethical/Relational Leadership (Contemporary Civic Practice)

Core Idea: Officials lead with their values and relational accountability to community.

Tension is not binary — it’s navigated with humility, ongoing reflection, and structured feedback loops.

- Key concepts:
 - Transparent decision-making
 - Naming your values publicly
 - Holding space for disagreement with dignity
- Often rooted in frameworks like:
 - Adaptive Leadership (Heifetz)
 - Public Narrative (Marshall Ganz)
 - Relational Organizing (PICO, Industrial Areas Foundation)

Possible Next Steps for Practice, Exploration and Inquiry

As Individuals

- **Reflect on the public and private relationship spectrum in the context of your experience as an alder**
 - How do you present in your public life? On social media? Are you comfortable with your public/private boundary?
 - Where are needs and expectations blurred in your life between these domains?
 - Are there some relationships that overlap these spaces - how do you navigate public disagreement and difference in those relationships?
- **Being an alder requires the consistent use of the skills of emotional intelligence.**

Which of these do you feel most comfortable with when faced with disagreement? With conflict? Which skills would you like to strengthen?

 - Identify and have words for feelings
 - Accurately read and interpret emotions in others
 - Regulate one's own behavior and stress response in the face of discomfort and tension
 - Volume Control: Manage expression of strong emotions
 - Develop empathy for others
 - Practice curiosity and a learning mindset
- **Consider the roles inventory** included here. Identify which roles feel most important to you as an alder and how you will prioritize and enhance your comfort with these roles. How will you communicate these priorities to your constituents?
- **Remain mindful of the tension between the “Trustee” and “Delegate” models of representation**, especially when encountering highly polarizing topics. Based on your values and goals as an elected official, are you there to mirror your constituents or to vote your conscience, or something in between? **What happens when you disagree with a majority of your constituents?** And how will you communicate that to your district?

As a Council

- **Reflect on the power (the ability to act and get a reaction) you have as a Council in the system of City government.** Develop consistent messaging to help support public education about the powers of the Council.
- **Normalize disagreement** with each other to better avoid the pitfalls of permanent polarization and model public disagreement for your constituents.

With Constituents

- **Develop a proactive public engagement strategy** that elevates multiple points of view, normalizes thoughtful disagreement, articulates your values and integrates some feedback mechanism after a vote to close the loop.
- **Be aware of the resources** available to help keep you safe when disagreement escalates into more dangerous forms of conflict.

Explore the skills of political persuasion as an antidote to permanent polarization.

Common Council Retreat

Individual Reflection: Values & Boundaries

September 2025

1. What are 3-5 values that guide your public service?
2. Whose voices are you accountable to — and how do you make that visible?
3. What boundaries are non-negotiable for you (keep in mind some of the nuances around the public / private relationship spectrum as well as how far you are willing to compromise on your values).
4. How do you signal your values to constituents even when they disagree?
5. What do you owe your constituents - and what not? (Be sure to consider your relationship with loyalty in your public relationships)

Common Council: Navigating Complex Constituent Dynamics

September 13, 2025

Abha Thakkar, Mosaic LLC
mosaicmadison.com
608-213-6879
abha@mosaicmadison.com

AGENDA: NAVIGATING COMPLEX CONSTITUENT DYNAMICS

9:00 am	Welcome
9:15 am	Check-In & Group Agreements
9:40 am	Experiences and Expectations
10:00 am	The Spectrum of Constituent Interactions
10:30 am	A Shared Framework
11:00 am	BREAK
11:15 am	Examining Your Role
11:45 am	Key Tension: Delegate vs Trustee?
12:15 pm	Values, Roles & Boundaries
12:30 pm	Designing a Public Input Strategy

9:30 am

EXPERIENCES

&

EXPECTATIONS

THE CONSTITUENT EXPERIENCE

- What were some of your feelings, assumptions and experiences about government before you became an elected official?

THE ALDER EXPERIENCE

- In what ways is being an elected official similar to what you expected?
- In what ways is being an elected official different from what you expected?

When you're done, take a moment to read what's on the wall.

GROUP REFLECTION

- Do you see any mismatched expectations, sources for frustration?

10:00 am

THE SPECTRUM OF CONSTITUENT INTERACTIONS



The Spectrum of Constituent Interactions

- Write 2-3 anonymous examples of constituent interactions on post-it notes and place them where they fall

Take some time to read each other's experiences

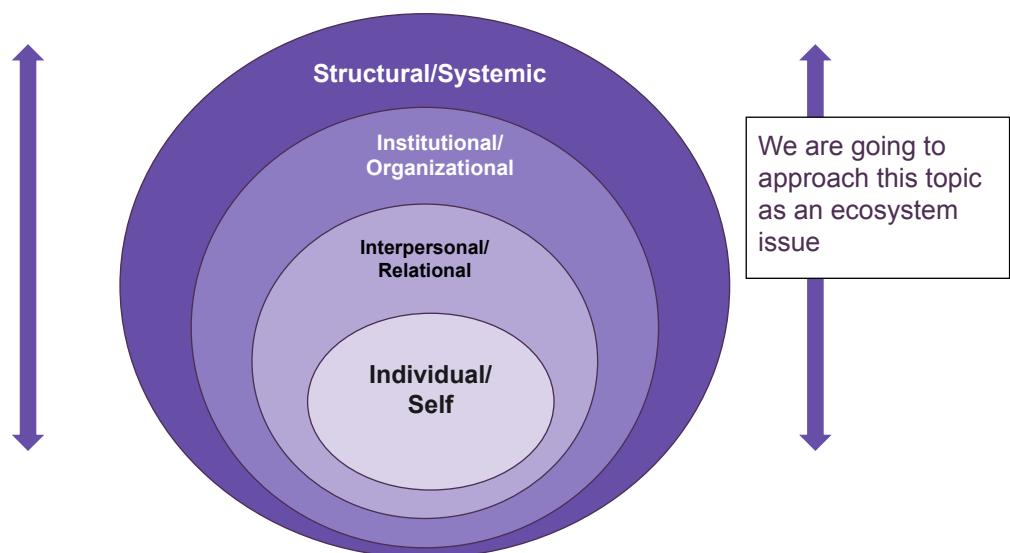
The Spectrum of Constituent Interactions

- What patterns do you see?
- Where do you spend most of your energy?
- What's the difference between discomfort and actual harm?
- What supports do you need and what exists for the hard end of the spectrum?

