

Get the Most Out of Your Plan of Service

Connecting Engagement and
Advocacy with Strategic
Planning



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Angela Kublik Consulting
Marigold Library System Conference

Strategic Planning vs. Plan of Service



Why do strategic planning?

A strategic plan is an vitally important guiding document that sets and communicates the library's vision and goals.

A good strategic plan:

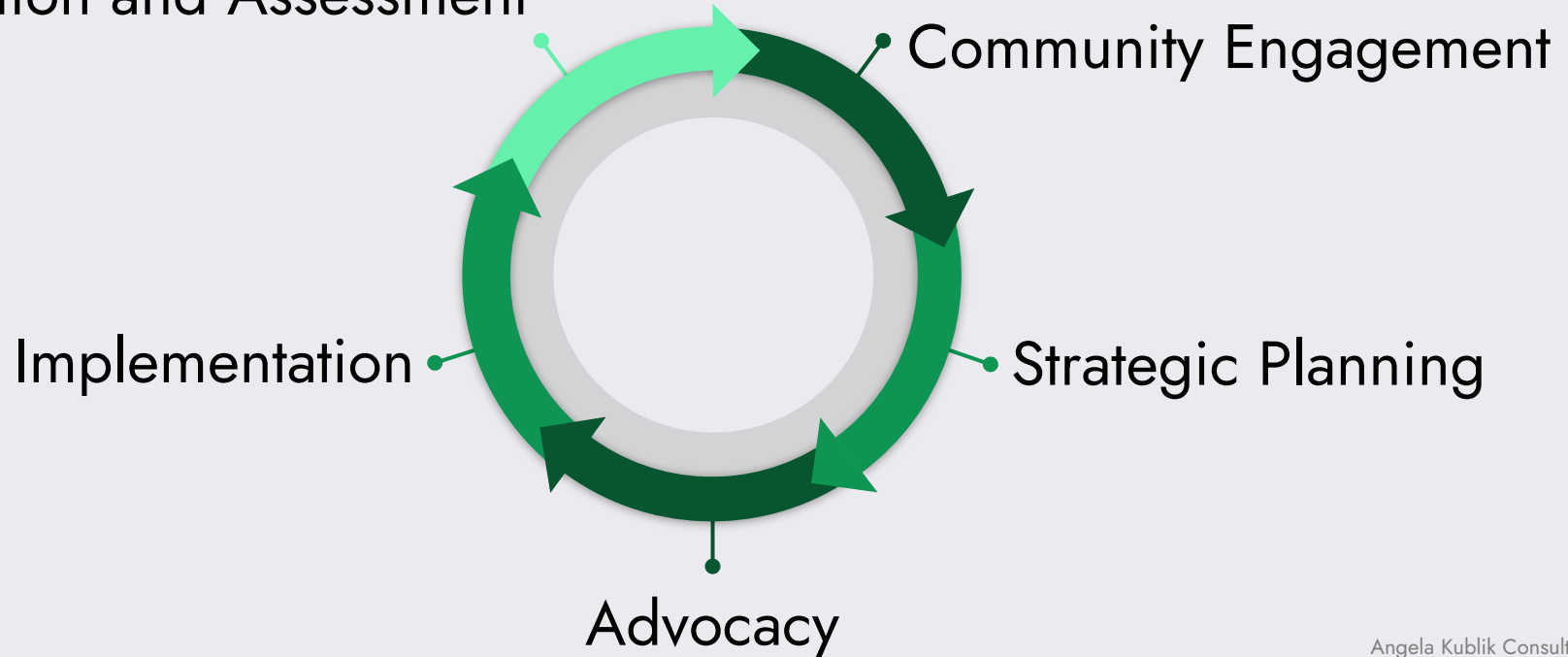
- ✓ Unites the board and staff.
- ✓ Aligns library services with community needs.
- ✓ Is a powerful advocacy tool.
- ✓ **IS USEFUL.**



