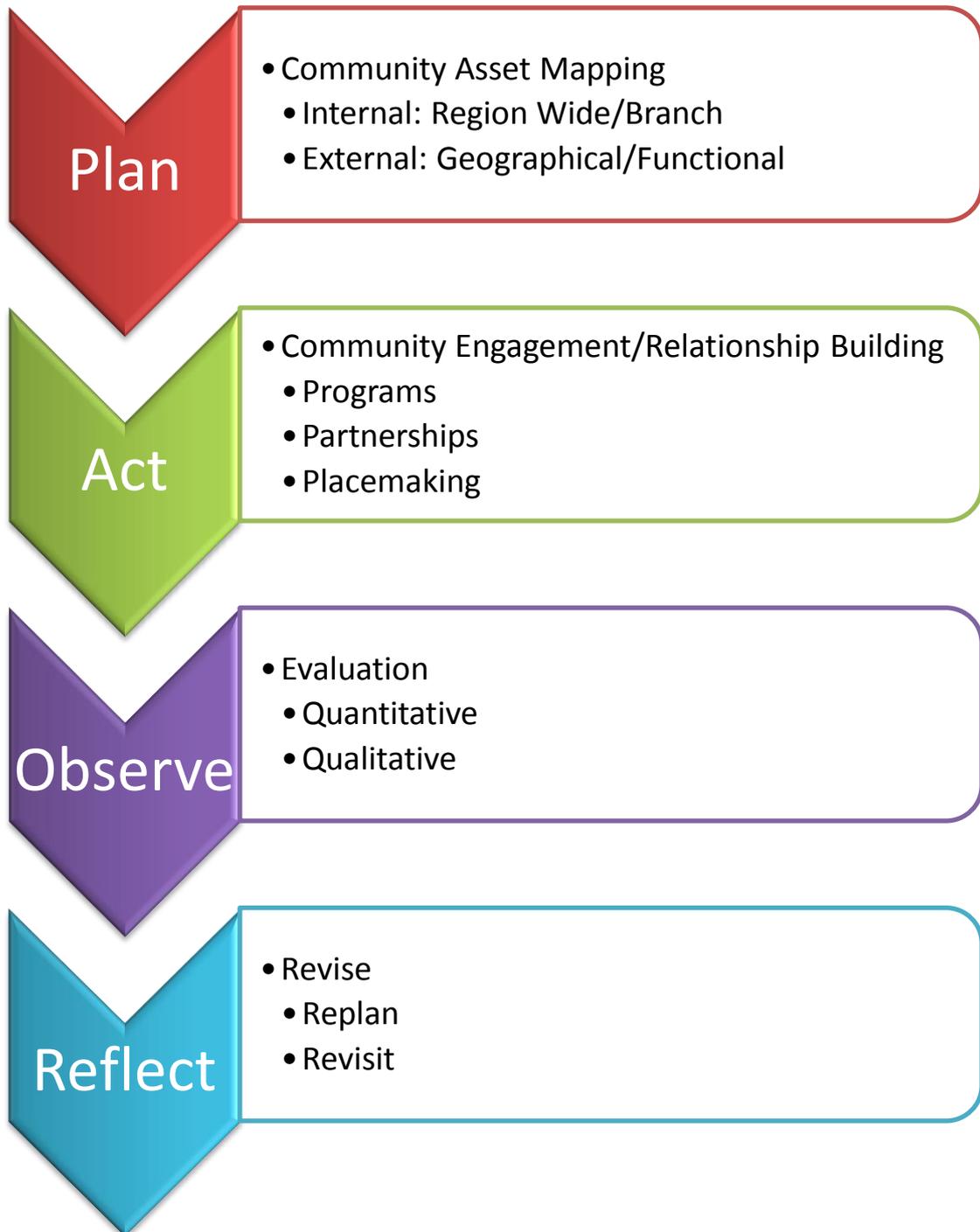
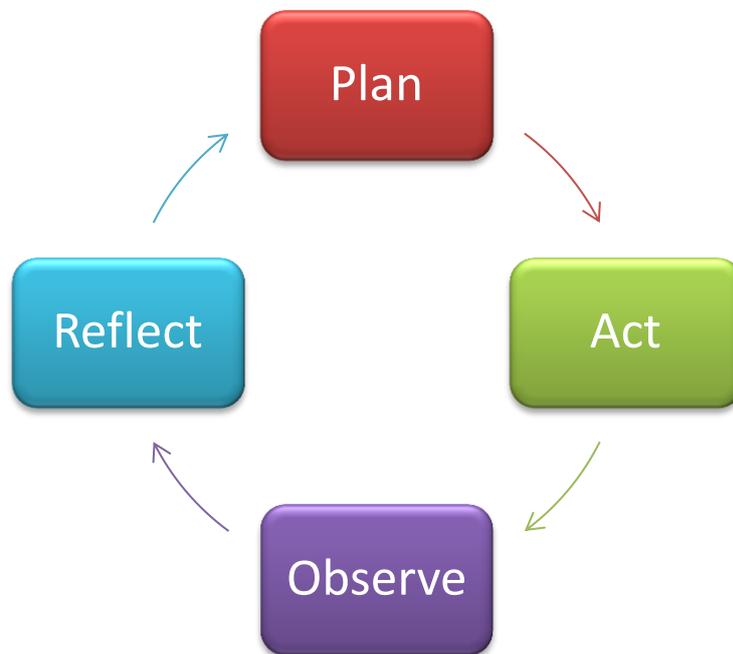


