

Community Engagement Tools

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NEW DIRECTOR BOOTCAMP

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You may be asking yourself . . .

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- Where am I now?
 - What are biggest challenges for the library?
 - What are biggest challenges for the community?
 - What's the health of the library board, friends group, foundation and local government?
 - Do we gather customer feedback? What are we hearing?
 - Who are our community partners? How strong are those partnerships?
 - Does the library have capacity (staff, funds, space) to grow and change?

What communities do you serve?

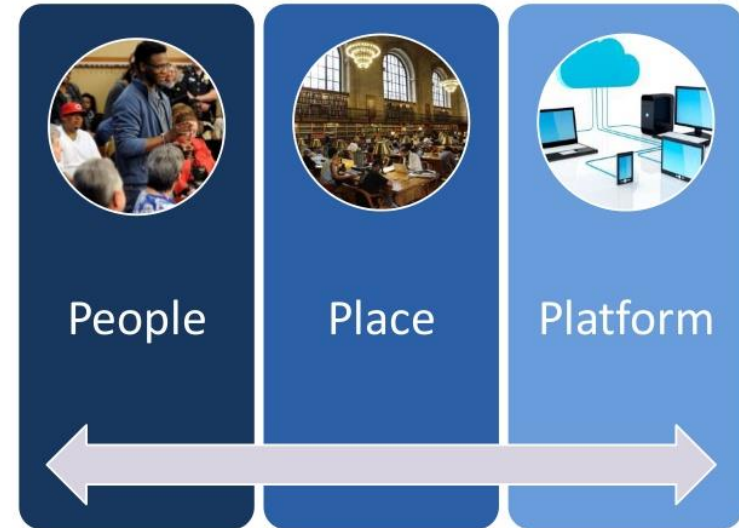


Forward from “Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries”, The Aspen Institute

“The time has come for a new vision of public libraries in the United States. Communities need public libraries—more people are visiting them and using their services, materials and programs than ever before—but ***communities’ needs continue to change***”.

The Aspen Report

- PEOPLE
 - Library staff as navigators
 - Community expertise
 - PLACE
 - Library as community anchor
 - In your building(s)
 - Out in the community
-
- PLATFORM
 - The stuff you do
 - The stuff to which you provide access



THE ASPEN
INSTITUTE'S
*ACTION GUIDE FOR
RE-ENVISIONING
YOUR PUBLIC
LIBRARY, VERSION 2.0*

The Pathways:
Learning, Leading and
Implementing


THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
DIALOGUE ON
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

ACTION GUIDE

for Re-Envisioning
Your Public Library

VERSION 2.0

Based on the report

Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries

LEARNING Pathway

- People
 - Library staff
 - Community expertise
- Place
 - Library as community anchor
 - In your building(s)
 - Out in the community
- Platform
 - The stuff you do
 - The stuff to which you provide access
- SOAR



Great Blue Heron soaring

Good for INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Sample Exercise

Library as People

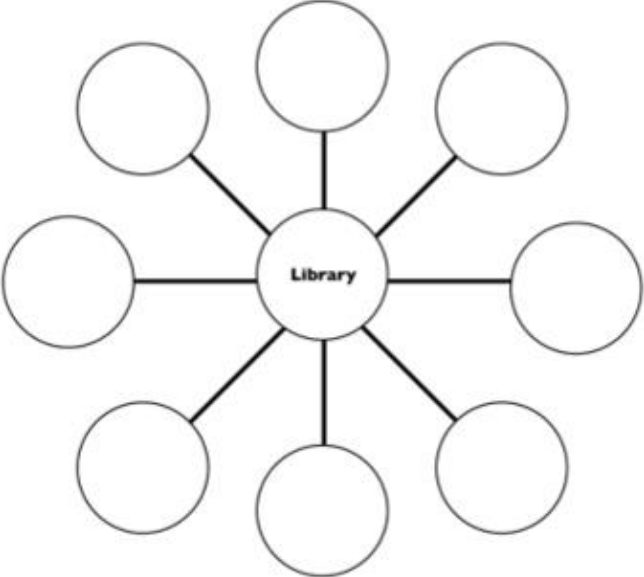
- ACTIVITY
 - What are some of the audiences at your library? Complete the audience map.

