

# AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING

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HUMAN SERVICES  
COMMISSION



# WHAT IS IT?

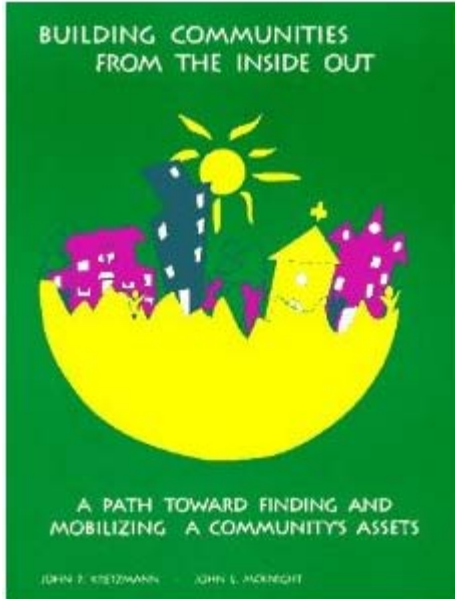
- **Asset-based planning**
- **Community-building**
- **Community capacity-building**



# FEATURES OF ASSET-MAPPING

- **Asset-Based:** Uncovers Services/talents/skills/resources found in the community right now – may expose gaps
- **Internally Focused:** Relies on the community's assets, not on those found outside of it
- **Relationship Driven:** Seeks to build linkages among local people, institutions, and organizations

# ABCD



John P. Kretzmann  
John L. McKnight

THE ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

# IN SHORT

***“It is a way to assess and mobilize what a community has.”***

**It's a PROCESS.**



# CORE THEORIES

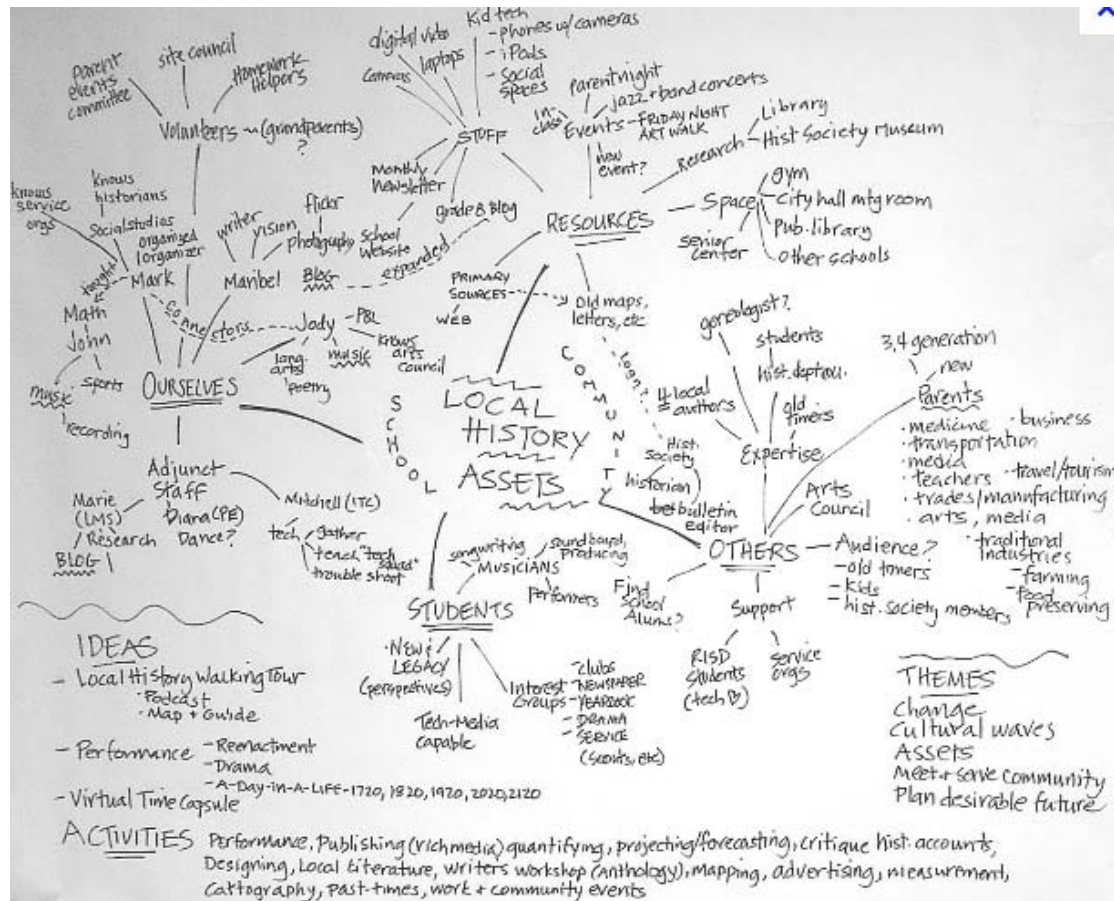
- **Assets:** Gifts, talents, dreams, hopes, fears
- **Relationships:** Relationship-driven, constantly build connections
- **Inside-out:** Debunking that outside resources are need, self-sufficient, sustainable

