

La Crosse Historic and Cultural Museum Planning Task Force Visioning Workshop Comments from May 10, 2018

1) What would you consider the ultimate picture of success for this project?

- Actively used and financially supported community space that celebrates all of the region's history.
- Inspirational place where people have fun and are educated about the past and present of La Crosse County.
- Room for exhibits and artifacts, adaptive storage for more donations, room for events, handicapped accessibility, pleasing to the eye, history is multiculturally inclusive.
- A museum that people travel to see including visitor activities and is full of changing displays. It will leave a yearning to return and be involved.
- Create an enjoyable experience, immersive, engaging and/or interactive.
- Sustainable.
- A museum where the public and visitors can be educated on the history of La Crosse.
- Self-sustaining fully staffed site fulfilling the La Crosse Historical Society mission.
- Ultimately this new museum facility created through this group will encompass all the different stories that created the La Crosse area into what it is today. That visitor experience will be immersive and interactive. Visitors will leave feeling tied to the area and know that they too are a part of the history of La Crosse.
- Establish an attraction to local and out of town visitors to showcase La Crosse in history, culture, achievements, people and events.
- A destination cultural museum that engages the public and celebrates our rich historical community.
- After viewing the current situation, it is easy to see that the La Crosse Historical Society needs a new museum to adequately store and exhibit the wealth of its collections.
- Educate families on local history. Engage the school district. New facility for La Crosse Historical Society. Safe and secure storage of local history. Financially sustainable.
- Museum building provides adequate space for both storage and display. Located in a safe accessible location to both local residents and tour groups.
- Building a structure that allows complete display of La Crosse collectibles. Access for all.

- An iconic building (architecture that draws people) telling the story of the La Crosse region over thousands of years, from indigenous people to the 21st century, including the natural surroundings.

2) What would make this project special?

- Displays that show the proud history of the area.
- Promotes interactions and understanding yet is a place to have fun.
- More cultural inclusivity, including representation from African American, Native American, Hmong, Mexican, Puerto-Rican, Hispanic, European.
- Inclusivity with all the groups equally would make this project unique. Especially by allowing the same amount of storytelling/space between ethnic groups. Additionally, utilizing the surrounding environment and river as outdoor museum experience space would make this unique.
- This museum needs to have an appropriate and beautiful location. This museum needs to have adequate and appropriate storage space, exhibit space, work space, office space, parking ‘hands on’ activities, audio-visuals.
- The creation of a city sponsored/promoted attraction so it is more than just another museum. Something that becomes known as a must-see in La Crosse.
- Historic building. Staff.
- La Crosse focus. Sustainable.
- This should be a museum that specifically represents the history of the La Crosse area and functions as a community gathering place.
- History given that is unique to La Crosse and very interesting to many different types of people.
- If you describe this project to someone not a part of the planning process they say “Wow, I would want to go there.”
- Local flavor. Cultural inclusiveness. Pride and respect for historic artifacts.
- A destination that is interactive and engaging for multi-generations. Something that leaves a lasting positive memory.
- Local engagement and support – make this something everyone talks about. Location at Riverside North.
- The building or location would be uniquely connected to the La Crosse history.
- It tells the story of the Upper Mississippi, the people, the landscape, the history.

3) Describe how you would like visitors to feel when they visit this project.

- Engaged and connected to the importance and value of La Crosse history.
- Engaged and interested. Can interact and relax. Come away wanting to come back.
- Engaged. Worth their time and money.
- Captivated. Transported into the past, memories, feelings.
- Inspired. Affirmed. Curious. Proud.

- Visitors should be amazed, involved, eager to see everything, more knowledgeable after they leave, eager to tell friends/family about it.
- A connection to the area. The need to share with others to visit also. Spark an interest in the history and pass that along and down to the next generation.
- Inspired. Glad they came because they know facts they didn't know before they came. Encouraged to return.
- Sense of arrival at a key destination.
- Engaged. Interested. Curious. Surprised. Happy! Knowledgeable.
- Awed by the natural beauty of the landscape, impressed by the breadth of history in the region, and excited to spend time in La Crosse.
- Visitors to the project should feel connected to the stories and place. They should feel that they are a portion of the ongoing history and development of the La Crosse area.
- They would enjoy their experience and want to know and learn more.
- Educated. Involved. Enlightened. Ready to come back for the next event.
- Awed. Excited. Want to come back again. Want to tell friends about it.

4) Using three sentences, describe three concrete wishes for a La Crosse Area Historic and Cultural Museum.

