

Enabling Open Government for All: A Road Map for Public Libraries

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Executive Summary

The traditional and important role of public libraries as trusted information intermediaries provides a powerful platform for public libraries to be key facilitators in opening government. How best public libraries can take advantage of the opportunities to advance their roles in opening government is unclear at this point. What is known is that public libraries must be proactive and deliberate in evolving the roles they play as more and more community's pressure their governments to open their data and to engage their citizens and as more local governments commit to the principles of open government. Libraries need to work with government partners and other key stakeholders to develop portfolios of programs and services geared toward helping community members access and use information and engage with their governments. It is also necessary to balance these portfolios with the practical limitations of public library capabilities and resources.

This report presents the results of a year-long partnership project focused on open government and public libraries in the 21st century. The project was designed to respond to a growing question about the role of public libraries and how new attention to creating more open governments is influencing, and possibly changing, their role in their communities. Three overarching questions guided the project:

1. What role can public libraries play in their community open government ecosystem?
2. Where in their community open government ecosystems can public libraries best create the most public value?
3. What new skills and resources are needed to help public libraries create the designed value?

The project activities, which included a wide range of stakeholders, were designed to provide a foundation for a new conversation about this changing environment and to create a shared understanding among public librarians and other key stakeholders, of how public libraries, as enablers, facilitators, intermediaries, partners and leaders, can best meet their ALA Library Bill of Rights obligation to serve as forums for "information and ideas."

The Role of Public Libraries in Improving Local Open Government Ecosystems

This report is based on a year-long project titled *The Role of Public Libraries in Improving Local Open Government Ecosystems*, led by the Center for Technology in Government and funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The project work included current practices research and analysis and consultation with an expert group of public library and local government leaders, representatives from public library and local government associations, public administration and information science researchers, and open government advocates.

Questions, Observations, and Recommendations

Five critical questions were identified as necessary to answer in order to create new understanding of what role public libraries are already playing in their communities to create more open and collaborative governments, to understand which activities are creating the most value, and what public libraries must have access to in order to create this value in an ongoing and sustainable way.

1. What frameworks are available to help identify and categorize open government related activities?
2. What projects are public libraries doing that might be considered “open government” initiatives?
3. What are the “best” ideas in public libraries’ open government initiatives? What makes them best?
4. What best practices might public libraries adopt to begin to work with their communities as they seek a more open government?
5. What new opportunities to extend or evaluate new ideas and best and preferred practices in public library and open government including critical success factors can be created?

Four primary observations emerged from the work:

1. Individual public libraries and library systems are actively engaged in a wide-range of activities that might be considered “open government” initiatives.
2. Little, if any formal knowledge about these efforts is being systematically captured and shared among public libraries.
3. The opportunity for the development of a collective understanding of open government and of good and best practice for public libraries is currently limited.
4. New focus on defining the role of public libraries and models of best and good practices in the context of open government is needed.

Six recommendations about leveraging past practices and ensuring a future role for public libraries in the 21st century open government agenda emerged from the research and expert meetings. Public Libraries should:

1. Clearly define the role of public libraries in community-focused open government activities.
2. Adopt a focus on the demand side of open government.
3. Adopt a community-wide perspective on open government.
4. Build capability to create and sustain new kinds of partnerships with a wider range of community actors.
5. Build a knowledge base of public library open government initiatives.
6. Fund and carry out a set of pilot projects focused on building new understanding of preferred and best public library open government practices.

Two resources were produced to support the recommendations and to help public libraries get started in building their open government agenda:

1. A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities
2. A Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries, Version 1.0

SECTION 1. Introduction

The public library as information hub, steward and intermediary, has long been an important community resource. In the 21st century the public library is increasingly being called on to take a more significant role in responding to community needs that, while consistent at the highest level with the traditional role of public libraries, creates the need for a new perspective on the role of the public library. This trend is seen as part of a larger shift in society. The combination of advanced information technologies, the increasing potential of data as a societal asset, and the complex social problems requiring many actors to collaborate on solutions, have made it both possible and necessary for citizens and other non-state actors to engage with their governments and each other to ensure a more open government. The trend is also occurring at a time when local newspapers and other traditional local media “that have traditionally served democracy by promoting values of openness, accountability, and public engagement are in crisis from financial, technological, and behavioral changes taking place in our society.”¹

A Warrant for a New Framework

We need a new model, a conceptual framework for stepping into open government. What is the language we use when talking with our authorizing environment (public boards and voters) about the importance and value of supporting this direction? How will library leaders begin to map out strategies for ramping up to the task? When and how does the support for civic engagement move into job descriptions and duties?

Jamie LaRue

CEO of LaRue and Associates

Former Director of the Douglas County, Colorado Library System

The traditional and important role of public libraries as trusted information intermediaries provides a powerful platform for public libraries to be key facilitators in opening government. How best public libraries can take advantage of the opportunities to advance their roles in opening government is unclear at this point. What is known is that public libraries must be proactive and deliberate in helping to redefine their role in the shifting context of the 21st century where more and more communities are

¹ Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, *Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age*, The Aspen Institute: Washington, D.C 2009), p.18 http://www.knightcomm.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Informing_Communities_Sustaining_Democracy_in_the_Digital_Age.pdf

pressuring their governments to open their data and to engage their citizens. Working with government partners and other key stakeholders to develop portfolios of programs and services geared toward helping community members access and use information and engage with each other and their governments is needed. Balancing these portfolios with the practical realities of public library capabilities and resources is also necessary.

This report presents the results of a year-long partnership project focused on open government and public libraries in the 21st century. The project was designed to launch a dialogue about public libraries and how new attention to creating more open governments is influencing, and possibly changing, their role in their communities. Project activities, which included a wide range of stakeholders (See Appendix A), were designed to provide a framework to guide change in this evolving context and to create a shared understanding among public librarians and other key stakeholders, of how public libraries, as enablers, facilitators, intermediaries, partners and leaders, can best continue to meet their ALA Library Bill of Rights obligation to serve as forums for “information and ideas”.

After a brief introduction to open government, the report discusses some trends in the activities public libraries are engaging in that might be considered open government. It then provides a quick overview of the capabilities of public libraries that make them appropriate actors in community open government efforts and the risks that public libraries face in such efforts. The report then considers five questions related to the current state of practice in public libraries and open government and provides recommendations for future action. These recommendations draw attention to the need for role clarity, a new focus on demand-side open government, and new attention to both communities and partners. Also recommended is to create a knowledge base of successful public library and open government projects, and to undertake a series of pilot projects designed to help more public libraries take advantage of best practices and enhance their capabilities and skills to support open government efforts. Implementing both of these recommendations will bring new insight into how public libraries can best contribute to community open government efforts and to discover what resources and capabilities are necessary to carry out their new roles to create public value. The recommendations are supported by two newly developed resources including a typology for open government activities and a planning model for public libraries as they seek to build community-focused, demand side open government programs.

A Brief Introduction to Open Government

President Obama’s 2009 Open Government Directive (OMB, 2009) drew renewed attention to a long-held commitment to an open government in the U.S. His directive, made possible through advancements in technology and how governments capture, manage, and use data, generated enthusiasm for and support of new open government related policies and programs beyond the US Federal government, state and local governments in the U.S., and internationally. This enthusiasm has resulted in open government initiatives of many forms including:

- Open data policies and projects where governments release their data for public access and use;
- Transparency efforts where government provides a less obstructed view of the public policy process in the form of opening meetings, budgets, and other decision making; and
- Participation efforts where government encourages the public to get more involved in the policy making process.

As these governments and other interested stakeholders have embraced, and in many cases reconnected, with these principles, we also see many adapting the principles to their own context, capabilities and priorities. The definition of open government put forward by Gavelin et. al. (2009), which broadly defines open government “as a more transparent, accessible and responsive democratic governance system, where information moves freely both to and from government through a multitude of channels;”² pays particular attention to the movement of information through a “multitude of channels.” A government that is “open”, according to the Engineer’s Without Borders (EWB) Policy Forum (EWB Policy Forum 2013), is “one that works with its citizens, civil society, and other actors to collaboratively solve important problems faced by their society”. The EWB Policy Forum highlights that

Enabling citizens to benefit from the commitments of government leaders to provide more openness represents new opportunity for public libraries to grow with and adapt to their communities and community needs.

information and data transparency and public engagement are critical to the co-production of solutions to important problems of society³. While this definition is broad, it provides the foundation for public libraries to envision themselves in open government as valuable, relevant and necessary players.

