

Community Efficacy for Economic Development in Lane County, Oregon

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Terminal Project

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

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An active local and regional economic development strategy is a vital component to the long-term economic health of communities. Many consider building a community's capacity to engage in collective action - or community efficacy - a key component in economic development. However, few models exist for measuring community efficacy and the underlying factors for that capacity. In the article *Building Capacity for Community Efficacy for Economic Development in Mississippi*, Parisi et al. (2002) provided the first empirical framework for examining these specific issues. In addition to providing a methodology for measuring community efficacy, the authors examined the extent to which some features of the community might account for differences in a community's involvement in economic development. Utilizing the Parisi model, this study explores the strength of community efficacy towards economic development in Lane County, Oregon. Findings reveal that community efficacy in Lane County may be more complex than can be captured in an empirical model, particularly at the county or regional level. Furthermore, the empirical model may actually provide a false view of community efficacy and ignore larger issues that may lead to community failure.

I. Overview

An active local and regional economic development strategy is a vital component to the long-term economic health of communities. There are many strategies available including those intended to help revitalize retail districts, encourage local entrepreneurialism, or new industry recruitment (Eisinger 1988; Flora et al. 1991; Rowley 1996). Research shows that the strategy a community chooses to adopt is related, in part, to the social structure of the community (Flora et al. 1997). This social structure does more than guide the values underlying the chosen strategy. It is also an important part of the community's ability to engage in productive dialogue around economic and sustainability issues (Flora and Flora 1993; Shuman 1998; Swanson 2001; Wilkinson 1970).

While many consider building a community's capacity to engage in economic development a central aspect of community development, a workable set of tools for measuring this capacity has received limited attention. In the article *Building Capacity for Community Efficacy for Economic Development in Mississippi*, Parisi et al. (2002) provided the first theoretical framework for examining these specific issues. The authors examined the extent to which some features of the community - such as its social and economic makeup, number of meeting places, and the strength of social networks - might account for differences in a community's involvement in economic development (2002). The authors present the resulting framework as a useful tool for establishing gaps in the capacity for community efficacy in communities of varying scales.

Background

In Lane County, the continuing decline in the region's primary industries, lumber extraction and wood product manufacturing, has forced the County to rethink its economic strategies in order to remain economically resilient. Institutions at every level of government and private industry have worked towards developing some road map to reinvent and diversify the economy of Oregon at both the state and county level. Three key initiatives at play in the County's economic restructuring come from the federal government through the Economic Development Administration, private industry through the Oregon Business Council, and at the

local level through the regional prosperity plan. While each initiative plays a varying role in the economic development of the County, looking at each gives a generalized overview of the current vision of the County's economic future.

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the University of Oregon a three-year grant. This grant established a University Economic Development Center (EDC) with a mission of linking university resources and communities to enhance regional, sustainable economic development (University of Oregon University Economic Development Center 2012).

As an initial step, the EDC undertook a statewide economic development needs assessment in 2010. The goal of the needs assessment was to understand what economic development strategies were in use, perceived effectiveness of these strategies, and barriers to its effectiveness (University of Oregon University Economic Development Center 2012). According to the assessment, quality of the community weighed heavily on a strategy's effectiveness. Research shows that community quality factors heavily not only in a city's ability to compete for highly skilled workers, but also to the overall social health of a community (Parisi et al. 2002). Furthermore, in Parisi's initial analysis, community quality was strongly correlated with a community's capacity towards economic development, particularly those qualities related to the social and economic factors (2002).

Parallel to initiatives such as the EDC assessment, the Oregon business community developed its own Oregon Business Council, which developed the Oregon Business Plan. The plan is a set of recommendations designed to help the government gain insight into what businesses see as the key barriers to Oregon creating a strong, competitive economy. A yearly update incorporates changes that have occurred in the market, highlight success and failures of state industrial policy initiatives, and provide updated information on the state of Oregon's industry.

The Oregon Business Council envisions the plan as an open forum for both business leaders and public official to come to the table, discuss the obstacles facing Oregon's industries, and develop strategies to overcome them. Two committees, the Steering Committee – which

consists of business leaders from around the state – and the Leadership Committee – a coalition of government officials and policy makers - head the plan. The committees collaborate on short- and long-term initiatives to create a strong, stable, and vibrant business environment.