# Programs, Partnerships & Placemaking: A Community Development Framework & Toolkit



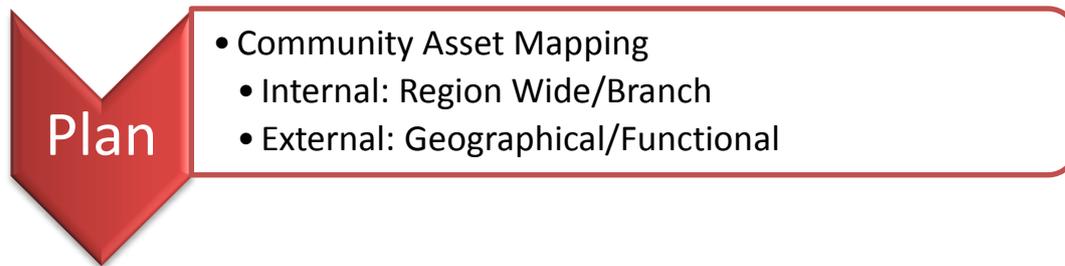
# Action Research Model



This Community Development Framework and Toolkit is based on an Action Research Model. Action research is a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and then re-planning in light of the knowledge gained through the cycle (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). It is an ongoing process that uses information gleaned from the community during each cycle to shape future service planning.

The action research model allows a library service to refine its programs and services after reflection on community feedback. It is the basis for the community development framework to ensure ongoing service evaluation that meets the needs, wants, and aspirations of the community.

The planning phase of the model involves community mapping, while the acting phase involves actively engaging with the community. The observing phase involves both qualitative and quantitative evaluation, while the reflecting phase involves revising and replanning to ensure the process is community-centred.



Asset mapping is an important community development planning tool. It involves identifying the organisations and services located in a specific area and assists with identifying potential community partners. Asset mapping can identify both the geographical features of an area as well as the social and economic features. It is an asset based approach to community development that capitalises on a community's strengths rather than weaknesses, and is a way to build social capital and community capacity (Asset-Based Community Development Institute, 2012).

Asset maps can be both internal and external. It is important to conduct an internal asset map to capitalise on the strengths of an organisation. Internal asset mapping can be conducted across a whole library region, or concentrate on a specific library branch. It involves identifying what the library has to offer the community including current programs, services, and facilities, and is a base upon which to build future community relationships, library services, and community partnerships.

