

# Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this task force is to make recommendations to the Mayor and the Common Council that will improve upon Madison's reputation as a music and entertainment hub that offers an enjoyable and welcoming environment for all of our residents and guests of all ages, thereby providing positive social, cultural, and economic impact for Madison.

The Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment was the result of nine years of work from the Hip-Hop community in Madison and seven years as a part of the official mission of Urban Community Arts Network. Over those nine years, citizens of Madison convened various government and private business entities to discuss plans to make our city's music and entertainment scene more inclusive. These entities included the Madison Police Department (MPD), the Office of the Mayor, the Alcohol License Review Committee (ALRC), the Madison Arts Commission (MAC), the Division of Civil Rights, and owners of music venues. In June of 2017, the City of Madison Common Council unanimously approved a resolution (RES-17-00512<sup>1</sup>) to convene this task force. The Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment makes the following recommendations:

## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Within one year, the City of Madison should create a full-time staff position the Mayor's office at \$60,000 per year (including pay and benefits) focused exclusively on promoting equity in arts and entertainment. This staffer would be responsible for ensuring that relevant ordinances are effectively communicated to the general public and be the point person for navigating licenses for entertainment events (from block parties to music festivals). In addition to being directly available to the public, one of their mandates would be, in coordination with relevant departments, to produce "how-to" videos, tool-kits, and literature that would be available online and at Madison Public Library branches. As a representative of the City, this staffer would also advocate for the inclusion of underrepresented populations and art forms at publicly accessible events like Make Music Madison and Dane Dances.
2. Within one year, the City of Madison should work with festival organizers who are receiving City funds to ensure that artists of color and specifically Hip-Hop artists, are incorporated into their programming.
3. Within five years, Hip-Hop should be incorporated into all kinds of events, including those at licensed entertainment venues and publicly accessible events such as Taste of Madison and Art Fair on the Square.

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<sup>1</sup> The resolution was amended to extend the end date of the task force to December 4, 2018 in [File ID # 53206/Res-18-000675](#)

4. Within five to ten years, the City of Madison should work to support a music festival featuring Hip-Hop music, dance, and visual arts, R&B, etc.
5. Within one year, the Common Council and Mayor should commission a study on the level of equity in policing Hip-Hop related events in comparison to other genres.
6. Within one year, the City should work to increase the number of residents trained as EOC Certified Partners to witness music and entertainment events to ensure that equity is maintained. The City should offer these trainings at a minimum of once per year and intentionally advertise these trainings in neighborhood libraries, businesses, and centers as well as with Neighborhood Resource Teams.
7. Within two years, the City should hire a consultant to develop a plan to build music infrastructure to support independent artists. Venues should work closely with the newly created Entertainment Equity City staff position by no later than 2020 (refer to recommendation 1).
8. Within one year, the Department of Civil Rights should develop procedures to train all venue staff in anti-bias practices and bi-cultural and cross-cultural interactions. The ALRC should recommend that all staff be trained within two years.
  - a. This should be a requirement associated with receiving an entertainment license or a bartending license in addition to Tavern Safety. Venue owners, bartenders, and other venue staff should complete eight hours annually. New staff should attend training as soon as possible after hire.
  - b. This training should be provided by the City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative Staff, Department of Civil Rights, or by an appropriate Community Partner contracted to provide the training by the City of Madison. This training shall be provided at no cost to venue owner aside from costs associated with staff salaries, building utilities, etc.
  - c. Venues should implement clear anti-bias procedures and specific discipline policies for violation of these procedures. Guidance should be provided by the City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative staff. These policies should be developed within one year and implemented within two years.
9. Within one year, venues should begin to follow the 2015 Revised Entertainment Practices for Venue Owners (Appendix C).
10. Within two years, the ALRC should require that all venues with an entertainment license with more than 14 employees submit an Affirmative Action Plan similar to entities contracting or receiving grant money from the City of Madison. The ALRC should emphasize EEOC language and discrimination definitions when granting these licenses.
11. Within five to ten years, the City should support finding venue spaces outside of the downtown area (e.g. Oscar Meyer, West Gate Mall), hopefully in conjunction with a new and improved city transportation plan.

