



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Agenda

Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

5:15 PM

Eagle Room

This meeting is also being held virtually. E-mail kuhlmanl@cityoflacrosse.org if you have trouble logging in.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://cityoflacrosse-org.zoom.us/j/88525522441?pwd=cUh5OG41d1pydTntZWV1VS95b0FSdz09>

Meeting ID: 885 2552 2441 Passcode: 330906

Join by phone

+1 (646) 931-3860

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Agenda Items:

- 1 [23-0068](#) Accept Code of Ethics

 Attachments: [Municipal Code of Ethics](#)

- 2 [22-1522](#) February Updates on Discrimination Complaints, Racial Equity Team, REACH, and Homelessness Coordinator

- 3 [22-0343](#) Strategic Planning

 Attachments: [Draft Goals \(Nov 2022\)](#)
 [Draft Vision, Mission, and Core Values \(Sep 2022\)](#)
 [Strategic Planning Workshop Results \(Jul 2016\)](#)

 Generating Action

- 4 [22-1024](#) Discussion on housing as a human right.

 Attachments: [The Right to Adequate Housing - Training Module](#)
 [What Does the 'Human Right to Adequate Housing' Mean?](#)
 [Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration](#)
 [Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunity for All](#)
 [City of Madison - Housing as a Human Right Resolution Draft](#)

5 [22-0062](#) Discussion on Civil Rights Dept.

Attachments: [Madison Civil Rights Dept Interview Notes \(January 2022\)](#)
[GARE Presentation Memo \(August 2018\)](#)

Adjournment

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

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400 La Crosse Street
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City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Text File

File Number: 22-1522

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City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Text File

File Number: 22-0343

Agenda Date: 6/8/2022

Version: 1

Status: Referred with Direction

In Control: Human Rights Commission

File Type: General Item

Agenda Number: 3

Draft Goals

Moved from Core Values or Shared in Meetings

- Provide quick access to legal and housing resources
- Help and advocate for residents with evictions or who can't pass background checks
- Improve Housing Authority policies

From 2016 Strategic Planning Workshop

Overarching Goals

- Gather statistics on police contact proportionate to demographics
- Work to ensure housing quality is better in La Crosse with affordable and adequate options
- Work toward having employee demographics of City/County proportionately match those of the residents

Community Building Goals

- Work toward multiple meaningful after school, weekend, and summer programming for youth
- Ensure homeless individuals and families are treated with dignity and respect and efforts are made to make sure they are put into permanent housing quickly
- Celebrate diversity in La Crosse

Housing and Economic Development Goals

- Make La Crosse's neighborhoods vibrant and diverse
- Ensure there is quality, affordable housing available to residents
- Residents are able to earn a living wage
- Subsidized housing is available for those that are homeless and transitioning

Public Health and Safety Goals

- Increase the mental health services in La Crosse so people can get help quickly
- Work towards having all providers in La Crosse County use same intake system to enter information on client
- Increase options for drug and alcohol addiction treatment
- Increase walkability of streets and safety

Draft Vision & Mission Statements

Vision

To be a trusted resource for resolving discrimination in the community.

Mission

To be a forum for reviewing discriminatory complaints; providing tenant/landlord resources; and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the community.

Core Values

- Providing quick access to legal and housing resources
- Creating a clear complaint process with a quick response
- Continuing engagement with the community to identify their needs
- Collaborating with other agencies
- Being a positive presence in support of other anti-discrimination organizations
- Having trust in a fair hearing
- Housing as a human right
- Working for the dignity and safety of the La Crosse community by promoting diversity, equity and inclusion considering social, economic and environmental factors
- Providing an impartial forum to educate about, monitor for, and implement fair practices.
- Equity and justice
- Having open minds with critical thinking

Human Rights Commission
Strategic Planning Workshop Results
July 2016



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Participants and Process

Human Rights Commission Members:

Fabio Burgos
Elizabeth Digby-Brittan
Jai Johnson
Ashley Lacenski
James Parker
Shaundel Spivey
Will Van Roosenbeek

Community Member:

Jason Larsen

Facilitated by:

Jason Gilman, City of La Crosse Director of Planning and Development

Process:

At the July 27th special meeting of the Human Rights Commission (HRC), Jason Gilman held a planning workshop for those in attendance. The workshop was held in effort to assist the commission in determining goals and the direction of the group's future actions. In order to do this, the participants were asked to write down their top suggestions for the vision and mission of the commission as well as goals and concerns for each of the following categories: overarching policy, community building and social capital, housing and economic development, public health, safety, and welfare. The participants then voted on the top priorities from each of the categories. The top goals and concerns as voted on by participants are included in this report.

The commission will meet again to brainstorm action items as well as plan for implementation. Staff suggestions for possible goals and action items are included in italics in each section.

Vision

Listed are the vision suggestions verbatim as received on the index cards: Please choose your top three priorities.

- “Stronger community through a celebration of our various cultures, ethnicities, racial make up, etc. in order to meaningfully reduce discrimination based on race, gender, etc.”
- “A community that is inclusive + just with employment reflecting the population. Welcoming + treating justly all members + citizens of the community with a metropolitan collaborative approach to education, housing, employment + public safety”
- “Equal access to all resources, proportionate police contact, equal representation and a better balance in our communities and schools”
- “Long Term: An open + welcoming community for minorities, people of color, those w/diverse backgrounds + experiences. People will want to come here. Short Term: Ensuring practices are in place to promote diverse workforces + public organizations. Hiring practices should promote diversity.”
- “A city where people of all races, groups feel welcomed and want to live. Based on both equal access to jobs and housing and a feeling that city/county government is committed to promoting social and economic diversity: meaning for policing and specific economic outreach.”
- “Women and non-white males broadly represented in Professional fields, positions of leadership and influence, a cultural presence. An absence of the overall negativity that has characterized La Crosse for decades (WIZM, nasty bloggers, etc.) In a word, civility! A more educated, enlightened, economically comfortable populace.”
- “In a place where we truly embrace & appreciate the differences of all people. So much so that we help place different people in high positions, the work force is as equally representative of the community. Everything we offer in this community will be presentative & show appreciation for all- utopia of acceptance.”
- “A place where housing (safe/kept up/affordable) was available for everyone. Many diverse programs to help people with addiction, depression, homelessness, mental or physical disabilities, etc.... These programs would all be connected hospitals/clinics/city/county providing the best care. Diversity would be integrated in all neighborhoods. We would invest in our youth, making our city sustainable and welcoming. Our festivals would be focused on our diversity & to celebrate one another. We would listen to one another.”

Overarching – General Public Relations/Policy Influence

Voted as top priorities:

- Disproportionate minority contact with police – adults and youth
- Lack of mobility for people of color
- Adequate Housing – landlords often do not keep up their properties so people live in unsafe/bad homes or no middle cost housing (either student (slum) or high end)
- Employment - impartial (not preferential) application of affirmative efforts to match hiring and employment in City/County to existing demographics percentages of available and qualified candidates (race/sex/ability/orientation)

Possible Goal: Statistics will show police contact is proportionate to demographics

Possible Action Item: Diversify police force

Possible Action Item: Increase diversity training

Possible Goal: Work to ensure housing quality is better in La Crosse with affordable and adequate options

Possible Action Item: Encourage those to report housing breaking code to the Inspections Department

Possible Action Item: Talk with landlords and builders about building quality affordable housing

Possible Action Item: Encourage programs that provide affordable housing to low and moderate income residents

Possible Goal: Employee demographics of City/County will match those of the residents

Possible Action Item: Encourage employers to use practices such as removing all information that may give insight into people's race/sex/ability/orientation, etc. while doing initial reviews of applications to avoid explicit or implicit biases