10:30 am

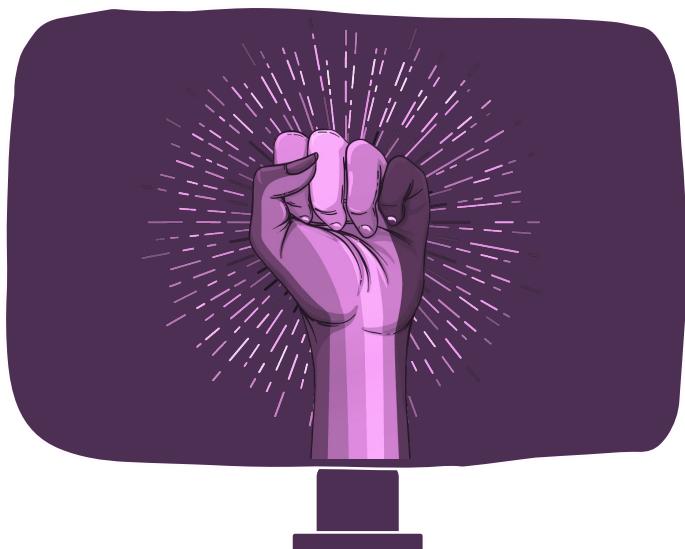
ESTABLISHING A SHARED FRAMEWORK

INTERDEPENDENT LEVELS OF COMPLEX SYSTEMS

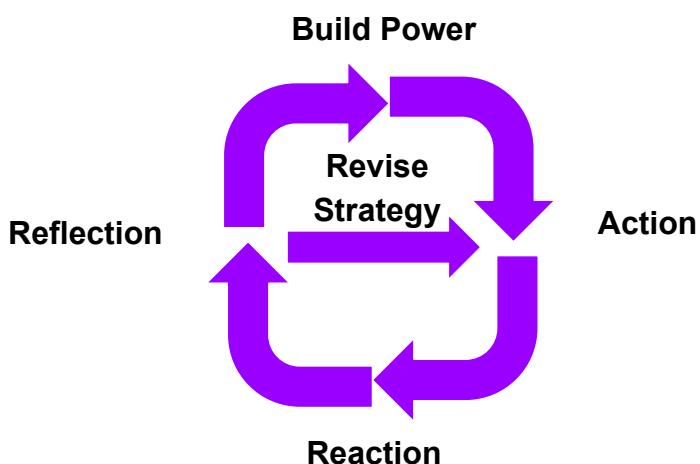


TERMS: POWER

- From the latin word *poder*: the ability to do or act... and get a reaction
- The **size** of the reaction is a measure of your power (equal and opposite).
- The **nature** of the reaction - did it move you towards your goals? - is a measure of the quality of your strategy and tactics



THE ACTION / REACTION CYCLE



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SOURCES OF POWER

Power is relative and shifting at all times, depending on who we're with and what we're doing. An awareness of how power works and an ability to use it mindfully is at the heart of being impactful.

Identities & Experience (Intersectionality)

Expectations, socialization related to personality, communication style, learning style, family roles, race, class, age, education level, subculture, heritage/family of origin, health and ability, age, size, etc.

Positionality

What is your functional impact in the world? Your impact can be influenced by your relationships, decision-making power, seniority and expertise, access and control of information and resources, and your ability to direct, reward or punish others.

POWER & CONSTITUENTS

Using this definition of "power as the ability to act and get a reaction,"

- What do constituents think about an alder's power?
- What power does an alder actually have?

A KEY FEATURE OF PUBLIC LIFE IS TENSION

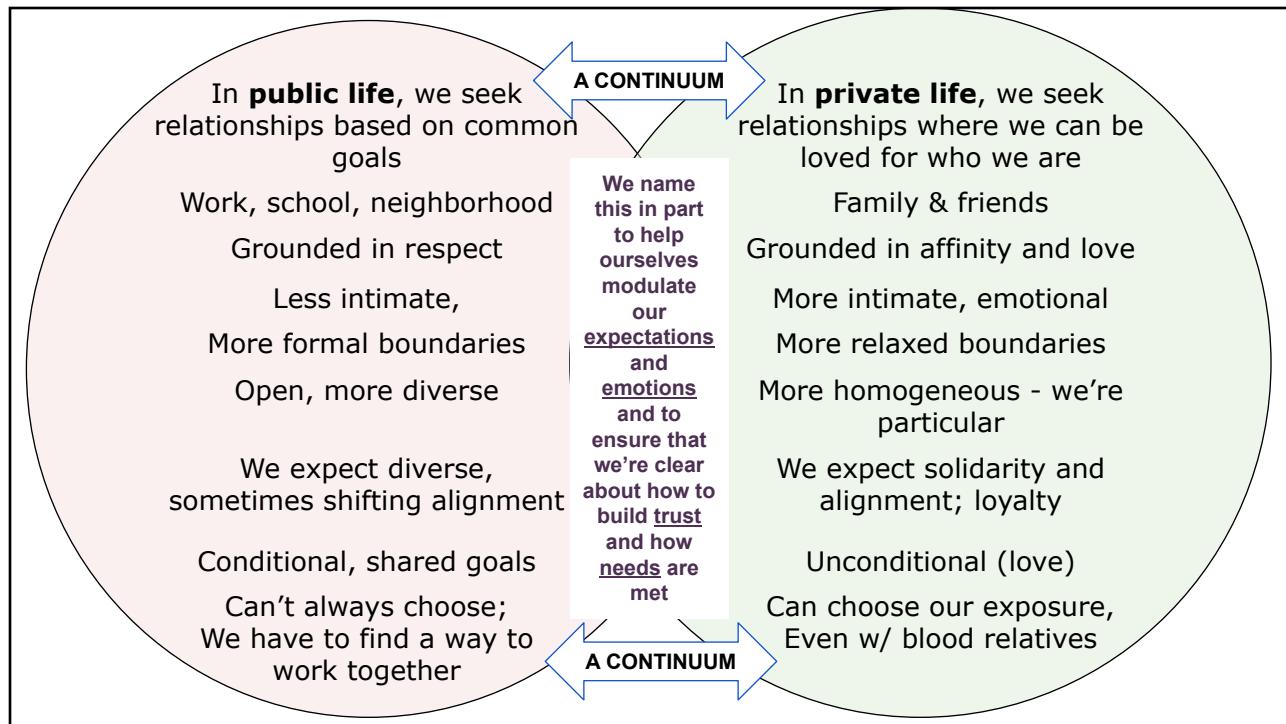
The push & pull of competing
needs and interests

(Not stress or conflict, though
those can be side effects)



THE TENSIONS OF BEING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

The World As It Is	↔	The World As It Should Be
Resources Available	↔	What People Need
Your To Do List	↔	Time Available
Urgency of Needs	↔	Speed of Democratic Process
Highly Personal Polarization	↔	The Need for Compromise
Divisive; Taking Sides on Record	↔	Coming Back Together
Binary "Yes/No" Voting	↔	Nuanced Issues and Impact
Loyalty	↔	Shifting Alliances
Good Intentions	↔	Unintended Consequences
The Needs of the Many	↔	The Needs of the Few
Majority Rule	↔	Protecting Minority Voice
The Isolation of Your Role	↔	Being Immersed in Community
Voices of Organized Constituents	↔	Voices You Don't Hear From
Ability to Make an Impact	↔	Limits to What City Gvt Can Do
Long-Term Strategic Gains	↔	Short-Term Alliances & Tactics



The Nature of Making Change in a Democracy

- Democracy is meant to be slow & incremental
- Democracy is designed to require compromise
- Democracy is more [much more] than voting
- Democracy often involves uniting our allies and dividing our opposition, but **it cannot withstand permanent polarization**
 - Which means no permanent allies, no permanent opponents - but within what parameters?
 - Who are you willing to work with to get things done?
- Democracy is a practice, not a description or a static state

SELF LEVEL: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is a basic requirement for people who hold leadership roles in complex systems of any kind.

Managing all that is going on in the body and brain while reacting to other people is challenging work.

- Identify and have words for feelings
- Accurately read and interpret emotions in others
- Regulate one's own behavior and stress response in the face of discomfort and tension
 - Volume Control: Manage expression of strong emotions
- Develop empathy for others
- Practice curiosity and a learning mindset

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The nature of democratic process requires us to hold complexity at multiple levels:

- Public and private relationships are different on a continuum - we don't get to choose who we work with and there will almost certainly be more diverse opinions and personalities in our public lives than in our private lives
- Tension (conflict, disagreement, balancing irreconcilable needs, scarcity) is a normal part of public life. We learn to live with the imperfect "middle ground."
- Power matters in all of this - who we are and what positions, expertise and information we hold plays a huge role in how we impact others, how others impact us and the tools we have to navigate tension
- Democracy is designed to be a slow, incremental process, often requiring compromise with people we disagree with.
- How we respond and self-regulate in the face of tension involves practicing and deepening our emotional intelligence and holding ourselves accountable to our values WHILE also naming and addressing the conditions at other levels that are impacting us.

