

## City of Madison

### **Racial Equity & Social Justice Toolkit – *Abbreviated Version*** **to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs and Budget Issues**

The mission of the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Initiative is to establish racial equity and social justice as a core principle in all decisions, policies and functions of the City of Madison. The RESJ Toolkit lays out a process to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs and budget issues to prevent or address inequitable impacts on the community.

Note that this *abbreviated version* was developed as a subset of the questions and considerations included in the full RESJ Toolkit. The intended use of this version is to answer basic questions related to WHAT, WHO, WHERE, WHY and HOW for decisions and issues with quicker timelines or with potentially less widespread impact. The questions included here should be considered a “bare minimum” for incorporating racial equity and social justice considerations into decision making processes.

#### **When should these questions be asked?**

**As early as possible.** The questions should be used in the development and discussion of new policies, early in planning processes, or during reevaluation or update phases, to allow for adoption of recommended strategies or changes.

#### **WHAT**

**Policy, initiative, program or budget issue:**

**Description:**

This ordinance requires all pit bulls over the age of five months be spayed or neutered. This ordinance also creates several exceptions to possessing an unaltered pit bull and establishes an appeal process for an owner who does not believe that the dog is a pit bull. This ordinance requires any owner of an unaltered pit bull register the dog and comply with several requirements. This ordinance also establishes bail deposits for individuals who keep unregistered unaltered pit bulls within the City and creates enforcement authority for the Director of Public Health or her/his designee.

This policy will be violation-based and complaint-driven. Fees will be assessed based on violations but removed if the pet owner complies with spay/neuter requirement. Dogs will not be seized when violations are discovered.

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**Which racial equity and social justice opportunity area(s) will the issue or program primarily impact?**

See page X of the full RESJ Toolkit for descriptions and examples. Please add any comments regarding the specific impacts on each area.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government Practices | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Development          | <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Community/Civic Engagement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Access & Affordability     | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Equity             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe)         |   |

**Comments:**

Gov't practices – implementation/enforcement of policies; disproportionate amount of Animal Services  
Health – injury prevention; animal health

**What do available data tell you about this issue?**

Over-population of the Pit Bull breed has resulted in Public Health Madison and Dane County and the Dane County Humane Society being inundated with this dog breed. Every year from 2010 to 2012 more than fifty percent (50%) of dogs euthanized at the Dane County Humane Society were from the pit bull breed. In the City of Madison in 2013, twelve percent (12%) of incidents involving dogs biting humans involved the pit bull breed and thirty eight percent (38%) of cases involving a dog attacking another dog involved a pit bull breed. In the City of Madison in 2013, twenty one percent (21%) of all cases of dogs running at large involved a pit bull breed and forty eight percent (48%) of cases of abandoned dogs involved the pit bull breed. In 2013 in the City of Madison, thirty four percent (34%) of all cases of aggressive dogs involved a pit bull breed. From 2011-2013 in the City of Madison, 15 dogs were declared dangerous and 14 involved the pit bull breed.

**WHO**

**What individuals or groups have expressed concern about this issue?**

Local pit bull advocates:

Concern that this policy could lead to a full breed ban

National organizations are not in favor of breed-specific legislation

Fighting for the reputation of the breed

Dane Co Humane Society:

General opposition to breed-specific legislation

People cannot afford the surgery for their dogs

People will surrender their dogs rather than paying the fine or spaying/neutering their dogs

People will stop regular veterinary care – fear that vets will report noncompliance

People feel this will encourage more backyard breeding

Concerns re: poor definition of what is a pit bull and that we (PHMDC) will have trouble identifying the dogs

Board of Health member: there is no evidence that a mandatory spay/neuter law would prevent or reduce bites

BOH/Common Council member: livability/safety/quality of life; fear of dogs may prevent people from going outside, accessing nearby spaces, avoiding areas

**What individuals or groups could be impacted by this decision? Who would benefit? Who would be burdened?**

Consider social, economic, health and environmental impacts.

Owners of unaltered pit bulls: impacted by new policy and costs associated (burden)

Dog owners needing transportation to spay/neuter clinics (burden)

DCHS could experience increased surrenders in the first few years (short-term burden)

Animal Services could experience increased work load due to surrenders and follow-up checks (short-term burden)

Neighborhoods/residents living near unaltered pit bulls – potential increased safety or perception of safety (benefit)

Victims or potential victims (people or animals) of dogs from irresponsible breeding (benefit)

Veterinarians: increased business (benefit)

Animal Services & Dane Co Humane Society, rescue services: decreased workload, decreased numbers & euthanasia over time, more time to spend on adoptable animals (benefit)

Dogs: lower rates of euthanasia, increased adoptions, improved reputation (benefit)

Animal Services could experience decreased work load for at-large dogs due to owners keeping unaltered dogs at home (benefit)

If this policy passes in Madison, other surrounding communities might follow suit (benefits and burdens similar to those mentioned above)

**WHERE**

**Are there impacts on geographic areas? (Select all that apply)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Madison neighborhoods     | <input type="checkbox"/> Owl Creek                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allied Drive                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Edge/Park Ridge                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badger/Bram's Addition/Cypress/Burr Oaks | <input type="checkbox"/> Southside                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balsam/Russet                            | <input type="checkbox"/> East Madison (general)                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brentwood/Northport Corridor             | <input type="checkbox"/> North Madison (general)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Darbo/Worthington                        | <input type="checkbox"/> West Madison (general)                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leopold/Arbor Hills                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown/Campus                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meadowood                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dane County (outside Madison) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hammersley/Teresa Terrace                | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Dane County                      |

Certain neighborhoods in Madison and Sun Prairie have higher rates of incidents

## **WHY**

**What are potential unintended consequences?** (Social, economic, health, environmental or other)

Increased abandonment of unaltered dogs (initially at least)

Drive backyard/underground keeping of dogs further underground

Drive backyard/underground breeding of dogs further underground

Decreased veterinary care

Decreased licensing

Some dogs could be moved outside of Madison

Potential hostility from upset animal owners towards Animal Service Officers when they are enforcing the requirement.

**Describe any additional considerations or concerns associated with the issue:**

Data challenges: we don't have good data to tell us who owns these pets (demographics). This makes it more difficult to identify and target prevention and communication strategies.

## **HOW**

**Describe possible strategies to address disparate or inequitable impacts** (Program, policy, partnership and/or budget/fiscal strategies):

Portion of licensing fees could go toward low-cost spay and neuter services

Grants to subsidize spay and neuter costs (Petco & Petsmart)

Warnings or citations accompanied by vouchers for spaying or neutering

Evaluate costs of tickets to determine undue burden

As a policy alternative: require owners to license dogs in order to keep them unaltered

Continue to develop a partnership with low-cost spay/neuter service that also offers pickup service

Add a sunset clause to the ordinance requiring to be reviewed in five years at minimum

Amend the ordinance to become a violation-based enforcement for all breeds