Possible Action Item: Ensure recruitment efforts are being made to diverse populations

Community Building and Social Capital

Voted as top priorities:

- Need for more youth programming that provides leadership
- Treatment of Homeless – need for permanent housing and to be seen as human beings
- Stratification of social groups
- Failure to promote current diversity of the city as a plus

Possible Goal: There are multiple meaningful after school, weekend, and summer programming for youth

Possible Action: Encourage and support organizations in creating these programs

Possible Goal: Homeless individuals and families are treated with dignity and respect and efforts are made to make sure they are put into permanent housing quickly

Possible Action: Support groups working to fight homelessness

Possible Action: Provide trainings on compassion towards those that are homeless

Possible Action: Support projects and programs creating transitional and supportive housing for those that are homeless

Possible Goal: Diversity is celebrated in La Crosse

Possible Action: Hold free community events celebrating diversity

Possible Action: Release editorials or letters to the editor highlighting diversity?

Housing and Economic Development

Voted as top priorities

- Low income housing is often in certain neighborhoods, so people avoid those. Those neighborhoods are where many people of color live (segregated)
- Lack of affordable housing for all – not many options. Can be difficult to gain if they had been evicted.
- Hard to make ends meet when working minimum wage jobs. Higher min. wage needed in City of La Crosse
- Employment est. and matching employment in city and county to population demographics in city and county for fair representation of all citizens (qualified and available people)
- Homelessness – insufficient subsidized housing

Possible Goal: Neighborhoods are vibrant and diverse

Possible Action: Support efforts to diversify neighborhoods without displacing residents

Possible Goal: There is quality, affordable housing available to residents

Possible Action: Encourage developers and landlords to offer quality, affordable units

Possible Goal: Residents are able to earn a living wage

Possible Action: Encourage legislation to increase minimum wage

Possible Goal: Employee demographics will match those of residents

Possible Action: Encourage more efforts with hiring diverse candidates in city and county positions

Possible Goal: Subsidized housing is available for those that are homeless and transitioning

Possible Action: Encourage programs to expand subsidized housing

Public Health and Safety

Voted as top priorities:

- Mental health – most therapists/counselors have waiting lists and can't be seen for 2-3 months. We need access to more options – more therapists/psychiatrists/ what to do if beds are full – more short term care
- Integrating systems – healthcare – county – city – nonprofit so that people don't fall through the cracks
- Drug and alcohol addiction treatment
- Dark streets, unsafe for those that must walk and use public transportation

Possible Goal: Increase the mental health services in La Crosse so people can get help quickly

Possible Action: Encourage hospitals and clinics to expand their mental health services, hire more therapists/counselors, find ways to make it easily accessible

Possible Goal: All providers in La Crosse County use same intake system to enter information on client

Possible Action: Encourage all providers to use Service Point (??) so all providers can access list of those needing help

