



Equity Assessment of Current Recruitment/Hiring Practices

An Opportunity to Move Equity Forward

July 2016

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Executive Summary:

Dane County government is committed to becoming a more racially equitable and socially just institution in several areas, including: County infrastructure; County operations; County budgets, policy and programs; and in County communities.

Generally, this report calls for a coordinated and collective response to the following overarching goals within Dane County government:

1. Significant increase in the employment, retention, and promotion of people of color.
2. Improved communication, internally and externally, regarding recruitment and hiring processes.
3. Provide best practice resources to hiring managers in order to increase equity.
4. New partnerships to move equity forward in recruitment and hiring.

The recommendations, which were developed after use of the racial equity tool on Dane County recruitment and hiring practices, are intended to help inspire action. We invite all Dane County employees to review and provide additional feedback and to move to action.

Moving recommendations into action requires different levels of effort and timespans—some recommendations may be accomplished by relatively simply administrative changes, while others will require additional partners and processes to move forward effectively.

The Racial Equity Tools Team (RE Tools Team):

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Colleen Clark, Equity and Criminal Justice Coordinator	Dane County Board of Supervisors
Bob Lee, Administrator	Department of Human Services, CYF,
Paul Logan, Operations Manager	Public Safety and Communications
Isadore Knox, Jr., Director of Equal Opportunity	Office for Equity and Inclusion
Stephanie Muñoz, Equity and Criminal Justice Intern	Dane County Board of Supervisors
Tim Ritter, Captain	Dane County Sheriff's Office
Amy Utzig, Director	Employee Relations

This report is a first step and clearly not the end of Dane County's work around employment practices. . Retention, promotion and succession procedures and policies should go through a similar review and analysis.

Overview:

This report follows leadership shown by Dane County Executive Joe Parisi and County Board Chair Sharon Corrigan in developing an internal team focused on racial equity and social justice.



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TO: Department Heads
Elected Officials

FROM: Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive
Sharon Corrigan, Dane County Board Chair *Joe Parisi
Sharon Corrigan*

SUBJECT: Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative

DATE: June 10, 2014

Our vision for Dane County is a fair and just place where all our residents have a safe and healthy place to live, learn, work, and play. Ensuring that all residents in Dane County have access to opportunities and resources must be a core function of government. It is important that we systematically consider our own practices to identify any changes needed to address disparities that may exist in services and outcomes.

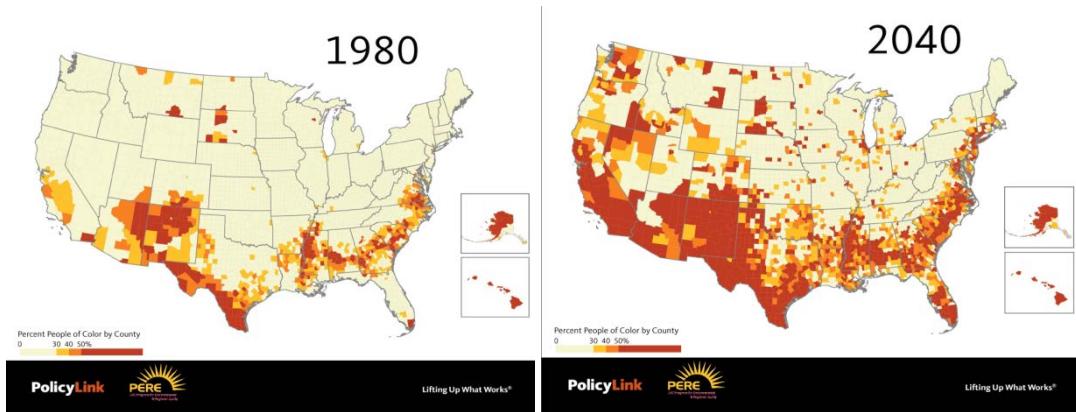
Over the course of the last two years, Dane County has developed teams dedicated to making improvements in racial equity across the County. The Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Leadership team provides guidance to the larger RESJ team. The RESJ Leadership Team is made up of leaders from the Department of Administration, Employee Relations, Department of Human Services, Office for Equity and Inclusion, County Board, Public Health Madison/Dane County, and the Dane County Sheriff's Office (See Appendix A for full list of RESJ Leadership Team Members)

In order for the County to move forward proactively with racial equity, a racial equity tool or lens must be instituted. After review of potential pilot uses of the tool, the RESJ Leadership Team championed applying the tool to Dane County's current recruitment and hiring practices.

Dane County has made improvements to our systems; however, much work is yet to be accomplished. The RE Tools Team acknowledges that institutional change is challenging and will take ongoing accountability and measurement standards. The RE Tools Team applauds the changes that have been made and will champion recommendations to create and sustain a diverse and equitable workforce.

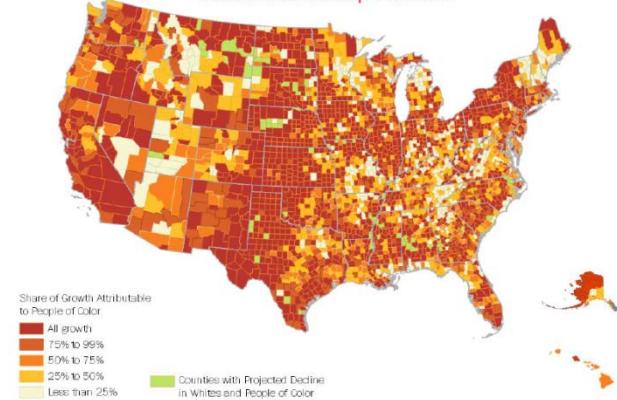
According to PolicyLink, Dane County will have a majority of people of color by 2040. PolicyLink also found that where population growth is occurring nationwide, it is almost exclusively attributable to the growth in populations of people of color. This demographic and prediction data is demonstrated in Dane

County's workforce. Similar to the United States population, Dane County's workforce is following the trend of "graying and browning". Public sector agencies face a common and daunting challenge—the wave of baby boomer retirements, which potentially will lead to loss of institutional knowledge and unfilled critical positions. Equitable access to these critical positions will move Dane County most effectively toward a racially equitable workforce. .