# BASIC STEPS

- **Recognize delineate** assets
- **Map/record** the assets
- **Mobilize** assets and relationships towards an end .....Efficient service delivery...in the case of HSC resource allocation

# MAPPING: EXAMPLE MAP 1

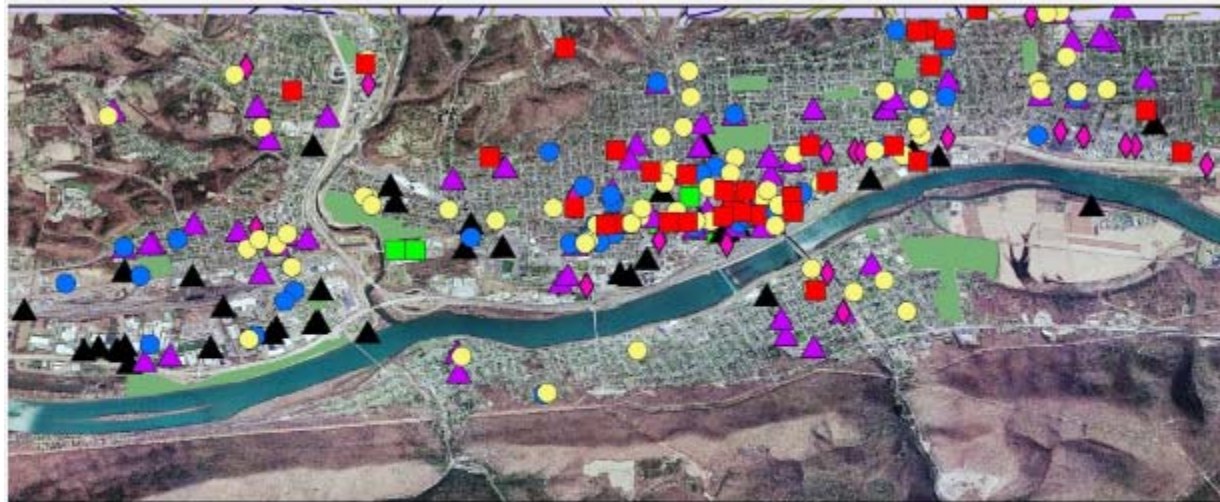
## Local History Assets





# EXAMPLE MAP 1

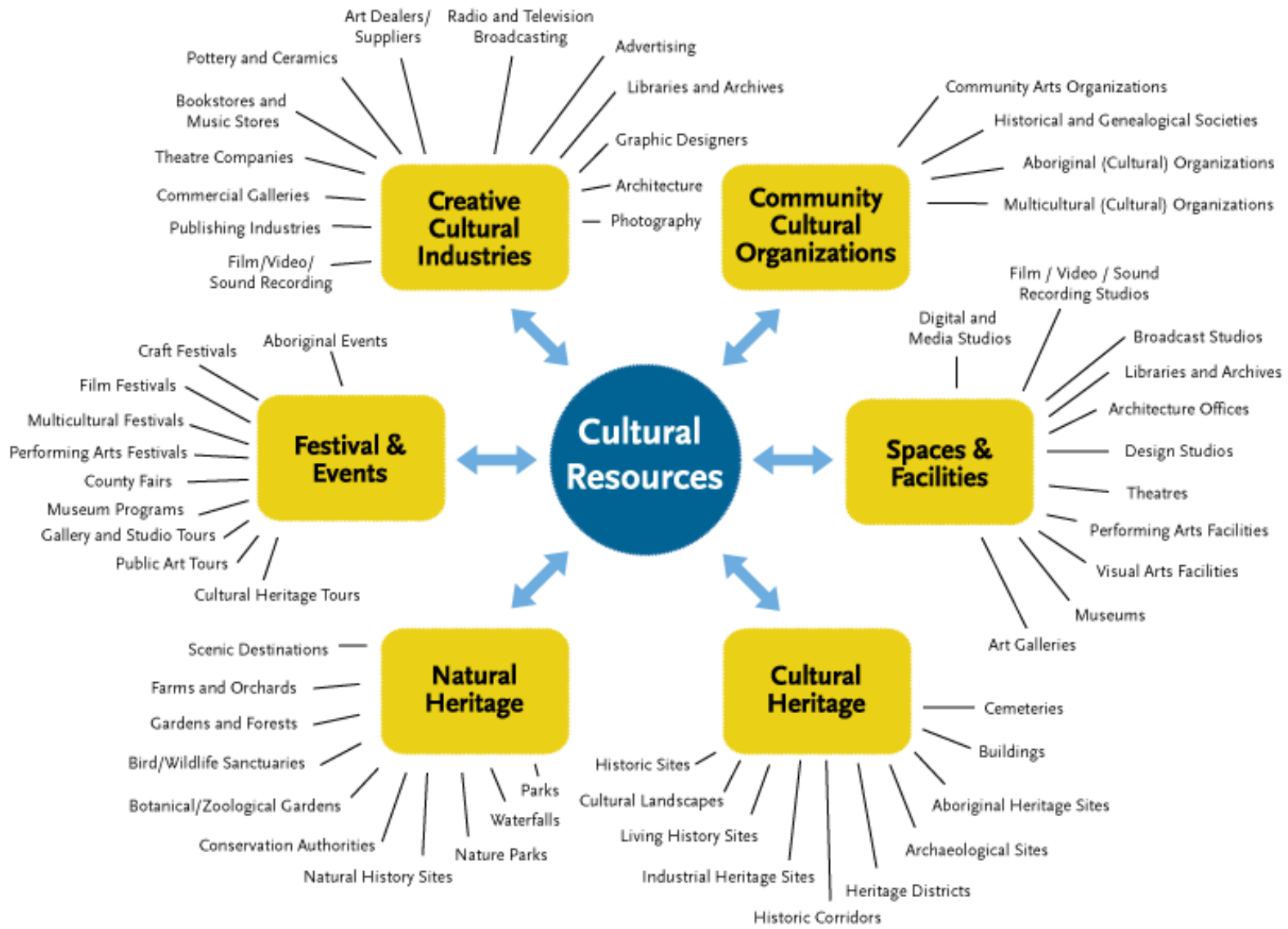
## 2-1-1 Service



- |                       |             |              |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| ■ Health Care         | ◆ Food      | ■ Government |
| ● Churches            | ▲ Education |              |
| ● Community Resources | ▲ EPA Sites |              |

# EXAMPLE MAP 3

## Cultural Mapping



# OVERVIEW

- The concept of asset mapping
- The importance of asset mapping
- The benefits of asset mapping
- How asset mapping is done
- Relationship between asset mapping and needs assessment

# MAKING A COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE:

## Traditional “Needs” Approach

- Meeting of local leaders & citizens come together
- Discussion focused on problems & concerns in the community
- Maybe a survey of residents on issues and problems

*\*\*Final Product= laundry list of “the negatives!”*

# MAKING A COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE:

## Asset Mapping Approach

- Identify:
  1. Resources, Skills & talents of community
  2. Capabilities available (or possible) through local organizations & institutions
  3. Needs