- DO EXERCISES WITH VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS
 - Staff
 - Trustees
 - Friends of the Library

THE LIBRARY AS PEOPLE

ACTivity 1

What are some of the audiences at your library? Complete the audience map below.



Are there other audiences not represented above? Please list them below:

Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library

LEADING Pathway

- Strategies for Success
 - Align library with community goals
 - Provide access to content in all formats
 - Ensure long-term sustainability of public libraries
 - Cultivate leadership
- 15 Action Steps for Leaders
 - Define scope of programs and services
 - Partner with local organizations
 - Deploy existing resources in new way
- Community Leaders



THEN CURRENT ALA PRESIDENT (2017-18) JIM NEAL ANNOUNCES
LOIDA GARCIA-FEBO AS NEXT ALA PRESIDENT (2018-19)

Good for **STARTING TO TURN OUTWARD**

IMPLEMENTING Pathway

- Community Dialog
 - Planning checklist
 - Convene and facilitate aspirational discussion
 - sample questions in Facilitators Guide
 - Lots of sample documents in Appendices
- Next Steps
 - Report results (sample press release)
 - Form a committee or work group



Good for STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Barbara Stripling, Past ALA President, in letter to
Libraries Transforming Communities Public
Innovators Cohort – May 2014

“ALA started the Libraries Transforming Communities initiative because we believe that *librarians’ role as core community leaders and change agents* is vital to the success of libraries and the communities that support them.”



turn outward {verb}

1. The act of seeing and hearing those in the community and acting with intentionality to create change;
2. A reorientation toward the public; a posture;
3. A framework for making choices about public life.

Libraries Transforming Communities

- Based on the Harwood Institute’s practice of “Turning Outward” – **making the community, not the library, the focus of our efforts.**
 - Taking measures to better understand your community
 - Changing processes and thinking to make library work more community-focused
 - Being proactive to community issues
 - Putting community aspirations first



Public Knowledge

What it is:
Information directly
from and about the
lived experience
of community
members



Why it matters: It is *authentic* (and *actionable*)



Why the library?

- Why not?
- And if not us, then who?





Community Aspirations

ALA Libraries Transforming Communities
& the Harwood Institute

- **ASK Exercise**
- Aspirations Exercise
- Turn Outward Quiz
- **Community Conversations**
- **Something Special for YOUR Community**

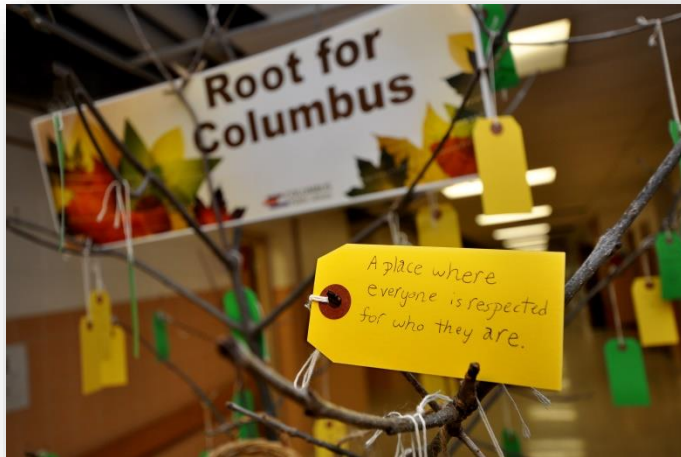
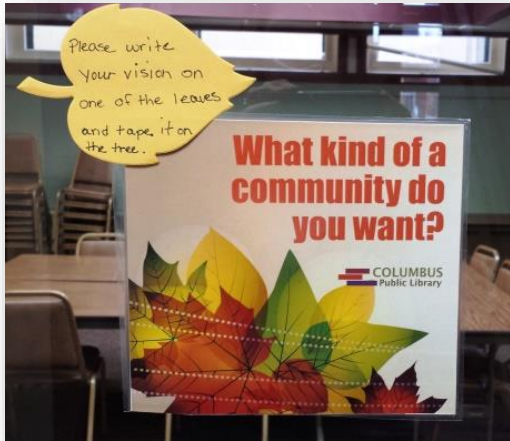
ASK Exercise