Diversity is Increasing Everywhere

**Projected Population Growth from 2010 to 2040
Attributable to People of Color**



Map created by PolicyLink and the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) using data from the 2010 Decennial Census, Woods & Poole Economics projections data (adjusted using 2010 census data), Census TIGERLine, NHGIS, and ESRI.

In order to effectively serve our residents, Dane County needs to be able to attract and retain quality employees. Policies and practices must be reviewed through a racial equity lens to ensure that our future employee base will be most reflective of Dane County's population.

Dane County has demonstrated leadership and commitment to racial equity and social justice by creating a racial equity and social justice core team (RESJ) and four action teams (training, assessment/tools, communications, and data). As a partner in a national cohort of racial equity leaders, Dane County joined the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) in early 2015. This partnership has led to multiple resources and learning opportunities for Dane County and other municipalities. This work and commitment to change should be applauded and enhanced.

Dane County has taken critical first steps toward developing a strong framework for the people of Dane County, and their government, to succeed. Initiated in May 2014, the support for a framework where all have equal chances to reach their full potential has been wide-reaching. County Executive Parisi and Chair Corrigan invited each department across the county to be represented on a Racial Equity and Social Justice Team (RESJ) and departments have demonstrated strong interest.

Since the RESJ Team began, we have:

- Developed grounding in the data regarding racial equity in Dane County
- Created a safe space and strong team able to talk about race and how it intersects with government systems and structures
- Explored implicit bias
- Increased organizational capacity via training
- Developed liaisons for racial equity across all county departments

Additionally, Dane County Board of Supervisors conducted an independent analysis of racial equity across all county operations, which GARE and Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) completed in September 2015 (see Reference One). In this comprehensive study, multiple recommendations and strategies were enumerated to move Dane County to a more responsive, equitable, and just organization. According to the report, “national best practice suggests government is most successful in addressing racial inequity when all employees and the institution normalize racial equity as a key value, operationalize racial equity via new policies and institutional practice, and organize, internally and in partnership with the community and other institutions.” The CSI and GARE analysis enumerates the steps necessary for Dane County to truly transform into a racially equitable institution. The analysis outlines actions and strategies that, if implemented with urgency, will move the county toward eliminating racial inequities.

Racial Equity Tool: Pilot Project-Recruitment and Hiring Practices

County Executive Parisi request[ed] the recently created “Dane County Racial Equity and Social Justice” group “to evaluate current county hiring processes, rules, and regulations that may represent barriers to diversifying the county workforce and make recommendations for changes.” This is a part of our larger vision to review all barriers to equity within county government. The County Executive and the RESJ Leadership Team provided the Tools Action team with its first action—use of a racial equity tool on current recruitment and hiring practices.

The purpose of developing a RESJ Tools Team was to begin pilot work around utilization of a Racial Equity tool in order to analyze policies, programs and processes. In the 2016 budget, County Executive Parisi funded a Diversity Recruitment Specialist within the Office for Equity and Inclusion to enhance workforce equity on the front end of county employment. The use of a racial equity tool on recruitment and hiring practices and the subsequent recommendations should provide critical background information for the new position. It is most valuable to review Dane County’s current hiring process, identify barriers to equity, and provide the results and recommendations to the Recruiter of the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

What is a Racial Equity Tool?

A Racial Equity Tool is a simple set of questions utilized to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions.

The questions are:

1. What is your proposal and what are the desired results and outcomes?
2. What are the data? What do the data tell us?
3. How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
4. What are your strategies for advancing racial equity?
5. What is your plan for implementation?
6. How will you ensure accountability and evaluate results?

A Racial Equity Tool can help to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups. Racial Equity Tools provide a structure for institutionalizing the consideration of racial equity by:

- Proactively seeking to eliminate racial inequities and advance equity
- Identifying clear goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes
- Engaging communities in decision-making processes
- Identifying who will benefit or be burdened by a decision
- Examining potential unintended consequences of a decision
- Developing strategies to advance racial equity and mitigate unintended negative consequences
- Developing mechanisms for successful implementation and evaluation of impact

A racial equity tool should be used as early in the decision process as possible. The earlier a racial equity tool is used, the more effective it can be. Early integration will ensure that decisions are aligned with organizational racial equity goals and desired outcomes. In addition to early utilization, best practices dictate municipalities incorporate a racial equity tool throughout all phases, from development to implementation and evaluation. It is important that Dane County utilize a Racial Equity Tool because routine use of a racial equity tool explicitly integrates racial equity into governmental operations.

RE Tools Team Strategy:

In September 2015, Dane County utilized GARE's Racial Equity Tool and adapted it to a summarized form-Dane County Racial Equity Tool (see Reference Two) Representatives from seven major county areas were asked to participate in this analysis. The six departments and one constitutional office represented include: Employee Relations, Dane County Sheriff's Office, Department of Human Services, Department of Administration, County Board of Supervisors, Office for Equity and Inclusion, and Public Safety and Communications. Each representative was responsible for serving as the liaison for information from their department. The RE Tools Team reviewed the GARE Racial Equity Tool as well as Dane County's summarized version (See Reference Three) and used it to analyze the current hiring process. Our initial assessment focused on individual processes that we determined may be a barrier to an equitable workforce. The RE Tool team reviewed aggregated and disaggregated data by race and ethnicity, and consulted process experts to obtain all necessary information.