*Then tackle important issues impacting the community!*

# FEATURES OF ASSET MAPPING

- **Asset-Based**: Uncovers talents/skills found in the community right now
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# IMPORTANCE OF ASSET MAPPING

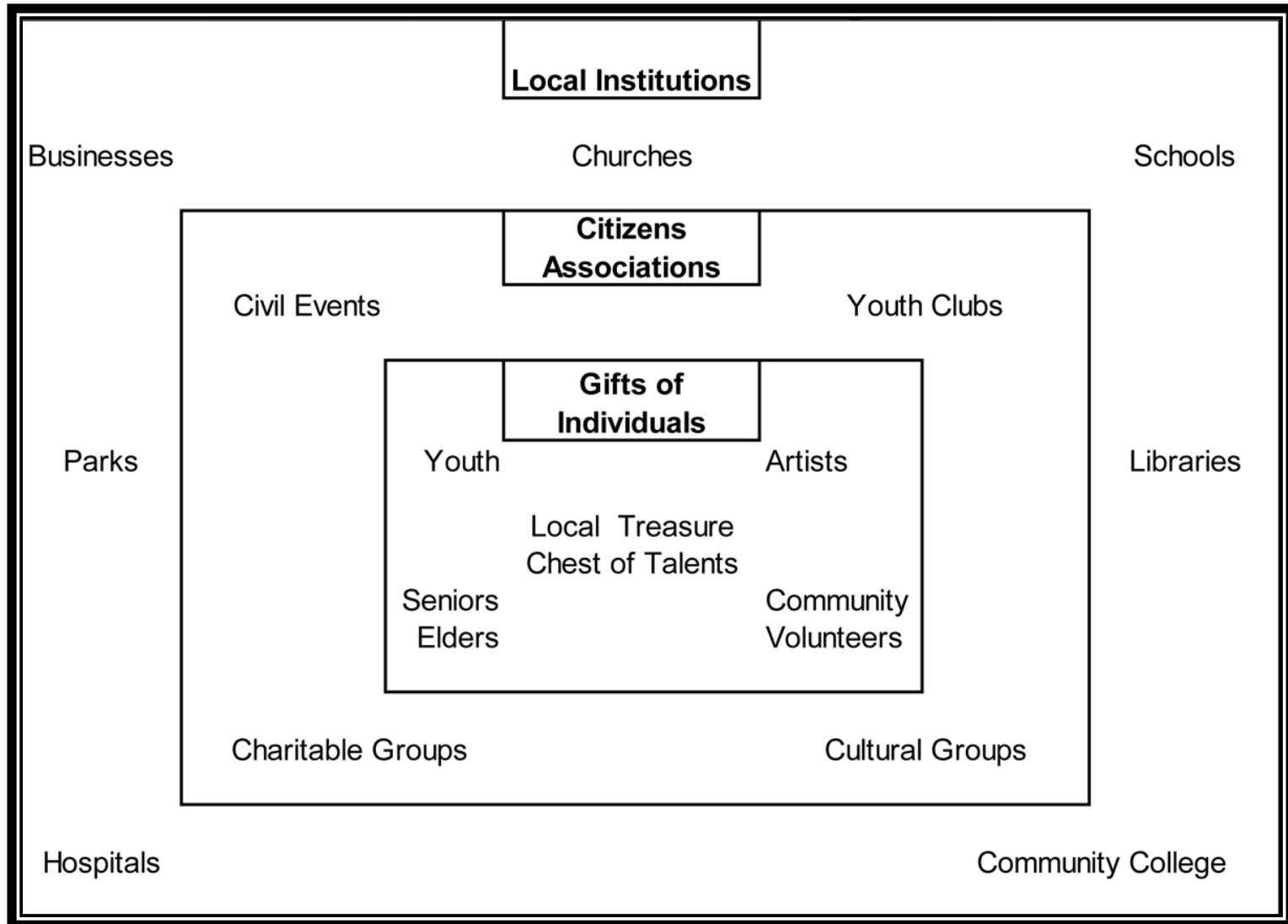
- Create awareness of local resources
- Use resources to identify community connections, meet community needs, & other activities
- Recognize and value the resources within communities

