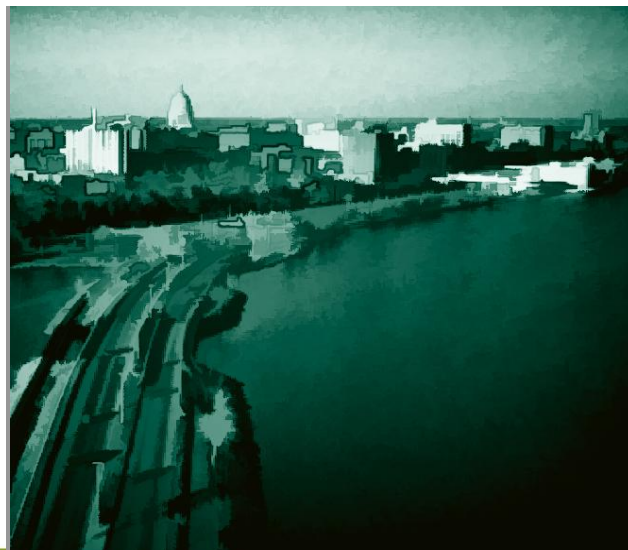**City of Madison**

Racial Equity &
Social Justice Initiative

Strategy Guide for City Agencies

December 2014

Introduction

The mission of the City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) is *to establish racial equity and social justice as core principles in all decisions, policies and functions of the City of Madison*. The City launched RESJI in the fall of 2013 (RES-13-00828), and on July 15, 2014, RESJI was formally established (RES-14-00546) and authorized to begin implementation. RESJI aims to eliminate racial and social inequities in municipal government and, in partnership with the community, throughout the city by addressing institutional racism. The three priority areas for RESJI are Equity in City Policies and Budgets, Equity in City Operations and Equity in the Community.

This guide will provide City agencies and their partners with a roadmap to put RESJI principles into practice. We recognize that each agency is different in its interactions with and impact on the city as well as in the makeup of its workforce. Each agency is starting from a unique place, with many assets to build from and challenges to overcome.

The strategies in this guide will build toward institutional transformation toward a City that works to end racism and race-based inequities, with the expectation that changes to our policies and practices will result in greater impacts and sustained benefits. While some of the strategies will take time to implement, there are day-to-day actions that each of us can take. See the "Where should I start?" section for reminders about what each of us can do every day to work toward racial equity. Keep in mind that these strategies cannot be implemented in a vacuum: agencies must be intentional about creating a culture where respect and inclusion are the expectation, and where City personnel of all backgrounds can contribute and thrive.

Why Racial Equity?

Madison is known for its commitment to livability and sustainability, yet not all people, families and neighborhoods share in this experience. Local data show that people of color, people with disabilities and people from low-income backgrounds fare far worse than many other city residents in areas like educational attainment, income, health outcomes and housing affordability and quality. Our focus on racial equity will allow us to address Madison's most persistent inequities while supporting a sustained shift towards fairer practices throughout our institutions that will ultimately benefit all.

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"**To challenge institutional racism, we have to look beyond individual acts of prejudice to the** systemic biases **that are built into our institutions.**"

– City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

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What is equity?

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.com)

Equity is a goal, not a process. It ensures that everyone has the resources to succeed, and calls for just distribution of resources. It means that shared decision-making and involvement processes will lead to greater shared power and involvement of communities most affected by inequities.

Where should I start?

Just as each agency is starting from a unique place, each of us comes with a set of life experiences that impact the way we see and operate in the world. Here are some practical, day-to-day actions for continued learning and development in the area of racial equity and social justice:

- Communicate your own commitment to incorporate racial equity and social justice principles into your agency's work
- Continue to examine your personal biases and beliefs
  - Resource: www.projectimplicit.com
- Seek learning and training opportunities for yourself and your staff (trainings, readings, discussions, conferences)
- Learn about current racial inequities and strengths in Madison and Dane County
- Explore and pursue opportunities for leadership by persons of color throughout your agency
- Explore and pursue opportunities for partnerships with communities of color
- Be willing to engage in conversations about race and equity with colleagues
- …and support staff and colleagues to do all of the above

Local data show that people of color, people with disabilities and people from low-income backgrounds fare far worse than many other city residents ...