One of the aspects of the Oregon Business plan is the focus on identifying and developing regional industry clusters to promote economic health. The OBP defines clusters as "geographic concentrations of similar and/or related firms that draw competitive advantage from their proximity to competitors, to a skilled workforce, to specialized suppliers and a shared base of sophisticated knowledge about their industry" (Oregon Business Council 2013). Since its inception, Oregon has implemented many of the individual recommendations in the OBP and both the state and county policymakers have pushed to advance regional industry clusters as the key long-term economic plan.

The Regional Prosperity Development Plan is the driving force behind economic development in the County. Developed by Lane County of Governments (LCOG), Eugene, and Springfield, the Plan builds upon the OBP concept by establishing a set of targeted clusters for the County in Education, Software Information Technologies (IT), Knowledge, Food, Manufacturing, and Health Care. Although presented as a countywide economic development plan, it is important to note that none of the specific communities outside of the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area were part of the planning or adoption process nor is any satellite community mentioned within the document.

The EDC assessment provides a big picture view of what economic development professionals see as the barriers facing Oregon communities for successful economic development. The OBP is business' point of view. While the Lane County Regional Economic Development Plan provides insight to LCOG, Eugene, and Springfield's proposed future of economic development for the County. Within the economic rhetoric for the County there is little that reflects the public concerning economic development, let alone the other local governments in Lane County. Yet the literature and general consensus on best practices for economic development shows that a viable, long-range economic development plan needs to reflect the values and social structure of the community (Flora et al. 1997).

The following study attempts to assess one potential barrier to the public participation in economic development, community efficacy. The study begins with the model proposed by Parisi and colleagues. It analyzes not only the level of efficacy available in the County but also the applicability of the Parisi model to determining this efficacy in the County. In the following report, I will present the results of a countywide assessment of local formal and informal leaders to examine how community capacity towards efficacy may affect the ability for the County to engage in a truly regional economic development conversation. The primary objective is to explore community efficacy in Lane County regarding three primary questions:

- How strong is community efficacy in the region?
- Does community efficacy towards economic development occur in the region?
- Do gaps exist in the factors contributing to the capacity to community efficacy?

Key Terms

In addition to the terms defined in the literature, "Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area" refers to the Eugene-Springfield Urban Area as defined by the US Census and will be referred to simply as "the Metro" throughout this report. Similarly, "Lane County" refers to Lane County, Oregon in relation to the physical place, based upon acknowledged geographic and political borders, and will be referred to as "the County" or the "region" in this report.

Themes in the Literature

There are two main themes explored in the literature review for this study. The first is an overview of community efficacy – specifically the recognized characteristics of efficacy and its role in local and regional development. Because community efficacy can only develop when the community is part of strong social network, literature on social capital – including the emerging discourse on community failure – is the second theme included in the literature review.

Organization of this Report

In the sections that follow, I first provide an overview of the theoretical concepts underlying community efficacy and a general description of the local feature used in this project to define local capacity for community efficacy. Next, I will present the methodology used to collect

information on community efficacy and the defining characteristics. Third, the results of an online survey of local formal and informal leaders in the County are presented. Fourth, I will discuss the state of community efficacy in the County and possible issues that may be hindering the development, or quality, of efficacy towards economic development. Finally, I will conclude with suggestions of possible avenues for further research and recommendations on how to encourage community efficacy.

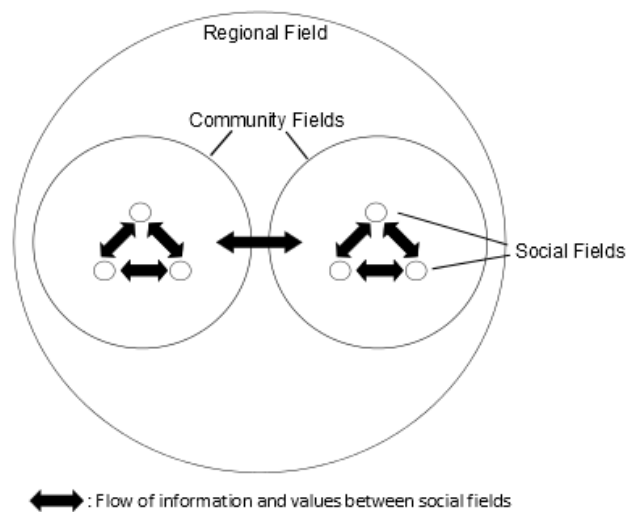
II. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background knowledge on community efficacy, and to gain a better understanding of the relationship between efficacy and social capital. This chapter examines literature on community efficacy and social capital. More specifically, it looks at how the widening influences of social capital within the social fields help in the development of community efficacy. Because social capital and community efficacy is interrelated with the power structure of community, and consequently the economic development strategy a community adopts, a brief overview of the relationship between community efficacy and economic development is included.