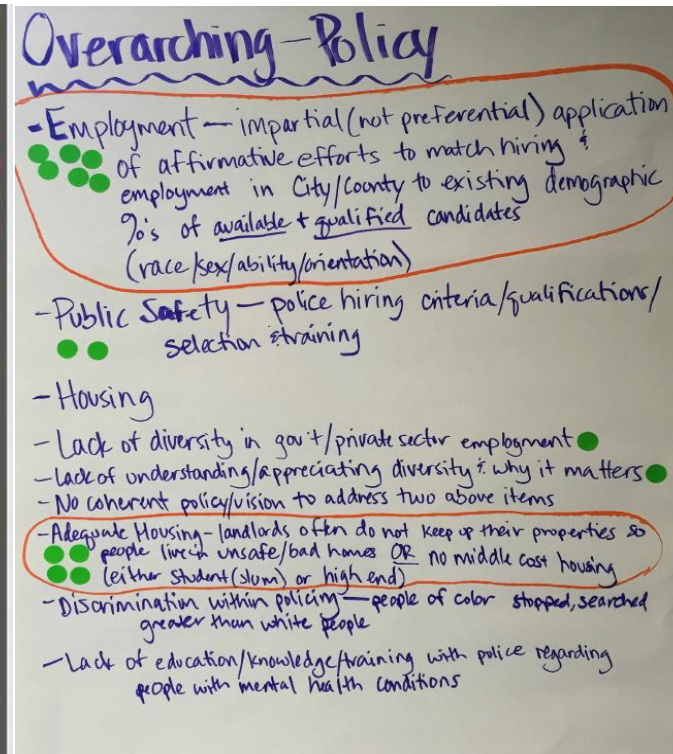
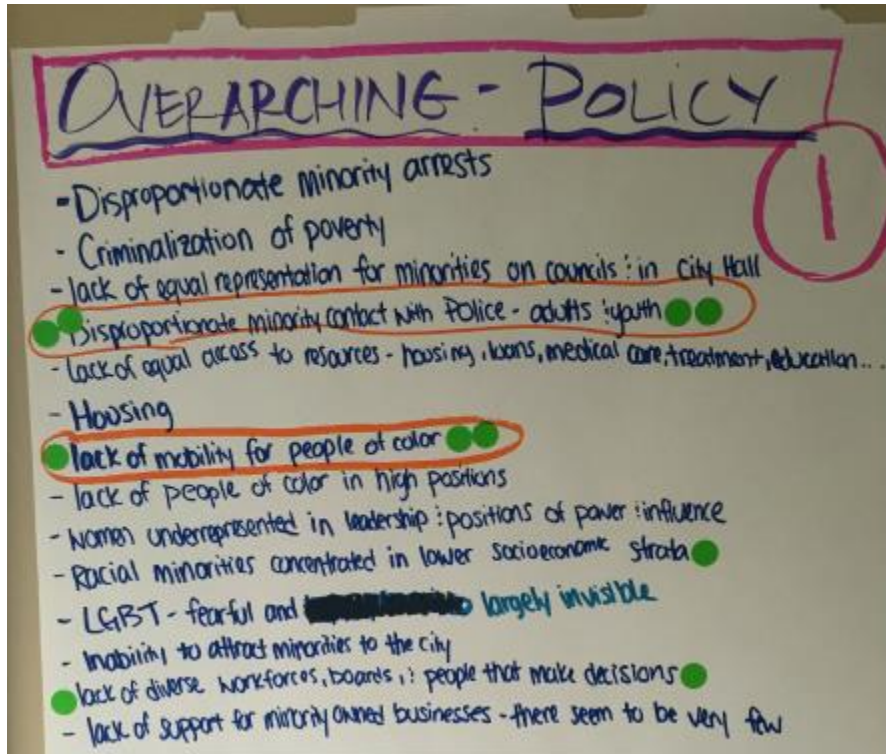
Possible Goal: Increase options for drug and alcohol addiction treatment

Possible Action: Work with groups such as Coulee Council on Addiction to determine what the needs and possible solutions are

Possible Goal: Increase walkability of streets and safety

Possible Action: Encourage City to fund lighting projects, including streets and bus stops

Appendix A – Images



COMMUNITY BUILDING - SOCIAL CAPITAL

- events that are representative of others (non whites)
- gentrification / segregation within housing
- need for more youth programming that provides leadership
- Racism - you see it with the comments (Tribune/Wikileaks) or online (Facebook)
People know not to say it publicly but it is right under the surface
- fear violence
- Our festivals are based on white/male chosen leaders, fest master / commander
• How is that inclusive of a diverse community?
- We aren't welcoming of new diverse people. Based on color of skin, lack of wealth, who they love etc.. parking / affordable housing, places to shop, etc.

Homeless - avoid enabling homelessness by...

Social

2

- Treatment of Homeless - need for permanent housing: to be seen as human beings
- Celebrating the diversity of the community
- More resources for those in poverty reducing the stigma of poverty.
- Lack of resources for poorer neighborhoods
- Stratification of social groups - lack of contact between groups
- Failure to promote current diversity of the city as a plus.
- Creating social capital through meaningful community-neighborhood-based events.