# INVENTORY OF LOCAL INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Examine printed materials
  - Newspapers/Community directories
- Contact local institutions
  - Schools/Churches/Parks & Recreation/Libraries
- Contact individuals who seem to know what is going on in their community or neighborhoods
- Find out the activities of these informal groups



# HOW ASSETS FIT TOGETHER



# HOW TO . . .

- Define your community or “study area”
- Determine what you want to do with the information
- Select the assets you want to identify
- Identify any previous asset mapping activity
- Develop a plan to collect the information
- Map the assets of the community
- Identify community issues & needs
- Put it all together

# DEFINE YOUR COMMUNITY

- Specific population: elderly, persons with disabilities, youth, senior, non English speakers etc.
- Geographic boundaries



# DEFINE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WITH THE INFORMATION COLLECTED

- Create a community resource guide
- Create a searchable database of community resources to tap for future initiatives
- Develop programs
- Allocate scarce resources for greatest impact

# SELECT WHAT ASSETS YOU WANT TO IDENTIFY

## **What skills do you need to identify?**

- Start with pre-existing asset inventory tool
- Add and delete skills
- Keep focused on what you will do with this information
  - Build on existing resources
  - Respond to existing needs

# IDENTIFY ANY PREVIOUS ASSET MAPPING ACTIVITY

- How recent was it?
- Will it provide the information you are looking for?
- What did or did not work well?
- What is needed now?

# DEVELOP A PLAN TO COLLECT INFORMATION

- When do you need the data?
- What methods will you use to collect the info?
- What resources (people, copying, database creation and entry, facilitators) do you need to collect the info?
- Who is going to do what and by when?

# SAMPLE DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Community resident surveys
- Community forum
- Dashboard surveys
- Inventory of skills, resources, or institutions
- Secondary Analysis: Pre-existing data sets (crime, census, housing)



# FOCUS GROUP

**Way to gather the opinions/ideas from a small, targeted group of citizens.**

## Advantages

- Easy to conduct
- Provides detailed info
- Allows for issue probing
- Stimulates thinking and discussion

## Disadvantages

- Ideas generated not necessarily prevalent
- Small sample for effort
- Difficult to analyze
- Quiet folks suppressed
- Requires participation

# COMMUNITY FORUM

**Public meetings that involve residents to express their concerns about community issues, problems, and needs.**

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## Disadvantages

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# SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

**Data that are collected about a particular audience without having direct contact with that audience. It can often provide insight about emerging trends or issues in a particular community**

## Advantages

- Data already exists
- Fast & easy to access
- Data available for many geographic levels

## Disadvantages

- Representative sample may not be accurate
- Gaps in data
- Requires inferences
- Lack of Data Richness

# COMMUNITY SURVEY

Help one to gather info about local attitudes regarding precisely defined issues, problems or opportunities.

## Advantages

- Wide distribution
- Good for data analysis
- Strong sample of the population

## Disadvantages

- Expensive
- Requires skill/time
- Suffers low return rate
- Poor qualitative tool

# INTERVIEWS

**Conversation with a purpose, designed to help you gather information about peoples assumptions/perceptions of activities in your community. They are useful when looking for in-depth information on a particular topic.**

## Advantages

- Detailed information
- Allows for clarification/ follow-up on questions
- Personal contact builds rapport

## Disadvantages

- Time-consuming
- Requires skill/time
- Information is hard to summarize
- Little quantitative value