External asset mapping can focus on a geographical community or a functional community. A geographical community is a community based on a place or location, while a functional community is a group based on a common element providing a sense of identity (Ife & Tesoriero, 2006). A geographical asset map can concentrate on a whole library region, or focus on the area serviced by a specific library branch. It is a map of the local community groups, service providers, businesses, institutions, and community spaces in that geographical area. A functional asset map focuses on a specific group within a community, such as youth, older adults, or CALD communities, and the groups, service providers, institutions, and businesses that serve those community members. As community organisations can change over time, it is important to regularly revise and revisit a community asset map. This is built into the framework through the action research model.

# Internal Library Asset Map

- Identify library's assets
- Document these assets
- List the ways in which these assets can be shared with the surrounding community

**Personnel (Skills,  
Interests, Abilities)**

**Space and Facilities**

**Library Materials  
and Equipment**

**Current  
Programs/Services**

**Current Community  
Networks**

**Other**

Adapted from [www.urbanlibraries.org](http://www.urbanlibraries.org)

## External Community Asset Map

- Geographical (location)
- Functional (youth, CALD, older adults, non-library users, etc.)

### Community Groups

### Local Businesses

### Community Meeting Spaces

### Community

### Social and Economic Conditions

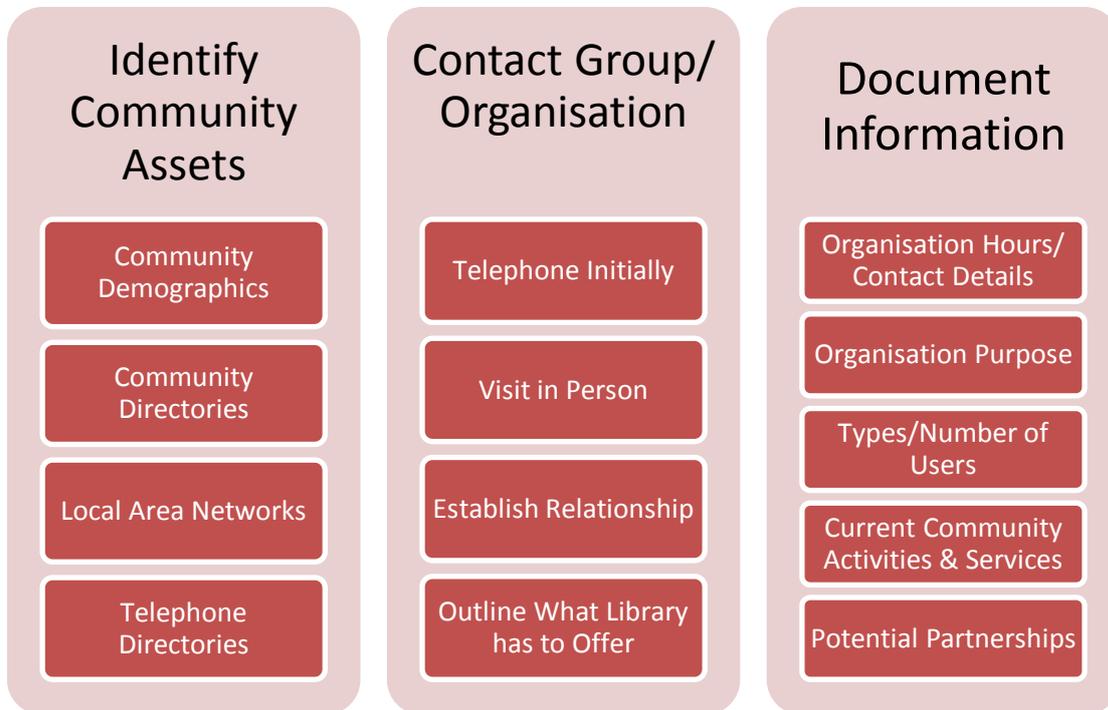
### Associations and Institutions

### Community Stories and Narratives

Adapted from [www.urbanlibraries.org](http://www.urbanlibraries.org)