12. Within five years, the City should invest in an alternative venues dedicated to Hip-Hop. This can be in the form of an Arts Incubator, or alternate satellite venues incorporating community center activities during the day and operating as a licensed venue by night.
13. Within one year, the City should consider providing grants or sliding-scale fees for arts events that require permits. Bringing a community together around music should be achievable for all citizens at all income levels. Along with this, language should be standardized for all permitted events, and it should be clear which type of event needs which type of permit.
14. Within five to 10 years, the City should commit to making improvements in the Madison Metro transportation system recommended by the Transit Development Plan (2013).
15. Within five years, the City should work with the Madison Metropolitan School District to fully fund arts education, leveraging resources such as grant funding. The City should advocate for MMSD expanding efforts to include non-traditional music and arts programming during the school day. Community organizations that work with young people should also be directly supported by the City to make culturally relevant arts opportunities available outside of school hours.
16. Within five years, the City should invest in “arts incubators”: venues that provide education and resources for artists located throughout the city.
17. Both print and television media outlets should commit to more balanced culturally sensitive reporting and should develop systems to track their own performance/goals in this area. The City of Madison public relations staff should take a proactive approach to promoting underrepresented events and events by and for citizens of color.
18. Both print and television media outlets and City of Madison public relations staff should utilize style/language resources and culturally competent best practices.
19. Both print and television media outlets and City of Madison public relations staff should hire more people of color who can contribute different cultural realities and perspectives to stories and coverage.
20. Both print and television media outlets should educate staff on the historical contexts of the linguistic and culturally insensitive communication styles and ideas that no longer serve, honoring Madison’s diversity and mutual respect. The City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative staff should provide this education to City of Madison public relations staff.
21. We highly recommend the 2015 Race Forward style sheet on reporting racially sensitive topics.<sup>2</sup> City public relations staff can support equity of representation by taking steps to promote events and initiatives by underrepresented arts genres and/or led by people of color as they would for large scale or annual events.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward\\_V1.1.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward_V1.1.pdf)

22. The City of Madison Police Department (MPD) should commit to more balanced and culturally sensitive policing. The Deputy Mayor of Public Safety should work with the Division of Civil Rights and MPD to set performance goals in this area and develop methods to track performance. We recommend that funding increases be directly tied to these performance measures.
23. MPD officers and public relations staff should be trained in culturally competent practices for writing, assessing, and categorizing incident reports. We highly recommend that the 2015 Race Forward style sheet as a guide for these reports and other MPD communications.<sup>3</sup>
24. MPD should make available to the public specific policies for determining police presence and deployment for all events including in nightclubs, at concerts, and at festivals. If such policies do not exist, MPD should develop these policies with public input within one year.
25. MPD should increase employment of people of color to support the different cultural realities and perspectives they contribute to law enforcement work.
26. MPD should provide training to staff on the historical contexts of culturally insensitive understandings and ideas that no longer honor and respect our community diversity.
27. MPD should reduce police presence in communities of color, and when police are present in these communities, the focus should be on building build trust and connection.
28. We recommend that all media and law enforcement staff view the film “13<sup>th</sup>” through which filmmaker Ava DuVernay, explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African Americans, and also explaining many of the origins of racist language/understandings we use to talk directly and indirectly about black people in the Media which lead to conscious and subconscious behavior and attitudes by law enforcement.
29. Madison Metro should expand late night bus services throughout the city. By not running even main-route buses past bar time, the City makes it much more difficult for residents to get home safely after a night out. The City of Madison should not assume that private industry (taxi and ride-sharing apps) is as effective as safe, reliable, and affordable public transportation.
30. The City should more frequently provide reduced-fare and free service on fixed routes during major music and entertainment events. This would address both public safety and equity of access to these events.
31. Through a competitive bidding process, the City should contract with a local party bus or van company to provide late night transportation for residents in neighborhoods without access to public transportation or far from transfer points. This service could be provided on a sliding scale to City of Madison residents.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward\\_V1.1.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/Race%20Reporting%20Guide%20by%20Race%20Forward_V1.1.pdf)

## Introduction

### Vision

Madison desires a reputation as a music and entertainment hub that offers an enjoyable and welcoming environment for all of our residents and guests of all ages, thereby providing a positive social, cultural, and economic impact for Madison.

### Core Issue

For a myriad of reasons, musicians and entertainers of color, especially within the community of Hip-Hop, do not have equal access to performance opportunities venues in Madison at licensed, commercial venues such as bars and nightclubs, and publicly accessible venues such as parks, block parties and festivals. This lack of equity leads to both artists and businesses missing financial opportunities, businesses losing patrons of color, and the City of Madison losing citizens of color.



We believe that all people have the right to freedom of artistic expression and participation and that there is great value in having an equitable, well-rounded cultural landscape in our increasingly diverse city. This diversity has the potential to create a greater sense of shared ownership among people in our community, which leads to greater investment, responsibility, and care for our community, which then leads to less of the hopelessness and isolation that fosters crime and violence.

We recognize the right of all people to create, appreciate, and celebrate music and entertainment that speaks to their individual and collective identities. We recognize the barriers that limit access to artists and audiences of diverse musical genres such as Hip-Hop.

To address this, we believe that the City of Madison must put structures and systems in place that ensure access to safe and inclusive environments. The City of Madison must call out systems, practices, and bias that perpetuate institutional, structural, and individual racism. Musicians and entertainers of color do not have equal access to performance opportunities in Madison.

