

# Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative

## RESJI Mission

Establish racial equity and social justice as a core principle in all decisions, policies and functions of the City of Madison.

## RESJI Vision

Living wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, high-quality education, a healthy, sustainable natural environment, parks, and green spaces, efficient public transit, affordable and safe housing and healthy food are afforded to all residents;

The benefits of growth and change are equitably shared across our communities;

All residents have opportunities for fair and just inclusion in public processes and decisions; and

One's future is not limited by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, income, place of birth, place of residence or other group status.

## Priority Areas & Current Activities

### Equity in City Operations

- Hire Racial Equity Coordinator and Data Project Coordinator
- Update Affirmative Action plans in all departments
- Mandatory implicit bias training for all city employees
- Racial Equity and Social Justice training program available to all City employees
- City Clerk's Office used an overarching equity and empowerment focus in its 2014-2015 operational plan
- HR reviewing hiring processes, ban the box, evaluating minimum qualification requirements for positions

### Equity in City Policies and Budgets

- Develop concrete strategies through Interdepartmental City RESJI Team
- Develop Equity Impact Analysis Tool to analyze unintended consequences of city policies and ensure that the interests of communities impacted by decisions are taken into account
- Apply equity analysis to the funding process for Community Development grants and other city-funded programs
- Study disparities to evaluate city purchasing and contracting
- Increase community voice in the budget process through Neighborhood Resource Team recommendations and other strategies

### Equity in the Community

- Build relationships with community stakeholders and racial equity education organizations
- Connect with the community through Neighborhood Resource Teams
- Participate in local, regional and national networks to coordinate and build on best practices
- Support community engagement initiatives such as My Brother's Keeper, Madison Out of School Time, and Madison Public Library's Tell Us program.
- Apply RESJI tools in conjunction with community planning process for new fire station and business plan for Public Market.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why Focus Internally?

RESJI is working to create change in the areas we can have the strongest initial impact, like departmental operations, hiring, budgeting, and policymaking. The initial RESJI recommendations include ways to engage and support communities and neighborhoods in more sustained and authentic ways. Our partners in the community have been leading the way on racial equity and social justice in their own communities, and we will continue supporting and aligning with their efforts in every way we can.

### Why focus on race?

RESJI's explicit focus on racial equity is in direct response to racial disparities documented in the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families' (WCCF) Race to Equity report released in September 2013. Efforts that address poverty and other social conditions without specifically focusing on race can actually widen racial inequities. For example, programs that are designed to help women gain employment are valuable, but women of color suffer joblessness at a higher rate than women in general.

### Who is involved in RESJI?

Representatives from each city department participate on the core team, as well as leading change in their own departments. Department heads have received training in RESJI and are key partners. RESJI is interested in strengthening the City of Madison's connections to the community to promote accountability and transparency.

### When will the impact of RESJI be visible?

RESJI has celebrated several early wins, including the development and piloting of the RESJI equity impact analysis tool, departments adopting equity in their mission statements with a strong focus on equity in their work planning, serving as a partner to the Dane County RESJ team, and training many employees and elected officials in Dane County. Racial disparities have been formed over the course of centuries in the United States. We have a long term focus, as

we want to build sustainable capacity to make the urgent, deliberate, and monumental change that is needed. We often say RESJI work is a marathon, not a sprint.

### How will progress be measured?

Community engagement, transparency, communication, and data are key parts of measuring RESJI's work. The RESJI team has several important data points that can be used to track the City's progress, such as employment demographics and demographics of the city's commissions and committees. There are also many external data points that RESJI is organizing to set a roadmap for progress and success. We also plan to regularly check-in with community members to track our progress.

### How is RESJI different from past efforts to address racism?

RESJI is an urgent, deliberative shift in the way that the City approaches race and equity. Through the development and application of a racial equity impact analysis tool, RESJI is focused on addressing institutional racism within the City's institutional structure. Past efforts focused primarily on programs targeted at individuals, RESJI takes a more comprehensive approach to challenging the perpetuation of institutional and structural racism.

## How do I get involved in equity work in the community?

We all occupy many spheres of influence and connection. One powerful way to get involved in racial equity work is to start the conversation within workplaces, church groups, book clubs, families, and any other social groups. Practical, day-to-day strategies and resources for learning more about and acting to promote racial equity are available from a number of local organizations and groups, including YWCA Madison and Madison Racial Justice Connections.

#### For more information:

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