The Open Government Directive at the Federal level in the U.S. as well as open government initiatives in many sub national governments has resulted in a host of related initiatives – many clearly identified as related in some way to a federal agency open government plan or to a state governor’s plan for a more open government. Most of the easily identifiable open government initiatives found at the local level are in larger municipal units (cities and counties). Those found in cities tend to be in larger cities with progressive attitudes towards technology or with a large university community, large suburban counties, or smaller municipalities in the metropolitan area of technologically progressive cities. Most of these explicit open government initiatives are focused on providing more and varied data to the public. However, a review of current local government activities shows that many local governments are also participating in what might generally be considered

² Gavelin, Karin, Simon Burall, and Richard Wilson. "Open Government: Beyond Static Measures." Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), July 2009. <http://www.oecd.org/gov/46560184.pdf>.

³ From the Engineers Without Borders Annual Policy Forum, (<http://lindaraftree.com/2013/01/16/16-thoughts-on-open-government-and-community-and-economic-development/>)

opening government by providing e-participation or e-democracy features as well as e-government services.⁴

A review of current trends in public library programs further suggests that public libraries have been and continue to be involved in opening government activities; although these activities have not consistently, if at all, been linked with or identified as open government efforts. While libraries have historically supported community engagement in a variety of forms, from providing neutral civic spaces to enabling civic literacy⁵, the review indicates an expansion of the role libraries play in engaging their communities. Such trends are related in some cases to efforts led by organizations such as The Urban Libraries Council (ULC). The ULC has been a leader in helping public libraries increase their role in civic engagement with a number of the member libraries serving as pioneers in civic engagement focused on a broad range of community concerns. One example of this leadership role is the ULC's *Libraries and Digital Government: New Partnerships in Public Service*. This IMLS funded project focused on building new web-based tools to support information access and use.⁶ Some of these activities clearly involve local government and can be seen as opening government to various community groups.⁷ The Knight Foundation, which has studied community information needs required to sustain democracy in an era of declining local media such as newspapers has also seen libraries already serving as vital information intermediary in further opening government.⁸

A review of current trends in public library programs further suggests that public libraries have been and continue to be involved in opening government activities; although relatively little formal information about the nature and extent of public library involvement in open government activities is available.

Many experts agree that as communities begin to embrace the principles of open government,

⁴ This section is based on a review of local government Internet sites including those link from <http://opengovernmentinitiative.org/news/> and the Civic Commons site as well as the ICMA E-Government 2011 Survey Summary http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/302947/EGovernment_2011_Survey_Summary and ICMA 2011 E-Democracy Survey Summary http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/303564/ICMA_2011_EDemocracy_Survey_Summary

⁵ Nancy Kranich has detailed the past and expanding role of public libraries in civic engagement in a number of scholarly articles including *Libraries and Strong Democracy: Moving from an Informed to a Participatory 21st Century Citizenry*" *Indiana Libraries* 32.1(2013):13-20 <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/40777/> and "Libraries and Civic Engagement" in *Library and Book Trade Almanac 2012* (Medford, N.J.: Information Today), 75-96. <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/37218/>

⁶ This is a National Leadership Grants for Libraries 2009 grant to the American Library Association and the University of Illinois, the University of Maryland, and Towson University Usability Center to develop a Web-based resource to help libraries and governments provide better digital government-related services.

⁷ ULC Leadership Brief: Library Priority: Community-Civic Engagement http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Leadership_Brief_II_Full_4Pages.pdf; ULC Report: Civic Engagement: Stepping Up to the Civic Engagement Challenge http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Civic_Engagement_Report.pdf. See **The Engaged Library: Chicago's Story of Community Building** as a case study <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/ULCReport.pdf>.

⁸⁸ Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, *Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age*, (The Aspen Institute: Washington, D.C 2009), p.25 and passim. http://www.knightcomm.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Informing_Communities_Sustaining_Democracy_in_the_Digital_Age.pdf

expectations of public libraries as trusted information intermediaries will also increase. Enabling citizens to benefit from the commitments of government leaders to provide more openness represents new opportunity for public libraries to grow with and adapt to their communities and community needs. To be enablers in this way, public libraries must be proactive in determining how they can best support their communities as they seek to hold their governments more accountable through the use of open government data and as they seek to interact with their governments through a range of engagement opportunities. How this expectation is managed by the libraries themselves is critical.

Creating Value for Communities

Public libraries are recognized as having, in many cases, the full range of capabilities required to work with their communities to enable more open governments. Their long history and commitment to creating value in their communities by working with fellow public libraries worldwide, and their own community partners, clients, and funders is recognized as relevant to these efforts. The following are the most salient capabilities that libraries bring to the table.

- **Trusted community partners**

Within their communities public libraries are seen as trusted community partners. They are well positioned to take leadership roles, enabling the coming together of government, the public, and other community actors in interest in the process of opening government.

- **Public libraries as facilitators**

The ability of public libraries to engage with their communities and identify their interests and needs as they relate to information and library services is well known. Many public libraries conduct reference interviews with library visitors in order to help them identify the right questions and in order to provide the right answers. This invaluable skill can pave the way for public libraries to act as facilitators within and among various community spaces to elicit various and diverse aspirations, interests, and needs as they relate to open government.

- **Public libraries as community capacity builders**

Public libraries, in general, are already contributing to community capacity through various literacy programs embedded in their services portfolios (e.g. basic, civic, digital). Such programs are essential for community members to engage more with government and other community actors because they help develop the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate, use, and understand government and library resources. Public libraries also are well positioned to build

“If an overarching goal of this project is to bring along the public library community at large, then we do need to factor in where many libraries are in terms of capacity -- and how to think about an on ramp for community engagement.”

John Bertot

Professor and Co-Director
Information Policy and Access Center
University of Maryland

other types of community capacity such as social capital and trusting relationships among community members.

Risks to Public Libraries

A number of risks to public libraries from engaging in open government efforts must also be taken into account if those efforts are to be successful and public libraries are able to maintain their position as trusted community partners. These risks include:

- **Loss of credibility as trusted and neutral community partners**
Public library involvement in helping community partners identify and even communicate to government how they would like to see it become more open runs the risk of damaging community perception of the library as a trusted and neutral community actor. This damage could occur if any community actors perceive of their public library as being either aligned with or advocating for a politically or community sensitive issue. Further risk can come from various community actors whether it is the public, political bodies or community groups that don't see their issues properly presented by actions taken by the library.
- **Competing priorities for limited resources**
Engaging with community partners to enable open government for all can provide public libraries with an opportunity to leverage existing skills and strengths to make a difference in their communities. However, a potential risk comes in the form of increased pressure on library services over and above funded programs. As a result, public libraries must be prepared to evaluate existing programs to reallocate existing resources to support new programs.
- **Inadequate resources and skills**
Researchers have found that as government agencies move services onto the web, which often creates a gap in the provision of face-to-face customer services, the public is turning to public libraries for help in navigating such online government services. While the profession, like most, celebrates the new service efficiencies and opportunities provided through online government services, this trend raises difficult issues for already budget strapped public libraries. The new reliance on public libraries as intermediaries in the provision of web-based government services, or e-government, is resulting in a diversion of resources from traditional library services and has increased public expectations that libraries will provide services in areas where the staff itself is limited and those that are available have limited relevant training and expertise. Further, current technology budgets are not adequate for ensuring that the equipment necessary, either the kind or the amount, to ensure reliable access, is available. The fiscal impact on libraries is quite real as their role as e-government intermediaries becomes a type of unfunded mandate.⁹

⁹ Among the works focused on the impact of e-government on public libraries are: Gibson, Bertot, McClure, *Emerging Role of Librarians as E-Government Providers*, **Proceedings of the 42nd Hawaii International Conference on Systems Science – 2009** (<http://mcclure.ii.fsu.edu/publications/2009/Emerging%20role%20of%20public%20librarians%20as%20E-government%20providers.pdf>); Jaeger and Fleischman, Public Libraries, Value, Trust, and E-Government, **Information**

Public libraries have a unique opportunity to use the current national as well as international attention being paid to Open Government to define and communicate their evolving roles among themselves, as a profession, and to their community partners and funders. The specific challenge for public libraries is to understand fully the direction and implications of this trend. What role can public libraries play? In what areas can they provide the most value? What new skills and resources are needed? A lot of hard work and investment has gone into understanding why and how public libraries are evolving in specific areas such as information access and use, literacies training, and community engagement.¹⁰ Public libraries as a community need a shared understanding or vision that effectively communicates why these changes are necessary and how they are addressing broader interests in their communities and society in general. Without this shared understanding or vision, it is much more difficult for public libraries to strategically plan programs, training, and resources needed to meet these new demands and to do so in novel and innovative, yet effective, appropriate and sustainable ways.