- I wish it to be financially healthy. I wish for the museum to be ethical and true to its mission. I wish it to fulfill that mission in a professional manner, and to be known as an example of an excellent museum.
- The museum should become known far and wide for its uniqueness. It should have adequate staff to develop and maintain it. It should be comprehensive and 'hands on'.
- Is sustainable. Dares to be fun. Is a space not just for tourists, but repeatedly draws residents, as well.
- Interactive display that could engage children. Archiving space to maintain collections. Perhaps get away from the traditional 'museum'.
- Various cultures involved. History always changing. A place that is permanent.
- Opportunities for hands on experiences. Located near river and well-traffic areas. Indoor and outdoor features.
- A museum that represents all of our diverse culture. A destination for all ages that is a highlight for families and creates lasting memories. Indoor/outdoor active engagement and experiences.
- Financial sustainability. Collaboration of all local groups of interest. Provide education to families – local and visitors. Destination center.
- Ethnic group stories including Ho-Chunk removals and persistence to stay in area represented in the space. History of downtown evolution shown. More engagement with visitors!

- Reflective of the total community. Generator of interest for groups previously unknown. Artifacts from other cultures represented.
- Easy access for all. Location in downtown La Crosse. Year round activities.
- Sustainable. Engaging. Inviting/welcoming.
- Financial sustainability. Flexibility to attract repeat visitors. Attractive and inspiring structure.
- Bright, open, colorful. Attractive displays. Interesting narrative/stories.
- It tells the whole story of La Crosse, from indigenous people to the 21st century. It integrates the natural landscape into the story. It serves as a major tourist destination and preservation facility.
- Inspired. Connected. Renewed.
- Adequate space for expansion. Building that reflects La Crosse. Interactive exhibits.

5) How will this project make a difference?

- This project will raise appreciation for local history and increase understanding for the diversity in our community.
- The celebration of our cultural history gives our community roots and strength and pride. Our culture is important to our growth and happiness. It is the foundation of our community.
- Educate our children, visitors and community of one rich history.
- Local and beyond. Tourism-education. Income generating. Home/support for collections.
- People will know where to go for questions, answers and knowledge of their history.
- Become a unifying site for the community bringing all diverse aspects of La Crosse together under one roof – a hub.
- Value seen from the perspective of residents and visitors. Create something that people want to talk about.
- By being a source of pride and an appealing, engaging venue the project will garner strong local support and attract visitors.
- It will showcase the history, achievements and people of the La Crosse area, thus letting all visitors know who we are and how we got to the present time. This is not done anywhere now.
- This museum will allow families, individuals, school children and visitors to gain a comprehensive background on the history of our area. It will bring new visitors to La Crosse. It will allow the La Crosse Historical Society to showcase the wonderful collection they have.

- By having a visible space for visitors to learn and engage with the area's history, they can connect themselves as players in the area (civil engagement, cultural tourism, etc.). Visibility can also lead to potential donors and more visitation.
- More members of community will feel included in the community. More inclusiveness generates more bridge-making within the community and dispels paranoia and distrust over time.
- It will bring the whole community together in shared history and love for the natural surroundings. In essence, it will serve as something to invite all the local citizens and provide a point of civic pride.
- Create a collaboration between many community groups for one mission/vision. Bring awareness to locals and visitors.
- Huge tourism attraction.
- Encourage the local awareness of La Crosse's history.

6) How can this project be structured to function at its best?

- Inclusive. Careful financial planning. Consider all current resources in the community – don't duplicate what is currently being done.
- Location and accessibility are very important to the success. Being near downtown and active areas will help to support the destination. Multilevel engaging spaces are essential.
- While the City of La Crosse will take the lead, the County and surrounding communities also need to be involved. Partnerships with the large land corporations should also be part of the project.
- Museum is its own entity with its own board/management. Financially sustainable separate from any non-profits having to bear the financial burden.
- Long-term financial support in place. Expertise involved at all levels.
- Keep open mind to unique opportunities.
- How can it be funded and staffed to meet the needs to today's 'internet'?
- Must be sustainable, in staffing, energy use, etc. so that funding woes in the future do not cause it to fail. Combining cultural center with museum create buy in by many local factions, emphasis on people not just things.
- Through consistent meetings and discussions with represented groups, the project can allow for equality. The end can be an inclusive museum/cultural center that won't just appeal to one audience. The end stories can be more than an armchair anthropologist's view of society and history.
- Areas designated for activity and displays.
- It should be a new building so things can be developed for the best preservation of all artifacts. It should be easy for visitors to proceed through the museum, unlike what is available in the present location. It should be interactive in order to maintain the interest of visitors.

- Need a joint venture with County, City and public support.
- By careful listening to all parties and creation of an appropriate management structure.
- People excited and willing to help monetarily and voluntarily. Government recognized.
- Project needs to be inclusiveness and collaborative, garnering broad support. Financial stability needs to be planned for from the start.
- Dedicated project manager. Funding thru both city and private groups.