

Boulder Public Library

Master Plan Community Thought Leaders Dialogue

March 21, 2017

The Boulder Public Library Commission and staff invited over 100 leaders and partners from the Boulder community to attend a focus group dialogue about how the library may contribute to making Boulder the kind of community its residents desire. Eighteen leaders participated in the dialogue. Their input and ideas will be incorporated with other community feedback to inform the goals of the Master Plan. A summary of the discussion follows.

Roundtable dialogue

1. What kind of community do we want?

- Accessible and welcoming, warm and engaging to everybody
- The notion of being a citizen is considered participatory. People aren't just consumers of our community, but build things together.
- Citizens have awareness of themselves and others, and their own impact on the community and environment
- Maintain Boulder's unique sense of self
- We need places for people to meet to encourage random relationships, in which people have discussions that lead to unlimited creativity and opportunity for everyone
- Opportunities for diverse people to engage and collaborate
- Opportunities for parents to interact with other mothers and fathers
- One that embraces commuters
- Successful and sustainable for everyone
- Where one can be just themselves without feeling self-conscious.
- Boulder should be a leader of the county communities. Everyone should feel a part of the community even if they aren't here all the time.

2. What changes are needed to make this vision a reality?

- Make changes at the neighborhood level.
- Understand the challenges people face and their barriers for accessing the library and other resources
- Foster opportunities to have tough conversations in non-threatening spaces and conversations between people to learn about others' experiences
- Create / foster economic opportunity.
- Don't take ourselves so seriously – have humor, gentleness, compassion and curiosity
- Create a mechanism to sponsor and encourage collaboration
- People are employed in new ways, e.g. several part time jobs, self-employed, etc. Need support and access to information and co-working space.

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3. How can Boulder Public Library assist in bring about this transition?

- Show people how to create economic opportunity for themselves and provide access to resources – educational materials, internet and computers
- Increase communication/marketing about existing opportunities, and find best way to connect with potential users
- The library can be a place to teach people to be engaged citizens
- Meet patrons at their point of need – there's an opportunity to take programs out into the neighborhoods to engage the community and help make connections
- Find a way to foster informal communal activities
- Take advantage of the outdoor space to draw people in to the library
- Don't be afraid to take calculated risks
- Foster a leaderful culture where employees engage people in conversation about what they wish was going on and then ask them if they'd want to lead it, creating a wider force of people attracting members from diverse programs without taxing own staff. Have a fair where people set up tables to recruit people to join their groups.
- Increase weekend programming, particularly for children, to bring in diverse people from all over Boulder County.
- Partner with daycare providers to provide storytimes.
- Take library services (e.g. bookmobile or truck) into the neighborhoods.

4. How can we engage and collaborate with other stakeholders that you know to transform the library and strengthen the community, now and in the years ahead?

- A library in Utah created a Latino board specifically to reach out to and organize that community
- Invite Casey Middle School's Latino parent group to meet at the library
- Increase communication between city departments to avoid duplication of services
- Increase collaboration and outreach with local schools and organizations to organize field trips to the library
- Increase marketing of meeting spaces to bring other groups in to the library
- Build an alliance of makerspaces in Boulder County to help direct groups to resources they need and encourage collaboration. Consider making BLDG 61 the umbrella.
- Invite non-library users to give input

5. Other thoughts / Conclusion

- Spread the word about Seeds Café – it's a great attraction for the library

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- How can we ensure that the master plan provides a system that can adapt for the next 10 years? We need processes in place that are continuous and allow us to continually evaluate and check in with the community.