- Discrimination of offenses that could be categorized as civil rather than criminal
- The events/festivals in the city cost money and are geared towards the majority - Oktoberfest - Zuerfest - Irishfest etc - Need more free events that are inviting to all.
- Divide between North side & South side
- High crime in some neighborhoods stimulates revitalization
- Drug manufacture-distribution and abuse contributes to flight and discourages reinvestment & socio-economic mix

HOUSING & ECONOMICS

- Landlords are not all held accountable for the upkeep of property - including safety issues
- We have student housing (slums) or high end housing but nothing in between
- Low income housing is often in certain neighborhoods, so people avoid those. Those neighborhoods are where many people of color live (segregated)
- Lack of affordable housing for all - not many options. Can be difficult to gain if they had been evicted.
- Hard to make ends meet when working minimum wage jobs. Higher min. wage needed in City of La Crosse
- Need more resources for people if they need help paying rent or if anything else comes up unexpected - medical bills, car repairs.
- Housing discrimination - race/sexual orientation - needing to hold landlords accountable
- Need a center of some sort for Black/AA. people
- Creation of employment/businesses that help create economic mobility
- Better paying jobs
- Better quality affordable housing
- Enforcing City codes (Housing)

- Quality affordable rental units
- Treatment of poor or minority tenants - inability to see units / different rent/ lease terms
- More opportunities to increase wages which will be enough to support the family once assistance is decreased
- We need a more diverse workforce
- Transportation systems for the working poor
- Affordable scattered site housing
- Employment est.: matching employment in city: county to population demographics in city: county for fair representation of all citizens (Qualified: available people)
- Housing - city active role in providing safe shelter for homeless citizens
- Proactive of health: safety of vets
- Lack of affordable housing
- Homelessness - insufficient subsidized housing
- Economic development concentrated downtown

PUBLIC HEALTH - SAFETY - WELFARE (4)

- Mental health - most therapists/counselors have waiting lists ? can't be seen for 2-3 months. We need access to more options - more therapists/psychiatrists/what to do if beds are full - more short term care
- Lack of hospital staff familiar with transgender issues - lack of staff who can or have training to serve transgender patients
- Criminalizing those who report sexual assaults - very few who are accused are convicted - instead those assaulted are re-traumatized and abused and we wonder why few report.
- Integrating systems - healthcare - county city - non profit so that people don't fall through the cracks
- Increasing collaboration between minority residents and police-NRO's

- Affordable healthcare for all
- Drug: Alcohol addiction treatment
- More Neighborhood watch groups in highest risk areas
- Dark streets, unsafe for those that must walk: use public transportation
- Inability to get appropriate mental health services for those w/ limited ability to pay
- More diverse police force to help w/ disproportionate minority arrest rates
- Tent city by Riverside needs bathrooms: dumpsters - will help w/ basic needs
- Places in parks to leave used needles so police/fire dept.: public don't have to pick up
- Another free clinic: more transitors to help.
- More diversity training for our police / fire dept.: hospitals/clinics
- Poor maintenance of roads - mainly affects poorer neighborhoods
- Lack of access to medical care for poor
- Access to transportation

- Prioritizing outdoor recreation in our high-need neighborhoods parks - trails and activities
- Parenting and budgeting consultants provided in various neighborhoods
- Wellness classes that are affordable/free and family oriented.

