

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

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**MAYOR'S PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES ARE SETTING PRIORITIES
AND BUILDING CONSENSUS**

Madison Mayoral candidate John M. Elias described his vision of the mayor's role today in a statement released by his campaign.

"When I was first elected to the Council, I quickly realized that every citizen who raises an issue sincerely believes that his or her issue should be the Council's first priority," said Elias. "I realized even more quickly that I needed to try and prioritize those issues to be fair to the citizens, to the Council and to myself. The challenge was developing an objective way to line them up, which issues got to be on the front burner and which received back burner treatment. This is difficult in a town like Madison where there are many different constituencies, coupled with a vocal and informed citizenry. That's why we all choose to live here, and it's what we love about Madison, but the incontrovertible fact remains that not every issue can come first."

"The system that I developed for prioritization is simple," Elias continued. "First, I listen—to all the people and all the issues. Then, I rank issues and projects by thinking about if and how they serve the interests of the greatest number of citizens. This process insures that I represent all of Madison, not one or another segment of the community, and works in the best interests of Madison as a whole."

"As Mayor, I intend to use that same system to set priorities for Madison. It's important for citizens to realize that just because an issue may not be on the front burner today does not mean that it's off the stove altogether. I know it takes some trust to believe that your particular issue may fit into the big picture tomorrow instead of today, but it's important to make that leap of faith, because it is only in this way that Madison can continue to maintain the great character it has and continue to be the place we love to call home."

"This approach fits squarely with the Mayor's first responsibility: of building consensus in the community. We cannot succeed if the community perceives that the Mayor has an agenda that is independent of the Council and is isolated from the community at large. The charge of your mayor is to successfully convey priorities in terms of what is in the best interest of Madison, today, tomorrow, and five years from now. Only in this way can we keep safe our sense of community, a community that was built upon the ideals of mutual respect, common purpose and shared commitment. Too frequently we debate and discuss issues in a tone that is too personal, too biting and too self-centered. We must resist the urge to take that approach and break that habit."

“I am proud of my record on Council because it is based upon building a consensus within the Council. I have benefited tremendously from debates and discussions with fellow Council members. Those discussions help me better understand issues, challenge my own natural biases on issues and result in the development of comprehensive well thought out solutions that advance Madison’s best interests. I intend to continue that approach as mayor for a better Madison.”