SECTION 2. The Current State of Practice: Public Libraries and Open Government

It became clear that gaining new understanding of the current state of practice was necessary to help libraries decide for themselves what role they might play in open government efforts and how they might maximize the public value they can create through their efforts. Five specific questions about current practices were identified and addressed in this project (See Table 1). The first two questions relate to what public libraries are doing now that might be considered open government activities. The remaining three questions focus on what insights can be gained by further examinations of current activities. Through such examinations libraries can gain insight to help define or guide future investments by public libraries and others in creating a more open government. Preliminary answers to the first two questions were developed in this project. Getting complete answers to all five questions is critical to building a shared understanding of the roles public libraries have and can play in open government and to designing relevant and useful resources for use by public librarians in such efforts. Preliminary answers to the first two questions are presented and discussed and a short discussion of the value of getting answers to the remaining questions is provided. Recommendations presented in Section 5 will also address these questions.

Technology and Libraries (Dec. 2007) : 34-43 (<http://www.ala.org/lita/ital/sites/ala.org.lita.ital/files/content/26/4/jaeger.pdf>); Bertot, J.C., Jaeger, P.T., & McClure, C.R. (2008). Citizen-Centered E-Government Services: Benefits, Costs, and Research Needs. **The Proceedings of the 9th Annual International Digital Government Research Conference**: 137-142. Montreal, Canada, May 18-21, 2008 (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/advleg/federallegislation/govinfo/egovernment/citizencenteredgov.pdf>). Also see the American Library Associations (ALA) E-Government Tool Kit at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/federallegislation/govinfo/egovernment/egovtoolkit>.

¹⁰ The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) has been a leader in advocating for an increased role for libraries in engaging the community beyond library patrons. The Information Policy & Access Center (iPAC) at the University of Maryland has been studying the information and technology trends affecting libraries over a number of years. The Knight Foundation in partnership with the Aspen Institute has supported projects to look at community information needs that include the emerging role of libraries as well as the evolving open government movement. IMLS itself has also fund similar studies to look at the role of libraries in building digital communities and library/local government partnerships. The Gates Foundation has also funded similar projects.

Table 1.
Public Libraries and Open Government:
Building an understanding of the current state of practice

1.	What frameworks are available to help identify and categorize open government related activities being carried out by public libraries?
2.	What projects are public libraries doing that might be considered “open government” initiatives?
3.	What are the “best” ideas in public libraries open government initiatives? What makes them best?
4.	What best practices might public libraries adopt to begin to work with their communities as they seek a more open government?
5.	What new opportunities to extend or evaluate new ideas and best and preferred practices in public library and open government including critical success factors can be created?

What Frameworks Are Available to Help Identify and Categorize Open Government Related Activities Being Carried Out by Public Libraries?

A review of the literature and current practices on open government and on public libraries revealed a number of useful perspectives and resources. However, no single framework or tool was found that was directly applicable to helping public libraries develop a new understanding of the roles they might play in enabling open government and to use that new understanding to plan for and make decisions about their respective portfolios of open government-related initiatives. The *Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities* presented in Section 4, was developed to fill the gap in resources available to support a new dialogue about open government activities among public libraries and between those libraries and their communities. The preliminary typology is comprised two primary activity types: Civic Engagement and Literacy and Access. These two activities types are further categorized into subtypes which, while different, often coexist in a single initiative.

The Preliminary Typology provides a language for building new understanding of the possibilities and to support the process of choice-making about which activities are most appropriate for a given community or will likely generate the most value to that community. The Typology will support a dialogue about what activities make the most sense for public libraries, how these new activities can be described, and their relative merits examined.

Activities classified as “Civic Engagement” range from hosting community forums at the library to proactive engagement with community groups on civic issues.¹¹ Overall these activities are focused on

¹¹ Nancy Kranich has detailed the past and expanding role of public libraries in civic engagement in a number of scholarly articles including *Libraries and Strong Democracy: Moving from an Informed to a Participatory 21st Century Citizenry* Indiana Libraries 32.1(2013):13-20 <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/40777/> and "Libraries and Civic Engagement" in *Library and Book Trade Almanac 2012* (Medford, N.J.: Information Today), 75-96. <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/37218/>

The ULC has issued a number of studies and brief on community engagement including *Leadership Brief: Library Priority: Community-Civic Engagement* http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Leadership_Brief_II_Full_4Pages.pdf; *ULC Report: Civic Engagement: Stepping Up to the Civic Engagement Challenge* http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Civic_Engagement_Report.pdf; *The Engaged Library: Chicago’s Story of*

raising awareness of, informing, increasing interest among, and ultimately actively engaging citizens and groups on community or civic issues. These activities can be viewed as directly or indirectly promoting the opening of government by increasing interest in local issues and local government functions as well as putting pressure on local government to engage citizens.

- Informing the community
- Enabling a more engaged community
- Leading community engagement

Activities classified as “Literacy and Access” would enable access to and assistance in using information held by libraries but also available through a variety of sources including government agencies and non-profits and through a variety of media such as websites and social media.

- Literacy Services¹²
- Information Access
- Technology Access
- Government services facilitation
- Facilitating information use

What Projects are Public Libraries Doing That Might be Considered “Open Government” Projects?

A review of current practices found in the literature and interaction with leaders in the public library community resulted in the identification of a number of public library programs and projects that include activities considered to be “open government” activities. The “Civic Engagement” and “Literacy and Access” classifications that form the *Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities* are used to introduce and describe a set of selected projects.

Civic Engagement

A number of public libraries are carrying out activities classified as civic engagement. These activities include helping the general public participate in public policy decision making. Public Libraries are doing this by both providing neutral spaces (virtual and physical) for public consideration of issues and by helping to incorporate community aspirations into governmental decision making processes.

The King County Library System (KCLS), WA, has established *Convey*, an online forum to foster civic engagement and dialog on issues of public concern. KCLS serves as a neutral party but has partnered

Community Building as a case study <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/UJCRReport.pdf>. The American Library Association (ALA) maintains a website dedicated to libraries and civic engagement as well as the ALA Center for Civic Life <http://discuss.ala.org/civicingagement/>

¹² We are thankful to Dr. John Bertot for pointing out the concept of “transliteracy”, which is gaining currency within the library profession. Transliteracy is defined as “the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks.” <http://librariesandtransliteracy.wordpress.com/what-is-transliteracy/>

with other community groups and local governments interested in initiating community conversations. KCLS partnered with the City of Kirkland and Kirkland Arts Center to create in-person and online opportunities for citizens to learn and make suggestions about the potential uses of the former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway acquired by the City of Kirkland. They also partnered with the Snoqualmie Valley Community Network, Downtown Issaquah Association (DIA), and City of Issaquah to generate ideas to revitalize downtown¹³.

The Wichita Public Library and the City of Wichita partnered to develop a similar online resources *Activate Wichita*. The Library helped to broaden the community conversation so citizens had greater opportunities to participate. *Activate Wichita* has also helped demonstrate the way the library has become a more active partner with the community. Similar types of library-hosted forums to foster dialogue on important issues, help the community move toward solutions, and support participation in the democratic process, have been held by **Hartford Public library, Sno-Isle Libraries, Calgary Public Library, Anchorage Public Library, Kansas City Public Library, Virginia Beach Public Library; and DesPlaines Public Library**. These activities have most often occurred in partnership with other community entities or local governments.

The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, KS, has trained its staff to better position it as a convener for community conversations and librarians as trusted facilitators. Librarians and management received Effective Facilitator/Masterful Meetings training with the ultimate goal to: reinvent the role of librarians in the 21st century and help librarians realize their full potential; help reconcile diverse perspectives and teach people how to reach consensus with the goal of making the community a better place to live, work and learn; demonstrate the value of librarians as trusted community change agents; build community capacity by growing the number of people who can work together effectively, make better decisions, and get things done.

Literacy and Access

Libraries have always been leaders in basic literacy training. These programs have, in many libraries, expanded to include basic computer literacy training as well as early/emergent and family literacy, such as are provided by children's story times. Some libraries have expanded these efforts beyond the library itself and have taken training into the community. In addition, public libraries have always been at the forefront of providing access to the technologies that are essential for taking advantage of e-government services and enable citizen engagement with government and others. A significant number of libraries have gone beyond the usual approach to providing access to computers and networks in the library to providing such access to large segments of the community. Such initiatives usually involve both governmental and non-government partners and often includes training and education. It is important to note that while many public libraries take on these initiatives as part of their mission, providing literacy and access at any level requires a certain degree of training and resources. As libraries look to expand their role, the need for staff training and resources will change accordingly.