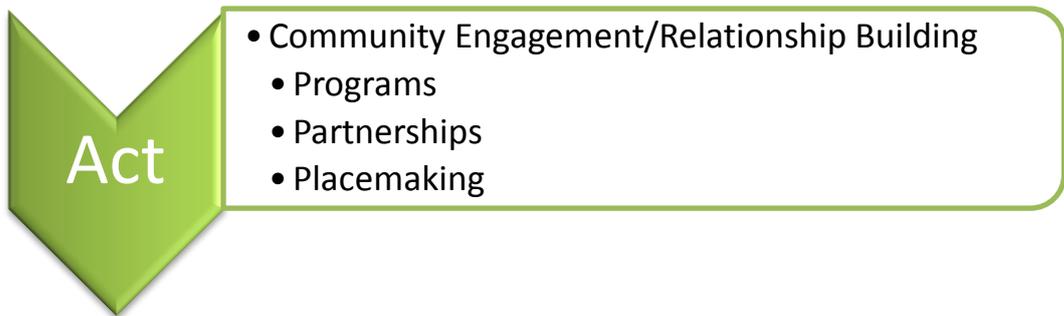
Source: Asset-Based Community Development Institute [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org)



The Information collected can be stored in a Community Information database and used to plan responsive library services. It should be updated regularly as groups change, relationships develop and as part of the action research model.

**Example List of Community Organisations/Groups/Associations to Contact:**

- |                                 |                       |                              |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Animal Care Groups              | Local Government      | Pre-Schools                  |
| Business Organisations          | Men's groups          | Kindergartens                |
| Charitable Groups               | Mentoring Groups      | Schools                      |
| Civic Events Groups             | Mutual Support Groups | Tafes                        |
| Community Health Providers      | Neighbourhood Groups  | Universities                 |
| Cultural Groups                 | Parenting Groups      | Police Departments           |
| Disability/Special Needs Groups | Recreation Groups     | Hospitals                    |
| Education Groups                | Religious Groups      | Social Service Agencies      |
| Environmental Groups            | Service Clubs         | Non for Profit Organisations |
| Family Support Groups           | Seniors Groups        | Museums                      |
| Health Advocacy Groups          | Social Groups         | Fire Departments             |
| Fitness Groups                  | Veteran's Groups      | Local Media                  |
| Heritage Groups                 | Women's Groups        | Local Prisons                |
| Hobby and Collectors Groups     | Youth groups          |                              |



