

# RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TOOL

## FAST TRACK VERSION



Racial Equity  
& Social Justice Initiative





# Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative Racial Equity Analysis Tool Fast-Track Version

## INSTRUCTIONS

*This abbreviated version of the Comprehensive RESJI Racial Equity Analysis Tool is intended for issues on a short timeline or without a widespread impact.*

*Examples:*

- single piece of legislation already drafted and introduced.
- creation of a single position description and job posting for an open position
- development of a single budget item proposal

*For broader policies and legislation in its beginning phase, please use the full version of the RESJ Toolkit.*

*This tool should be completed by people with different racial and socioeconomic perspectives. When possible, involve those directly impacted by the issue. Include and document multiple voices in this process. The order of questions may be re-arranged to suit your situation.*

**Mission of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI):** To establish racial equity and social justice as core principles in all decisions, policies and functions of the City of Madison.

**Equity** is just and fair inclusion into a society in which all, including all racial and ethnic groups, can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Equity gives all people a just and fair shot in life despite historic patterns of racial and economic exclusion ([www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org)).

**Purpose of this Tool:** To facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-income populations will be affected by a proposed action/decision of the City.

The “*What, Who, Why, and How*” questions of this tool are designed to lead to strategies to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts and unintended consequences on marginalized populations.

## BEGIN ANALYSIS

Name of topic or issue being analyzed:

Three zoning ordinance amendments that can be used as strategies to help support the unsheltered homeless population: Mission Camp (Leg. Id# 66790) ; Tiny House Village (Leg. Id# 66791); Portable Shelter Mission (Leg. Id# 66792)

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Names and affiliations of others participating in the analysis:

City of Madison meet with representatives from Porchlight's Single Men's Overnight Shelter (Preston & Kim). Gene, Brenda, Maria, Chole, Charlie, Alison, Kim, Joshua/Chula, Rob, Chereeke/Adreiane, Malika, Casey and Willie participated in a discussion held at Occupy Madison Village. Some individuals were previously camping at McPike Park and now members of Occupy Madison Tiny House Village. Also included, Maria and Brenda from MachOne Health/Street Outreach.

Have stakeholders from different racial/ethnic and socioeconomic groups—especially those most affected—been informed, involved and represented in the development of this proposal or plan? Who is missing and how can they be engaged?

The City of Madison reached out to current operator of the men's shelter to discuss how mission campground and tiny house villages affect their operations and the potential use of shelter from participants when there are other options. This was important to understand how the impact of legalizing urban camping could have unintended consequences on shelter use.

The meeting held at Occupy Madison brought a diverse group of folks with lived experience of staying at encampments and in tiny house villages to the table. The City asked outreach workers to help secure attendance at the meeting and also offered bus tickets for residents at current encampments to attend. There were no residents that took up the offer to attend from current encampments, only past sites. Since no one was in attendance, City has asked outreach workers to engage with campers at Rehindal Park about the future of mission campgrounds and their potential use of the sites and concerns. The results of these conversations have been relayed to City staff and used in the development of requirements like a Safety Plan.

**1. WHAT**

a. What is the policy, plan or proposal being analyzed, and what does it seek to accomplish?

Broadly, these amendments apply to a wide group of persons in our City who may be experiencing short-term or long-term homelessness or are transitioning from homelessness to a more stable residential environment.

A campground or encampment is not a land use allowable in the City, so any attempt to establish an encampment would be a zoning ordinance violation. The amendments would legalize the use and provide structure to locations where people could establish homeless-type encampments, either as stand-alone establishments or accessory to existing institutional or non-profit land uses, relevant to each district and zoning use.

If adopted these ordinances would create an opportunity for a camping/encampment place to be established, with considerations for health, safety, service delivery and organization.

b. What does available data tell you about this issue? (See page 3 for guidance on data resources.)