11:15 am

EXAMINING YOUR ROLE

WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE AS AN ALDER?

Pass out worksheet.

Score your worksheet based on:

1. How important you think each role is for you
2. How comfortable you are in each role

Elected Official Roles

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE ROLES

- Policy-Maker
 - Research, debate, and pass laws or ordinances
 - Understand implications and unintended consequences
 - Use data, equity analysis, and public input to inform decisions
- Public Steward
 - Protect public resources and the public trust
 - Prioritize transparency, fiscal responsibility, and accountability
 - Avoid conflicts of interest or self-enrichment
- Ethical Compass
 - Model integrity and courage, especially under pressure
 - Speak out against injustice, corruption, or harmful norms
 - Defend institutions and democratic principles even when unpopular

Elected Official Roles

RELATIONAL & COMMUNITY ROLES

- Constituent Service Provider
 - Respond to inquiries, complaints, and requests
 - Help people navigate public systems (housing, permits, transit, etc.)
 - Maintain accessibility through office hours, email, phone, and public presence
- Bridge-BUILDER
 - Facilitate connection across divides (race, class, ideology, geography)
 - Find common ground while honoring difference
 - Mediate between stakeholders, agencies, or community factions
- Public Educator
 - Demystify policy and process: “Here’s how this works”
 - Explain decisions clearly, with values-based messaging
 - Help set realistic expectations of what government can (and cannot) do

ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Leadership & Governance

Policy Maker - How important is this to you?



Policy Maker - How comfortable are you in this role?



Public Steward - How important is this to you?



Public Steward - How comfortable are you in this role?



Ethical Compass - How important is this to you?



Ethical Compass - How comfortable are you in this role?



Not at all

4.3

Very



ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Relational & Community

Constituent Service Provider - How important is this to you?



Constituent Service Provider - How comfortable are you in this role?



Bridge-Builder - How important is this to you?



Bridge-Builder - How comfortable are you in this role?



Public Educator - How important is this to you?



Public Educator - How comfortable are you in this role?



Not at all

4.2

Very



Elected Official Roles

COMMUNICATION & ACCOUNTABILITY ROLES

- Messenger & Translator
 - Break down complex issues in accessible, inclusive language
 - Communicate early and consistently — not just during crises
 - Share not just what decisions were made, but why
- Responsive Listener
 - Create predictable channels for input (town halls, surveys, listening sessions)
 - Ensure underrepresented voices are sought out and centered
 - Document, reflect, and report back on what was heard
- Feedback Looper
 - Show constituents how their input shaped decisions (or why it didn't)
 - Update community on implementation and follow-through
 - Close the loop, especially on contentious or emotional issues

Elected Official Roles

LEARNING & REFLECTION ROLES

- Systems Thinker
 - Understand root causes, not just symptoms
 - Connect the dots across departments, agencies, and policy areas
 - Address complexity with humility and collaboration
- Continuous Learner
 - Stay current on laws, best practices, and local trends
 - Learn from mistakes and welcome feedback
 - Attend trainings, conferences, or peer learning opportunities

ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Communication & Accountability

Messenger & Translator - How important is this to you?



Messenger & Translator - How comfortable are you in this role?



Responsive Listener - How important is this to you?



Responsive Listener - How comfortable are you in this role?



Feedback Looper - How important is this to you?



Feedback Looper - How comfortable are you in this role?



Not at all

3.7

Very



ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Learning & Reflection

Systems Thinker - How important is this to you?



Systems Thinker - How comfortable are you in this role?



Continuous Learner - How important is this to you?



Continuous Learner - How comfortable are you in this role?



Not at all

4.4

Very



Elected Official Roles

DEFENDER OF DEMOCRACY

- Democratic Guardian
 - Uphold constitutional principles and rule of law
 - Speak out against authoritarianism, bigotry, and disinformation
 - Protect the integrity of elections and democratic processes
- Equity Champion
 - Recognize historic and systemic inequities in decision-making
 - Advocate for inclusive policies and equitable resource allocation
 - Use data and stories to drive change
- Civic Culture Builder
 - Model respectful disagreement and active listening
 - Celebrate civic participation and community wins
 - Create space for people to believe in government again

Elected Official Roles

REPRESENTATIVE ROLES

- Voice of the People
 - Listen actively to diverse constituents
 - Understand both majority and minority viewpoints
 - Carry community concerns into the halls of governance
- Public Trustee
 - Make decisions grounded in long-term public interest
 - Use judgment, ethics, and expertise — not just popularity
 - Balance community needs with constitutional principles and laws
- Descriptive & Substantive Representation
 - Reflect the identities, experiences, and realities of the community (descriptive)
 - Advocate for the interests of communities even when not from them (substantive)

ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Defender of Democracy

Democratic Guardian - How important is this to you?

Democratic Guardian - How comfortable are you in this role?

Equity Champion - How important is this to you?

Equity Champion - How comfortable are you in this role?

Civic Culture Builder - How important is this to you?

Civic Culture Builder - How comfortable are you in this role?

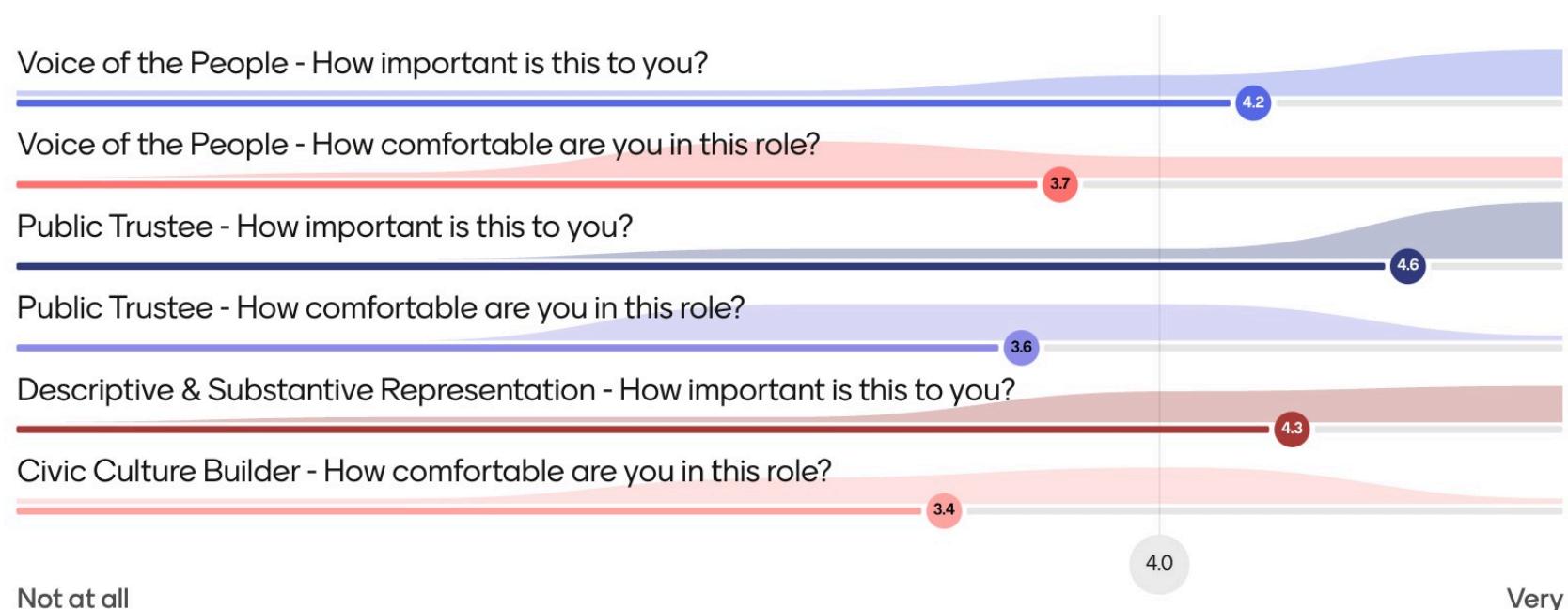
Not at all

4.2

Very



ELECTED OFFICIAL ROLES - Representative Roles



Elected Official Roles	Examples of Responsibilities
Policy Leader	Law-making, oversight, long-term vision
Constituent Ally	Accessible, responsive, helpful
Communicator	Transparent, values-driven, clear messaging
Bridge-BUILDER	Coalition-building, mediating, relational trust
Public Educator	Explain processes, build civic knowledge
Democracy Defender	Protect institutions, model integrity
Equity Champion	Lead with justice, repair historic harms
Systems Thinker	Strategic, curious, connects across silos
Continuous Learner	Seeks feedback, improves, learns from others
Representative	Voice of the people, trustee, equity advocate

11:45 am

A KEY TENSION:

BALANCING THE DELEGATE

AND THE TRUSTEE

(Handout)

Delegate vs Trustee Model

Core Question: Should officials enact the will of the people or use their own judgment?