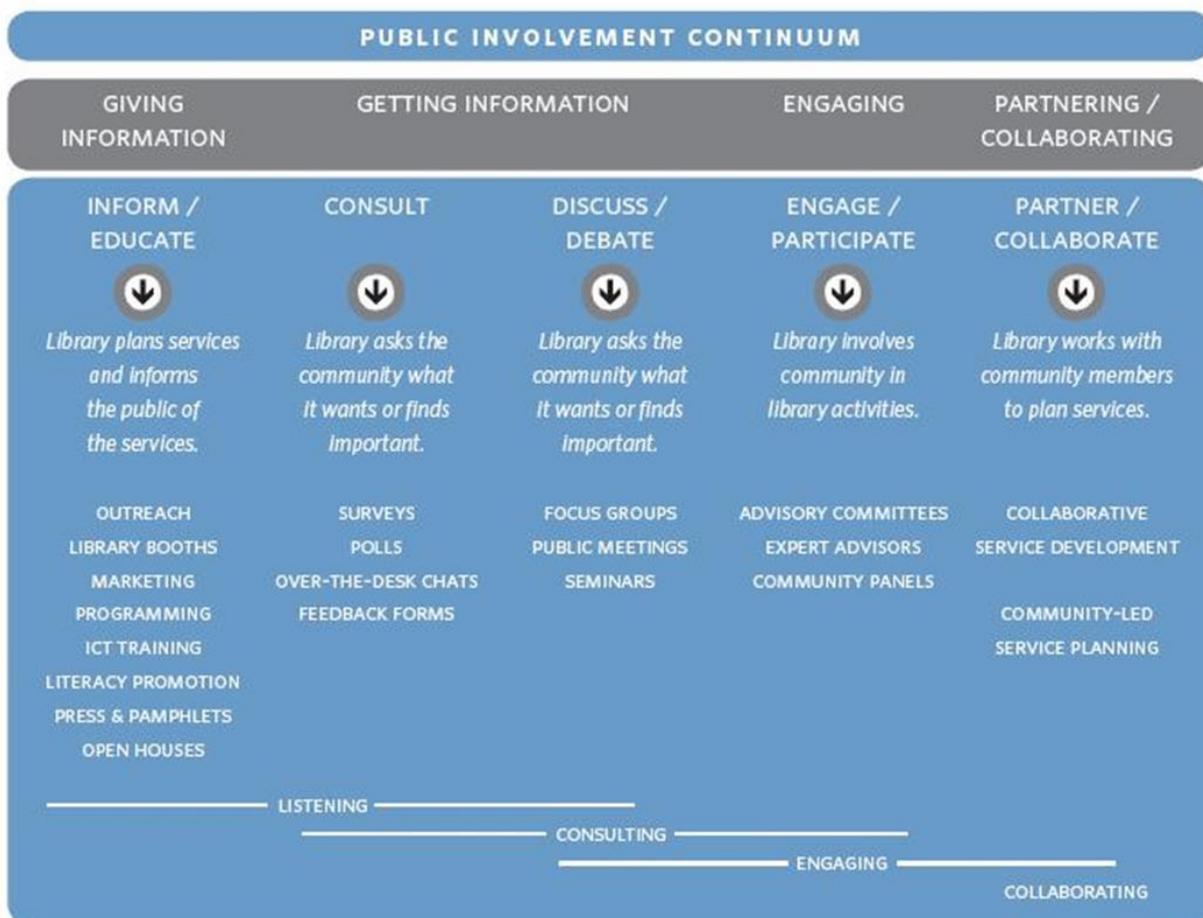
Community engagement is a vital part of community development. It is a way for libraries to build relationships with communities through communication, consultation, and collaboration to ensure they remain relevant to the communities they serve. The ultimate aim of community engagement is to involve the community in service planning and delivery. The International Association for Public Participation in Australasia has developed a Public Participation Spectrum to measure the impact of community engagement techniques. Most community engagement falls into the inform, consult, involve, or collaborate categories, with little falling into the empower category. The aim of the community development framework is to work towards participatory, collaborative engagement.

## Public Participation Spectrum

<b>Inform</b>	One-way communication providing balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has happened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Promotions</li> <li>• Outreach</li> </ul>
<b>Consult</b>	Two-way communications designed to obtain public feedback about ideas on rationale, alternatives, and proposals to inform decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Feedback forms</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>
<b>Involve</b>	Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Advisory committees</li> <li>• Community workshops</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborate</b>	Working together to develop understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships</li> <li>• Community-led service planning</li> </ul>
<b>Empower</b>	Providing opportunities and resources for communities to contribute to solutions by valuing local talents and skills and acknowledging their capacity to be decision makers in their own lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final decision-making placed in the hands of the public.</li> </ul>

Adapted from [www.iap2.org.au](http://www.iap2.org.au)

A good example of community engagement can be found in the Working Together Project (a partnership project involving four libraries in Canada), as described in detail in the Projects, Partnerships and Placemaking Report. The Working Together Project developed a public involvement continuum specific to libraries. Their aim was to encourage libraries to move away from the traditional position of the library determining what the community needs and how it will respond, towards a community-led model of service delivery. Traditionally libraries have informed and educated the community about library services, and the Working Together Project challenges libraries to move towards a more participatory and collaborative approach, where the community is involved in planning programs and services that meet their needs. This is particularly important for marginalised and socially excluded community members, who often do not feel that the library has anything to offer them. It is about engaging the community and building relationships to develop responsive programs, partnerships, and library spaces.



