Building Bonds and Bridges (and Leveraging Links): A Place-Based Mobility Strategy Based on Social Capital Creation.

Maureen Berner, Ph.D.
Professor of Public Administration and Government
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Anita Brown-Graham, J.D.
Professor of Public Law and Government
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Jamie McCall, M.P.A.
Vice President of Policy & Research
Carolina Small Business Development Fund

Jonathan Morgan, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Public Administration and Government
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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For More Information

Jamie McCall
Vice President of Policy & Research
Carolina Small Business Development Fund
jmccall@carolinasmallbusiness.org

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Carolina Small Business Development Fund

3128 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 170
Raleigh, N.C. 27604
telephone 919.803.1437
fax 919.897.8612
www.carolinasmallbusiness.org
Building Bonds and Bridges and Leveraging Links: A Place-Based Mobility Strategy on Social Capital Creation

Presented By:
Anita Brown-Graham
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Co-Authors:
Maureen Berner, Jamie McCall, Nathalie Floyd, Christopher Hatton, Alice Mahood

Agenda

- Definitions: Social Capital, CDCs, CDOs
- CDC’s & CDOs in Economic Mobility
- Social Capital Utilization by CDCs & CDOs
- Overarching Themes
- Remaining Questions
Defining Social Capital

Formal Definition
Features of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.

Practitioner Definition
“Relationships that are beneficial to building communities, built on respect and a common understanding that the relationship will produce a mutual benefit—whatever it could be, like expertise [or] knowledge, brought by parties to the table.”

Social Capital’s Typology

Bonding Capital
Connections within groups and organizations.
*Family, close friends, people with similar demographics.*

Bridging Capital
Connections across groups and organizations.
*Professional networks, organizational collaborations.*

Linking Capital (Bridging Subtype)
Bridging connections across disparate levels of power.
*Employee/employer relationships, political connections.*
Defining CDCs and CDOs

**Community Development Corporations (CDCs)**
1. Generally self-identified (no specific tax ID).
2. Chartered under NC’s General Statute Chapter 55A.
3. Covered by IRS tax code, usually as 501(c)3s
4. Emphasis on **localism, comprehensive programming, and community control**.

**Community Development Organization (CDOs)**
1. Umbrella term that includes CDCs.
2. Includes other organizations that perform similar work.

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**Respondent Social Capital Levels**

*Social Capital Index*
*Normalized Values*

- **Community Development Organization Interviewee**
- **-2.9 to -1.5**
- **-1.5 to -0.4**
- **-0.4 to 0.2**
- **0.2 to 1.1**
- **1.1 to 2.9**

The higher the number, the darker the color, the greater the social capital.
Providing Pathways into the Middle Class

- **Messengers:** Communicate local needs and experiences to funders and policy makers.

- **Resource Distributors:** Deploy resources in an efficient manner at neighborhood level.

- **Hyperlocal Responsiveness:** Target specific opportunities that address immediate needs.

- **Trust Beacons:** For both community members and local institutions. This underlies all of the above, and is the basis of social capital.

How CDCs/CDOs Use Social Capital

- To **assess and inform** the organization’s direction and strategic planning.

- As a general barometer for **program effectiveness and acceptability** to the community.

- For clients, to **strengthen personal relationships** within and outside of the community.

- For the CDC/CDO, to **build organizational assets** and educate stakeholders.
Social capital is intertwined into the work of CDOs, its use is intentional but also sometimes unintentional.

Linking capital is seen as vital to secure financial resources and political support.

Programmatically, CDOs tend to focus on bridging capital approaches.

Social capital is partially placed-based and shaped by a community’s institutions and socioeconomic context.

Interview Themes

- **Social capital is shaped by local community needs/place.**
  "In distressed communities, in some cases there is stagnation of efforts. Leaders perhaps have begun to feel the sense of hopelessness."

- **Focus on bridging capital.**
  [In response to being asked what defines success]
  “Relationships. Keeping good relationships.”

- **Use of linking capital for financial support.**
  “...The fact that we did have relationships, that we did know how to partner with those that had money. . . that has been key [to why we are still operating].”

- **Social capital use can be unintentional.**
  “Community developers were engaging in social capital leverage before they even knew what it was called.”

Interview Themes Example Quotes
Unanswered Questions & Further Research

- How to continue leveraging linking capital for funding, after the current generation of leaders leaves?

- Why do CDOs perceive bonding capital as being less important, and how can this type of capital be better leveraged?

- How is the use and effectiveness of social capital building different across geography (e.g. rural and urban areas)?

- How can community developers be more intentional in their leverage of social capital to promote economic mobility?

Questions?

Contact Me:

brgraham@sog.unc.edu

@Anita4nc
@ncIMPACTsog