"We are not to blame for what happened in the past, but we are responsible for eliminating racism today. We can end this legacy of inequity."

– City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

RESJI Priority Areas and Strategies

Priority Area 1: Equity in City Operations

"Applying a racial equity lens to internal organizational development helps to manage the inherent power dynamics that organizations grapple with every day. To the degree that (dominant) culture is present in an organization, exposing how it permeates business practices and internal operations provides an opportunity to expand processes, norms, and worldview. By expanding work processes, one can create an organizational culture that is viable and sustainable within a world of changing demographics and unremitting racial disparities." (www.racialequitytools.org)

a) Assess staff and management for readiness

Why: An understanding of your agency's readiness can help you start in the best place with trainings, capacity building and implementation of effective strategies. Initial assessments can help to identify strengths and concerns of staff, and may identify areas where racial equity work is already happening and can be built upon. It is also important to establish baseline measures against which progress will be measured over time.

How: Assessment tools include:

- RESJI Staff Readiness Survey - https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MadisonRESJIstaff
- RESJI Organizational Readiness Reflection - https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MadisonRESJIorg
- Multicultural Organization Development Model (contact Melissa Gombar – mgombar@cityofmadison.com for assistance)

Example: the Multicultural Organization Development Model

The City of Madison Police Department utilized the Multicultural Organization Development Model along with training from the YWCA. As a result, MPD is moving forward with strategies tailored to the department's current position and needs.

"Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives."

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Priority Area 1: Equity in City Operations

b) Develop a department equity team

Why: It will be important to have a team of staff dedicated to leading your agency's selection and application of racial equity strategies. This group will plan and execute your agency's training and work planning, and can support other staff in working together on strategies that are tailored to your agency's needs and desired outcomes.

How: Your equity team should reflect as many racial, social, gender, age and job class perspectives as possible. The size of your team will depend on the size and structure of your agency, but could range from 4-10 people. Very large agencies should consider dividing the work group into action teams to ensure integration across locations and job classes. Your agency might already have a team in place (e.g. a culture and engagement team or steering committee for another initiative) which could lead the charge on racial equity. Provide this team with opportunities to engage in training via conferences, webinars, discussions and RESJI events, so they can develop content expertise and leadership skills to bring back to your full staff. Delegate at least one person from your equity team to represent your department in the RESJI Core Team and Action Teams (see Strategy 2a) to help streamline communications and activities.

c) Engage staff and management in training on racial equity and social justice

Why: "The elimination of racism is an on-going process that requires persistence, commitment, and continuing dialogue between individuals and groups." (YWCA Madison)

None of us can be expected to have all of the answers or skills needed to engage in racial equity and social justice work right away. Most City personnel are trained in the specific professions in which we are working. In fact, racial equity experts note that best practices are still emerging. As a City, we all need to learn together, do our best work with the information we have, and adapt strategies as we continue to learn what works well. Engaging staff in professional development on racial equity and social justice should be given the same level of importance as all other continuing education. Training is and will continue to be a high priority for everyone involved in the RESJI, as well as all City personnel.

Priority Area 1: Equity in City Operations

c) (continued) Engage staff and management in training on racial equity and social justice

How: Work with staff from the RESJI to identify and plan trainings to meet needs identified in your assessment(s) (Strategy 1a). Create a culture of shared learning by setting up an ongoing structure for training and dialogue. Obtain support from RESJI and your agency's equity team in fostering this culture. Permit staff to use work time for training.

Organizations such as the YWCA provide ongoing racial justice trainings for individuals and groups. RESJI will make available an inventory of training opportunities in early 2015. Also in 2015, quarterly RESJI trainings will be available to all City personnel through the Human Resources' Organizational Development and Training schedule.