¹³ <http://www.kcls.org/convey/>

The Houston Public Library (HPL) partnered with Houston City government to establish and manage WeCAN (Wireless Empowered Community Access Network), which is funded by corporate partners to provide free wireless to underserved communities. WeCAN includes an education and awareness campaign that focuses on accelerating the adoption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). It also includes community resource portals, ICT-based development opportunities, and technology community access locations within neighborhoods. A working body of stakeholders from business, education, health, community and government guides the allocation and distribution of resources.¹⁴

The **New York Public Library** system received a \$500,000 grant in June 2014, from the Knight Foundation's Knight News Challenge, to provide network boxes designed to provide wireless internet service for up to five users. These devices cost \$10 in a monthly subscription fee, enough to equip up to 2,000 people. Various NYPL branches are acting as the information hub and internet access hub for their surrounding communities. Community members rely on the library's broadband network because many people within the participating communities do not have internet access in the home due to excessive internet service costs¹⁵.

Among the most innovative computer training program, **the Calgary Public Library's** Digital Literacy in the Community (DLIC) provides its highly successful and popular computer training modules "on the road" to new audiences. Partnering with community agencies who serve underserved communities, the DLIC program provides 17 different computer training modules for various skill levels in the partner agency locations using a mobile computer lab. All classes are free and include library membership for those who do not currently have it. Child care is offered through the partner agencies.

A number of libraries combined literacy training with program to help segments of the community access government. **The Hartford Public Library's** The American Place (TAP) is a free library program designed to welcome immigrants and facilitate their transition into their new home city through free English and Citizenship classes, resources for studying at home, and assistance with accessing online immigration information¹⁶. This program was established in partnership with USCIS and grants from IMLS.

Creating New Knowledge about Public Libraries and Open Government Activities

This project highlighted that the public library community has not yet answered the five questions considered critical to creating a shared understanding of the current state of practice for public libraries' involvement in open government, and how the roles public libraries are playing might best be adopted in or adapted for different communities. Understanding what ideas are best across the board and being clear about what makes them good ideas, how these good ideas might succeed in a variety of different

¹⁴ <http://www.houstonlibrary.org/wecan>

¹⁵ Dwyer, Jim. "For Those in the Digital Dark, Enlightenment Is Borrowed From the Library." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 08 July 2014. Web. 15 July 2014.

¹⁶ <http://www.hpclct.org/library-services/immigration-citizenship#sthash.Aw9Nvr8u.dpuf>

community conditions, and what public librarians must know about these ideas, is critical to create robust, impactful and sustainable strategies. New understanding about how public libraries, once embracing new open government activities, might work with their communities to collaboratively select and develop such activities is needed. Many models exist for developing such community-oriented partnerships. Not all models will work in all communities and with all public libraries. Variances in capability, stakeholder interests and resources must be understood and taken into account as part of such partnership building efforts.

Finally, it became clear through the project that new opportunities must be provided to extend or evaluate new ideas and preferred practices so that the kind of new knowledge required can be developed. A selected set of project ideas for building this knowledge base is provided in Appendix D. Suggestions include projects that create new understanding of the pathway to data literacy as a resource for libraries to use when developing their literacy and access activities or one that designs and tests a mentorship program including those librarians considered to be leaders in open government activities and those seeking to become future leaders.

SECTION 3. Recommendations for Future Action

Six recommendations for future action were identified based on the consistent themes that emerged from project activities. Participants, as indicated above, called for more clarity of role, a unique focus on demand rather than supply, broad perspective beyond the library itself, and a new attention to partnerships. Further, participants recognized the need for new understanding of what has been done and where should future efforts focus. Public Libraries should:

1. Define the role of public libraries in community-focused open government activities.
2. Adopt a focus on the demand side of open government.
3. Adopt a community-wide perspective on open government.
4. Build capability to create and sustain new kinds of partnerships with a wider range of community actors.
5. Build a knowledge base of public library open government initiatives.
6. Fund and carry out a set of pilot projects focused on building new understanding of preferred and best public library open government practices.

Each of the six recommendations is presented below.

Recommendation # 1

Define the role of public libraries in community open government initiatives.

While there is general understanding of the concept of open government throughout the project activities, the lack of a specific interpretation of open government in terms of public libraries hampered discussions. For example, for some, open government for public libraries is about enabling engagement, for others it was about achieving a specific outcome through the engagement. Establishing a shared understanding of the possible roles for public libraries in community efforts to create a more open

government is central to the ability of library leadership and other interested actors to design programs of interest appropriate to the priorities and capabilities of the library and the community.

Aspects of a role statement were collected throughout the project and are integrated into the following proposed draft which is both anchored in the ALA Library Bill of Rights and builds on it.

The role of public libraries in open government is to help ensure that all community members regardless of origin, age, background, economic circumstance or views have the opportunity and capabilities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the government processes open to them. In addition, public libraries help ensure that all community members have a say in which processes they would like to see more “open.”¹⁷

While open government, particularly the open data initiatives that have occurred all over the US and elsewhere, is clearly a step forward for transparency, it is not always very useful to the average citizen.

Norman Jacknis

Senior Fellow, Intelligent Community Forum
Co-Founder, Gotham Innovation Greenhouse
President of the Metropolitan New York
Library Council
Former CIO Westchester County, NY

Recommendation # 2

Public libraries should adopt a focus on the demand side of open government.

The focus of open government policies and activities in the United States and throughout the world have attempted to create the conditions for transparency, collaboration and participation through increasing the supply of data, information, and technology innovations.¹⁸ The focus on “supply” has been a game-changer for governments around the world. New programs, new positions, and new priorities have all emerged with a focus on increasing supply as a way to create more open governments. It is critical to gain a new understanding of what citizens want and how to prepare citizens to benefit from the supply of data, information, and technology innovations being provided in their interests. How this new insight into what citizens want can be developed is on the minds of both government leadership and academics. As part of a series of open government research agenda setting workshops organized in 2011 by the Executive Office of the President, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program (NITRD) and the National Archives and Records Administration, leaders from government, academia, and the non-profit community identified a range of high priority and unanswered demand-

¹⁷ The full version of the Library Bill of Rights is available at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>.

¹⁸ The 2009 Presidential Open Government Directive available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment/. Satish Nambisan and Priya Nambisan. (2014). Engaging Citizens in Co-Creation in Public Services Lessons Learned and Best Practices. IBM Center for Business of Government. Available at <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/report/engaging-citizens-co-creation-public-services>. Gavelin, Karin, Simon Burall, and Richard Wilson. "Open Government: Beyond Static Measures." Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), July 2009. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/gov/46560184.pdf>.

From the Engineers Without Borders Annual Policy Forum. Available at <http://lindaraftree.com/2013/01/16/16-thoughts-on-open-government-and-community-and-economic-development/>.

side research questions including defining, “what citizens wanted from open government” (See Table 2).¹⁹

Table 2. Selected Research Questions from An Open Government Research and Development Agenda Setting Workshop: A Summary Activity Report
How does government know (hear about) what citizens need to know?
How much do citizens want to know about and be involved in government processes? Which citizens care?
How do we know what citizens need and how/if they can access it?
How do citizens know what they need to know?
What information has high consumer demand? Will open government widen the digital divide and redefine it? What are the effects of limits on a citizen’s ability to use and interpret information?
Who should drive an open government agenda? Is it government, citizens, other groups?
Who within society should be responsible for making sure open government works for everyone?
How do you measure or evaluate that open government is working? What’s open enough?
What skills and capabilities should citizens have in order to be able to use and understand open government and be able to add value to government processes?
How can government help increase digital literacy among citizens so they better use government data?
Given the constraints of government marketing and all of the noise online, what is the best way to reach out and inform citizens of open government projects?

These questions and others (See Appendix B) make it clear that attention to the demand side of open government is needed. At a 2013 Forum on Communications and Society (FOCAS)²⁰, an annual roundtable discussion hosted by the Aspen Institute, attendees examined the constraints on open government and noted:

- Open government practitioners love to speak of “the citizen” and “the government.” But who exactly are these people? Too often, we don’t really know. We are builders, makers and creators with insufficient understanding of whom we are building, making and creating for.²¹
- Closely linked to knowing what citizens want from the opening of government is the issue of citizen’s ability to actually participate in and benefit from open government. As highlighted at the 2013 FOCAS Roundtable: The central irony of open government is that it’s often not “open” at all. For all the talk of

¹⁹ An Open Government Research and Development Agenda Setting Workshop: A Summary Activity Report Tue, 10 Jun 2011 http://www.ctg.albany.edu/publications/reports/OGWorkshop_ActivityReport/OGWorkshop_ActivityReport.pdf

²⁰ **Toward the Next Phase of Open Government** July 10-13, 2013 <http://csreports.aspeninstitute.org/Forum-on-Communications-and-Society/2013/report/details/0065/FOCAS-2013-Download-PDF>

²¹ Ibid, p.3.

technology's broad and inclusive reach, conversations on open government are dominated by those with the means to participate. . . .The practical result of those with power, privilege, and access tinkering for solutions while large citizen segments remain uninvolved is that open government initiatives are clouded by our own biases and tunnel vision.²²

As the results from these workshops and roundtables show, the open government community is increasingly recognizing the need for a more holistic approach to open government. What must happen for citizens to be more demanding of their governments is unclear. As described in the *Creating Open Government Ecosystems: A Research and Development Agenda*, by Teresa Harrison, et.al, "Governments have always collected, analyzed, and used information in their legislatively mandated duties; such activities are essential to delivering any service to citizens. But government has rarely been in a position to have to think about what users, in a wide variety of roles, would find personally, politically, professionally, economically, or medically valuable to know from among the data that government already possesses or could move to acquire²³."