1. What kind of community do you want to live in?
2. Why is that important to you?
3. How is that different from how you see things now?
4. What are some of the things that need to happen to create that kind of change?

Community Conversation

- What kind of community do you want?
- Given what we just said, what are two or three important challenges in the community?
- What do you think is keeping us from making the progress we want as a community?
- When you think about what we've talked about, what are the kinds of things that could be done that would make a difference?
- Thinking back over the conversation, what groups or individuals would you trust to take action on these things?
- Think about the library now. What are some areas we discussed that the library can help with?
- If we came back in a year, what might you see that would indicate the library is engaging its services and resources to help the community reach its aspirations and address its challenges?

“Root for Columbus” campaign



REPORT BACK!



[Columbus Community Calendar](#)

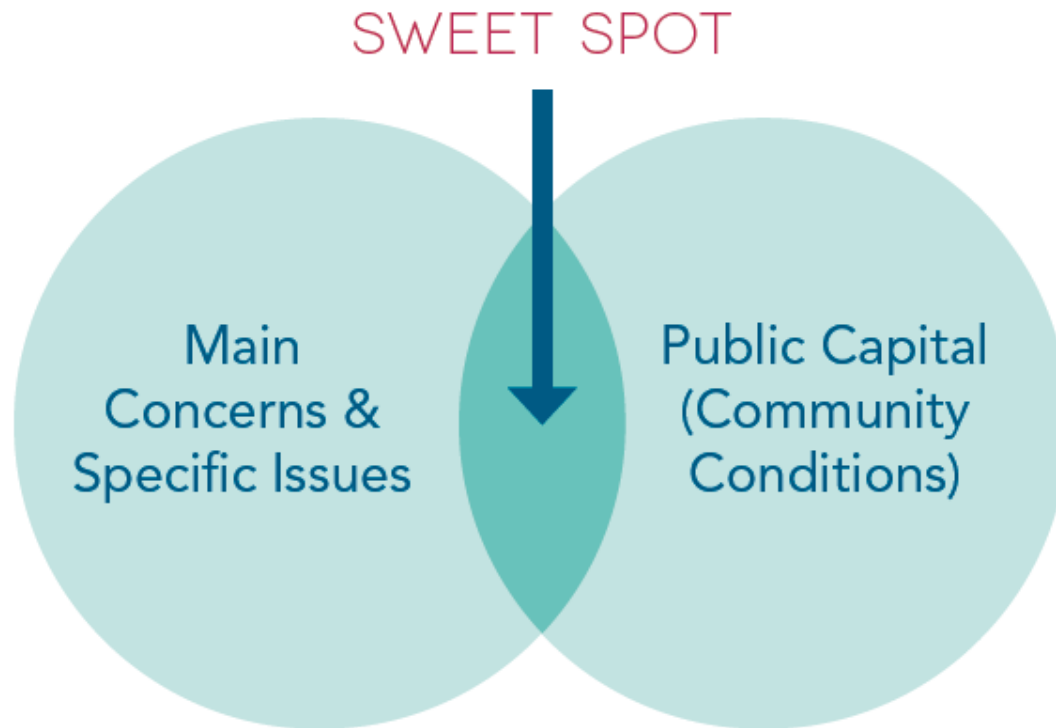


Where is the community at?