- **Delegate:** Officials act as a mouthpiece for constituents — they vote and advocate strictly according to the preferences of the electorate.
 - “I’m your voice.”
 - Pro: Honors direct democratic accountability
 - Con: May ignore long-term needs or minority rights
- **Trustee:** Officials are entrusted to use their judgment and conscience for the greater good, even if it contradicts public opinion.
 - “You elected me to lead.”
 - Pro: Allows for ethical leadership and expert decision-making
 - Con: Can feel unresponsive or paternalistic to constituents

Burke argued famously in 1774: “Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion.”

Politico Model (Hybrid)

Core Idea: Recognizes that most elected officials blend delegate and trustee roles depending on:

- The salience of the issue
- Their own expertise or experience
- The clarity of constituent opinion

Example: A city council member might act as a delegate on zoning issues (highly local, clear public feedback) but as a trustee on complex budgeting decisions.

Descriptive Representation (Shared Identity)

Core Idea: Representation is also about embodied experience — people should be represented by officials who share their backgrounds, lived experiences, or community identity.

- Important for historically excluded groups (race, gender, disability, income)
- Pushes back on “neutral” expertise-only models of leadership
- Can shape trust, legitimacy, and what issues get surfaced

Substantive Representation (Shared Interests)

Core Idea: Goes beyond identity: officials are effective if they act in the interests of a group, even if they don't personally belong to it.

- Often used in equity or allyship conversations: “You don't need to be from my community if you fight for what we need.”

Transformative Representation

Core Idea: Drawn from social justice movements, this framework challenges the status quo of what is considered “representative.”

- Officials should:
 - Challenge oppressive systems
 - Lead for liberation, not just consensus
 - Be accountable to marginalized communities, even when unpopular

“Leadership is not about pleasing everyone. It’s about bending the arc of justice — even when it breaks norms or traditions.”

Participatory & Deliberative Democracy

Core Idea: Representation should be shaped by constant, structured input from constituents — not just periodic elections.

- Emphasizes co-creation, town halls, listening sessions, surveys, participatory budgeting
- Promotes two-way communication and relationship-based politics
- Elected officials are stewards of public dialogue, not just decision-makers

Inspired by scholars like Jane Mansbridge and Iris Marion Young, who argue for inclusive, dialogic approaches to representation, especially across lines of power and difference.

Ethical/Relational Leadership (Contemporary Civic Practice)

Core Idea: Officials lead with their values and relational accountability to community. Tension is not binary — it's navigated with humility, ongoing reflection, and structured feedback loops.

- Key concepts:
 - Transparent decision-making
 - Naming your values publicly
 - Holding space for disagreement with dignity
- Often rooted in frameworks like:
 - Adaptive Leadership (Heifetz)
 - Public Narrative (Marshall Ganz)
 - Relational Organizing (PICO, Industrial Areas Foundation)

EXAMPLES

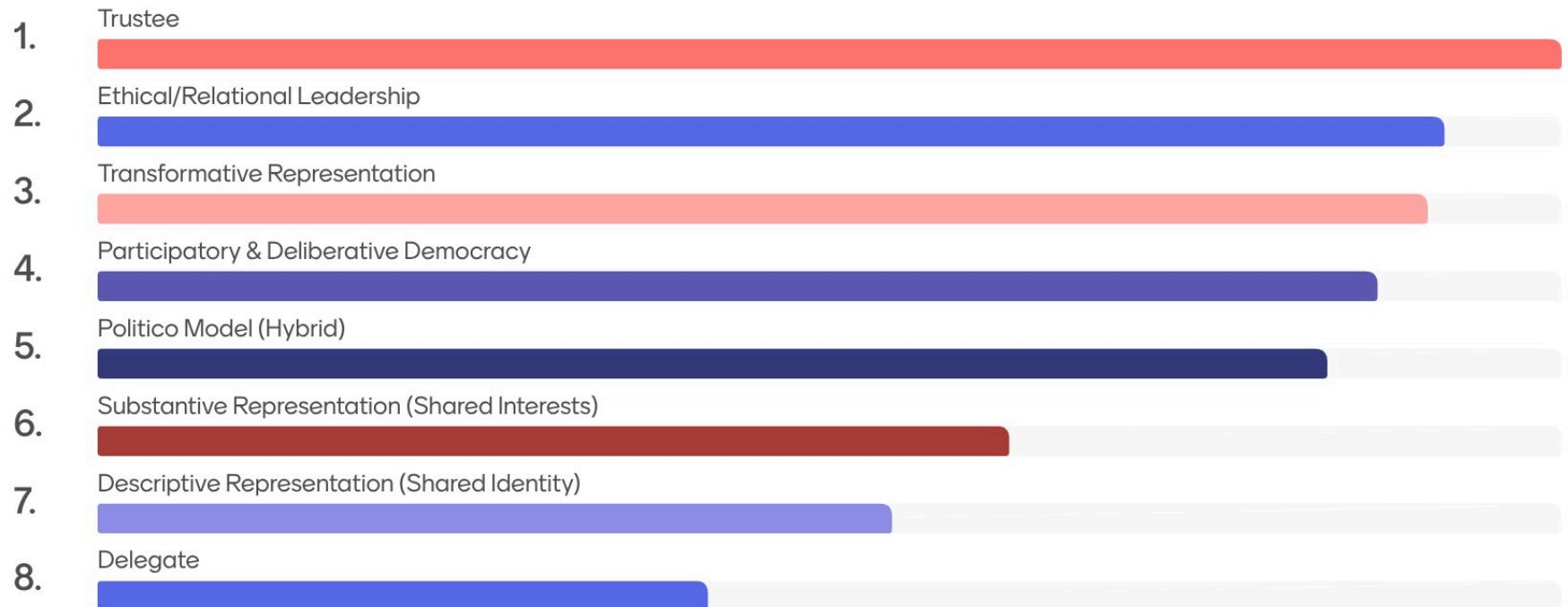
Situation	Delegate Role	Trustee Role	Participatory	Transformative
A controversial rezoning proposal	Vote how the neighborhood majority wants	Weigh long-term citywide impact	Host a listening session + community mapping	Consider how development patterns reflect racial equity or access
Policing policies	Reflect what constituents are asking for (more/fewer resources)	Make a values-based call on safety + justice	Engage in community-led safety planning	Challenge root causes and shift power

GROUP REFLECTION

- Which of these approaches resonates with you the most?
 - Complete Menti Slide
- When do you feel like a delegate, and when do you lead as a trustee?
- How might these different ways of being an elected official affect council dynamics?

12:15 pm
VALUES, ROLES
& BOUNDARIES

Please rank these based on what kind of representative you want to be.