Examples: Staff Training

Public Health Madison & Dane County sent 18 staff from all divisions and job classes to the YWCA Racial Justice Summit in October 2014. Since the Summit, this group has engaged in discussions to debrief, share learnings and questions, and discuss how they can be applied to the work of the department.

d) Develop a work plan that includes racial equity and social justice goals

Why: Many City agencies use work plans to communicate goals and priorities and align efforts throughout the organization. A work plan allows your agency to articulate its equity goals and to lay out specific action steps to achieve them. It also delineates roles and creates a framework to evaluate progress and impact. Integrating equity goals and actions into your agency's overall work will communicate your agency's commitment to achieving racial equity, and creates an expectation that staff and management at all levels should be thinking and acting through an "equity lens."

Training resources:

- YWCA Racial Justice training programs: www.ywcamadison.org
- City of Madison RESJI trainings (quarterly in 2015): www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet/hr/odt/
- Racial Equity Tools (tools, research, tips, curricula and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working toward justice at every level): www.racialequitytools.org
- PolicyLink: a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity by Lifting Up What Works. www.policylink.org

"We made the world we are living in and we have to make it over"

-- James Baldwin

Work planning resources:
- City of Seattle Race & Social Justice work plans by department: http://web6.seattle.gov/fas/rosa/ROSAWebhome.aspx
- Multnomah County's Equity and Empowerment Lens (Racial Justice Focus): https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens
  Also see "Creating an Action Plan" on page 41 of the Equity and Empowerment Lens: https://multco.us/file/31833/download

Priority Area 1: Equity in City Operations

d) (continued) Develop a work plan that includes racial equity and social justice goals

How: Start by evaluating and, if needed, updating your agency's mission, vision and core values. If your agency already uses work plans, use your next planning cycle to integrate racial equity strategies that fit with your mission and your work with the community. Your work plan and your equity goals should include both internal (hiring, promotion, leadership) and external (contracting, service, community partnerships) strategies. Your goals should be consistent with your mission and overall goals as an agency and also be applicable to the work of your agency. See the City of Seattle's work plans by department for examples (link below). Your agency's work plan should also include a plan to measure and communicate progress over time.

Example: **Clerk's Office work plan**

In January 2014, the City of Madison's Clerk's Office developed a two-year work plan to fulfill its updated mission: We exist to assist. Our team serves to provide equitable access to open government by promoting inclusion and full participation of all residents in the democratic process. The work plan includes goals and actions to improve election participation across marginalized communities and to empower their customers and staff at all possible points. One of the core messages included in the work plan is Government can't be neutral. (We will) Interrupt the processes creating or enabling inequity. The Clerk's Office has experienced several early successes with its new work plan, including a substantial increase in the diversity of City election officials, and will continue to evaluate its impact in the city and scale up efforts as their work progresses.

e) Update hiring practices

Why: To best serve all populations, our workforce should reflect the many racial and social perspectives of the community. Currently, the City of Madison's workforce is racially under-represented in several job classes. Many people of color and other marginalized populations have experienced systemic barriers to education and pathways to successful employment. Moreover, many traditional recruitment, hiring and advancement practices have been developed through a lens that values the dominant culture's experience over others (e.g., placing high value on advanced educational degrees versus life experience and community relationships).

Priority Area 1: Equity in City Operations

e) (continued) Update hiring practices

City internship programs provide opportunities for students to gain experience in
City service. Examples include:
- Affirmative Action Student Professionals in Residence (AASPIRE)
- Wanda Fullmore Youth Internship Program
- Madison Parks Internships
See www.cityofmadison.com/HR/employment/volunteerIntern.cfm for more information.

How: Start by looking at your current hiring practices. It may be helpful to analyze your last few hires and note some of the following:

- How was the position description developed? Who participated? Was a previous position used as a template?
- What were the education and experience requirements? Are these requirements truly needed to succeed in the position? Are multicultural skills and experience valued as highly as academics? Are there any groups that could be disproportionally excluded or otherwise impacted by the requirements?
- If a written exam was used to satisfy the civil service requirement, are the questions appropriate to the level of hiring?
- Did recruitment strategies and job postings ensure adequate outreach and advertisement to underrepresented populations?
- Did the interview panel include at least one person of color and one woman? Was at least one person from another department on the panel?