Appendix B- Implementation Worksheet

Overarching Goal: Gather statistics on police contact proportionate to demographics

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Overarching Goal: Work to ensure housing quality is better in La Crosse with affordable and adequate options

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Overarching Goal: Work toward having *employee demographics of City/County proportionately match those of the residents*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Community Building Goal: Work toward *multiple meaningful after school, weekend, and summer programming for youth*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Community Building Goal: Ensure *homeless individuals and families are treated with dignity and respect and efforts are made to make sure they are put into permanent housing quickly*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Community Building Goal: Celebrate *diversity in La Crosse*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Housing and Economic Development Goal: *Make La Crosse's neighborhoods vibrant and diverse*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Housing and Economic Development Goal: *Ensure there is quality, affordable housing available to residents*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Housing and Economic Development Goal: *Residents are able to earn a living wage*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Housing and Economic Development Goal: *Subsidized housing is available for those that are homeless and transitioning*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Public Health and Safety Goal: *Increase the mental health services in La Crosse so people can get help quickly*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Public Health and Safety Goal: *Work towards having all providers in La Crosse County use same intake system to enter information on client*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Public Health and Safety Goal: *Increase options for drug and alcohol addiction treatment*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Public Health and Safety Goal: *Increase walkability of streets and safety*

Recommendation-Action	Partner(s)	Range	Priority
1.			
2.			
3.			

Goal:

Recommendation	Partner(s)	Range	Priority

Goal:

Recommendation	Partner(s)	Range	Priority

Goal:

Recommendation	Partner(s)	Range	Priority



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City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
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File Type: General Item

Agenda Number: 5



GRAND RIVER • GREAT CITY
 La Crosse • Wisconsin
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
 400 LA CROSSE STREET | LA CROSSE, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512



August 13, 2018

Memo

To: Human Rights Commission

From : Jason Gilman, Director of Planning and Development

RE: GARE Presentation

Dear HRC Members:

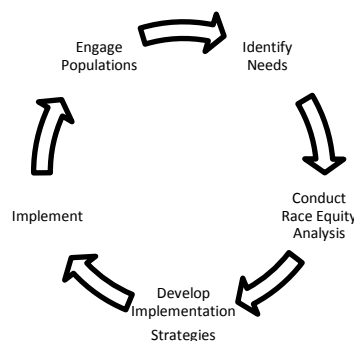
Gordon Goodwin of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) presented the structure of GARE and how it can provide support and guidance for groups like the HRC in cities. Here are some highlights for your consideration:

GARE provides learning cohorts and networking between organizations with similar missions in the racial equity.

Membership responsibilities include sharing our experiences via a blog they manage, attending an annual meeting and actively engaging through their website and other offerings.

GARE can assist organizations in conducting a racial equity analysis (they have a toolkit on their website at racialequityalliance.org) This racial equity analysis provides foundational data about the municipality that can help an organization identify opportunities as well as challenges.

The typical program may look something like this:



JASON GILMAN, AICP, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
 TIM ACKLIN, AICP, SENIOR PLANNER - HERITAGE PRESERVATION
 LEWIS KUHLMAN, AICP, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER
 ANDREA SCHNICK, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNER
 SARA OLSON, CLERK STENO

CAROLINE GREGERSON, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR
 DAWN REINHART, NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE
 TARA FITZGERALD, FEDERAL PROGRAMS ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN
 KEVIN CLEMENTS, HOUSING SPECIALIST
 KEVIN CONROY, HOUSING REHABILITATION SPECIALIST

They also promote something called Results Based Accountability, a method of reverse engineering whereby the desired identified outcomes are paired with effective implementation actions. Some of these desired identified outcomes GARE focuses on include things like voting attendance, family income and assets, infant mortality and life expectancy.

GARE also promotes the Center for Social Inclusion which is now united with GARE and tells stories about race nationally.

GARE generally promotes policy development from the ground up through movement and capacity building, shifting narratives on the fact that America has been built by all of us.

CSI is working with 60 local jurisdictions on learning and the adoption of policy.

GARE also provides links to valuable data like the Affordable Care Act's Livability by Race data.

Gordon also noted, "Community engagement is not input, it is a level of accountability. We need to define what level of accountability we want." Perhaps this is the paramount challenge posed to the La Crosse Human Rights Commission in identifying the path forward.