Making Connections

Engagement, Advocacy, and Strategic Planning

Evaluation and Assessment



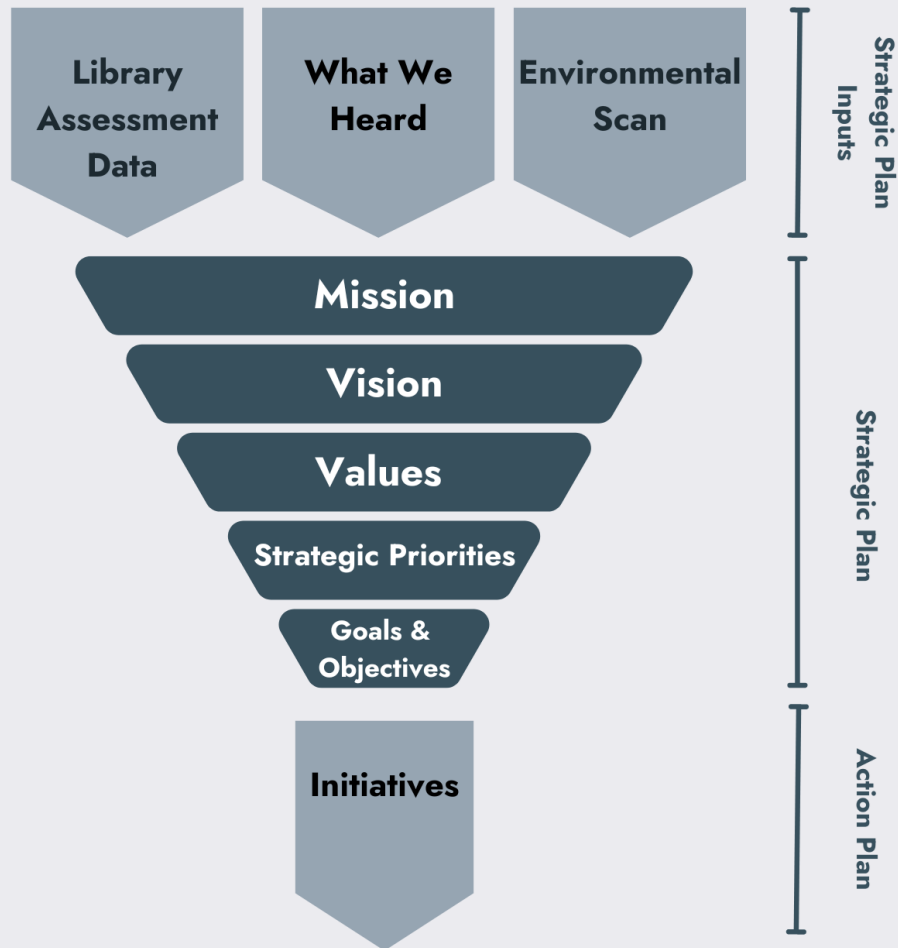


Putting the Pieces Together

- **The process is flexible.** What does your library need from its strategic plan?
- **Planning is important.** What process will be used to develop the strategic plan?
- **Make connections.** How can building relationships in the community now enhance advocacy efforts later?



**Make it
Useful**



Strategic Planning Process

Adapted from *Strategic Planning for Public Libraries*, by Joy L. Fuller (ALA, 2021), 28.

Strategic Plan Inputs

Data for assessing community needs will come from:

- Library Assessment Data
- Environmental Scan or Community Profile
- What We Heard — Engagement Feedback



What is Community Engagement?



Community engagement is a thoughtful and strategic way to develop and sustain relationships between an organization and the communities in which it operates.

Community Engagement vs. Outreach

Engagement

A two-way method of communication that can include listening, discussion, deliberation, and decision-making.

Successful community engagement builds relationships.

Outreach

Typically, one-way communication that brings services or information to others.



Why Community Engagement Matters

Engagement helps us:

- Understand community needs and perceptions
- Build trust
- Mitigate opposition
- Advocate effectively



Elements of an Engagement Plan

- Objectives and Goals
- Stakeholders
- Role of Stakeholders
- Engagement Questions
- Engagement Activities
- Reporting Back
- Timelines
- Evaluation



Engagement and Advocacy Goals



Questions to consider:

- What are the goals of the library's engagement/advocacy efforts?
- How and why will we develop relationships with the community?
- What do we want to say?
- What do we want to hear and why?