Throughout the project two specific ideas about where public libraries might be best positioned to enable the demand side of open government consistently emerged. The first is helping individual citizens and community groups identify and then share their most important and even urgent aspirations to inform open government activities. The second is helping citizens and community groups develop the skills and capabilities needed to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from existing and planned open government-related activities. The *Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries v1.0* presented in section 4 was designed to support public libraries in their efforts to plan their demand-side open government strategies. The Model is based on the community focused open government planning process depicted in Figure 1. This process interweaves the related process of planning and partnership development.

²² Ibid, p 11. "At the meeting Kelly Born of the Hewlett Foundation (asked attendees, who included senior executives from the Sunlight Foundation, the White House, and the Open Data Institute, "Is this [group of FOCAS participants] the right group of people to set goals for open government? Where are the citizens in this process?"

²³ Harrison, Teresa M., Theresa A. Pardo, and Meghan Cook. "Creating Open Government Ecosystems: A Research and Development Agenda." *Future Internet* 4.4 (2012): 900-928.



Figure 1. A Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries

Adopting a focus on the demand side of open government will provide public libraries with a much needed common language and a strategic planning platform to help match their programs and activities to their communities' aspirations and capabilities. Focusing on the demand side of open government will assist public libraries in developing key partnerships with government and other entities, helping government officials, government agencies, nonprofits, and private organizations have a direct resource to the community and its needs. It will also allow them to play a significant role in and benefit from the open government trend.

Recommendation # 3

Public libraries should adopt a community-wide perspective on open government.

A focus beyond patrons and into the community facilitates identifying partners that can help public libraries successfully meet community open government interests and needs. Such a community-focused and partnership building approach presents public libraries with an opportunity to take on a very visible leadership role within their communities and use and expand upon capabilities that public libraries excel at and are known for. While public libraries are visible within communities, taking this approach can help public libraries restructure and evaluate their current services and may provide opportunity to more effectively meet the open government interests and needs.

“Public libraries need to engage in discussions of information policy outside of the library setting and work with open government policy groups as well as with new enthusiasts such as Code for America and countless local manifestations of CfA-type groups.”

Mary Treacy

Outreach Coordinator
OpenTheGovernment.org

By focusing on the interests and needs of the community, public libraries can take on a community leadership role in helping facilitate the identification of community interests and needs and matches community-based capabilities to meet those interests and needs.

Recommendation # 4

Public Libraries should build capability to create and sustain new kinds of partnerships with a wider range of community actors.

Partnerships are critical to maximizing finite resources and leveraging diverse capabilities needed to respond to complex community challenges. Adopting new partnership language that effectively communicates recognition of the value of and commitment to partnerships across the full range of open government activities will help in identifying and securing necessary partners. Investing in new capability to build partnerships with a wide range of community actors, including government (federal, state, and local), civil society organizations, and other libraries, among others may be needed. The *Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries* (See Section 4) provides guidance in identifying potential partners and building necessary partnerships to advance the interests of communities.

Recommendation #5

Public Libraries should build a knowledge base of public library open government initiatives.

As noted above in Section 2, many public libraries already engaged in open government programs or related services (See Appendix C). However, information about public library open government projects is not systematically captured, widely known or shared among public libraries. Absent such knowledge and awareness makes it difficult for public libraries to transfer knowledge of preferred and best practices or learn from and build on such practices. New resources such as compendiums that explicitly

describe how public libraries are working on open government projects are needed. Having access to such resources is necessary if public libraries are to understand what's possible through the experiences and lessons learned by others public libraries.

Recommendation #6

Fund and carry out a set of pilot projects focused on building new understanding of preferred and best public library open government practices.

As noted in Section 2, what constitutes the best ideas and best practices in public library and open government is still unclear. How public libraries might, once best ideas and practices are identified, extend these best ideas and practices have also not been addressed. Systematic attention to these questions is required if new investments being made by public libraries are to be well informed and carried out.

Participants in the May 2014 *Role of Public Libraries in Enabling Open Government: A Stakeholder Workshop* brainstormed a set of project ideas that, if carried out, would help build the necessary knowledge base. Such a knowledge base was considered central to efforts to guide future investments in public library capacity as Open Government Community partners including increasing their ability to identify community-focused open government needs and aspirations (See Appendix D). Participants discussed the necessary partners, such as the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) *Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program*²⁴, and the *National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program*²⁵; The Knight Foundation *Knight Community Information Challenge*²⁶; and The Sunlight Foundation *OpenGov Grant Program*²⁷ and expected benefits of each project idea and identified any public libraries that were known to be involved in a similar project.

SECTION 4. Getting Started: Two Communication and Planning Tools for Public Libraries

Two new communication and planning tools were produced through this project to fill gaps identified by project participants in what is needed to support a comprehensive understanding of the current role of public librarians in the open government ecosystem and a robust discussion of future possibilities. The tools were designed to support efforts to carry out the recommendations.

1. A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities
2. A Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries, Version 1

A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities

The first tool introduces a set of initiative types as a way to support discussions about types or classes of projects as we move beyond specific open government related efforts by public libraries to explore more general categories (See Table 3). The Typology is comprised of two categories: Civic Engagement

²⁴ <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=9>

²⁵ <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=14>

²⁶ <http://www.knightfoundation.org/funding-initiatives/knight-community-information-challenge/>

²⁷ <http://sunlightfoundation.com/about/grants/opengovgrants/>

and Literacy and Access. Each category includes subcategories, which provide public libraries with a way of describing and communicating how their resources and programs are enabling open government within their communities.

<p>Table 3. A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities Civic Engagement & Literacy and Access</p>	
<p>A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities Civic Engagement</p> <p>Activities considered “Civic Engagement” range from hosting community forums to more pro-active engagement with community groups on civic issues.²⁸ Overall these activities are focused on raising awareness of, informing, increasing interest among, and ultimately actively engaging citizens and groups on community or civic issues. These activities can be viewed as directly or indirectly promoting the opening of government by increasing interest in local issues and local government functions as well as putting pressure on local government to engage citizens.</p>	
<p>Informing the community</p>	<p>Informing the community includes the type of community service activities that have been and are provided by public libraries including providing information on local issues through handouts or bulletin boards open to the public. Often these activities involve bringing community information resources into the library. They also involve using the library’s web presence to provide the same type of information resources to the public, serve as a virtual community bulletin board or virtual meeting space. The essence of these activities is the library as a clearinghouse for information about library and community-based resources and activities. This is a role that the library once shared with local media outlets. As these outlets disappear or reduce local media coverage, the library’s neutral role as an information clearinghouse for the community becomes more critical.</p>

²⁸ Nancy Kranich has detailed the past and expanding role of public libraries in civic engagement in a number of scholarly articles including "Libraries and Strong Democracy: Moving from an Informed to a Participatory 21st Century Citizenry" *Indiana Libraries* 32.1(2013):13-20 <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/40777/> and "Libraries and Civic Engagement" in *Library and Book Trade Almanac 2012* (Medford, N.J.: Information Today), 75-96. <http://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/37218/>

The ULC has issued a number of studies and brief on community engagement including Leadership Brief: Library Priority: Community-Civic Engagement http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Leadership_Brief_II_Full_4Pages.pdf; ULC Report: Civic Engagement: Stepping Up to the Civic Engagement Challenge http://www.urbanlibraries.org/filebin/pdfs/ULC_Civic_Engagement_Report.pdf; The Engaged Library: Chicago’s Story of Community Building as a case study <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/ULCReport.pdf>. The American Library Association (ALA) maintains a website dedicated to libraries and civic engagement as well as the ALA Center for Civic Life <http://discuss.ala.org/civicingagement/>

