

APPENDIX 10

6 Ways to Describe Your Community



Public libraries are deeply inclusive institutions, uniquely positioned to serve every member of the community, regardless of age, education, language, background, socio-economic status, or life experience, as well as contribute to the well-being of the community as a whole. Viewing the community through multiple lenses makes it easier to capture the complexity and vitality of community life.

The following six worksheets will assist in compiling a rich array of community information to be used in the planning and assessment of library service. While some prompts will seem more relevant than others, responsive and dynamic public library service is rooted in every aspect of community life and well-being.

Community Information Checkpoint

This brief assessment tool is designed to serve as a means of knowing if and when you've gathered sufficient community information for planning purposes. Complete individually; then discuss to gauge a collective sense of whether enough information has been gathered.

<p>1. Can you name the ways in which the community's demographic breakdown differs significantly from that of Ontario?</p> <p>For example, being home to twice as many seniors proportionately as live in Ontario, might indicate that your community is becoming a retirement destination, which would certainly impact the development of library service.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Can you name 3-5 ways in which the community is changing?</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Can you identify at least one characteristic particular to your community that is an important consideration in planning library service?</p> <p>Examples include being a tourist destination, a sleeper community for a nearby city, home to a Mennonite population, etc.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Can you name significant gaps in services and/or groups in the community?</p> <p>Not every community, especially in rural Ontario, will have every kind of group or social service available. Being aware of the gaps can be helpful in determining potential roles the library might play.</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>5. Have you learned something new about the community because of your involvement in developing the community profile and/or the information gathered in the profile?</p> <p>If there is no learning occurring at the Board and/or staff level, it typically indicates that the profile is nothing more than a restating of previous perceptions and assumptions, in which case, it is worth investing time in one or two further information gathering activities. Everyone should learn something new about the community!</p>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>