Identifying Stakeholders:

Who is your community?

Internal Stakeholders:


- Library Board
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Friends of the Library

External Stakeholders:

- Municipal Council and administration
- Library users
- Members of the public
- Community groups
- Local businesses
- Current and potential funders

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

| INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION  | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| | INFORM | CONSULT | INVOLVE | COLLABORATE | EMPOWER |
| PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL | To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. | To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. | To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. | To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. | To place final decision making in the hands of the public. |
| PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC | We will keep you informed. | We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible. | We will implement what you decide. |

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Remember:
different
stakeholders
may have
different roles.



Prioritizing Stakeholders: Decide Where to Focus

Now that we've identified our key audiences, we need to decide where to focus our energy and how to interact with each group of community members. Stakeholders are ranked into four priority groups, based on their capacity to influence and interest in our organization.

Priority 1

These community members have the highest influence and interest in the organization. We work with and manage them closely (inform, consult and collaborate).

Priority 2

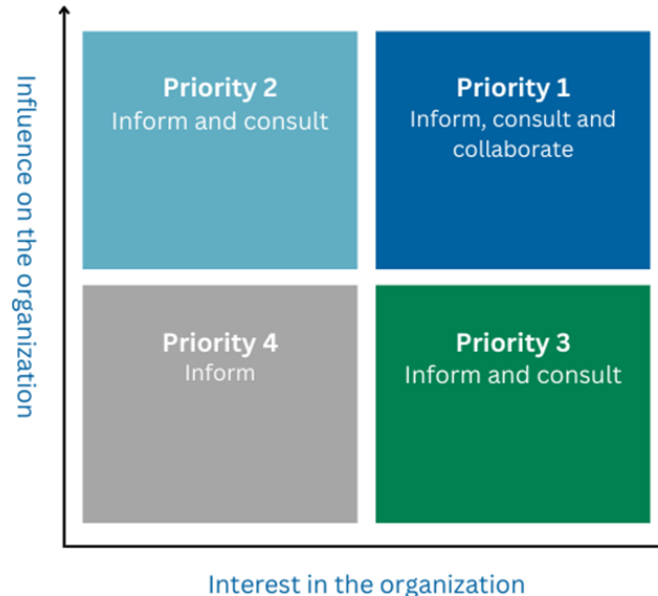
These community members have the highest influence and low interest in the organization. We work to meet their needs and keep them satisfied (inform and consult).

Priority 3

These community members have low influence and high interest in the organization. We work to keep them informed and show consideration (inform and consult).

Priority 4

These community members have low influence and low interest in the organization. We monitor these relationships and maintain minimal contact (inform).



How would you
prioritize the
stakeholders you
identified?

Develop Engagement Questions

What do you want
to ask your
community?

What questions
would help inform
the strategic plan?



Examples of Engagement Activities

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups
- Workshops
- Participate in community events
- Interviews
- Comment boxes
- Interactive features in the library
- Integrate engagement into programming and check-out desk interactions



CORE VALUES

IAP2 Federation's Core Values for Public Participation professionals define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process. Processes based on the Core Values have been shown to be the most successful and respected.

1 Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.

2 Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.

3 Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.

4 Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

5 Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.

6 Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

7 Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.