Table 3.
A Preliminary Typology of Public Library
Open Government Activities

Civic Engagement & Literacy and Access

<p>Enabling a more engaged community</p>	<p>Enabling a more engaged community includes activities where the library is proactive in stimulating interest in local issues, assisting the community in airing local concerns, or increasing the amount of information available on community issues including hosting community forums, educating the public on community issues, inviting community groups to present information on issues, and producing fact sheets or finding aids on issues of interest to the community. Many of these activities take place virtually through the web resources. The essence of these activities is enabling a more open government through the bringing together of the community, physically or virtually.</p>
<p>Leading community engagement</p>	<p>Leading community engagement includes activities where the library plays a leading role in reaching out to the community or specific community groups (e.g., immigrant groups, ethnic or issue-based groups, neighborhood associations) and is actively engaged in addressing specific community concerns. This may include non-traditional types of activities such as providing classes and seminars in forums other than in the library's facilities, direct advocacy with government agencies, direct services to address specific issues and pursuing grant funding for innovative projects.²⁹ It also involves libraries actively polling citizens to find out the type of data or e-participation they want from government. The essence of these activities is proactive engagement to the community, done through the use of library technical resources or those of other community groups and institutions</p>

²⁹ See The Engaged Library: Chicago's Story of Community Building as a case study <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/ULCReport.pdf>. The innovative activities of other libraries specifically directed at e-government issues are highlighted in iPAC Libraries & E-government: New Partnerships in Public Service Executive Summary (March 6, 2012) http://ipac.umd.edu/sites/default/files/publications/EGOVT_ExecSummaryJan2012_0.pdf

Table 3.
**A Preliminary Typology of Public Library
Open Government Activities**

Civic Engagement & Literacy and Access

A Preliminary Typology of Public Library Open Government Activities

Literacy and Access

Literacy and access programs and services enable access to and assistance in using information

Literacy Services³⁰	<p>Literacy services address multiple forms of literacies needed to enable access to and use of public information and library holdings in the process of engaging with the community and with government, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic literacy training, including English as a Second Language. 2. Digital literacy involving both formal training and informal assistance on computer use and internet access. 3. Civic literacy involving educational activities to help citizens understand and better engage in government and other civic institutions. 4. Data literacy involving formal and informal training to citizens on finding, manipulating, managing, and interpreting data (including text and images as well as numbers) and particularly government data.
Information Access	This includes providing access to information found online and in library's holdings including in government documents and publications in various formats and media.
Technology Access	This includes providing access to technologies including workstations and the internet.
Government services facilitation	This includes activities that provide assistance in accessing specific government services available online and facilitating their application for and use of such services.
Facilitating information use	This includes activities where libraries provide value-added tools that facilitate the use and interpretation of government information.

³⁰ We are thankful to Dr. John Bertot for pointing out the concept of “transliteracy”, which is gaining currency within the library profession. Transliteracy is defined as “the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks.”
<http://librariesandtransliteracy.wordpress.com/what-is-transliteracy/>

A Demand-side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries

The Demand-Side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries is a planning model designed to support public libraries that choose to begin building a community-focused, demand-side open government program. The model is comprised of a six-step community-focused planning process (See Table 4) focused on the demand-side of open government within a specific community. In this process the library serves as the facilitator of the planning process on behalf of the community. In addition, such a process will help an individual public library find the “right fit” open government plan for its community based on community aspirations and the library’s capabilities and resources. Finally, such a standardized process will help the public library community as a whole do a better job of communicating the critical role they play to the Open Government Community.

The Planning Model builds on recent work that encourages public libraries to take a broader community-focused approach to their service design and delivery and applies this approach to an open government context³¹ as well as the examples cited above and research into other planning models. It is important to note that the Planning Model introduced below is meant to provide an overview of the planning process and does not include tools and techniques to help libraries implement the process. However, many such tools and techniques can be found in the public libraries’ own civic engagement and program planning literature, as well as from other sources. For example, the *Community-Led Libraries Toolkit* describes in some detail scores of techniques³² that can support each step in the model³².

The Planning Model (See Figure 1) consists of two concentric iterative processes; a structured community-focused planning process, and a less structured relationship building and partnership development process.

Community-focused Planning. The outer circle represents the community-based planning process that will lead to the programs and services that will allow all community members to be involved and benefit from the opening of government.

Building relationships and developing institutional partnerships. The inner circle represents the process of building relationships and developing institutional partnerships necessary to co-create and co-provide services. Throughout the planning process the public library staff can use the opportunities afforded by each phase to build the foundational personal relationships with other community actors and to develop the formal institutional partnerships necessary to co-develop and co-provide services to help open government to the entire community.

³¹ Campbell, Brian, Sandra Singh, Annette DeFaveri, Eric Smith, and Jennifer O'Donnell. "Community-Led Libraries Toolkit." (2008): 1-143. Working Together. <http://www.librariesincommunities.ca/?p=23>.

³² Campbell, Brian, Sandra Singh, Annette DeFaveri, Eric Smith, and Jennifer O'Donnell. "Community-Led Libraries Toolkit." (2008) http://www.librariesincommunities.ca/resources/Community-Led_Libraries_Toolkit.pdf

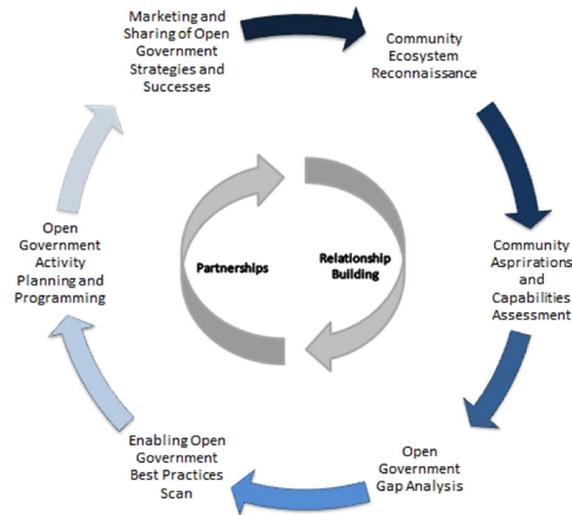


Figure 1. Planning for Community-focused, Demand-side Open Government Programs for Public Libraries

Table 4. A Community-focused, Demand-Side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries		
Step	Step Name	Step Description
1.	Community Ecosystem Reconnaissance	A community ecosystem reconnaissance is a way for a library to understand their community better in order to begin to work with other community actors to assess the community’s aspirations and needs in relationship to the opening of government. This reconnaissance involves identifying the key community institutions and community leaders, the relationship between entities and how these organizations interact with various segments of the community. It can also include a local scan of what has occurred or is occurring within the community to enable public libraries to tap into similar efforts that have already taken place or are in process.
2.	Community Aspirations and Capabilities Assessment	This is a critical step in determining a community’s open government aspirations and what capabilities are needed in order to contribute to, participate in and benefit from a more open government. Using the information collected from Step 1, the public library can engage with specific stakeholder groups to identify their specific open government aspirations. This assessment is community as opposed to library-driven and goes beyond existing library patrons.
3.	Open Government Capabilities Gap Analysis	This step involves an analysis of the gap between the open government demand based on aspirations and capabilities with the existing open government activities. From the library’s perspective, a community’s abilities to participate in, and benefit from, open government activities is focused on the access to and capabilities to use and understand information related to government processes. This involves a range of basic to more advanced literacies from reading and language comprehension to technology use and civics.

Table 4.
A Community-focused, Demand-Side Open Government Planning Model for Public Libraries

4.	Enabling Demand Side Open Government Best Practices Scan	During this step public libraries will perform a scan to find out if other libraries throughout their community and the United States are already providing services that meet community aspirations and capabilities. This gives public libraries an opportunity to match current and best practices from other public libraries, saving a significant amount of time and even resources rather than developing strategies from scratch. This also provides an opportunity for the library community to share resources and programs, open government related or otherwise.
5.	Open Government Activity Planning and Programming	The results of Step 3. Provide the library with essential information to then match their existing and perhaps needed resources and programs to the most important community open government aspirations and capabilities. In addition, as the examples included in this report show, the public library can work with other community and even non-community, partners such as state and federal agencies in those instances where there are community aspirations and capabilities the library cannot address alone. In addition the best practices uncovered in Step 4. can be used as the basis for planning new services and identifying partnerships.
6.	Marketing and Sharing of Open Government Strategies and Successes	This step has several important components. The first is that the public library must ensure that its community members are aware of the services that they are providing and how these services are available to address those aspirations and capabilities that were identified by the community themselves. Second, individual public libraries should make sure the rest of the public library community is aware of these services and how they specifically support enabling open government. Finally, third, individual libraries as well as the public library community should proactively share their open government related activities and success stories with the rest of the Open Government Community.