RESJI has drafted and is piloting an **Equitable Hiring Checklist** that can be utilized for new hires. Please contact Melissa Gombar in the department of Civil Rights at (608) 266-4721 or mgombar@cityofmadison.com

Example: **Madison Public Library Recruitment**

In filling a library supervisor position, Madison Public Library increased its outreach to communities of color through broad postings to national listservs and word-of-mouth to qualified community members of color. The application process included a supplemental question on participation in programs directed toward populations who are traditionally unrepresented in the field of librarianship, with participants in these programs receiving additional points. Benchmarks for supplemental questions emphasized experience working with communities of color as a core skill for library supervisors. The diverse interview panel included a person of color from outside the Library. With this new hire and others, the Library's challenge is to support conditions in which employees can transition and flourish in City employment and leadership. Library staff worked closely with Human Resources to develop and document this process for evaluation of success and replicability.

RESJI Priority Area 2: Equity in City Policies and Budgets

Example: **Staff Leadership**

The Community Development Division has delegated three staff who have been critical to the development of the RESJI. The staff are providing leadership in the RESJI Communications, Training and Tools teams, respectively. They have also utilized RESJI team members and materials in supporting community engagement for their own agency's work and continue to seek ways to do so.

Example: **From the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative:**

Since the Initiative began, the City has increased its City purchasing dollars to women and minority-owned businesses from $11 million to $34 million. Targeted outreach and other strategies have helped small businesses compete for contracts more effectively. An Executive Order strengthened the City's commitment to businesses owned by people of color and women, and outlined specific accountability steps for departments to ensure more equitable contracting results.

www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RSJI_Goals.pdf

a) Delegate representation to RESJI

Why: Involvement from all City departments and divisions will ensure that all perspectives are included and that the strengths of all agencies can be capitalized toward achieving racial equity. It will also ensure that communication can flow in both directions between the RESJI and City agencies.

How: Your agency's representative(s) can participate in one or more of the following:

- RESJI Core Team, a centralized hub of information sharing and planning
- An RESJI Action Team, focused teams working in specific strategic areas including: Communication, Community Connections, Data, and Training and Tools

b) Update purchasing and contracting practices

Why: The City of Madison spends millions of dollars annually in contracts ranging from major capital projects to office supplies. Our investments support a multitude of businesses, and inequitable investments can affect the economic and social health of our city. Historically, businesses owned by people of color have had limited opportunities to compete for the government's business because of discrimination, as well as by policies and practices that tend to put small businesses at a disadvantage.

How: The following strategies can be applied to help ensure that City contracts create equitable opportunities for all businesses and increased community benefits:

- Divide total project requirements into smaller tasks and/or quantities, where economically and legally feasible
- Encourage a higher level of subcontracting
- Regularly review the City of Madison directories of targeted businesses and identify firms from which to solicit bids/quotes
- Refer prospective targeted businesses to the City of Madison Affirmative Action Division for Certification
- Improve outreach and recruitment to ensure equitable access to information about contract opportunities, the work to be performed, and bid deadlines

Priority Area 2: Equity in City Policies and Budgets

Additional ways to incorporate racial equity and social justice considerations into your agency's policies, plans and budgets include:

- Align your agency's budget with Neighborhood Resource Team budget recommendations and other community-informed budget recommendations.
- Utilize community engagement strategies to inform decisions and plans (see Strategy 3a).

Additional Resources and Examples:
- Advancing Better Outcomes for All Children: Communicating Data Using a Racial Equity Lens (Casey Foundation) www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/morerace.pdf
- National Equity Atlas (PolicyLink): nationalequityatlas.org/
- Regional Equity Atlas (Coalition for a Livable Future, Portland Metro area): clfuture.org/equity-atlas
- Sustainable Communities Index (San Francisco): www.sustainablecommunitiesindex.org/