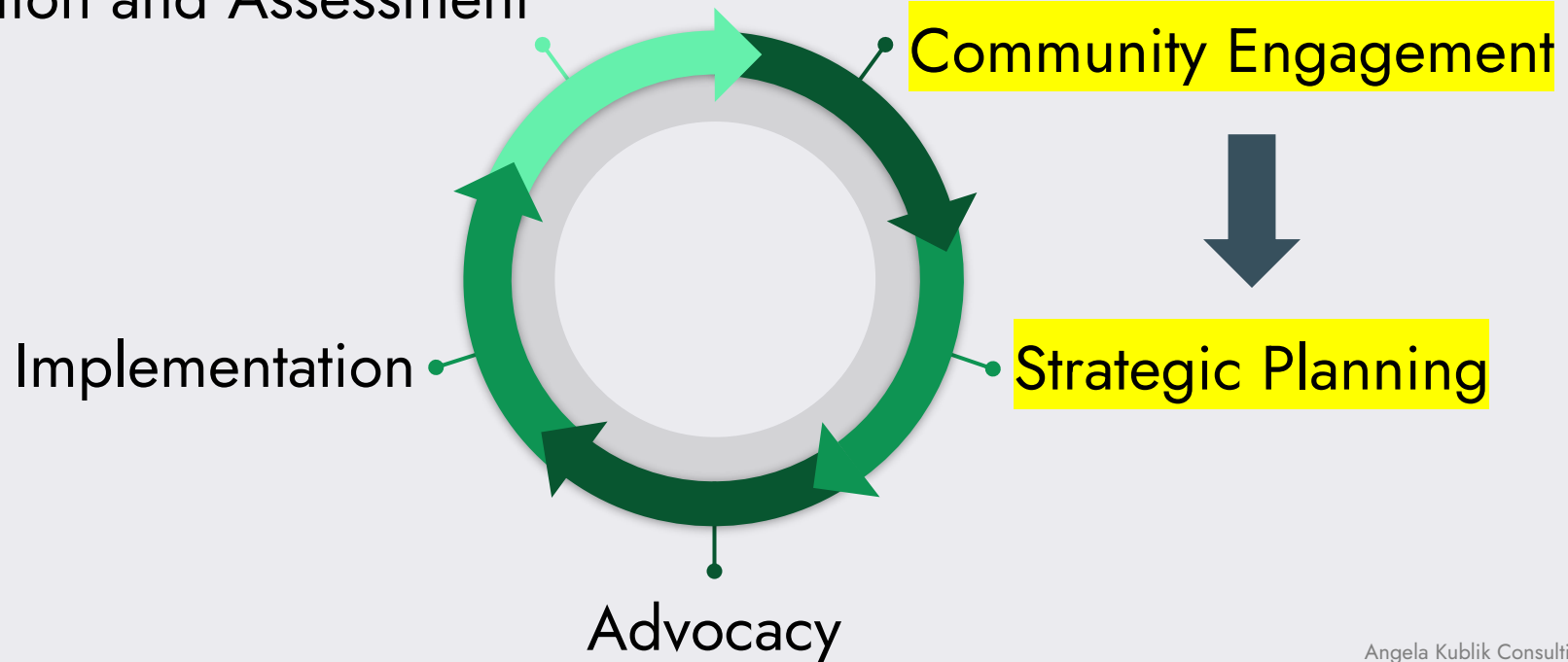
Tips for Effective Engagement

- Focus on listening.
- Listen to understand
- Stay humble and curious.
- Show empathy.
- Paraphrase what you heard.
- Be aware of non-verbal communication
- Take notes.

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Strategic Plan Elements

Mission

Vision

Values

Strategic Priorities

**Goals &
Objectives**



Questions to Consider:

- What stands out to you from the information gathered?
- What community trends, needs, or issues does the library need to pay attention to?
- What surprises you about your community?
- What stands out to you about the library's work in the past few years?
- Which library services are most valuable to the community?
Least valuable?
- What community needs could the library help address?
How?

Developing a Mission Statement

What is our focus?
Why do we exist?
Who do we serve?



Developing a Vision Statement

- What are the results of successfully achieving the mission?
- What is the impact on the community? What needs have been met? What aspirations fulfilled?



Values

Core values are principles that guide the library's actions and are the building blocks of an organization's culture.





Strategic Priorities

Broad focus areas that frame how the library will address community needs.

Goal

= Target Audience +
Benefit

Objective

= Target + Measure +
Timeframe



Action Plan – Implement and Measure Progress

Staff identify, plan, and carry out the initiatives that will achieve the aims of the plan.

Reminder: Don't forget to report back to the community about how their input was used.



The Role of the Library Board



Ensure that staff have the resources needed.