SECTION 5. Conclusion

The results of CTG’s year-long partnership with public library, local government, open government, and research experts included in this report provide public libraries with a set of new ideas, recommendations, and resources to help them define the roles they can play in open government. More specifically, these results help point public libraries to the areas within the open government space where they can create the most public value by responding to important community gaps and limitations within their community open government ecosystems. Finally, the recommendations and resources help public libraries identify and address the skills and resources they will need in order to fulfill their roles in enabling open government.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant List

The Role of Public Libraries in Enabling Open Government
A Stakeholder Workshop, May 7-8, Washington, DC
Participant List

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Appendix B. Open Government Research Questions

Research Question	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are citizen needs and expectations included in the design and implementation of e-government services and resources? How are citizen identified expectations and desires in e-government services and resources incorporated into the overall design and continual enhancement of e-government services and resources? What needs do users have in attempting to engage in e-government service and resource use? 	Citizen-Centered E-Government Services: Benefits, Costs, and Research Needs ³³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the different types of citizen co-creation possible in public services? Which existing structures and practices should we abandon, and which new structures and practices should we adopt? What are some successful approaches to government-citizen collaboration and co-creation in public services? In what ways can government agencies promote or encourage these different citizen roles in value co-creation and problem-solving? 	Engaging Citizens in Co-Creation in Public Services: Lessons Learned and Best Practices ³⁴ , IBM Center for the Business of Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are we trying to make public agencies more efficient, hold elected officials accountable, tackle corruption, influence policy, or achieve any number of other objectives that we associate with open government? Who do we mean by “the government”? Have these governments succeeded in achieving “open government”? And beyond evaluating their holistic records on transparency and accountability, how do we assess individual projects? 	Toward the Next Phase of Open Government ³⁵ Aspen Institute
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do our lives improve (with open government)? If so, in which ways? How do users interact with and use government information in the context of government sponsored or enabled tools or applications. How does government acquire the answers to such questions? Who should decide what data is “high value” and how do they choose? What is the value of open government? Who benefits? Is it citizens? If so, in what ways are their lives improved? Is the benefit shared? If so, in what way and how do we use that information to inform future investments? What can we define as success in open government? What kinds of information and/or data do individual users want and under what circumstances will they be best equipped to make use of it? 	Creating Open Government Ecosystems: A Research and Development Agenda, The Center for Technology in Government, University at Albany ³⁶

³³ Bertot, J.C., Jaeger, P.T., & McClure, C.R. (2008). Citizen-Centered E-Government Services: Benefits, Costs, and Research Needs. The Proceedings of the 9th Annual International Digital Government Research Conference: 137-142. Montreal, Canada, May 18-211, 2008.

³⁴ Nambisan, Satish, Priya Nambisan. *Engaging Citizens in Co-Creation in Public Services: Lessons Learned and Best Practices*. Washington, DC: IBM Center for the Business of Government, 2013.

³⁵ Lee, Panthea. *Toward the Next Phase of Open Government: A Report of the 2013 Aspen Institute Forum on Communications and Society*. Rep. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 2014.

³⁶ Harrison, Teresa M., Theresa A. Pardo, and Meghan Cook. "Creating Open Government Ecosystems: A Research and Development Agenda." *Future Internet* 4.4 (2012): 900-928.

Research Question	Source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does government know (hear about) what citizens need to know? • How much do citizens want to know about and be involved in government processes? Which citizens care? • How does government know (hear about) what citizens need to know? • How do we know what citizens need and how/if they can access it? • How do citizens know what they need to know? • What information has high consumer demand? Will open government widen the digital divide and redefine it? What are the effects of limits on a citizen's ability to use and interpret information? • Who should drive an open government agenda? Is it government, citizens, other groups? • Who within society should be responsible for making sure open government works for everyone? • How do you measure or evaluate that open government is working? What's open enough? • What's the responsibility of a citizen when it comes to open government? Or what is the right of a citizen when it comes to open government? • What skills and capabilities should citizens have in order to be able to use and understand open government and be able to add value to government processes? • How can government help increase digital literacy among citizens so they better use government data? • Given the constraints of government marketing and all of the noise online, what is the best way to reach out and inform citizens of open government projects? 	<p>The Center for Technology in Government, University at Albany; the Tetherless World Constellation (TWC), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; the Institute for Law and Policy (IILP), New York Law School; and Civic Commons³⁷</p>

³⁷ Many of these questions have derived from the Open Government Research and Development Agenda Setting Workshop: Cook, Meghan, and M. Alexander Jurkat. "An Open Government Research and Development Agenda Setting Workshop: A Summary Activity Report." (2011).

Appendix C. Public Library Open Government Examples

Examples of Library Programs Supporting Demand-side Open Government		
Facilitating Community Participation in Government Policy and Decision Making		
Library System	Activity Description	Community Partners
The King County Library System (KCLS), WA	Established Convey , an online forum to foster civic engagement and dialog on issues of public concern. KCLS serves as a neutral party but has partnered with other community groups and local governments interested in initiating community conversations. More information at http://www.kcls.org/convey/	Various, depending on forum topic, but includes: City of Kirkland and Kirkland Arts Center, Snoqualmie Valley Community Network, Downtown Issaquah Association (DIA), and City of Issaquah.
The Wichita Public Library, KS	Developed an online resource, Activate Wichita , to broaden the community conversation so citizens had greater opportunities to participate. Activate Wichita has also helped demonstrate the way the library has become a more active partner with the community. More information at http://www.activate-wichita.com/	City of Wichita
Hartford Public library, CT	Established Community Dialogues program designed to engage immigrants and the receiving community in dialogue on topics of mutual concern. The Library has piloted two approaches: City Wide and Neighborhood. More information at http://hplct.org/library-services/immigration-citizenship/community-civic-participation/community-participation/	Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association, the South Marshall Interfaith Coalition, Center for Hartford Adult Education Center (CAEH)
Sno-Isle Libraries, WA	Launched Issues That Matter , a community discussion series on a variety of volatile community/regional issues to support safe, civil and high-trust dialogue. The moderated panel discussion events are held outside the library's facilities and bring together people with differing viewpoints to explore issues that have an immediate impact on our communities. More information at http://www.sno-isle.org/issues-that-matter	Library initiative with participation from community groups with subject area expertise on topics under discussion.
Calgary Public Library, Alberta	Host a series of Vital Conversations - dynamic community forums at Library locations around the city inviting citizen engagement and dialogue around key issues of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability • Starting in Calgary (new Canadians) • Health & Wellbeing • Belonging & Leadership (voting, engaging in community) More information at http://calgarypubliclibrary.com/blogs/library-connect?p=657	Calgary Foundation (TCF), Office of Sustainability, City of Calgary

Examples of Library Programs Supporting Demand-side Open Government		
Facilitating Community Participation in Government Policy and Decision Making		
Library System	Activity Description	Community Partners
Anchorage Public Library, AK	<p>Initiated a series of community discussions focused on the Alaska constitution. The discussions focused on different parts of the constitution as a matter of historical interest, to see how legislation was shaped, and to look at specific topics that the community must address.</p> <p>More information available at https://www.facebook.com/anchoragepubliclibrary/posts/491688950652</p>	Institute of the North
Kansas City Public Library, MO	<p>Co-hosts public forums airing critical questions confronting the region, drawing hundreds of people and helping to steer official action on vital community issues.</p> <p>More information at http://www.kclibrary.org/press-release/citizens-project-forum-addresses-local-control-kansas-city-police-department</p>	Citizens Association of Kansas City
Virginia Beach Public Library, VA	<p>The library was asked to step in as convener of a group of city staff, citizens, and scholars working together with public officials to name, frame, and deliberate about local issues, which helped restore trust in public institutions while creating a cadre of citizens not only better informed, but also more capable of making difficult choices together.</p> <p>Cited in Libraries and Strong Democracy: Moving from an Informed to a Participatory 21st Century Citizenry By Nancy Kranich. Available at https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/article/.../4228/pdf</p>	City of Virginia Beach
DesPlaines Public Library, IL.	<p>The library framed and moderated a community conversation on “<i>What does it take to meet the needs of Des Plaines residents?</i>” The community conversations led to greater awareness of local services and new collaborative approaches for further action.</p> <p>Cited in Libraries and Strong Democracy: Moving from an Informed to a Participatory 21st Century Citizenry By Nancy Kranich. Available at https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/IndianaLibraries/article/.../4228/pdf</p>	Library initiative
Sacramento Public Library, CA	<p>Served as the Redistricting Assistance Site for Northern California. The library was a perfect Assistance Site since it had evening and weekend public hours, Internet connectivity, 500 square feet of secure office space, a nonpartisan environment welcoming to individuals and groups of all socio-economic levels and political persuasions, and ADA accessibility.</p> <p>More information at http://www.urbanlibraries.org/democracy-central---northern-california-s-redistricting-center-innovation-470.php?page_id=93</p>	The James Irvine Foundation
The Seattle Public Library, WA	<p>Provided an on-call fact-checking service on the website of the Living Voters Guide, an online discussion forum of Washington state ballot measures, for three weeks leading up to the election of November 6, 2012. The site has continued to provide information and input on other election and ballot issues.</p> <p>More information at https://livingvotersguide.org/</p>	City Club and the University of Washington

