

Objectives:

Hear, Here has six objectives with action plans and measurable components to make sure that we offer a strong contribution to our community after project has been completed:

1. **Objective:** Represent all populations and experiences, especially those that normally are not represented.

Action Plan:

- Make a list of all the populations in the La Crosse area. Throughout the story selection process keep checking back to see which populations are represented.
- While selecting stories, ask the questions:
 - What population does this represent and how visible are they in our downtown community?
 - Is this a quintessential Downtown La Crosse story or not?
 - Does the story tell us something we did not know about downtown, or something we see all the time?
 - Is the experience of this story already represented, underrepresented or overrepresented?

Measurable: Keep a running tally of populations and type of story or experience represented and build analysis.

2. **Objective:** Promote relationships between people and downtown spaces.

Action Plan:

- Record the stories in the space they happened. Include the background noises in the recording.
- Center the stories around the place by reminding the interviewee to bring their tale back to the space. Have them direct where the listener should be looking, what they should be picturing, what time of day or night it is etc.
- Avoid choosing stories that have little to do with place.
- Take the places that people avoid because they know nothing about them and find a story to explain and give significance to the space.

Measurable: Keep a detailed map of the locations of stories and the type of space in which they are situated (near business, alley, park, etc.) for reference and analysis. Work with downtown businesses and measure their traffic and compare with the years before the project. Although this might not be a direct correlation it merits further research.

3. **Objective:** Generate community involvement and sustainability of the project.

Action Plan:

- Reach out to citizens beyond the downtown La Crosse area to come listen to the stories. Advertise at the local level in the La Crosse area and also at the state level.
- Plan and coordinate groups to tour the signs (schools, clubs and associations, retirement communities, etc.)
- Set up an Board to review the stories as they come in and to assess the project every year asking what worked the past year and how it could improve for the next year.

Measurable: Count the number of participants using the phone system, record the number of stories submitted and set up a spreadsheet to keep track. Also use this spreadsheet to analyze which stories are listened to most, which are listened to the least, and what time participants are listening and contributing to the project.

4. **Objective:** Create a safe space for sharing stories.

Action Plan:

- Interviewers have written up a proposal for the Human Subjects Review Institutional Review Board and undergone ethics training.
- Discuss with the interviewee, the process of recording before going to the location and recording the story. Have them sign an Informed Consent Form.
- Allow interviewees to retract their stories from the project if they decide they do not wish to participate.

Measurable: Ask the storyteller at every step of the process if they are comfortable with the progression of their story and the project.

5. **Objective:** The project is as accessible as possible

Action Plan:

- Produce a website that will work in conjunction with the street level signs for people who may not be able to physically visit the sites.
- Offer on the website a transcript of all stories for the hard of hearing.
- Make sure all the signs are in an area accessible to all people, making them especially wheelchair accessible.
- Do not place signs in areas where participants may not feel safe.

Measurable: Offer on the website a “contact us if you were unable to participate in the project” option.

6. **Objective:** Maintain a constructive atmosphere for the discussion of controversial topics

Action Plan:

- The Board will come to a group consensus about which stories are suitable to be chosen and which are not. Discuss the issues brought up by the story.
- Do not accept stories that include hate speech against a person, group or community so that no one feels jeopardized by the project.
- Do not exclude stories that may cause controversy.
- Consider placing advisory statements on the signs of stories that may be unsuitable for young children, and offer a separate tour for children and families (through a brochure and a note on the website).
- Create a statement on all publicity materials regarding controversial topics that explains that the project is a platform upon which personal experiences and opinions are shared for the greater good of the community, not to harm any one person or group.
- When language in Oral History Program stories is outdated and/or insensitive according to today’s standards, we have chosen to review and edit out offensive language if it is not integral to the story. Full interviews are available at the Area Research Center at Murphy Library for those who would like to hear unedited versions.

Measurable: For the most part, controversy means we are doing something right. Keep track of the dialogue about the project to verify that no harm is being done by monitoring the complaints we receive and reviews people are giving the project on the website and in media.