b) (continued) Update purchasing and contracting practices

- Establish minority and women's business enterprise (MWBE) mentor/protégé and capacity building program, offering trainings and/or networking forums
- Begin and/or participate in a City coordinated or sponsored joint bonding program for MWBEs
- Require bidders or responders on large City projects to more fully detail and commit in their bids/proposals to community benefit agreements and/or inclusion of small and MWBE involvement
- Utilize the bid of a qualified and competent targeted business when the bid of such business is deemed reasonable, although not necessarily low
- Include targeted businesses utilization objectives in advertisements for bids/proposals
- Assure that targeted businesses are solicited whenever they are potential sources
- Utilize the bid of a qualified and competent targeted business when the bid of such a business is deemed reasonable, although not necessarily low
- Provide targeted businesses with support regarding:
  - Notification of new bid opportunities
  - Building business capacity
  - Providing access to capital
  - Business planning and financing
  - Contract financing
  - Networking
  - Guaranteed loans

c) RESJI tools applied to policies, plans and budgets

Why: An analysis questionnaire ("tool") has been created to facilitate conscious consideration of how people of color and low-income populations will be affects by proposed policy decisions. The questions in the tools are designed to lead to strategies to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts and unintended consequences on traditionally marginalized populations.

How: The tools listed below are supported by a best practices guide, which should be read before use of any tools: www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet/attorney/documents/RESJIbest.pdf

Two RESJI impact analysis tools have been developed:
- RESJI Tool – Comprehensive Version: www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet/attorney/documents/RESJIcomp.doc
- RESJI Tool – Fast-track Version: www.cityofmadison.com/employeenet/attorney/documents/RESJIfast.doc

Priority Area 2: Equity in City Policies and Budgets

d) Engage in data-informed decision making

Why: Community-level data illustrate dramatic racialized gaps across a wide variety of indicators. By using data to better understand community conditions, we increase the likelihood that our work will have the highest impact in the areas where needs are the greatest. Using data inform our decisions will also allow us to track progress over time to measure success and adjust strategies as needed.

How: In decision-making processes, including projects, plans, budgets or policies, identify as many data sources as possible that relate to the topic. Relevant data could include the demographics of the population in a particular area, socioeconomic indicators like income and education, and other related services in the area of discussion. Qualitative data, such as personal stories, case studies, written accounts and observations, can in many cases illustrate the reality of a community's experience as well or better than quantitative data. It is also important to note data that would help to inform the decision or plan but do not exist, and to consider ways to collect or find that information. Keep in mind that data sources are not perfect; often they reflect a time lag of multiple years, and sometimes the populations being reported upon are so small that margins of error render the data unusable. Whenever possible, present the data you are using with members of the population who would be impacted by the decision to find out whether the data are reflective of the experience of that community and whether there are gaps that need to be filled in.

It may be helpful to use an analysis tool to help answer questions about potential impacts of decisions on communities of color and low-income populations (see Strategy 2c).

Current Madison-area data sources include:
- Neighborhood Indicators: madison.apl.wisc.edu/
- City of Madison open data site: data.cityofmadison.com/
- Race to Equity Report (Wisconsin Council on Children & Families): racetoequity.net
- Geography of Opportunity Report (Capital Area Regional Planning Commission): www.capitalarearpc.org/

Resources:
King County Community Engagement Guide and Worksheet:
www.kingcounty.gov/exec/ equity/toolsandresouces.aspx

RESJI Priority Area 3: Equity in the Community

a) Delegate representation to Neighborhood Resource Teams (NRTs)

Why: While Madison consistently ranks as one of the most livable cities in the country, we know historically this has not been the reality for many residents of color and for residents from low-income backgrounds. Existing since the early 1990s, NRTs are one of the first ways the City of Madison focused on promoting racial equity and social justice. NRTs focus on neighborhoods that have barriers to opportunity and bring City staff together with residents and other stakeholders to enhance communication, coordination, and relationship-building and promote racial equity and improve the quality of life for all residents of Madison's neighborhoods. NRTs focus on an agenda created by the community which can range from better lighting and housing to youth recreation and transportation matters. In addition to creating better pathways for City-neighborhood collaborations, NRTs help to highlight issues that cut across multiple areas of the city so that systemic barriers can be better addressed. By serving on NRTs, City staff develop deeper understanding of issues residents face in neighborhoods with barriers to opportunity, and in turn can help their departments and divisions better orient on and address those issues.