Dane County Point in Time (PIT) count for January 2021 identified 854 persons experiencing homelessness. 87 of those individuals were unsheltered, meaning they were staying in a place not meant for human habitation and not at an emergency shelter. No unsheltered families were identified in the count. It should be noted that this count happens the last Wednesday of January annual. Outreach staff and other non-profit agencies seek out those experiencing homelessness to their best ability to identify in the count. Folks using hospital, doubled up or in jail for the night are not counted and therefore it can be assumed this is an undercount of the population being served. The PIT is the data point most commonly used to track trends in homelessness. Previous PIT data can be found on Page 15 of [Housing Snapshot Report](#). At the time of this analysis, Outreach Staff report between 100-120 unsheltered folks on any given night in Madison.

While approximately 8% of the population in Madison are Black/African American Households, over 50% of the homeless count during PIT are Black/African American. When adjusted for size of the overall population, Black individuals are 27 times more likely to be homeless than White individuals.

[Housing not Handcuffs](#) report published by National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty in 2019 provides overview of laws in effect across the country that punish homelessness and best immediate steps municipalities can take to reduce harm. The report includes national data on impacts of encampments as temporary solutions to unsheltered homelessness.

There are many reasons that individuals experience unsheltered homelessness. During 2019 PIT an additional question was added asking for the main reason a person is not using overnight emergency shelter. Top responses include feeling unsafe, used up 90 night limit, too many rules and have issues with staff. Emergency shelters, in particular the Men's Shelter, have reduced entry barriers to encourage use of the shelter during the pandemic. The 90 night limit has been terminated and shelter access is now granted to people who are under the influence of drugs/alcohol. There are still program requirements, due to safety, that prohibit use of drugs/alcohol are not allowed while in shelter.

c. What data are unavailable or missing?

Do not know the ongoing financial impacts on City or County operating budget to provide services to encampments.

Per zoning amendments, the mission campgrounds, portable mission campgrounds and tiny houses must have safety/management plans. Establishment of behavioral rules at sites could discourage the use of the site for those. It is unknown how the impact of a structured establishment will affect use of sites (i.e.. increase or decrease in use)

## 2. WHO

a. Who (individuals or groups) could be impacted by the issues related to this policy, plan or proposal?

The goal of these ordinance amendments is to establish a regulatory framework allowing for greater freedom and flexibility in providing legal places for residents to sleep. Unhoused individuals and groups that provide social services to unhoused individuals will be impacted by these changes.

b. Who would benefit?

- There are many reasons people do not use traditional shelter system, these changes create a process for legal places for those folks to sleep and create a faster process for approval of Tiny House and Portable Shelter Missions sites;
- Creation of this alternative housing types will benefit people who can live in group living situation and willing to follow behavioral rules established by the group;
- Urban campgrounds are not meant to be permeant housing situations, individuals will be connected to social services with the goal of obtaining housing when they might not have been connected before;
- At this time, overnight shelter for single men does not have storage options. Allowing legal places for people to stay outside allows folks to keep their items in safe location until housing is secured;
- There are no shelter options for couples without children, this is an alternative for couples to stay together when experiencing homelessness;
- Opportunity for faith based or grass roots organizations to provide services at a location and get more involved in direct services vs traditionally funded non-profits doing street outreach;
- Single women are a minority in unsheltered population, many have safety concerns to sleep outside. A staffed environment with behavioral rules would create more safety for women.

c. Who would be burdened?

- Folks who do not want to follow “safety rules” at shelter system may not want to follow rules at campground. Where do they go?
- These zoning amendments do not address car/RV camping. Where do they go?
- Campground/Tiny House Village still an enclosed small space, people who do not want to be around others, where do they go?
- Surrounding neighbors and business owners.
- Enclosed tiny spaces are not welcome by everyone and people have created larger encampment spaces with tarps. Where do they go?
- Best practices include group decision making by folks at residing at campground/tiny house village. People who do not fit well in group decision making can be triggered.

d. Are there potential disproportionate impacts on communities of color or low-income communities?

Yes- BIPOC populations more affected by homelessness. These will impact how they are served within Dane County Coordinated Entry system.

### 3. WHY

#### a. What are potential unintended consequences (social, economic, health, environmental or other)?

How people are selected to live in campground/tiny house/portable mission must have an equity approach. Sites need diversity and BIPOC are more affected by homelessness.