Individual Reflection (Worksheet)

- What are 3 values that guide your public service?
- Whose voices are you accountable to — and how do you make that visible?
- What boundaries are non-negotiable for you?
- How do you signal your values to constituents even when they disagree?
- What do you owe your constituents - and what not?
 - Be sure to consider your relationship with loyalty in your public relationships

Individual Reflection (Back side of worksheet)

What does your ideal relationship with your constituents look like?



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Master

File Number: 91103

File ID: 91103	File Type: Ordinance	Status: Unfinished Business
Version: 1	Reference:	Controlling Body: COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
File Created Date : 12/02/2025		
File Name: JCAC Composition & Duties		Final Action:
Title: Amending Section 33.32 of the Madison General Ordinances related to the Joint Campus Area Committee to modify the composition and duties of the JCAC.		

Notes: 7018CompDutiesJCAC

Sponsors: MGR Govindarajan	Effective Date:
Attachments: 91103 Body	Enactment Number:
Author: Michael Haas	Hearing Date:
Entered by: mglaeser@cityofmadison.com	Published Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Attorney's Office	12/02/2025	Referred for Introduction				
	Action Text:	This Ordinance was Referred for Introduction					
	Notes:	Common Council Executive Committee (1/13/26), Joint Campus Area Committee (12/11/25), Common Council (1/13/26)					
1	COMMON COUNCIL	12/09/2025	Referred	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE			
	Action Text:	This Ordinance was Referred to the COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE					
	Notes:	Additional referral to Joint Campus Area Committee					
1	COMMON COUNCIL	12/09/2025	Referred	JOINT CAMPUS AREA COMMITTEE		12/11/2025	
	Action Text:	This Ordinance was Referred to the JOINT CAMPUS AREA COMMITTEE					
1	JOINT CAMPUS AREA COMMITTEE	12/11/2025	Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval	COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	01/13/2026		Pass
	Action Text:	A motion was made by Phair, seconded by Webber, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the COMMON COUNCIL. The motion passed by voice vote/other, with Czyszak-Lyne abstaining.					

Text of Legislative File 91103

Fiscal Note

No City appropriation required.

Title

Amending Section 33.32 of the Madison General Ordinances related to the Joint Campus Area Committee to modify the composition and duties of the JCAC.

Body

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: This ordinance makes several changes to the composition and duties of the Joint Campus Area Committee. The ordinance designates two of the alder members of the Committee as non-voting members and updates language due to the creation of the Transportation Commission. The ordinance also clarifies language regarding the Committee's role in evaluating the impact of development projects on UW-Madison and the area of jurisdiction for the Committee.

Please see Legistar File No. 91103 Body in Attachments.

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: This ordinance makes several changes to the composition and duties of the Joint Campus Area Committee. The ordinance designates two of the alder members of the Committee as non-voting members and updates language due to the creation of the Transportation Commission. The ordinance also clarifies language regarding the Committee's role in evaluating the impact of development projects on UW-Madison and the area of jurisdiction for the Committee.

The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

1. Section 33.32 entitled "Joint Campus Area Committee" of the Madison General Ordinances is amended as follows:

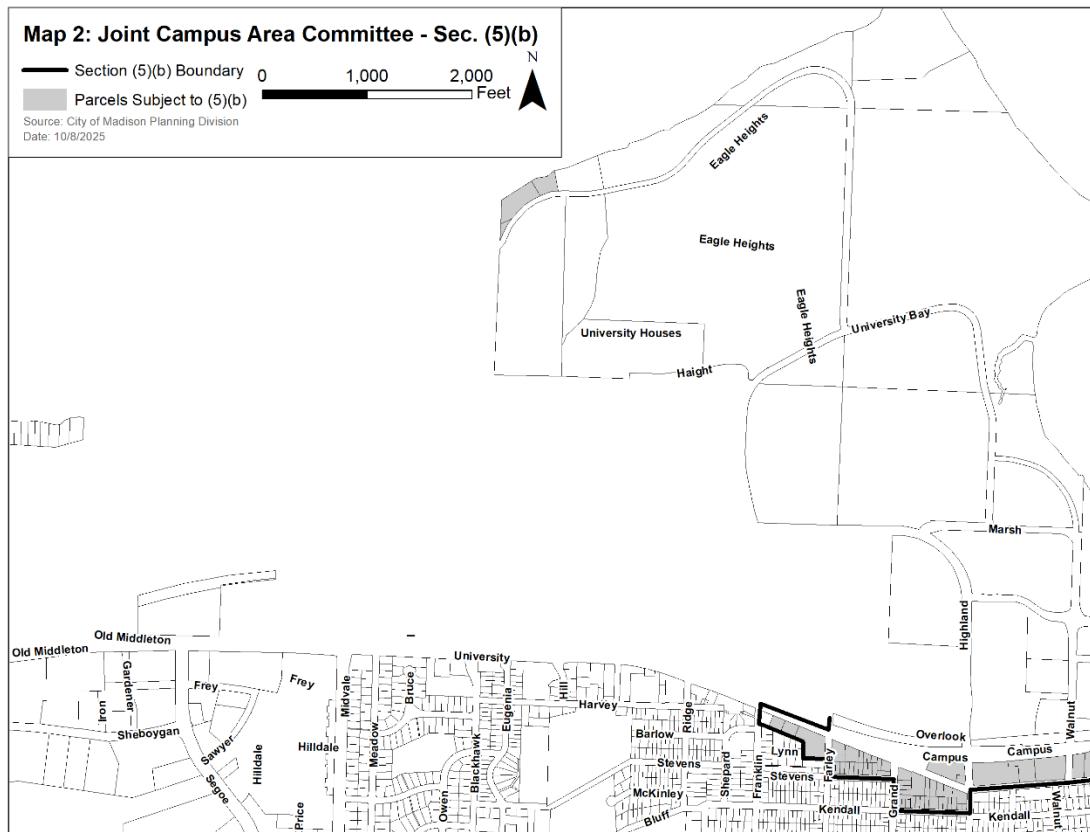
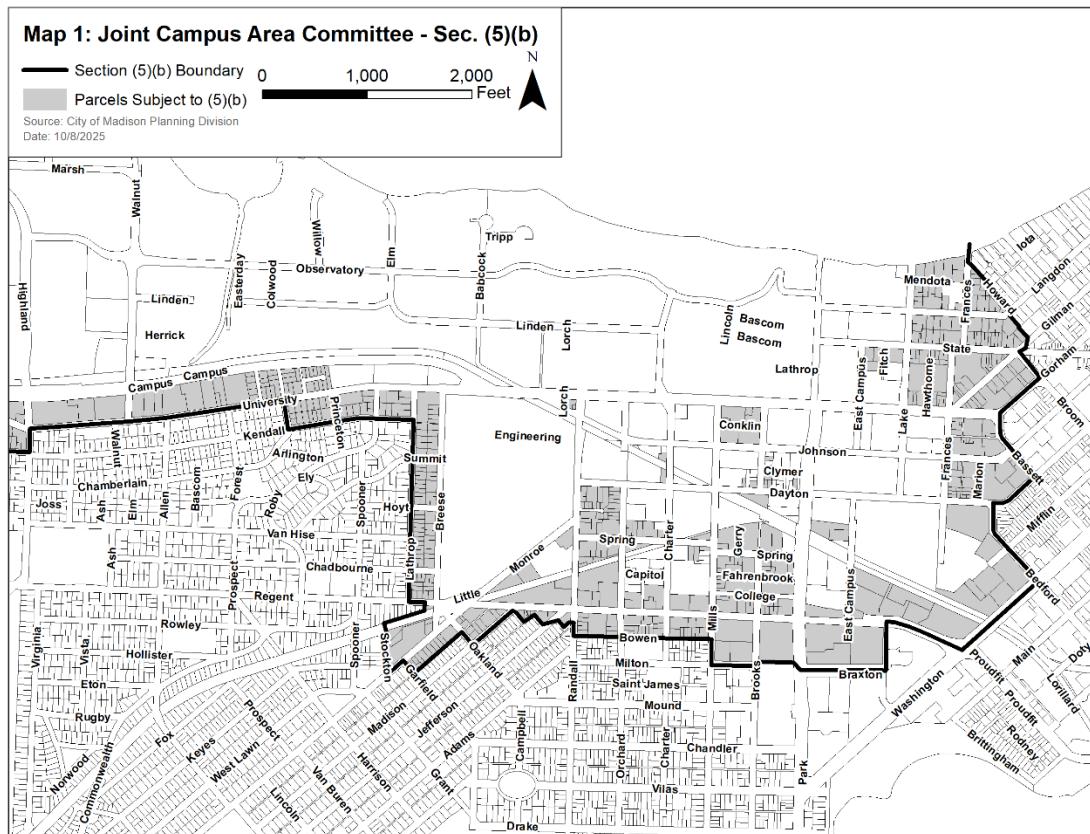
"33.32 JOINT CAMPUS AREA COMMITTEE.