How: Department and division representatives to NRTs should:
- Attend and actively participate in NRT meetings and activities
- Develop knowledge of the issues and opportunities in the NRT focus area
- Develop relationships with other City staff, neighborhood residents, and other stakeholders
- Look for overlap and relevance of neighborhood issues to one's role or the role or purview of one's department or division
- Report back to departments on goings-on within NRTs

b) Update community engagement practices

Why: In order to achieve racial equity, we must involve those most affected by inequities in as many ways as possible. This likely means that our agencies will need to re-think and update our community engagement practices. Traditional strategies such as publicly noticing meetings and online portals for feedback are helpful, but not enough. Community engagement should offer opportunities for people to not only easily obtain information from the City, but to express their views and have a meaningful role in decision-making. By leading with a mentality of partnership rather than "doing for" the community, effective engagement will lead to stronger community trust and capacity to work with the City, ideally resulting in better outcomes for all neighborhoods.

Example: NRTs

In early 2014, all nine NRTs held community engagement events, ranging from community meals to listening sessions, where residents could share their goals for their neighborhoods. NRTs then developed City budget recommendations based on the identified goals, priorities and needs of the neighborhoods. These recommendations are resulting in hundreds of thousands of dollars being invested in NRT focus areas to address the articulated resident needs and priorities. Some of these include building basketball courts, instituting traffic-calming measures, and increasing community programming. Community events like these can be built upon to support a culture of community collaboration and inclusion across the city.

"Community engagement is a two-way exchange of information, ideas and resources."

– King County Community Engagement Guide

Example: **Metro Transit Routes**

Metro Route 50, a core route in southwest Madison ran on an hourly schedule. Residents in several neighborhoods throughout southwest Madison articulated the need for more frequent service. One of the Metro planners on an NRT in southwest Madison took the concerns back to their department and developed a strategy to provide service every half-hour instead. Metro instituted the change in the fall of 2014.

b) (continued) Update community engagement practices

How: Community engagement approaches can range from finding innovative ways to inform residents about City activities to supporting community-led efforts. Some ideas include:

- Encourage staff to build relationships with neighborhood and community leaders to ensure that there are points of contact for sharing of needs and concerns.
- Find new ways to gather information from community members outside of showing up at City meetings. Use technology to your advantage, but pair technology-centered strategies with efforts to ensure access to everyone.
- Partner with community centers, libraries, churches and other community-serving organizations to involve people in City decisions. When possible, align with existing organizations and events rather than creating new ones.
- When you do hold meetings, hold them at locations and times that accommodate the needs of your stakeholders. Hold multiple meetings if needed. Consider parking costs, accessibility, transportation and scheduling concerns. Provide child care, transportation assistance and food when possible.
- Involve community members in decision-making bodies and ensure that they have real power to affect decisions that will impact their communities. Avoid token, or symbolic, representation.
- Plan for ways to regularly communicate results and progress with the community. This will build trust and ensure that those involved and impacted know what was done with their input.

c) Update communication practices

Why: Proactive communication about race and equity allow us to frame our messages in a way that connects with stakeholders rather than alienating them. Your stakeholder groups may include staff in your agency, vendors and contractors, customers, media, community partners and community residents. The ways in which race and other differences are portrayed in the media and in everyday discourse can serve to either perpetuate or interrupt unfair stereotypes about different groups. Likewise, the ways in which we as City personnel communicate about race and equity can do the same.

Resources:
- Moving the Race Conversation Forward (Race Forward): www.raceforward.org/research/reports/moving-race-conversation-forward
- Vision, Values and Voice – A Social Justice Communications Toolkit (The Opportunity Agenda): toolkit.opportunityagenda.org/

c) (continued) Update communication practices

How: Communications should be part of your larger strategy. Like your other racial equity and social justice efforts, your communications should be aligned with your overarching goals. It is also important to understand your audience and tailor your messages and methods to best meet people where they are.

Some common communication strategies are:
- Ensure everyone in your agency knows the racial equity and social justice goals and what is being done to achieve them;
- Frame messages to focus on institutional and structural issues rather than individual racism;
- Be consistent, concise and clear about what you are doing and why;
- Develop a set of core messages that can be used by anyone in your agency to communicate with stakeholders;

For additional information or technical assistance, please contact the RESJI co-leads:

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