



TOOL: COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING

Asset mapping is a way to collect facts about the strengths and resources in a community.

The purpose of asset mapping is to help address community problems or gaps. By documenting a community's strengths and resources in a map, community stakeholders can identify assets, apply them to fill gaps, and build them up to improve overall health and growth.

There are six main community assets to be aware of: people, institutions, the local economy stories, associations, and physical spaces/assets.

A group may decide to create a community asset map rather than conduct a neighborhood health audit. In some cases, both may be useful.

6 MAIN TYPES OF COMMUNITY ASSETS

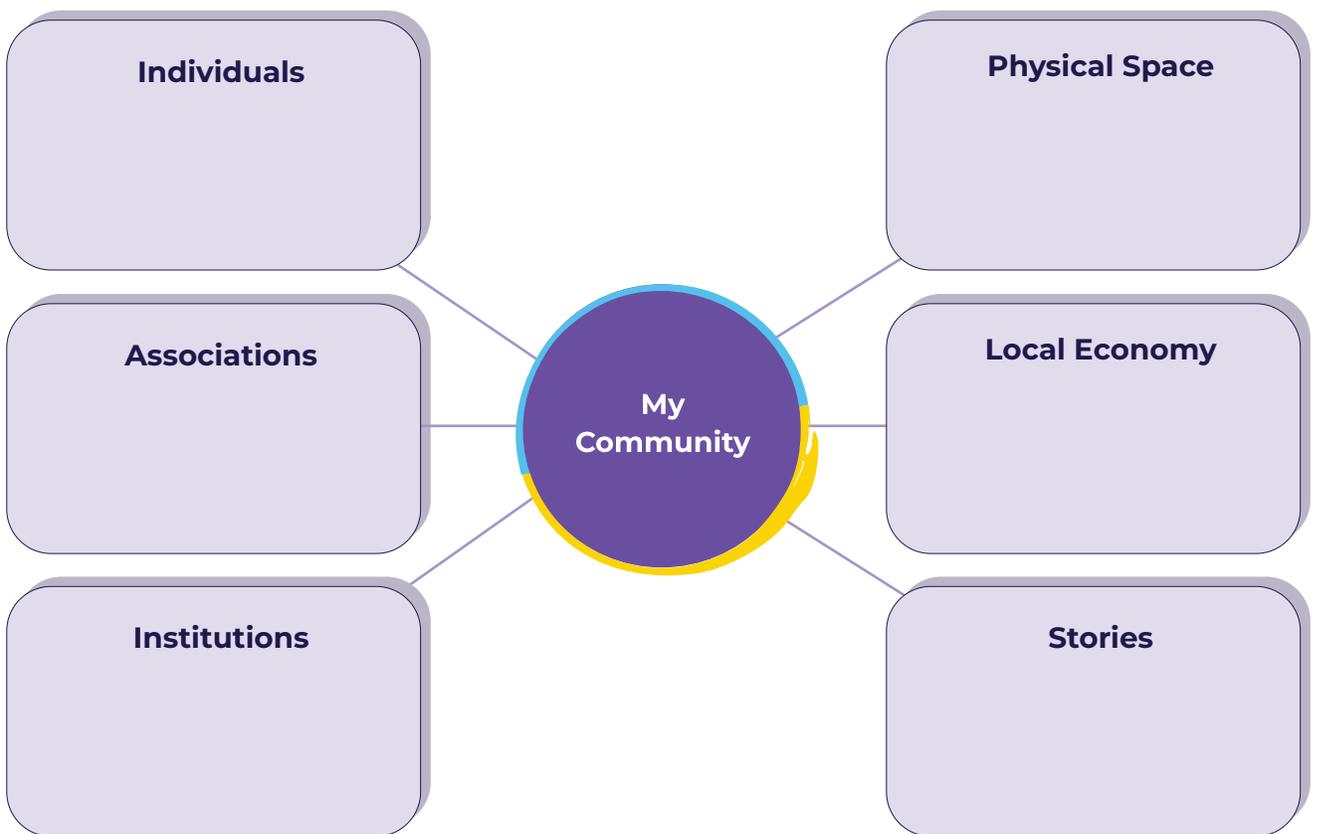
- 1. People in a Community:** The residents in a community have specific skills and abilities that create value for others and can be used to develop the community. For example, a local firefighter who risks their life to keep the community safe is an asset.
- 2. Institutions:** Any physical structure or place where people gather, such as a school, faith-based setting, community recreation center, library, or community center.
- 3. Local Economy:** This includes the economic assets produced or consumed by a community, whether through local businesses or other forms of exchange.
- 4. Stories:** Narratives or storytelling about a community's history create power that shapes understanding of the present and drives potential for the future.
- 5. Associations:** Community associations include volunteers and support groups that contribute to building the community. Some of these associations include labor unions, fraternities and sororities, veterans, cultural groups, and more.
- 6. Physical Assets:** Physical assets in the community include any physical object or place that strengthens the community, such as a fire station, a public transportation hub, or a historical statue.