- (1) Creation. There is hereby created a Joint Campus Area Committee consisting of twenty-two (22) twenty (20) voting members and two (2) non-voting members.
- (2) Composition.
 - (a) The following members shall be appointed by the City of Madison: Common Council members representing Districts 2, 4, 5, and 8 as voting members, and Districts 2 and 13 as non-voting members; one (1) resident representative each from the Greenbush, Vilas, and Regent neighborhoods neighborhood associations; one (1) resident representative from Capitol Neighborhoods; one (1) member of the Campus Area Neighborhood Association; one (1) member of the Plan Commission; and one (1) member of a transportation-related City committee the Transportation Commission. The Plan Commission member, transportation-related committee Transportation Commission, and each neighborhood resident representative shall be appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by the Common Council.
 - (b) The following members shall be appointed by the UW-Madison: one (1) designee of the Chancellor; one (1) representative from Facilities Planning and Management; one (1) representative from Transportation Services; one (1) representative from the Athletic Department; one (1) representative from University Housing; and one (1) representative from the School of Medicine and Public Health.
 - (c) Associated Students of Madison shall appoint one (1) representative.
 - (d) UW Hospital and Clinics shall appoint one (1) representative.
 - (e) The Shorewood Hills Village Board President shall appoint two (2) representatives.
- (3) Terms of Appointees.
 - (a) Common Council members shall serve for as long as they represent their district;
 - (b) Neighborhood resident representatives shall serve for three (3) years and may be reappointed;
 - (c) Plan Commission and transportation-related committee Transportation Commission appointees shall serve for as long as they are a member of the respective commission or committee they represent;
 - (d) All other members shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing body.
- (4) Committee Representative on UW-Madison Design Review Board (DRB). One City of Madison appointee unaffiliated with the UW-Madison shall be appointed to the DRB

established by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus Master Plan adopted by City ordinance ORD-17-00074 to meet the standards established under Section 28.097.

(5) **Powers and Duties**. The Committee shall:

- (a) Provide feedback on UW-Madison projects to the DRB established under the UW-Madison Campus Master Plan at approximately the thirty-five percent (35%) and sixty percent (60) percent stages of the project planning/design process for projects within Campus-Institutional (CI) zoned areas. Other informational presentations may be made to the Committee at other stages of project development.
- (b) Identify, discuss, and summarize community-wide and neighborhood impact of UW Madison infrastructure and development projects, and the impacts to UW Madison from city/village-initiated infrastructure and development projects, and private sector development projects, inside the campus boundary and within a quarter mile of the campus boundary mapped boundary near campus, per the map below. When relevant, make recommendations on whether a project should be approved and/or recommend strategies to mitigate negative impacts to applicable City, Village, or UW-Madison committee(s), commission(s), or other governing bodies.
- (c) Summarize city/village, UW-Madison, and neighborhood comments concerning current and planned pedestrian networks, bicycle routes, vehicular traffic, traffic analyses, parking, and transit service within the mapped boundary, per the map below, and provide those comments to relevant governmental bodies.
- (d) Review and provide comments to the appropriate City of Madison or Village of Shorewood Hills committee(s)/commission(s) on development projects, rezoning requests, and Planned Development alterations that are inside the UW-Madison Campus boundary but not covered under Campus-Institutional zoning.





City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Master

File Number: 91351

File ID: 91351

File Type: Miscellaneous

Status: In Committee

Version: 1

Reference:

Controlling Body: COMMON
COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

File Created Date : 12/22/2025

File Name: Council Chief of Staff Annual Performance
Evaluation Tool and Process

Final Action:

Title: Council Chief of Staff Annual Performance Evaluation Tool and Process

Notes:

Sponsors:

Effective Date:

Attachments: Council Chief of Staff Evaluation Tool Draft
12525.pdf

Enactment Number:

Author:

Hearing Date:

Entered by: kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com

Published Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
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Text of Legislative File 91351

Title

Council Chief of Staff Annual Performance Evaluation Tool and Process

**Madison Common Council
Chief of Staff Performance Evaluation
Common Council Executive Committee**

This evaluation is designed to gather an overall impression of the performance of the Council Chief of Staff from the Common Council Executive Committee (CCEC). The purpose of this evaluation is to provide the Chief of Staff with actionable feedback and guidance on their performance that they can use for continuous improvement.

Instructions

In the following areas, please rank performance of the Chief of Staff on a scale of one through five with the following rating scale.

If you are unable to provide a ranking due to a lack of awareness or information related to the Chief of Staff's performance in any particular area, please do not provide a ranking or choose Don't Know.

If you would like to provide the Chief of Staff with additional feedback or details about your ranking, please fill out the Written Comment section. Rankings and written comments (anonymous) will be provided to the Chief of Staff as part of the results of this evaluation.

Rating Scale

5	4	3	2	1	Don't Know
Exceeds Expectations	Consistently Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations	Inconsistently Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations	Unable to Assess
Performance is consistently outstanding	Performance consistently fulfills expectations and at times exceeds them	Meets requirements for the position	Performance meets some benchmarks related to the expectation area or meets all benchmarks but only some of the time	Performance is consistently below requirements for the position	Rater does not have enough awareness and/or information to decide on a rating

Common Council Office Operations

The Common Council Chief of Staff manages all aspects of the Common Council Office, including planning and organizing work and resources to ensure the highest level of service possible.

Key Expectations

- Analyzes and modifies organizational structures and workflow to improve efficiency, creativity, and accountability
- Establishes and implements operational policies, goals and objectives for the office and ensures departmental operations are carried out
- Develops and maintains an agency work plan encompassing an annual cadence of major activities
- Follows all City policies and follows direction provided by the Common Council Executive Committee
- Maintains transparency through regular updates to the Common Council Executive Committee regarding Council Office activities, organizational structure or service changes
- Provides alders with resources and materials about Council Office services
- Undertakes updates and revisions to Council operating procedures as needed

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Council Office Operations

Council Assistance and Policy Support

The Council Chief of Staff assists alders as they navigate City legislative processes, administrative policies, and interface with City departments.

Key Expectations

- Provides expert advice and consultation to alders on a wide range of complex, sensitive, and confidential topics in a politically neutral manner
- Assists alders in a responsive and timely manner
- Provides advice and assistance to alders to strategically navigate City legislative processes within legal and procedural constraints
- Engages alders regularly to discuss their needs and gather feedback
- Balances the needs and aspirations of each of the twenty alders with the needs of the Council and the Council Office as institutions
- Ensures the development and provision of materials and resources, including new alder onboarding and alder retreats, to support alders as they carry out their duties

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Council Assistance and Policy Support

Budget and Fiscal Stewardship

The Council Chief of Staff ensures that the Council office stays within budget and maintains services in compliance with all budgetary requirements and regulations.