Community Rhythms Implications for Change Chart

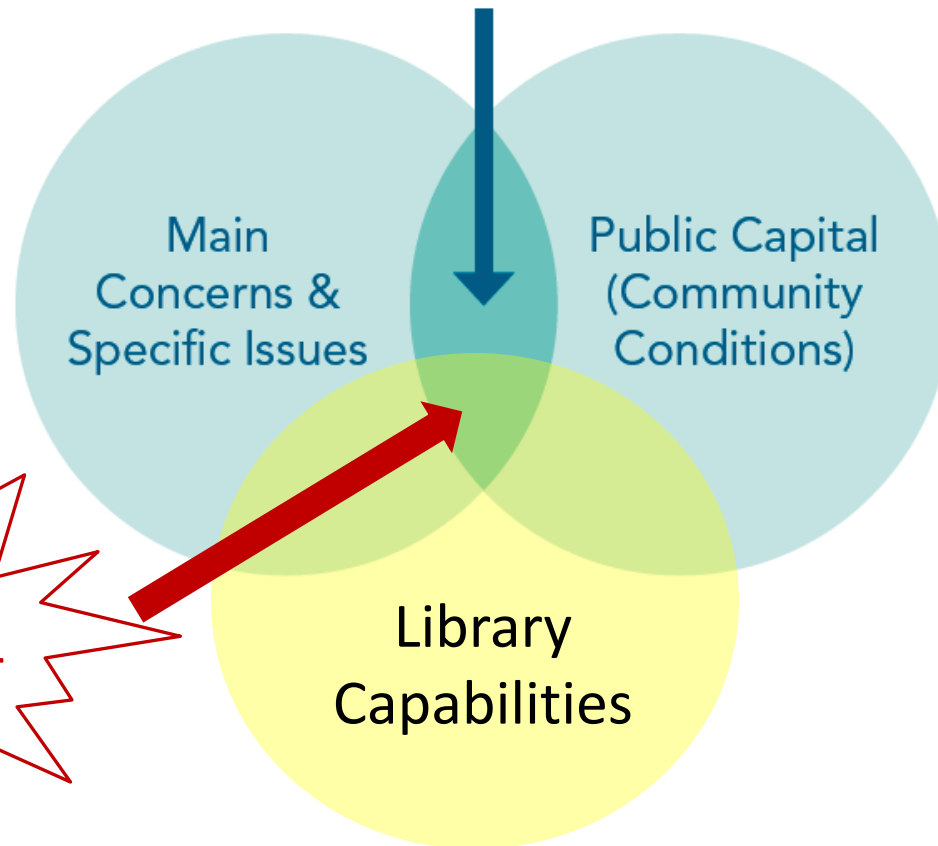
Stage	Speed	Size	Consensus	Coordination (See Collective impact note)	Pockets of Change	Actions for Changed Conditions
The Waiting Place	Slowly	Small	No, people can't name the problem	No	Create	Help people name the aspirations, concerns, issues and changed conditions. Demonstrate small signs of progress.
Impasse	Slowly	Small	No, people may be angry, but don't agree what's an issue	No, these will fail	Create	Discover shared aspirations. Identify taboo issues. Help people imagine alternate future. Create organized spaces for people to convene.
Catalytic	Quicker, particularly in pockets	Small	Yes, but it's not wide-spread	No, but you can form informal networks	Create and Loosely Connect	Try lots of small things in pockets. Encourage informal networks and new leaders. Help share the emerging narrative. Model desired community norms.
Growth	Quickly	Broad	Yes	Yes, particularly to address systemic issues	Connect and Coordinate	Work community wide. Coordinate and accelerate collective action. Highlight new narrative. Bring in new leaders.
Sustain and Renew (5th stage) — is rare and not included in this tool.						

The Sweet Spot of Public Life



The Library Sweet Spot

COMMUNITY
SWEET SPOT



LIBRARY
SWEET SPOT

Resources

- [Download the Aspen Report and the Aspen Action Guide 2.0](#)
- [ALA's Libraries Transforming Communities](#)
- ["A Step-by-Step Guide to 'Turning Outward' to Your Community"](#)
- View a free, 60-minute webinar about how three libraries are using the "turning outward" approach: ["Go Out & Play: Community Engagement through Turning Outward"](#)

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