Limitations to this use of an Equity Tool:

Team Composition: The RE Tools Team was created from current members of the RESJ Core Team. Most team members are in leadership positions within their department. The analysis would have benefitted from more voices of employees of color and representation of the various employee groups. Additionally, we were unable to complete conversations or focus groups with community members which is a key component of utilizing a Racial Equity Tool. For the purpose of this analysis, the community voice is represented by the summary of newly-employed Dane County employees' experiences and WCCF's "Roadmap to Equity". (See Reference Four)

Employee Handbook: A major challenge of this analysis involves the Employee Benefit Handbook. Some of the issues identified would require legislative action. To address these issues we recommend additional collaboration and representation from the employee work groups to continuing working on these issues.

Department decentralization: Although currently Employee Relations (ER) has some role in every hire, there is not one central department responsible for ensuring equity throughout the recruitment and hiring process. It is the intent of the RESJ Tools Team that the Office for Equity and Inclusion (OEI) will be able to provide a platform for embedding equity in all recruitment and hiring, as well as ensure accountability.

Benefits of this use of an Equity Tool:

Multiple Perspectives: The ability to obtain the perspective from six major departments and one constitutional office was extremely beneficial in this analysis. This allowed the team the opportunity to better understand why processes have been shaped in the way they are and why a change would be difficult.

Live Hiring Example: During this analysis, Public Safety Communications was in the process of hiring a Communicator-- a position that is frequently hired. Throughout the analysis the RE Tool Team was able to follow the Communicator recruitment process and obtain data regarding applicant demographics. This has helped us to better understand the mechanics of the hiring process, as well as reviewing at what stages the applicant pool declined. . The RE Tools Team was able to identify and explore any unintended barriers and gather qualitative data of the manager's experience with hiring.

Data: Due to Dane County's commitment to an equitable workforce, the Department of Administration had readily available quantitative data regarding the hiring process. Employee Relations assisted the committee to review and begin an initial review to identify portions of the Employee Handbook (see reference five), Administrative Practice Manual, and County Ordinance that apply to the recruitment and retention process.

Foundational Concepts: Moving Recommendations to Action:

High priority strategies are those that are viewed as important to initiate as soon as possible because they will have a significant impact on improving equity and the magnitude is great. The RE Tools Team acknowledges there may be challenges implementing some of the high impact recommendations due to:

- legislative ordinance requirements
- lack of representation on the RESJ Tool team from one or more of the employee groups
 - Increased collaboration will be required to change language to become more inclusive and equitable.
- Improved communication, internally and externally, regarding recruitment and hiring processes

The RE Tools Team intentionally chose to recommend changes that may be challenging to implement, but in the end are the most far reaching. During the analysis, the RE Tools Team had robust conversation about the challenges of systems change; this led to select recommendations not obtaining unanimous approval. We look to the expertise of policy leaders, employee workgroup leaders, and Dane County Office for Equity and Inclusion to collaborate toward successful implementation.

Recommendations that are identified as low- or medium-impact may be easier to implement, however may have smaller overall impact. These recommendations should be reviewed and implemented by departments when possible.

Upon the review of the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Leadership team, those recommendations that appear to be controversial or lacking necessary detail should go through further Racial Equity Tool analysis specific to that recommendation only.

RE Tools Team Assessment Process by Step:

Step 1: What is your proposal and what are the desired results and outcomes?

The RESJ Tools Team proposal is to study the recruitment and hiring process in order to identify barriers and potential improvements that will enhance equity in Dane County's workforce. The RESJ Tools Team wants Dane County to develop and sustain an equitable, diverse, and talented workforce.

Specific, measurable goals should be developed by each department with guidance from the Office for Equity and Inclusion.

Continue to follow upward trends in Dane County hiring of people of color.

Increase the number of managers and directors of color across most county departments.

Eliminate barriers in recruitment and hiring.

Step 2: What are the data? What do the data tell us?

Prior to this assessment, the data available were from the Racial Equity Analysis conducted by CSI in 2015. The data they collected were from past reports provided by the Office of Equal Opportunity and showed “[evident] disproportionalities in some functions and within hierarchy [of positions].”

Furthermore, the analysis determined that “People of color are still much less likely [than their white counterparts] to be in management positions.”¹

This analysis highlighted the following barriers to equitable access to economic prosperity through county employment:

- The current online application system
- Internal promotion policies
- Policies limiting the number of applicants in the overall candidate pool
- Recruitment and hiring of bilingual employees
- Lack of pay adjustment for bilingual employees
- Lack of employee confidence in the enforcement of affirmative action and equal opportunity policies
- The analysis yielded the following recommendations: Refine the [online application] system
- Improve communication about the [online application] system
- Build infrastructure to support workforce equity
- Improve the Employee Relations data collection system
- Identify specific positions with the greatest disparities
- Identify one or more specific classifications that are currently inequitable
- Develop and implement strategies to eliminate disproportionality
- Review and revise minimum qualifications
- Incorporate racial equity actions into job descriptions and performance reviews
- Eliminate points at which implicit bias can impact processes
- Include racial equity as a core competency in select job descriptions with each department
- Develop clear racial equity expectations for managers
- Review the employee handbook
- Conduct analysis of positions that have a large number of anticipated retirements in the next five years and develop and implement career pathways to ensure a diverse applicant pool is prepared to compete for vacancies of anticipated retirements
- Identify positions that interact with the public
- Research and develop a list of options for supplemental pay for bilingual workers
- Partner with other institutions and the community on workforce development strategies