# INFORMATION COLLECTION TIPS

**Ask advice of target population**

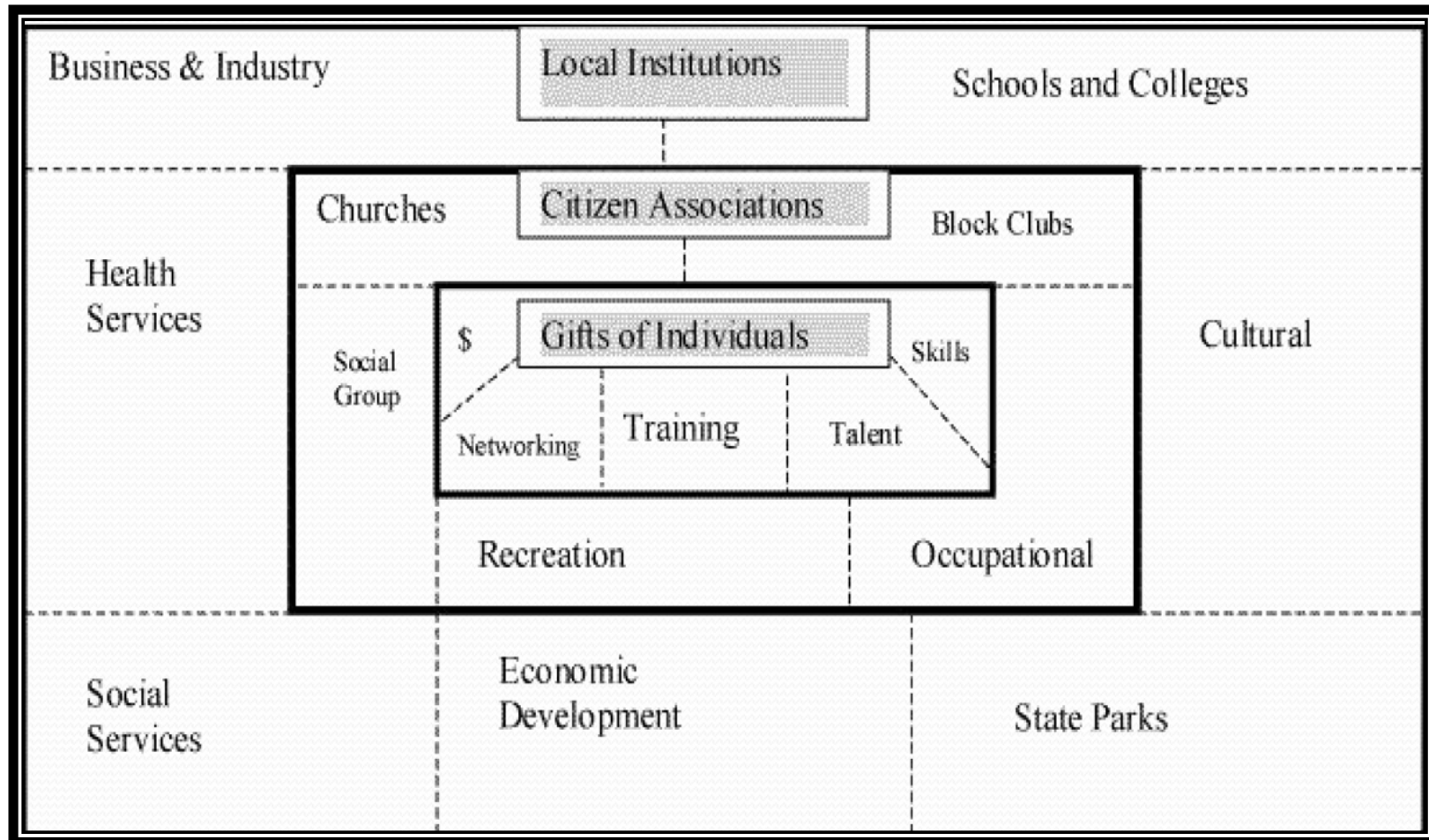
**Think outside the box**

- Web/Email Surveys
- Newspaper inserts
- PDA/Laptops

**Think Ahead –strategic**



# MAP THE ASSETS OF YOUR COMMUNITY



# IDENTIFY COMMUNITY ISSUES OR NEEDS

## **What is a Needs Assessment?**

- A formal tool that involves the identification of gaps
- Placing gaps in some type of priority order
- Making decisions on which of the priority needs warrant the attention and resources of the community.



# PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

- Build relationships among your local assets
- Explore how assets can be mobilized to improve the needs you identified (such as expanding job opportunities, improving education, better health care services, funding needs )
- Engage the community in visioning and planning