Examples of Library Programs Supporting Demand-side Open Government		
Facilitating Community Participation in Government Policy and Decision Making		
Library System	Activity Description	Community Partners
Building Community Capabilities to Contribute to and Benefit from Opening Government		
Library System	Activity Description	Community Partners
Houston Public Library (HPL), TX	<p>Partnered with city government to establish and manage WeCAN (Wireless Empowered Community Access Network), which is funded by corporate partners to provide free wireless to underserved communities. WeCAN includes an education and awareness campaign that focuses on accelerating the adoption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). A working body of stakeholders from business, education, health, community and government guides the allocation and distribution of resources.</p> <p>More information at http://www.houstonlibrary.org/wecan</p>	<p>City of Houston Various corporate partners Various community groups</p>
New York Public Library (NYPL), NY	<p>Library Branches act as the information hub and internet access hub for the surrounding community. Community members alike rely on the library's broadband network because many people within the community do not have internet access in their homes due to excessive internet service costs.</p> <p>Grant funding provided by Knight Foundation's Knight News Challenge grant to the NYPL in June 2014.</p> <p>More information at http://www.nypl.org/press/press-release/june-23-2014/new-york-public-library-receives-knight-news-challenge-grant-launch</p>	None Provided
Miami-Dade Public Library, FL	<p>Combines wireless computer access with a laptop lending program. At any of its library locations, customers can use library- provided laptop computers in-house, and have wireless Internet access supplementing the Library's wired network infrastructure. The program was instituted to insure access to the many government and business functions that have largely moved into the computer realm such as applying for jobs, food stamps, or visas.</p> <p>Cited as a ULC 2011 Innovations Award entry at http://www.urbanlibraries.org/laptop-lending-program-innovation-646.php?page_id=89</p>	Library initiative
Calgary Public Library's	<p>Established Digital Literacy in the Community (DLIC) which provides the library's highly successful and popular computer training modules "on the road" to new audiences. The DLIC program provides 17 different computer training modules for various skill levels in the partner agency locations using a mobile computer lab. All classes are free and include library membership for those who do not currently have it. Child care is offered through the partner agencies.</p> <p>Cited as a ULC 2012 Innovations Award entry at http://www.urbanlibraries.org/digital-literacy-in-the-community-innovation-268.php?page_id=96</p>	Various community agencies who serve underserved communities
The Hartford Public Library,	The Library's The American Place (TAP) is a free library program designed to welcome immigrants and facilitate their transition into their new home city	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Examples of Library Programs Supporting Demand-side Open Government		
Facilitating Community Participation in Government Policy and Decision Making		
Library System	Activity Description	Community Partners
CN	<p>through free English and Citizenship classes, resources for studying at home, and assistance with accessing online immigration information.</p> <p>More information at http://www.hplct.org/library-services/immigration-citizenship</p>	(USCIS)
Free Library of Philadelphia (PA)	<p>Established Free Library Hot Spots program where computer labs are located in trusted community centers throughout Philadelphia. Each Hot Spot is equipped with internet access, computers, software, a skilled trainer, and some library materials.</p> <p>Funded by Broadband USA: Connecting America's Communities, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and Verizon</p> <p>More information at: http://www.freelibrary.org/libserv/hotspots.htm</p>	<p>Heavenly Hall Annex, Institute for the Development of African-American Youth, Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, The Village of Arts and Humanities</p>

Appendix D. Recommended Enabling Open Government Projects

The project examples included in the below in this table were provided by the workshop participants.

Potential Projects to Enable Open Government		
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
This project would help focus activities with open data to enhance civic participation and transparency. CFA provides expertise; library provides hosting, research assistance and lines to community stakeholders. Funding would provide staff and virtual workspace to focus these projects and make them visible. It would also help fund training in civic deliberation and Open data practices.	Code for America	Legitimacy and visibility
	Local government	Transparency and creation of new funding
	Public library	Role as a clearinghouse for Open data
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
New LIS graduates spend a year in a public library devoted to development of Open Government/PL initiatives (modeled on ARL fellowships?). Could be on a combined scholarship/fellowship program or assistantship/fellowship? That would connect a student's graduate education program to the year-long post-grad experience.	Student/future LIS professional	Hands on experience; immersion; new skills in project development
	LIS program	Opportunities to fine tune curriculum to improve skill sets of graduates
	Public libraries	Resources to develop new programs/learn new skills for rest of staff
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Working with three different Texas library types (urban, suburban, and rural). Implement three different open government library pilot projects focused on a community scan. This project would work in conjunction with a Texas educator. There are very different challenges in urban, suburban and rural libraries. This demonstration project would involve each of the above library types to pilot replicable implementation strategies. Metrics for each type would be developed.	Texas library	Opportunity for pilot project
	Texas foundation	Funder who can replicate project
	Community groups	Engagement
	Public Officials	Leadership, engagement
	Non-profits, techies and corporations	Collaboration
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
This can be a practical, useful tool for libraries that can take the form of a website; video; presentation at state and national conferences; consultations to libraries who request (experts in residence). It identifies questions to ask (scan); resources already available on skills and "how to" (All the tool kits that exist). Have those who make use of product (in any of its forms) do a pre and post assessment, to include verification of "intention" and ultimately a realistic "portfolio" of the individual library's role in their community's needs.	Individual communities	Knowledgeable, connected libraries to community needs, assets and aspirations
	Public library	Same as above
	Local government	Same as above
	Other partners	Greater efficiencies, collaborations
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Project focused on understanding pathways to data literacy. This is key to future collaborations with government. Would include mentorships around data literacy.	Librarians	Data understanding and competency
	Constituents	Greater knowledge around data
	Non-profits	Could learn and teach together

Potential Projects to Enable Open Government		
	Local governments	Partners in presenting and archiving data
	Library administration	Closer relationships with city, GIS, planners, etc.
	Local universities/colleges	Reliable skills in public libraries and potential data repositories
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Mentorship/in-residence program that also generates network connection	Local community	Shared understanding, new insight
	Local government	Feedback from community
	National/federal government	Informative/insight re: public government
	Media	Foster for reporting; engaging
	Public library	Increase value, relevance, new relationship, status as a voice for citizens
	General public	
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Take something that aggregates what libraries heard from participants and report out to the government, to the public: Here is what America is saying and thinking	Library director	Skills, confidence involving political
	Local government officials	Relationships/partners
	Public libraries	Value, relevance, support
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Not just with public librarians; could be with other kinds of libraries (state agencies, corporate, academic, maybe with hackers)	Mentor	Learn about capabilities of the public library
	Mentee	Learn "culture" of the other organizations
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Open data will require localized datasets, processes and platforms that many communities do not have. Libraries can play essential roles in the curation, management and communication of practice around Open data. This could be an NLG or LB21. NLG would seek to build this for existing libraries/librarians. LB21 would be for a scholarship grant for MIS students to go through a program that prepares them to have these skills. NLG Product/Outcome: Demonstration project for building out local data infrastructure with smaller communities. LB21 product/outcome: X number of MLS students versed in Open data, data curation	Local government	Openness/transparency/economic development
	Public libraries	Community asset
	Civic society	Openness/transparency/good government practice
	Private sector	Market place development
	Non-profits	Community service/support
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
Develop a shared repository infrastructure for public libraries to host and provide perpetual access to valuable digital	Library IT unit	Increase capacity and share burdens

Potential Projects to Enable Open Government		
data/documents.	Other local IT	Increase capacity and share burdens
	Data sources/data users	Would need to be further desired depending on what data types were part of initial focus
Description	Stakeholder(s)	Benefit to stakeholder(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyper-local news efforts • Sunshine week celebration • Take Harwood Libraries in ALA effort and have them do an engaged e-government project; webinars that focus on good stories. Collect stories about successes and failures • Historical records project 	ACA	Promotes good practice and innovation
	Libraries	Advance role in community
	Open Government advocates	Bringing together people with common concerns
	Archivists/historians	Living history
	LIS students	Learning good practice
	Journalists	Platform for local information



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