

CONNECTED COMMUNITY



Communities are stronger when a vibrant network of community assets exist and are utilized.

A vibrant network of community assets is made up of people connected to various community groups, public parks, a public transportation infrastructure, libraries and more.

A strong transportation infrastructure, including roads, bus systems, metros and light rails, improves a community's mental and physical health, economy and safety.⁹ Libraries are transformative community hubs that support the education and culture of people as well as the history, sustainability and challenges in a community. Parks and playgrounds enhance property values, support public health and safer neighborhoods, promote community engagement (build relationships among neighbors) and support the environment by protecting green spaces.¹⁰ All of these assets are utilized by community groups, an asset in themselves, to congregate, share ideas, and take part in activities that build character and connections. Community groups range from groups centered by religion to Kiwanis Clubs to sports teams. A vibrant network of community assets exists to form a more connected community when we have successful outcomes.

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES EQUAL STRONGER COMMUNITIES

- Individuals feel connected to other people and groups (i.e. people have diverse networks).
- People can use transportation through an effective infrastructure and have the independence and ability to navigate it (driving, walking, biking, bus or metro).
- People have knowledge of availability of assets (parks, services, libraries, etc.).
- Individuals utilize assets (safety services, picnic areas, recreational facilities).

STRATEGIES

Access and communication are key components to a vibrant network of community assets. Thus, people need to

see flyers, advertisements, other media and be able to talk to other people in order to gain information that will provide them with awareness of the community's assets and encourage them to utilize the assets that exist. Individuals with stronger literacy skills will be better informed about the area we live in, which results in:

- People using the library for ongoing education for themselves and their children;
- Families relaxing in a park and connecting with their neighbors;
- Individuals using public transportation and supporting a green environment;
- Community members looking out for one's neighborhood and working together to make it a safe and inviting place.

ENGLISH LITERACY MAKES OUR COMMUNITY STRONGER

If a learner is in class for 6 hours a week for 40 weeks a year, he or she can...

IN A FEW MONTHS :

- Fill in a library card application
- Read a map
- Say what one likes or does not like to do in English

IN A YEAR OR TWO:

- Give someone directions and understand directions given to one.
- Describe what one did or will do on the weekend in English
- Read notice from a library or community center

IN TWO OR THREE YEARS:

- Apply for a permit for a picnic at a public site in English
- Talk with a group of neighbors about the Neighborhood Watch program
- Read a flyer about saving the environment



“Blanca obtained a library card while on a class field trip to the Rockville Library. After learning how to read a bus schedule in class and after taking the bus with her classmates on a field trip; Blanca reported that she and her children took the bus on their own to the library.”

Blanca, Families Foremost

FURTHER READING:

9. “Public Transportation : Benefits for the 21st Century.” American Public Transportation Association (n.d.): n. pag. 2007. Web. http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/twenty_first_century.pdf

10. “Recipes for Rising Neighborhoods.” Recipes for Rising Neighborhoods. N.p., n.d. Web. <http://www.alliance1.org/ce/form/download-free-copy-recipes-rising-neighborhoods>