HOW TO PLAN ASSET MAPPING

- 1. Define your boundary.** Setting community boundaries involves defining the scope of your asset map. With community input, this can be decided quickly and may include landmarks, streets, or other significant areas.
- 2. Involve your partners.** Find the people and organizations that share your interests and include them. Groups with similar interests can be a valuable source of information about community assets.
- 3. Identify the assets.** Each community has its own unique set of assets. Consider everything, including economic and public resources. Determine which of these assets can improve your community.
- 4. List and organize the assets.** Make a list of all the assets in your community and organize them into groups such as people, institutions, local economy, stories, associations, and physical spaces. This list should be growing as you and your group find new assets in your community.
- 5. Create an asset map.** The asset map will serve as an important visual tool showing all available resources within your community. For this, you should have a local community map that includes as many details as possible, clearly highlighting community landmarks, freeways, parks, and other essential assets you identify.

Community Asset Map



Ideas for a Community Asset Map

Consider what groups and people are in your community, drawing ideas from these lists. The lists are not exhaustive and are presented alphabetically.

ASSOCIATIONS

- Animal Care Groups
- Anti-Crime Groups
- Block Clubs
- Business Organizations
- Charitable Groups
- Civic Events Groups
- Cultural Groups
- Education Groups
- Environmental Groups
- Family Support Groups
- Fraternities and Sororities, including the Divine Nine (D9)
- Gender-Based Groups (Men's Groups, Women's Groups, etc.)
- Groups Focused on Disabilities or Neurodivergence
- Groups for Older Adults
- Health Advocacy and Fitness Groups
- Heritage Groups
- Hobby and Collectors Groups
- Mentoring Groups
- Mutual Aid Groups
- Neighborhood Improvement Groups
- Political Organizations
- Recreation Groups
- Religious/Faith Groups
- Service Clubs
- Social Groups
- Union Groups
- Veteran's Groups
- Youth Groups

INSTITUTIONS

- Community Colleges and Universities
- Local School Systems
- Crisis Programs or Shelters
- Fire Departments
- Foundations
- Local Health Departments
- Hospitals and Clinics
- Libraries
- Media
- Museums and Theaters
- Nonprofits
- Police Departments
- Social Service Agencies

INDIVIDUALS

Gifts, Skills, Capacities, Knowledge and Traits of:

- Activists
- Artists
- Community Event/Festival Coordinators
- Community Leaders
- Entrepreneurs
- Workers of Various Skills and Professions
- Older Adults
- Parents
- People Impacted by the Justice System
- People Living with Visible and Non-Visible Disabilities
- People Living with Neurodivergence
- People Living with Chronic Health Conditions or Mental Health Conditions
- People Living at Different Income Levels
- Students
- Veterans
- Youth

LOCAL ECONOMY

- Banks
- Barter and Exchange Economies
- Business Associations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community Development Corporations
- Consumer Spending
- Credit Unions
- For-Profit Businesses
- Foundations
- Institutions (purchasing power and personnel)
- Merchants
- Nonprofits

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Biking/Walking Paths
- Bird Watching Sites
- Campsites
- Community Centers
- Cultural and Social Hubs (e.g., gyms, beauty salons, barbershops, etc.)
- Gyms/Fitness Centers
- Duck Ponds
- Fishing Spots
- Forest/Forest Preserves
- Gardens
- Housing
- Natural Habitats (coastal, marine, amphibian, etc.)
- Parking Lots
- Parks and Playgrounds
- Picnic/Cookout Areas
- Restaurants
- Star Gazing Sites
- Streets
- Transit Stops and Facilities
- Vacant Land and Buildings
- Wildlife Center
- Zoos

STORIES

- Of a time when you or your group felt appreciated and valued
- Of addressing racism, discrimination, or oppression
- Of background and personal history
- Of economic growth
- Of under-resourced and marginalized groups
- Of realizing and engaging people's skills and capacities
- Of recognizing the value of everyone
- Of successful community development or assets
- Of times when the community was at its best
- Of what you like to do and contribute