We believe Madison can be a music and entertainment hub known for our cultural vitality that offers an enjoyable and welcoming environment for all our residents and guests of all ages.

The purpose of this task force is to make recommendations to the Mayor and the Common Council that will improve upon Madison's reputation as a music and entertainment hub that offers an enjoyable and welcoming environment for all of our residents and guests of all ages, thereby providing positive social, cultural, and economic impact for Madison.

The Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment was the result of nine years of work from the Hip-Hop community in Madison and seven years as a part of the official mission of Urban Community Arts Network. Over those nine years, citizens of Madison convened various government and private business entities to discuss plans to make our city's music and entertainment scene more inclusive. These entities included the Madison Police Department, the Office of the Mayor, the Alcohol License and Review Committee (ALRC), the Madison Arts Commission (MAC), the Division of Civil Rights, and owners of music venues. Figure 1 below shows a timeline of events leading to the formation of this task force. In June of 2017, the City of Madison Common Council unanimously approved a resolution (RES-17-00512) to convene this task force. The task force held its first meeting in September of 2017 and met monthly.

#### TASK FORCE MEMBERS

RES-17-00512 specified that this task force should contain eleven members from representing different sectors of the community and city committees. The eleven members of the Task Force include:

- Chair: Dr. Karen Reece, President of Urban Community Arts Network
- Vice Chair: Rob "Dz" Franklin, Musician, Educator
- Jalen McCullough, College Student
- Brennan Haelig, Music/Entertainment Promoter
- Darwin Sampson, Live Music Business Owner
- Matt Gerding, Music Venue Property Owner
- Fernando Cano Ospina, Alcohol License Review Committee
- Alderperson Arvina Martin, Transit and Parking Commission
- Yorel Lashley, Madison Arts Commission
- Caitlin Badsing, Equal Opportunities Commission
- Syed Mustajab Abbas, Public Safety Review Committee

Per the resolution, the task force had four main aims:

**Identification of the root causes of issues that may detract from equal access to entertainment by all residents and guests including transportation and public perception of safety concerns.**

**Explore best practices used in other communities, especially those that are home to large populations of college students, young professionals, residents who are active in urban arts that can be adapted to our own downtown.**

**Recommend long-term and short-term strategies to establish an atmosphere of continued communication, which will assure the sustainability of the desired environment and benefits.**

**Analysis of costs, revenues, and timelines that will support both short term and long term recommendations.**

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**Table 1. Timeline leading to Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment**

Year	Events
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incident at Brink Lounge results in “indefinitely postponing” booking of Hip-Hop. No Hip-Hop acts have been booked at the Brink Lounge since then. This incident resulted in media coverage of Hip-Hop community members speaking out about inequity.</li> </ul>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dexter Patterson and ShaH Evans develop a list of best practices with the Alcohol License Review Committee (ALRC) for Hip-Hop shows aiming to increase awareness and inclusion. These best practices were discussed by the ALRC but never distributed to venue owners or otherwise implemented.</li> <li>- The Madison Hip-Hop community comes together to strategize as to how to improve the community’s image. This community team worked to produce the first Madison Hip-Hop Awards show. Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN) was formed as a result and incorporated as a non-profit in 2011.</li> </ul>
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UCAN begins meeting with MPD (Chief Noble Wray, Captains, and others) and the Mayor’s office (Deputy Mayor of Public Safety) regarding over-policing and inequitable treatment and booking of Hip-Hop shows.</li> <li>- Karin Wolf, Madison Arts Program Administrator, calls a meeting with Hip-Hop representatives while composing the City of Madison Cultural Plan. The discussion was focused on the perception of public safety issues related to Hip-Hop rather than art and culture.</li> <li>- UCAN begins meeting with an unofficial task force including the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety, MPD, ALRC, and Madison Arts Commission (MAC).</li> </ul>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Madison Arts Commission forms a Hip-Hop Ad Hoc Subcommittee</li> <li>- MAC Hip-Hop Ad Hoc Subcommittee administers survey regarding perceptions and practices for Hip-Hop performances.</li> <li>- Civil Rights joins unofficial task force meetings.</li> </ul>
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unofficial task force decides that official task force would be the best path forward.</li> <li>- Ad hoc Hip-Hop Subcommittee survey report is released and MAC recommends starting an official task force to address these issues.</li> <li>- The best practices document is distributed to MAC, ALRC, and community members for revisions and updating.</li> </ul>
2015 - 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formation of task force is delayed while decisions are made about appropriate staffing as well as due to transitions in staffing in the Mayor’s office, MPD, and ALRC.</li> </ul>
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A resolution to create the Equity in Entertainment Task Force is introduced to council in February and passes in June. Task Force member recommendations are confirmed in August and September.</li> </ul>