Key Expectations

- Establishes and effectively implements a plan to maintain services within budget limitations
- Presents annual budget proposal to the Common Council Executive Committee for their feedback and approval
- Provides alders with information about allowable uses of alder expense funds and support alder use of funds in a legally compliant manner
- Is a responsible steward of taxpayer money

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Budget and Fiscal Stewardship

Leadership

The Chief of Staff endeavors to build and maintain trust and confidence in working relationships through honesty, commitment, and fairness, and by being transparent in decision-making.

Key Expectations

- Acknowledges, owns, and learns from their mistakes and recognizes the impact of one's behavior on others
- Encourages innovation and responsiveness to meet shifting demands and foster continuous improvement
- Demonstrates a commitment to the City's racial equity and social justice initiatives (RESJI)
- Effectively works with the Mayor's Office, alders, and City staff where tact, persuasiveness, and judgment must be exercised
- Displays leadership in line with the mission and core values of the [Common Council](#) and the [City of Madison](#)
- Accepts accountability for individual and staff actions and models by example a commitment to organizational excellence
- Balances workload and priorities effectively and consistently follows through on commitments

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Leadership

Communication

The Council Chief of Staff builds relationships and serves as a communication and policy liaison between the Common Council Office, the Mayor's Office, City agency heads and staff, and the general public.

Key Expectations

- Creates and shares regular updates to the Common Council Executive Committee, including updates on staff efforts to achieve communication, legislative, administrative, and other relevant goals
- Represents the various perspectives of the Council in an exemplary manner when interacting with the Mayor's Office and City staff
- Attends Common Council, Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and other meetings at the direction of the President and/or the Executive Committee
- Promotes appropriate communication and builds working relationships with City agency heads
- Employs honesty, tact, and courtesy in communication with internal and external interested parties, and encourages open communication in all directions
- Provides feedback mechanisms to enhance agency strategies and priorities

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Communication

Council Office Staff Supervision

The Council Chief of Staff supervises, plans, organizes, coordinates, assigns and evaluates the work of Council Office staff.

Key Expectations

- Facilitate and lead the hiring, coaching, training, engagement, and development of Council Office staff to allow staff to reach maximum potential and performance
- Provides and encourages professional development opportunities for all Council staff
- Conducts annual employee check-ins with all Council Office staff
- Seeks out and stays current on supervisory best practices through City-offered trainings and other professional development opportunities
- Develops staff relationships by maintaining a schedule of regular staff meetings
- Ensures staff receive adequate training, resources, and capacity-building related to racial equity and social justice and ensures that racial equity and social justice principles are continually reviewed and practiced
- Provides supervision of staff in a manner consistent with best practices outlined by the City's racial equity and social justice initiative and inclusive supervisory practices.
- Ensures staff have the resources needed to perform their duties to the best of their abilities

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: Council Office Staff Supervision

BCC Administrative Support Team

Key Expectations

- Work to support and enhance City Board, Commission, and Committee (BCC) staffing, training, and structure evaluation by facilitating the BCC Administrative Support Team
- Work collaboratively with the Common Council and Mayor's Office to meet the goals of the BCC Administrative Support Team
- Work with other staff to develop training for BCC chairs, members, and assigned staff

Overall Rating:

5 4 3 2 1 Don't Know

Written Comments: BCC Administrative Support Team



City of Madison

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File Number: 88520

File ID: 88520	File Type: Miscellaneous	Status: In Committee
Version: 1	Reference:	Controlling Body: COMMON COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
File Created Date : 05/28/2025		
File Name:	Final Action:	

Title: Council Office Updates (2025-2026)

Notes:

Sponsors:	Effective Date:
Attachments: CCEC Chief of Staff Update 6-3-25.pdf, CCEC Chief of Staff Update 7-1-25.pdf, CCEC Chief of Staff Update 080525.pdf, CCEC Chief of Staff Update 091625.pdf, CCEC Chief of Staff Update 102825.pdf, CCEC Chief of Staff Update 120925.pdf	Enactment Number:
Author:	Hearing Date:
Entered by: kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com	Published Date:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:

Text of Legislative File 88520

Title

Council Office Updates (2025-2026)

Council Chief of Staff Update

6/3/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

6/3-64: Lorissa out
6/6: Debbie out
6/13: Liz out
6/16 (afternoon): Liz out
6/18 (afternoon): Liz out
6/20: Isaac out; Liz out
6/25-6/26: Isaac out

Reminders & Tips

June 19: City Offices Closed

Project Updates

All-Alder Retreat: Close to confirming the final date. Doodle poll with the finalists is in your inbox.

BCC Staff Training Updates: Along with Organizational Development and the Attorney's Office, we are working on reviewing and updating BCC staff training materials as part of an ongoing effort to bolster BCC support.

RESJI Training: I will be coordinating with the City Equity and Social Justice Manager (kristy kumar) to provide a training for alders on the RESJ (Racial Equity and Social Justice) Initiative and the equity analysis process this fall.

Council Chief of Staff Update

7/1/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

7/2-7/3: Isaac out

7/3-7/8: Debbie out

7/30: Karen out

8/6-8/8: Karen out

Reminders & Tips

July 4: City Offices Closed

City Website Accessibility-How Alders Can Help

We are legally required to make City public facing web content accessible. This is due to a [federal ruling](#). At this time, alders can assist by avoiding ALL CAPS when writing their blog posts. We know that content coming from agencies may contain all caps, so this ask is focused on the content you write yourself, or draft content that you are given and can easily modify before posting. If you'd like to learn more about best practices to keep in mind while blogging, there are [several resources and articles](#) available on EmployeeNet (access with your City login). Here are some examples of all caps in some recent blogs that caught the attention of the software (Siteimprove) that the City is using to help staff identify issues (highlighted in red below).

[Press Release: Avoid Flash Flooded Areas](#) posted June 24, 2025

PRESS RELEASE COPY

:Heavy Rain Continues, Urban Flash Flooding Expected, Avoid Flash Flooded

Areas“The next few days are expected to have multiple, brief but heavy

storm events which may result in urban flash flooding of roadways. If you...

[4506 and 4514 Verona Road-Plan Commission Public Hearing](#) posted June 20, 2025

Monday, June 23, 2025 @5:30pmLocationThis meeting is being held

virtually.Watch Online

Category: [Notices](#)

[STOP THE VIOLENCE SAVE THE CHILDREN-Meadowood](#) posted June 18, 2025

SIXTH ANNUAL STOP THE VIOLENCE SAVE THE CHILDREN COMMUNITY

SUPPERThe event will be held inside Good Shepherd Church tonight

Project Updates

AASPIRE Intern

Our AASPIRE intern, Ella, is hard at work assisting with policy research and community engagement. She will be in the chambers tonight between 6 and 6:30 with the Clerk's

Council Chief of Staff Update

7/1/25

Office interns collecting videos for the Pass the Phone Challenge. She is in the CCB on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so please stop by to meet her.

Council Office Budget Request

Please refer to the [7/1/25 CCEC agenda](#) for [links to the proposed budget request](#). If you aren't able to attend CCEC today, please watch the recording or contact me to find out more about our agency operating budget request.

Annual Workplan

Now that staggered terms are in effect and there will be alder elections every year, the Council Office has an opportunity to create an annual workplan that maps out the large projects that occur throughout the year. For a sneak peak, come to the Council Office conference room to review the notes on the whiteboard.