Review the plan and evaluate results regularly.



Use the strategic plan to provide a framework for the board's decision making-process.

What about Advocacy?

Advocacy is engagement!

It tends to be more focused toward decision makers and funders.





Advocacy Tips

- Focus on building relationships.
- Lean into the library's Mission and Vision.
- Connect requests to what you heard during engagement.
- Listen. Be curious.

Tell Your Story

Storytelling is powerful!

Know your story.

Tell your story

Own your story.

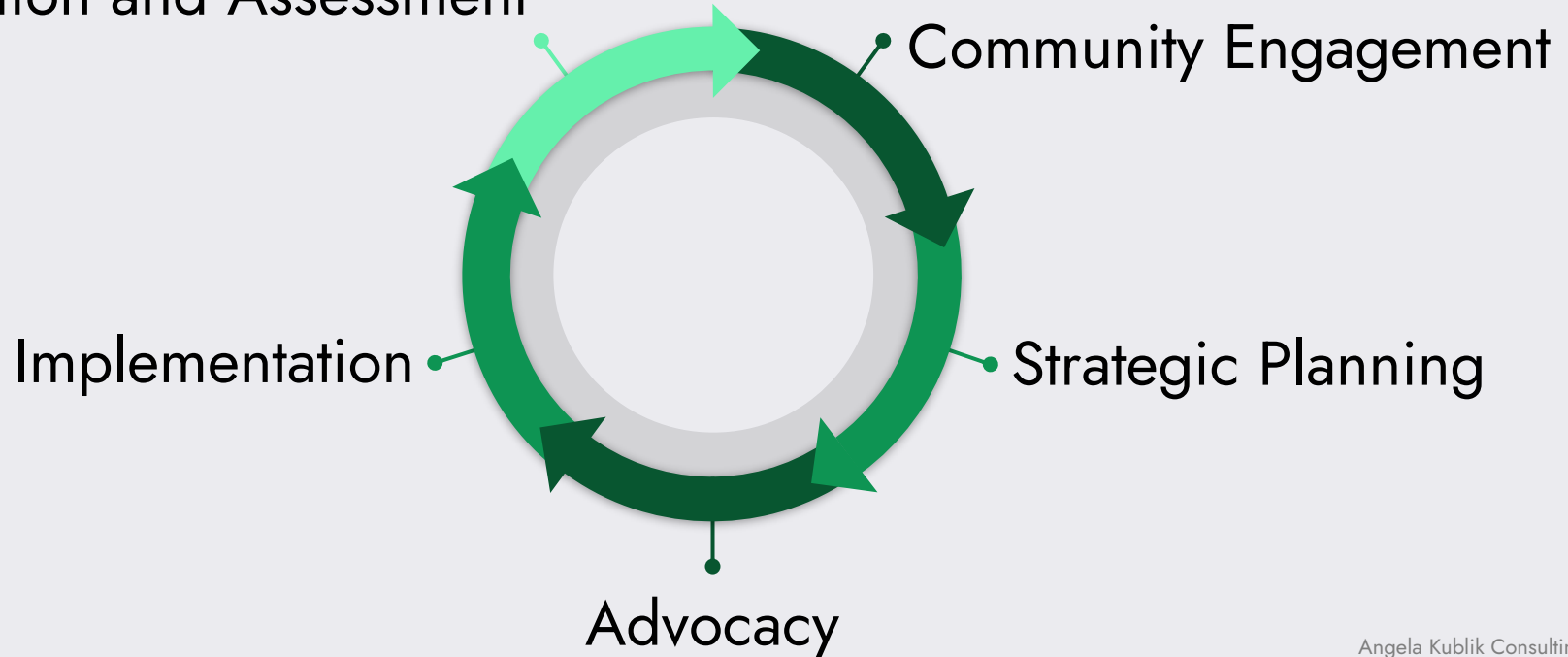
Tip: Use key messages to guide storytelling.



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Action Steps

1. Review your POS as a board or staff.
2. Plan and implement one easy engagement activity.
3. Ensure POS goals and objectives are reflected in your library's budget.

Questions?

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