Madison experiences excessive weather (i.e. cold and heat) that can have impacts on people's health. Long term exposure to elements can impact health.

Creating a smaller site, with boundaries and rules, can be triggering for folks. Must focus on de-escalation

Must control the flow of donations from outside groups. Donated items not needed by encampment folks, creates a look of trash pile up.

Social service providers must be connected to housing navigation/mental health/AODA/peer support services to connect to permanent housing options and start to connect to services that will make sure they are successful in a housing environment with lease and more rules.

Encampments become a spectacle for non-homeless people to gawk at creating shame and isolation for people living within encampment.

People do not succeed in structured campground/tiny house and feel they have no other options for safe places to find shelter.

Panhandling/loitering are things associated with homeless folks. Any increase in those activities in area where mission camp or tiny house is approved will be directly connected with the site. Even if activity is by people not living at the site.

#### 4. HOW: RECOMMENDATIONS SECTION

- a. Describe recommended strategies to address adverse impacts, prevent negative unintended consequences and advance racial equity (program, policy, partnership and/or budget/fiscal strategies):

Limit the number of campsites/tiny houses to a “reasonable” amount. The best practices include group decision making in creating a community that is impossible if the group is too large.

Set up screening criteria that is inclusive and ensure harder to serve people have opportunity, not just people easiest to serve.

Community safety plan and individual safety plan addressing extreme weather conditions and a sign off of what each participants plan will be in those situations.

Management plan must address site cleanliness and process for receipt of donations.

Truman informed social services, with goal to connect to permanent housing or address concerns for shelter.

Educational campaign needed for general public on causes of homelessness, strategies to address homelessness and places to donate. Include in education the impacts of race and discrimination on housing choice.

De-escalation training, mediation and discussion of group decision making mandatory trainings. Plus require mandatory meetings of folks at sites. Must create community within the community for it to be successful.

Cannot expect people to abide by rules in a place with outside security watching their every move. Must work on creating a community that folks look out for each other and develop the rules.

Connecting people to housing is only way to ensure end to homelessness for a person. Housing First policies must continue to be pushed to ensure barriers to housing are addressed.

Must have exist strategy for folks unable to continue living in group environment.

## DATA RESOURCES FOR RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT ANALYSIS

### City of Madison

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- Neighborhood Indicators (UW Applied Population Lab and City of Madison):  
<http://madison.apl.wisc.edu>
- Open Data Portal (City of Madison):  
[www.cityofmadison.com/data](http://www.cityofmadison.com/data)
- Madison Measures (City of Madison):  
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/MadisonMeasures-2016.pdf>
- Census reporter (US Census Bureau):  
<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US5502548000-madison-city-dane-county-wi>

### Dane County

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- Geography of Opportunity: A Fair Housing Equity Assessment for Wisconsin's Capital Region (Capital Area Regional Planning Commission):  
[www.capitalarearpc.org](http://www.capitalarearpc.org)
- Race to Equity report (Wisconsin Council on Children and Families):  
<http://racetoequity.net>
- Healthy Dane (Public Health Madison & Dane County and area healthcare organizations):  
[www.healthydane.org](http://www.healthydane.org)
- Dane Demographics Brief (UW Applied Population Lab and UW-Extension):  
[www.apl.wisc.edu/publications/Dane\\_County\\_Demographics\\_Brief\\_2014.pdf](http://www.apl.wisc.edu/publications/Dane_County_Demographics_Brief_2014.pdf)

### State of Wisconsin

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- Wisconsin Quickfacts (US Census):  
[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/wisconsin)
- Demographics Services Center (WI Dept of Administration):  
[DOA Demographic Services Center \(wi.gov\)](http://www.doa.wisconsin.gov/demographic-services-center)
- Applied Population Laboratory (UW-Madison):  
[www.apl.wisc.edu/data.php](http://www.apl.wisc.edu/data.php)

### Federal

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- US Census:  
[Explore Census Data](https://www.census.gov/data.html)
- 2010 Census Gateway (US Census):  
[www.census.gov/2010census](http://www.census.gov/2010census)