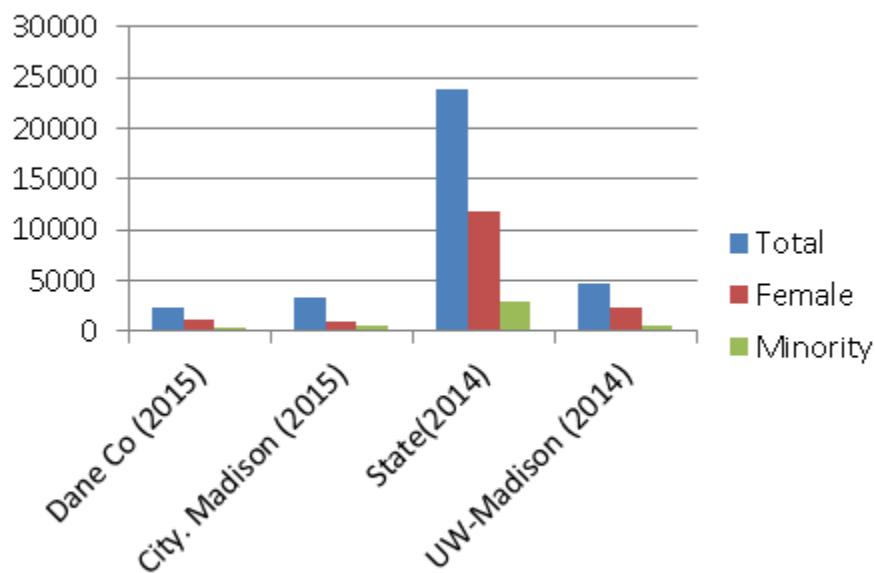
Using this information as a starting point, the RESJ Tools Team assessed data regarding anticipated retirees, demographic comparisons of county employees and city employees, as well as recruitment data. The information provided by the analysis helped to better inform our assessment, and frame our conversations and areas of interest. CSI’s Racial Equity Analysis was a useful guiding structure and facilitated a deeper analysis specific to key areas.

¹ “Dane County Wisconsin Racial Equity Analysis.” (n.d.): n. pag. Center for Social Inclusion, Sept. 2015. Web.

Retiree Data:**Analysis of Dane County Employees - Retirement Prospective by Ethnicity**
2/10/2015

Ethnicity	Employees	Ave. Age	Ave. Years of Service
US-American Indian/Alaska Nat	29	50.517	13.272
US-Asian	91	41.615	7.304
US-Black or African American	209	41.981	6.729
US-Hispanic or Latin	108	42.139	7.522
US-Two or More Races	1	61.000	1.000
US-White	2409	45.930	11.711

This data shows us that our county workforce is made up of both a high number of white employees nearing retirement and a high number of young people of color. This data is important to consider as it is an area of opportunity to foster mentorship, partnership and pathways to upward mobility as our white employees retire and people of color enter the workforce.

Comparison Data:

Dane County demographics are comparable to the City of Madison, State of Wisconsin, and University of Wisconsin-Madison. In general, County employee demographics reflect a greater than average number of women, and fewer people of color (overall). Further analysis needs to be completed to determine the pay level, job function, and promotions disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

Position Data:

In order to assess the hiring process, we looked at applicant flow data for four of the most frequently hired job classifications. The recruitments analyzed were: Economic Support Specialist (three recruitments), Jail Clerk (three recruitments), Security Support Specialist (three recruitments), and Deputy Sheriff (five/six recruitments – one was ongoing). The recruitments were analyzed from paper reports and covered a period from 2012 to 2014. The analysis was done prior to recruitments using the online application system.

How many positions are hired from a given recruitment varies based on the position and the needs at the time. The County is rarely screening and interviewing for a single opening — top candidates are placed on a list and candidates from the list are interviewed as openings occur. A list stays open for a period of time (it depends on the classification and the relevant employee service group rules)— generally about six months. The analysis was not able to determine if an expanded certification was used for the recruitments analyzed. Nor were we able to determine if these job classifications were under parity at the time of certification.

This analysis looked at the major phases in the recruitment process. The first phase is the application. We looked to see if there was a variance in the application data. Dane County is approximately 13.6% non-white according to recent U.S. Census estimates. For the positions analyzed, most of the applications were at or above 13.6% non-white applicants. In two of the recruitments, there were fewer than 13% minority applications. The percentages for each position are in the table below:

Economic Support Specialist	Jail Clerk	Security Support Specialist	Deputy Sheriff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8/8/14: 34 minority apps of 79 total ~ 43%• 3/29/13: 128 minority apps of 314 total ~ 40%• 10/12/12: 73 minority apps of 178 total ~ 41%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3/24/13: 18 minority apps of 87 total ~ 20%• 10/16/12: 13 minority apps of 60 total ~ 21 %• 2/4/12: 10 minority apps of 32 total ~ 31%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7/1/14: 39 minority apps of 230 total ~ 16%• 3/1/13: 19 minority apps of 142 total ~ 13%• 6/1/12: 40 minority apps of 284 total ~ 14%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6/8/14: 4 minority apps of 55 total – 7%• 3/15/14: 17 minority apps of 73 total – 23%• 12/7/13: 7 minority apps of 88 total – 8%• 9/7/13: 12 minority apps of 87 total – 14%• 6/8/13: 14 minority apps of 64 total – 22%• 3/9/13: 16 minority apps of 101 total – 16%

The next phase of the hiring process is to screen the applications for minimum qualifications. Applications that meet minimum qualifications are then scored according to the position-specific examination plan. Each position has a different examination plan for how applications are scored. Applications are then ranked according to how the applications have been scored and appropriate adjustments have been calculated (seniority points, veterans' preference, etc.). The list of ranked candidates is used to create a list of names of candidates to interview. That list is then sent to departments for consideration. If a position is under parity, as determined by the Office of Equal Opportunity, then additional candidates are added to the list.