Source: Working Together Project [www.librariesincommunities.ca](http://www.librariesincommunities.ca)

## Programs & Partnerships

Libraries deliver an array of important programs and collections to the community that educate, inform, and entertain. Community development techniques offer additional tools to engage hard to reach and marginalised community members who often feel unwelcome, or that the library has nothing to offer them. Community asset mapping provides the tools to identify these community members, who are often reachable through community service providers. The process of building relationships with communities and service providers often initiates new library programs, or more collaborative approaches to collection development, as communities articulate a need that the library can respond to proactively. Frequently these programs grow out of partnerships with other community service providers that foster community knowledge and resource sharing.

Partnerships can be formal with written agreements and memorandums of understanding, or informal verbal agreements. When entering into a partnership, it is important to clearly outline the purpose, objectives, partnership parameters, and responsibilities of each organisation, including a regular meeting schedule to communicate, review, and evaluate the partnership. Partnerships can change over time and this needs to be factored into any agreement. Changes can include staff turnover, changes in resources, or programs, and the partnership agreement should be flexible enough to accommodate these events. Partnerships can also be long or short term, depending on the project or program being delivered. Partnerships, like other community engagement techniques, are about relationship building.

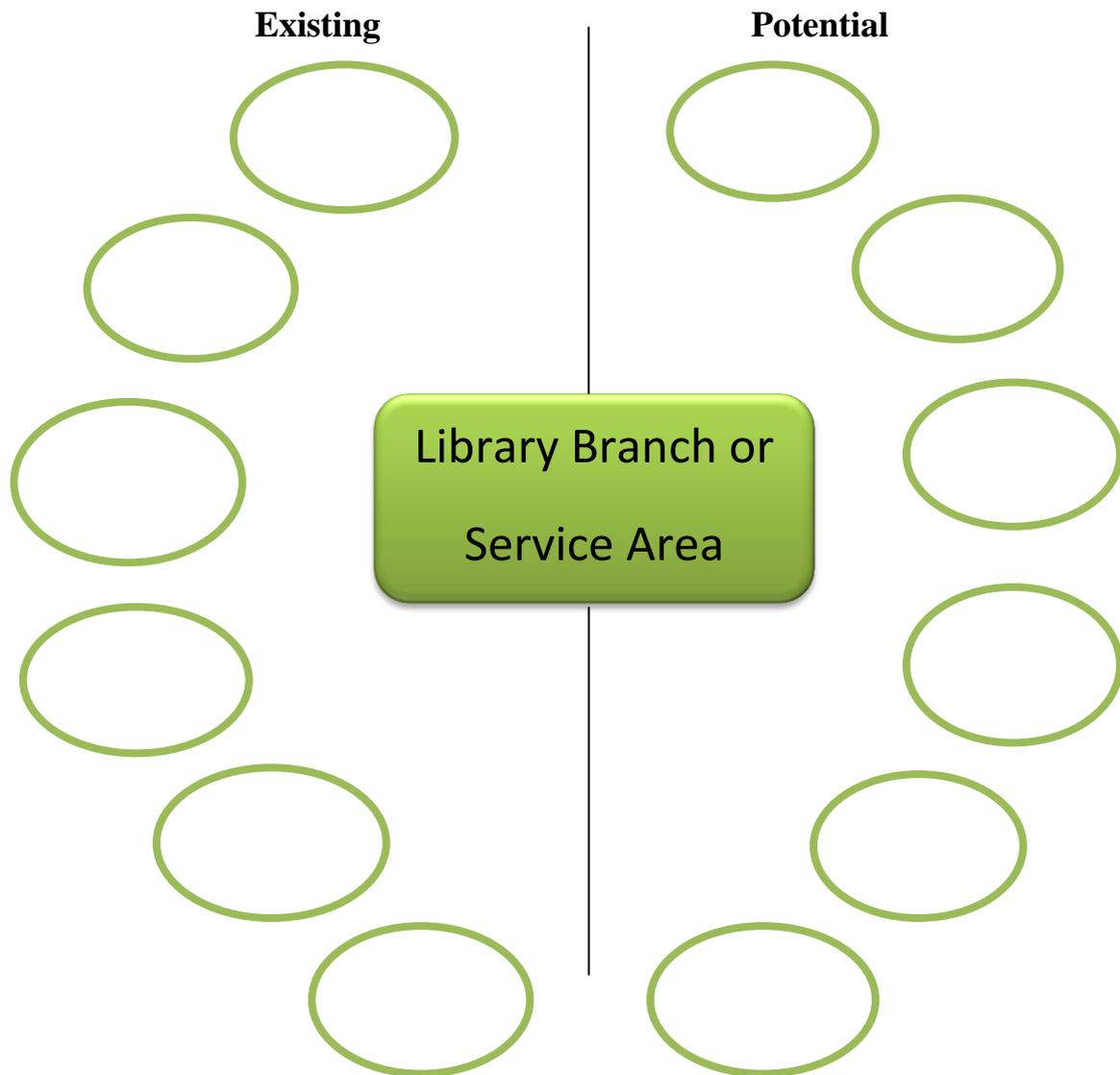
Factors for Successful Partnerships:

- A shared vision, goals and objectives
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Strong commitment to the vision and goals
- Detailed action plans
- Effective communication processes
- Adequate resources
- A commitment to evaluation and adaptation

Source: Frank & Smith (2006), *Community Development and Partnerships*

# Community Partnerships

Use this tool to illustrate current and potential community partnerships.



Adapted from [www.urbanlibraries.org](http://www.urbanlibraries.org)

# Placemaking

Placemaking is a community-based approach to public spaces. It involves turning a place into a destination that people want to visit. Placemaking ties in with the concept of the library as a “third place”, where the community gathers outside of home or work. Ideally, Placemaking involves the community in the planning, design, and management of a public space by consulting the people who use the space about their needs and aspirations. This is then articulated into a vision for the space.

The Power of 10 is a simple concept developed by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to begin the Placemaking process. It involves identifying 10 things to do or 10 reasons to be in a particular place. These can include places to sit, programs to attend, people to meet, information to find, books to borrow, or food to consume. Each place will have its own unique activities that are interesting enough to engage the community and keep them returning. The Power of 10 is a simple way to begin looking at why people choose to come to a particular place and how to make it more inviting. It is about observing and then revitalising the space for the community.

PPS have worked with a number of libraries to develop vibrant community places that bring people together. They have developed a list of what makes a library a great community destination. According to PPS, Great Libraries:

1. Offer a Broad Mix of Community Services
2. Foster Communication
3. Showcase History and Information
4. Build Capacity for Local Businesses
5. Become Public Gathering Places
6. Boost Local Retail and Public Markets
7. Offer Easy Access
8. Make the Surrounding Area Come Alive
9. Feature Multiple Attractions and Destinations
10. Are Designed to Support Function
11. Provide a Variety of Amenities
12. Change with the Calendar
13. Depend on Wise Management
14. Catalyse Community Revitalisation

Source: Project for Public Spaces [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)

# The Place Diagram



Source: Project for Public Spaces [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)

The Place Diagram outlines the 4 key attributes of a successful place: uses and activities, comfort and image, access and linkages, and sociability. It also looks at intangible qualities and measurements associated with each attribute.