All-Alder Retreat: Being Public: Navigating the Spectrum of Disagreement and Conflict as Elected Officials Facilitated by Abha Thakkar, Mosaic LLC. Saturday, September 13, from 9-2 at the Parks Office. Lunch from Melly Mel's (including vegetarian and vegan options).

City Training Opportunities

The [on-demand training portal](#) has a number of additional trainings on topics that may be of interest, including Giving & Receiving Feedback, How to Run Effective Meetings, Customer De-Escalation, and an orientation to the Equitable Hiring Plan (formerly the Equitable Hiring Tool).

Conflict Management

Description: Increase your self-awareness regarding our common styles to approaching and navigating conflict. July 9, 10:00 – 11:30 am, Virtual

Sparking Growth

Description: Sparking Growth is a training focused on exploring topics like grief, the window of tolerance, and strategies to foster balance and mental health. Join us for this interactive session where we will explore components of mental health and will practice skills to assist with emotional regulation and balance. Leave the space with practical tools and knowledge to foster your wellbeing at home and workplace. August 12, 1:30 – 3:00 pm, Virtual

Council Chief of Staff Update

8/5/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

8/6-8/8: Karen out
8/22: Isaac out
8/25: Liz out
8/28: Liz out
August TBD Debbie out
Sept 1: City Offices Closed

Reminders & Tips

All-Alder Retreat on Saturday, September 13. Being Public: Navigating the Spectrum of Disagreement and Conflict as Elected Officials Facilitated by Abha Thakkar, Mosaic LLC. Lunch from Melly Mel's (including beef, chicken, vegetarian, and vegan options).

Common Council Discussion on Tuesday, September 30. Topic: Purpose-Built Men's Shelter. 6:00 p.m. CCB 201.

Register for the [YWCA Racial Justice Summit](#). Deadline is 8/29/25.

City Website Accessibility-How Alders Can Help

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Council Chief of Staff Update

8/5/25

Plain Language and Effective Communication

Description: How you communicate and the language you use can serve to build positive and lasting relationships, help people understand your message, and help people make informed decisions. In this session, you will learn tools to increase understanding and engagement as well as to disrupt power dynamics in language. Learn how language can foster inclusion and how to navigate communication challenges. We will also review the ADA's effective communication requirements for public entities. August 19, 10-11:30 a.m., virtual.

Council Chief of Staff Update

9/16/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

9/19-9/29: Debbie out

9/29-10/7: Lorissa out

10/1-10/3: Isaac out at Emerging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) Conference

Reminders & Tips

Common Council Discussion on Tuesday, September 30. Topic: Purpose-Built Men's Shelter. 6:00 p.m. in CCB 201 and via virtual meeting.

Equity and Social Justice Division Training

Equity and Social Justice Division staff have requested an opportunity to provide the alders with an interactive training with the team's guiding principles and experiential-based learning for equity work at the City. I'll be sending out a poll soon to identify dates in November and December.

City Website Accessibility-How Alders Can Help

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- **Adding alt text descriptions** to any images you use in your blog
- **Writing out the information** from event flyers into the text of your blog post
- **Avoiding ALL CAPS** when writing your blog posts

If you'd like to learn more about best practices to keep in mind while blogging, there are [several resources and articles](#) available on EmployeeNet (access with your City login).

More information will be coming as we are updated.

Council Chief of Staff Update 10/28/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

10/30-31: Debbie out
11/26: Karen, Liz & Lorissa out
12/1-3: Lorissa out
12/18-22: Isaac out
12/22-26: Liz out
12/22-29: Lorissa out
City Offices Closed: 11/27, 11/28, 12/24, 12/25, 12/31

Reminders & Tips

- **CRASE Training:** October 30
- **Equity and Social Justice Division Training:** November 4
- **Reminder:** November 11 budget session starts at **5:30 p.m.**

50-Piece Rule goes into effect on December 1 for all alders up for re-election who have not filed their non-candidacy papers. Please review the guidance available in [**50-Piece Rule And Other Campaign Restrictions Facts & FAQ**](#) and [**RES-22-00610**](#) and reach out to me with any questions.

CCB Basement Parking

There are three dedicated spots for Common Council members and staff in the basement of CCB. As some of you know, we have had challenges keeping unauthorized users out of those spots. The County has installed more visible signage and we have created yellow cards to place on your dashboard when parking there. Thank you very much to those of you who are using your yellow card when using a Council space! Contact me if you would like a yellow card for your vehicle.



City Website Accessibility-How Alders Can Help

We are legally required to make City public-facing web content accessible by April of 2026. This is due to a [federal ruling](#). At this time, alders can assist by:

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Council Chief of Staff Update 12/9/25

Upcoming Staff Out-of-Office

12/12: Karen out, Debbie out
12/15: Lorissa out
12/19: Debbie out
12/23: Karen out
12/18-22: Isaac out
12/22-26: Liz out
12/22-29: Lorissa out
1/26: Liz out

City Offices Closed: 12/24, 12/25, 12/31, 1/1

FYI: Karen has jury duty the week of December 15, so her schedule will be subject to change. Karen also plans to be on vacation from May 20-31, 2026.

Reminders & Tips

No-Meeting Holidays & Election Dates

In the coming days, you will notice a number of notifications appearing on your Outlook calendars. These are the days in 2026 that are designated by ordinance as prohibited meeting dates for City committees. It is strongly recommended to avoid these dates when scheduling neighborhood meetings. There are also some [additional holidays](#) that are not prohibited by ordinance, but are strongly recommended to avoid.

Alder Expense Claims Due December 10

Please check your inboxes for a message from Liz on how to submit any remaining 2025 claims for reimbursement.

50-Piece Rule went into effect on December 1 for all alders up for re-election who have not filed their non-candidacy papers. Please review the guidance available in [50-Piece Rule And Other Campaign Restrictions Facts & FAQ](#) and [RES-22-00610](#) and reach out to me with any questions.

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Project Updates

Council Staff Work Planning & Annual Employee Check Ins

Council Office staff are in the process of creating individual work plans for 2026. Additionally, with the new cadence of annual elections, the Council Office is finalizing its agency work plan. The Chief of Staff carried out HR's upgraded [annual employee check-ins](#) with all Council Office staff this month.

Council Chief of Staff Update

12/9/25

Legistar Resources & Training

Liz has [brought online a repository](#) of Legistar tips and resources to assist staff as they work with the system.

BCC Staff Training and Resources

With Karen and Attorney Haas as executive sponsors, Performance Excellence Specialist Kara Kratowicz and Isaac led a discovery process that resulted in 19 BCCs sharing the onboarding materials they use when welcoming new members to their BCC. A comprehensive list of resources was created, then presented to a multi-agency focus group of BCC staff for feedback. The final list of items was prioritized, then priority items were divided out amongst a working with a group of volunteers BCC staff contacts. Together we are working toward a toolkit for BCC staff onboarding. Learning & Development Specialist Andie Hopkins is working with the Attorney's Office as a Learning Partner to record several videos in support of the toolkit.

Emergency Preparedness

Karen attended a multi-agency Emergency Management crisis tabletop exercise this month. This event was a half-day scenario-based workshop designed to further the City's emergency and crisis readiness organization-wide.

Retreat Report

The 2025 alder retreat report-out is attached to this update. There will be a presentation on this material at the January 13, 2026, CCEC meeting. If you have ideas for elements you would like to have me incorporate into the 2026 retreat, please reach out to Karen as she will be beginning 2026 planning in the next few weeks.



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Master

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Text of Legislative File 88519

Title

Future Agenda Items (2025-2026)

Future Agenda Item Requests 2025-2026

Council meeting ending times (Ald. Lankella-added 6/3/25)

Alder committee appointments (Ald. Tishler-added 6/3/25)

Reducing size of Council (Pres. Vidaver-added 6/3/25)