Sheriff's Deputies use a specialized version of this process. Applicants must fill out the standard County application. Those applications are then screened for felony convictions. According to the Sheriff's Office most of the applicants pass this screen. Individuals who pass the screen are invited to take a written test. Written tests are held four times a year. Tests are offered both in Madison and Milwaukee. The tests are scored and all of the top candidates receive an interview. After the interview, a certain number of candidates (based on the number of openings available) receive a conditional employment offer. Those candidates must then pass an extensive background investigation, pass a psychological evaluation, and meet certain physical fitness requirements.

The next aspect of the analysis looked at if non-white applicants are "eligible" at the same rate as white applicants. Being eligible means that an individual passed the minimum screen and was considered for an exam-based ranking. The analysis was not able to review all of the aspects of the Sheriff's Office's specialized process. The results of this analysis are summarized in the table below:

Economic Support Specialist	Jail Clerk	Security Support Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/8/14: 34% of all applications eligible/screened in; 35% of minority applications screened in; minority candidates were 44% of those screened in • 3/29/13: 65% of all applications were screened in; 67% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 40% of those screened in • 10/12/12: 45% of all applications were screened in; 45% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 40% of those screened in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/24/13: 13% of applications were screened in; 5.55% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 8% of all applications screened in • 10/16/12: 13% of applications were screened in; 30% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 50% of all applications screened in • 2/4/12: 18% of all applications were screened in; 10% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 16% of all applications screened in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7/1/2014 36% of applications were screened in, 43% of minority applications were screened in, minority candidates were 20% of all applications screened in • 3/1/2013 37% of applications were screened in;, 63% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 22% of all applications screened in • 6/1/2012 39% of applications were screened in;, 57% of minority applications were screened in; minority candidates were 20% of all applications screened in

The next aspect of the analysis looked at whether non-white applicants received interviews at the same rate as white applicants. Because the Sheriff's Office's process is highly specialized, we do not have

comparable information for those positions. It is important to point out that just because an individual met the minimum qualifications, it does not guarantee that an individual would receive an interview. Individuals who did not score sufficiently high enough on the exam may not be invited for an interview. The results of those data are summarized in the following table:

Economic Support Specialist	Jail Clerk	Security Support Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/8/14: 100% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 100% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 44% of those interviewed • 3/29/13: 77% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 62% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 32% of those interviewed • 10/12/12: 28% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 15% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 21% of those interviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/24/13: 50% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 100% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 16% of those interviewed • 10/16/12: 62% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 50% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 40% of those interviewed • 2/4/12: 83% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 100% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 20% of those interviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7/1/2014 19% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 11% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 12% of those interviewed • 3/1/2013 45% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 27% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 12% of those interviewed • 6/1/2012 18% of all applications eligible/screened in were interviewed; 4.5% of minority applications screened in were interviewed; minority candidates were 5% of those interviewed.

The last aspect of the recruitment process examined was the number of positions filled from each recruitment.

Economic Support Specialist	Jail Clerk	Security Support Specialist	Deputy Sheriff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/8/14: 9 positions filled from the recruitment. 2 positions filled with minority candidates. • 3/29/13: 28 positions filled from the recruitment. 3 positions filled with minority candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/24/13: 2 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions filled with minority candidates • 10/16/12: 1 position filled from the recruitment. No positions filled with minority candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7/1/2014 6 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions filled with minority candidates • 3/1/2013 5 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions filled with minority candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3/15/14: 6 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions were filled with minority candidates. • 12/7/13: 12 positions filled from the recruitment. One position was

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10/12/12: 5 positions filled from the recruitment. 0 positions filled with minority candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2/4/12: 2 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions filled with minority candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6/1/2012 10 positions filled from the recruitment. 1 position filled with a minority candidate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> filled with a minority candidate. • 9/7/13: 9 positions filled from the recruitment. One position was filled with a minority candidate.. • 6/8/13: 8 positions filled from the recruitment. No positions were filled with minority candidates.. • 3/9/13: 10 positions filled from the recruitment. 5 positions were filled with minority candidates.
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It is important to point out that while Employee Relations posts position openings and a screens application, Employee Relations does not make hiring decisions—Departments do. Further, all recruitments are different so it is difficult to make comparisons, even for the same classification.

Step 3: How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?

At this point in the assessment, the RE Tools Team is unable to engage communities as this is an internal assessment. However, in considering how to engage communities, the RE Tools Team reviewed current County job posting contracts within media and also reviewed the opportunity to begin to utilize social media in a more effective manner. There are opportunities to expand engagement in the hiring process and the RE Tools Team would likely begin community engagement through including employee workgroups into any further assessment and then extend to community members.

The RESJ Communications Team could be a vehicle to expand community engagement regarding the hiring process. The GARE/CSI analysis recommended amplification of the Communications team toward creation of an Inclusive Engagement Team. Learning from Dane County's residents about the barriers they face when attempting to gain employment with Dane County will be a critical need as the analysis continues and proactive solutions are crafted.

Additionally, phase two of the analysis will require collaborative teams that include the employee work groups to review specific challenging recommendations while using a racial equity tool. In this way, greater capacity for use of the racial equity tool is gained, as well as the subject matter expertise gleaned from employee workgroups.