The Place Diagram is a useful tool for observing how the community relates to a space and which areas could be improved. It can be adapted for use by large or small libraries to evaluate the library building and its surrounds. Placemaking is as much about the exterior of the building and its accessibility as the interior space. It involves making the space vibrant and welcoming with multiple things for people to do while they are there. Placemaking doesn't have to be expensive, as small changes can yield large results. These can be as simple as rearranging furniture to make an inviting reading area or adding outdoor furniture or plants to make the entrance more welcoming. Observing how the community uses the space and engaging them in improvements are key features of Placemaking.



## Observe

- Evaluation
  - Quantitative
  - Qualitative

Evaluation is an important part of the community development framework. It allows libraries to measure the success of a program or event using evidence-based quantitative and qualitative data. The community-led approach to evaluation is a collaborative effort between the library, community partners, and community members. It measures the longer term impact of the program on the community as well as the short term statistical data. It is concerned with the skills, knowledge, and perspectives of the participants involved in the program to gauge whether the library is meeting the needs of the community. It is an ongoing, participatory process. The aims of evaluation using an action research model include:

- Engaging the community in the research process to better understand and take action on issues important to them
- Document and amplify people’s experiences, concerns, and interests
- Learn about and improve a specific initiative, service, or collection
- Make decisions about priorities, strategies, and allocation of resources
- Develop broader knowledge useful to the field of community engagement and development in libraries

Source: Green & Kleiner (2011). *Action Research and Evaluation in Community Development*

A logic model can be used to evaluate the impact of library programs and services on the community. The Edmonton Public Library (EPL) has developed a basic logic model to measure the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of programs as part of their Community-Led Service Philosophy Toolkit. This model outlines the relationship between resources, actions, and results. It looks at how library resources and activities are linked to short term outcomes and longer term impacts upon the community. It looks at what worked, what didn’t work, and what could be improved. It values community stories of empowerment as much as statistical data.

# Evaluation Model



Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Program supplies</li> <li>• Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCHC new parents group visit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people visited</li> <li>• Number of new library members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships</li> <li>• Library becomes “place” for new parents</li> <li>• Increased attendance at storytimes</li> <li>• Child develops early literacy skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child has skills to do well at school</li> <li>• Parents are connected to other people</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Program supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct computer training at library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number attending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees develop new skills</li> <li>• Information literacy increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual empowered to use the internet for job skills, information, networking etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Program supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly bookgroup and afternoon tea for housebound seniors at the library held in partnership with local Council (who provide transport)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number attending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships</li> <li>• Encourage social connections</li> <li>• Promote talking books and home library services to attendees and local Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social inclusion for isolated older adults</li> <li>• Attendees feel part of the community and mix with different ages</li> </ul>

Source: EPL Community-Led Service Philosophy Toolkit [www.epl.ca](http://www.epl.ca)



The reflective phase of the action research model involves reviewing the program, partnership, or Placemaking process that was undertaken and reflecting on the knowledge gained through that process. This includes the benefits to the participants, the wider community, the partner organisations, and the library service. It involves looking at what worked, what didn't work, how the process could be improved, and planning for the next cycle based on the information gained through the process. It also involves sharing the lessons learned and the knowledge gained both within the library service and with the wider library community.

The reflective phase may involve refining an existing program based on observations made during the planning, acting, and observing cycles, or developing a new program based on the knowledge gained about the community. It is a dynamic process of refinement and revitalisation to ensure the library remains responsive to the community's needs, wants, and aspirations. It involves reviewing the community mapping process, the level of community engagement achieved, and the evaluation process to ensure it is community-centred.

Reflective practice is an important cyclical process of continuous learning achieved through experience, and the conscious application of the knowledge gained through the cycle. The process leads back to the planning stage of the action research model to ensure the continuous improvement and refinement of library programs and services. It is a critical part of the learning process to ensure the library remains responsive and relevant to the communities it serves.