The recently released “Roadmap to Equity” recommends the following specific to public sector employment: “...commit to recruiting and hiring substantial numbers of additional workers from low income households of color, and to increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of their overall workforce.”

They further suggest public sector employers review policies and practices relating to recruitment, definition of job qualifications, credential and educational requirements interview and reference procedures, and treatment of prior justice system involvement.²

Step 4: What are your strategies for advancing racial equity?

Overall, Dane County has taken concrete steps via the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) initiative to normalize conversation about race, ethnicity and gender, and is beginning to operationalize procedures and policies to mitigate racial inequities. Despite progress in addressing explicit discrimination, racial inequities continue to be deep, pervasive, and persistent across the country, and in Dane County.

Dane County must work to change the systems, at the same time while working within the system that has negatively impacted people of color. We seek to actively undo harm causing policies and procedures through use of racial equity tools and capacity building among all County staff.

The racial equity analysis and use of a racial equity tool, is one early example of advancing racial equity within Dane County. Prior years have provided advancements in racial equity, including: Dane County an early adopter of “ban the box”; redacting name information on recruitments; creating bi-lingual/bi-cultural positions and more. As an entity designed to serve the people we also understand our unique responsibility to hold ourselves accountable and responsible to for fairness and advancement of all.

The specific strategy we will utilize to advance recruitment and hiring racial equity is as follows:

- Provide written recommendations and full report to the RESJ Leadership Team for review
- Present the finalized report to Dane County’s Personnel and Finance Committee
- Encourage the Office for Equity and Inclusion to further review recommendations that are deemed as challenging or requiring more representation
- Develop phase II RESJ RE Tools Team which includes employee work group representation, front-line staff, more employees of color, as well as part or all of the current RESJ Tools Action team.

² Roadmap to Equity

Recommendations:

*NOTE: *Denotes recommendations that are currently in progress of being implemented

1. Standardize a list of at least 10 qualified candidates to interview for all new hires across all job classifications and departments

Rationale: Currently, some hiring managers have the decision to choose between 5 and 10 candidates. In some employee groups, ordinance regulates the number of candidates to be interviewed a department receives. Having a standard would ensure that each position is interviewing a minimum of 10 candidates. This will have an impact on hiring because it will allow a larger candidate pool. This recommendation will require further analysis with collaborative partnerships with the employee workgroups

The employee associations expressed concern about this recommendation. They assert the current process adequately insures a diverse candidate pool. They further express concern that current employees value the opportunities that smaller pools of interviewees provides.

2. *Explore best practices for social media use in order to better market for job postings

Rationale: Dane County needs to meet applicants where they exist. Increasingly, individuals spend their time on social media. In an attempt to better brand Dane County as a good place to work the RE Tools Team encourages the County to utilize social media as a valuable recruitment tool. In order to operationalize the procedure, the County should explore social media best practices for recruiting and hiring.

3. Departmental development of a Recruitment Activity Plan

Rationale: Currently, departments are required to complete a Recruitment Action Plan with OEO once they have identified a position as under parity. This has increased the minority representation within some departments. For that reason, we recommend that each department work with the Office of Equity and Inclusion to develop a proactive Recruitment Plan (see resources for sample plan).

4. Eliminate language which creates barriers to equity within employee handbook

Rationale: The RE Tools Team has done a preliminary limited review of employee handbook language and potential unintentional inequitable results. The RE Tools Team recommends the elimination of any language which creates barriers to equity within the employee handbook. This recommendation will require further analysis with collaborative partnerships with the employee workgroups.

The employee associations request initial identification and sharing of any concerns regarding inequitable language in the employee handbook so that it can be addressed as a part of the meet and confer process.

5. Increase frequency of equity infused Management Advisory Council (MAC) meetings to ensure continued education regarding best hiring practices

Rationale: MAC meetings are held approximately two-three times a year. This does not contribute to the County's emphasis on fostering a culture of continued education with an emphasis on equity. Increasing the frequency of MAC meetings will allow for education of equity and best hiring practices. In this way, Dane County can ensure that management employees are receiving adequate education surrounding the topics, as well as being given the opportunity to discuss any challenges and/or concerns, and potential solutions. (Currently a MAC meeting regarding equity is scheduled for May 2016).

The employee associations indicate that they would like an opportunity to assist with transforming our culture by holding informal training/discussion sections that are sponsored by associations working with the Office for Equity and Inclusion.

6. Establish consistent training for hiring managers regarding equity and best practices

Rationale: Dane County does not have a formal training program for its managers. New managers receive a broad range of training, ranging from peer coaching to training programs occasionally available from the City of Madison. The current protocol does not allow the County to foster a culture of continued education and emphasis on equity and best hiring practices. It is recommended that Employee Relations and the Office for Equity and Inclusion develop equity training for managers. This can ensure that hiring managers receive adequate education surrounding the topics as well as being given the opportunity to discuss any challenges and/or concerns.

The employee associations support this recommendation and support this for current employees and managers through training and mentoring programs.

7. Elimination of internal only hiring practices

Rationale: Currently, specific work groups have internal hiring practices as outlined by the employee handbook. This policy limits the county's opportunity to seek diverse candidates, given the current demographics of county employees. Current county employees do receive points for their service, which would increase their overall hiring score. This recommendation will require further analysis with collaborative partnerships with the employee workgroups

The employee associations oppose this recommendation. They indicated internal hires provide a career path.

8. *Continue to update the online application system

Rationale: The current online application system has been identified as a barrier to an equitable workforce by community, employees and CSI. In 2015, a multidiscipline/cross-agency series of meetings took place to discuss departmental concerns with workforce equity. The online application system was identified as a barrier. Slight changes have been made, however the RE Tools Team hopes to see further enhancements with the online application system to ensure accessibility, usability, as well as improved communication between applicant and Employee Relations/Hiring

Department. Overall, the online application system should be reviewed and compared to best national practices. A visionary plan to design an online system that is more user-friendly and intuitive should be developed.

9. *Develop a working relationship between the Office for Equity and Inclusion and Employee Relations that will establish strategic communication regarding equity

Rationale: The Office of Equity and Inclusion will focus on recruitment and outreach among diverse populations but will not have access to operational processes of hiring. Therefore, it is imperative that as the functions of the Diversity Recruitment Specialist (DRS) are developed, a working relationship with Employee Relations is established to ensure strategic communication regarding equity. This relationship should include understanding regarding robust communication standards, access protocols, information sharing and a recruitment database to measure the impact of intentional outreach and recruitment.

Employee associations indicate that they would also like a good working relationship with the Office for Equity and Inclusion.

10. *Intentional outreach and recruitment efforts in communities of color

Rationale: In order to increase diversity in the Dane County workforce, it is imperative that the DRS are intentional in their outreach efforts. This outreach will help continue to brand Dane County as a good place to work that values equity.

11. Develop formal professional pipelines to upward mobility

Rationale: Often times, municipal workers throughout our state and county, find pathways of success due to informal professional contacts that can guide an employee through the municipal system (both formal and informal protocols). As we note a shift in overall county demographics, it is important to design success for each new employee. Employee engagement and coaching should be formalized to increase equity for all employees.

Employee associations support this recommendation, however believe it works at cross purposes with the recommendation regarding the elimination of internal hiring.

12. *More clear and frequent communication between ER and applicants regarding application processes and status

Rationale: Previous applicants have shared dissatisfaction with the type and frequency of communication received throughout the application process. Not providing clear updates during the process may result in qualified applicants withdrawing from the process. Therefore, we recommend more clear and frequent communication between ER and applicants regarding application processes and status. The RESJ RE Tools Team would like to see more clear communication to applicants regarding: notification of application, explanation of application/hiring process, general hiring timeline, department and employee relations contact information and a survey to measure applicant satisfaction with process.

13. Create a statement of commitment to creating an inclusive/equitable workforce to include in all position descriptions

Rationale: In order to increase equity we must ensure that we are branding ourselves as a good place to work that values equity. In creating and including a statement of commitment to creating an inclusive/equitable workforce to include in all position descriptions, we will intentionally demonstrate our commitment to an equitable workforce.

14. Accept paper applications

Rationale: Dane County generally only accepts applications for positions through its online application system (accommodations will be made for those requesting accommodations through the American Disabilities Act). The RE Tools Team notes a substantial increase in number of applications the County has received which suggests a greater access point for County employment. Additionally, a prior recommendation champions a much improved online application system to broaden accessibility.

That said, for some residents there may be barriers to completing the application online, which include: computer knowledge and accessibility, transportation, being unaware that assistance is available or feeling as though requesting assistance may negatively impact their opportunity to gain employment. Allowing applicants to submit paper applications, even if it is only a small number, would increase overall accessibility to county employment.

The Department of Administration has strong concerns about implementing such a process. Doing so would essentially duplicate the examination process: one for online applications and one for paper applications. Given the current level of staffing in Employee Relations, this might slow down the processing of applications to departments, potentially exacerbating problems in the recruitment process. Further, duplicating the process raises the potential for errors and legal implications.

15. Establish partnerships with other public employers and agencies that specialize in recruitment, training and placement of people of color

Rationale: In order to increase equity in the Dane County workforce, it is important that the DRS is intentional in their outreach efforts. This outreach will help continue to brand Dane County as a good place to work that values racial equity and inclusion.

16. Establish formal support of new hires in order to ensure employees remain engaged and invested in their position

Rationale: In concert with recommendation 11, new formal support of new hires is required to increase success and retention of new employees. Other counties have retained employee engagement specialists, which acts as a liaison between employee relations, departments, and new employees. Given that creating a new position is unlikely, a resource repository should be developed for hiring managers and new employees as a resource guide.

Employee associations support this recommendation and request expansion to existing employees.

17. Provide hiring managers the ability to flag positions that fall under parity

Rationale: Currently, parity reports are generated on a quarterly basis. However, departments may begin a hiring process in between reporting periods and may be aware they are under parity. The ability to flag a position would ensure additional efforts to reach parity are put in place. This may only be the case in a minimal amount of hiring processes and if changed, should be highlighted during Management Advisory Council meetings.

The employee associations request initial identification and sharing of any concerns regarding inequitable policies in the employee handbook so that it can be addressed as a part of the meet and confer process.

18. *Review minimum qualifications on position descriptions

Rationale: Multnomah County, Oregon conducted a similar analysis of their hiring and recruitment practices utilizing an equity decision making tool. This analysis found that minimum qualifications did

not always accurately coincide with applicant's ability to perform a job. They also found that "minimum qualifications tended to favor dominant identities by emphasizing the need for formal education and previous government experience. Disproportionately, women and people of color have a more difficult time meeting these qualifications because of systemic barriers." In order to ensure equity in recruiting and hiring, Multnomah County recommended that each department "[ensure] minimum qualifications relate to essential functions of job performance, [conduct] a job analysis to determine key tasks and competencies required for job performance at entry, [consider] potential in applicants in addition to their current skill sets, and [take] measures to ensure that minimum qualifications are accurate." Furthermore, Multnomah County recommended allowing applicants to capitalize on previous experience (paid or unpaid) that may have provided transferable skills as well as considering on-the-job trainings which may supplement applicant skill set.

19. Conduct an analysis of the impact of Dane County's Ban the Box policy

Rationale: In 2013, Dane County Executive Joseph Parisi "banned the box" which eliminates the use of criminal history background check on the initial application process, unless required by specific agency (for example, Dane County Sheriff's Office (DCSO)). Dane County was the first county in the State of Wisconsin to adopt this policy and this early adoption lead other local municipalities to review and change their policy. Dane County should review the outcomes of the "ban the box" policy to ensure efficacy and equity.

20. *Require diversity during the hiring process (i.e. Grading and interview panels)

Rationale: Requiring diversity in the hiring process would ensure an inclusive perspective and removal of unintended barriers. Comfort levels increase when applicants feel represented by interviewers. Every attempt should be made to increase diversity on grading and interview panels by race, ethnicity, and gender.

21. *Review policies that interfere with the hiring/advancement of people of color

Rationale: The employee handbook has never been reviewed utilizing a racial equity tool. For that reason we recommend a review in order to be able to eliminate any policies that may interfere with the hiring/advancement of people of color. This recommendation will require further analysis with collaborative partnerships with the employee workgroups.

22. Review the underutilization of LTE positions as an opportunity for upward mobility

Rationale: LTE positions are hired frequently in some departments to aid in flexibility. These positions can serve as a useful stepping stone into county employment.

The employee associations express concerns about this recommendation and indicate a desire to work cooperatively with the county to overhaul the entire LTE system.

23. *Establish the need and grant access to data and information for the Office for Equity and Inclusion

Rationale: In determining the structure of data access for the Office of Equity and Inclusion it is important to ensure the Diversity Recruitment Specialist maintains up to date and on demand access to the application database.

24. *Obtain parity reports monthly

Rationale: Currently, parity reports are generated on a quarterly basis. However, departments may begin a hiring process in between reporting periods and may be aware they are under parity. The ability to obtain parity reports monthly would ensure more accurate hiring processes.

25. Brand Dane County as a good place to work

Rationale: Dane County is currently updating the County website. To increase visibility and highlight the work of front line leaders, managers, and directors the County should create a method to highlight the good work of County employees and the importance of County work. This recommendation should be considered as a part of the overall plan to increase residents' understanding of what Dane County employees do, as well as the overall mission and vision for Dane County.

Step 5: What is your plan for implementation?

The RE Tools Team acknowledges changes in legislation will be required to implement some of the recommended changes. The RE Tools Team recommends that the RESJ Leadership Team, OEI and Employee Workgroups work together to implement changes over which they hold authority. Changes which require legislative, high levels of interdisciplinary collaboration, or do not require legislative change but are controversial for some other reason, we recommend an analysis of that specific recommendation utilizing a racial equity tool.

Step 6: How will you ensure accountability and evaluate results?

The Department of Human Services provided a hands-on example of accountability and evaluation via the division yearly work plans. OEI and RESJ Leadership should finalize a prototype work plan document that departments may use as they strive to move equity forward.

Next Steps:

As previously mentioned, neither the RE Tools Team nor the RESJ leadership team is able to implement any changes to policies or processes. It is our hope that leadership will make changes in areas of high impact. Immediate changes are continued improvements to the online system detailed below and immediate implementation of a few recommendations that are influenced by ER and OEI including:

- Online application system changes including :
 - Ensuring when a user clicks a "help" button the user gets directed towards clear instructions
 - Update to e-Personality will allow the County to create custom "workflows." Which will allow a smooth, step-by-step application process
 - Custom reports for departments in order for departments to have a candidate reports that are easier to understand and only include relevant information
 - Display information regarding application assistant in a location on the website that is easily accessible.
- New positions proposed in the 2016 Budget are intended to provide assistance to external groups and internal departments on how to navigate the online process
- Development of a working relationship between OEI and ER that will establish strategic communication regarding employment and recruitment equity
- Intentional outreach and recruitment efforts in communities of color
- More clear and frequent communication between ER and applicants regarding application processes and status
- Establish the need for and develop a data sharing MOU between DOA and OEI
- Obtain parity reports monthly

Conclusion:

Within large systems, it is common for policies, practices and procedures to continue to move forward in an effort to provide stability, efficiency and predictability. Within government, it is often a challenging process to conduct a system change. However, it is the intention of the RE Tools Team that routine use of an equity tool is integrated into the review and implementation of policies, practices, procedures and programs. The County has acknowledged that our system has benefitted certain groups, and in an effort to ensure that every County resident is benefitted, it is critical that Dane County take an intentional pause to focus on racial equity as the County continues to evolve.

As a team we acknowledge the limitations of the current analysis, which include : lack of diversity among our team, limited time to conduct the assessment, the need for legislative changes in order to implement some recommendations, the inability to standardize all data, lack of employee workgroup representation , and the decentralization of accountability regarding equitable recruiting and hiring. However, this document is not intended as an end product—but rather a beginning of the critical and challenging work of increasing equity for all of Dane County current and future staff.

Moving forward, we expect the Diversity Recruitment Specialist in Office for Equity and Inclusion to utilize this assessment as baseline background information to inform their work. Lastly, the RE Tools Team understands that in order to move forward with these recommendations Dane County will need high levels of collaboration between County leaders, County employee group leaders and community members. Phase II of this analysis will require collaboration with voices that were not at the table to complete separate analysis of the recommendations that may require legislative change.

The Racial Equity and Social Justice RE Tools Team are committed to continuing to move forward the County's goal of an equitable workforce. We applaud the past policy changes to improve racial equity within the county, encourage further collaborations, and champion visionary change to a more equitable workforce.