Community Efficacy

Parisi et al. (2002) states “a community possesses the quality of community efficacy when its members can engage in locally-oriented collective actions through open and inclusive processes of interaction within and between social groups” (p 20). Community efficacy is defined as a community’s capacity “to come together and act collectively in pursuit of a common goal” (Parisi et al. 2002). “Community” refers to the social construct defined in the social science literature as “a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings” (MacQueen et al. 2001). The self-defined nature of community means that, in terms of its relationship to efficacy, community not linked to any particular physical or political boundaries.

Both local governments and grassroots community organization have used community efficacy for many reasons. These can include education, crime reduction, and health initiatives (Kamo et al. 2008; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1998; Wahlstrom and Louis 2008). In the current economic and political climate, the push for local governments to tap into this resource is even greater. Justification for this push is in the belief that if the local population can act on its own, it is in a stronger bargaining position in negotiations in the growing global network (Shuman 1998; Wilkinson 1970). Under these macro level forces, the key to community and individual well-being is a strong social structure at the public level (Luloff and Swanson 1995; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994).



Research shows that community efficacy develops within the exchanges between various social fields (Wilkinson 1991). Social fields are the groups, organizations, and activities in which

Figure 1 Development of the Regional Social Field

individuals interact to develop shared interests in local issues (Parisi et al. 2002). As the various social fields interact, a shared vision of the “community” develops creating a community field. Community efficacy then develops within this larger context of the community field (Figure 1). To determine whether community efficacy exists within the community field, it is important to note whether actions by actors in the community field embody the following three qualities:

- (1) The principal actors and beneficiaries are local residents.
- (2) The goals represent local interests.
- (3) The action is public, as opposed to private, in the sense that beneficiaries include others besides the actors. (Wilkinson 1970, 56-57)

This brings up an interesting dilemma. A review of the literature indicates that economic development in practice generally has little public input except when required (Amin 1999). In addition, many of the common practices in economic development focus job growth from businesses owned by actors outside the area (Green et al. 1990). If true community efficacy only exists where the beneficiaries and principal actors are local, then can community efficacy really

exist in economic development? Sharp and Flora provide insight into why and how community efficacy plays into successful economic development (2009).

Previous research has shown that a successful economic development project of any strategy is more likely to be found in communities with high community efficacy towards economic development than in communities with low efficacy (Flora et al. 1997). In their article, Sharp and Flora (2009) noted economic development in towns with a public engaged in local economic development planning are more likely to focus on self-development economic development plans. This form of economic development focuses on creating or expanding locally owned firms or income-generating activities. In contrast to recruiting external industry, self-development leads to local ownership of firms or local control of economic activities while successful recruitment results in absentee-owned firms (Humphrey 1980).

Compared to recruited, absentee owner firms, successful self-development often generates fewer jobs but research shows those jobs generally require higher skills and provide higher incomes (Flora et al. 1991; Flora et al. 1992; Flora and Flora 1993; Green et al. 1990; Green et al. 1992; Green 1993). Whereas absentee owners are prone to hiring from outside the area, local owners are more likely to invest in training the local workforce to fill the jobs generated. This investment can come in many forms including on-the-job training, internships, and tuition offsets to employees (Green 1993). Another concern with industrial recruitment is that it pits communities against each other with one community's gain being another's loss (Eisinger 1988). Finally, self-development's reliance on local support and solving local problems through the community processes provides a two-fold benefit: 1) self-development generates new economic activity not only for the community but the economy as a whole, 2) self-development further supports and builds community efficacy providing for a more stable social network (Littrell 1980; Littrell and Hobbs 1989).

Social Capital

Social capital is the network of personal interactions that fosters collaboration within and between social fields (Lin 2002). Social capital first emerged in the literature in 1971 as a possible avenue for communities to cope with welfare and market failures. "In the absence of

trust ... opportunities for mutually beneficial co-operation would have to be foregone ... norms of social behaviour, including ethical and moral codes (may be) ... reactions of society to compensate for market failures”(Arrow 1971, 22).

According to Putnam (1994), social capital means the norms, trust, and reciprocity that make possible coordination and cooperation between actors for mutual benefit. This social resource, while valuable, is only accessible through social connections. The ability to activate social capital is thus limited in its ability to activate for collective actions by the quality and quantity of the connections within the social field. Coleman (1988) describes the quality of social connections as the intensity of give-and-take exchange between actors. Quantity refers to the number of actors involved in those social relations (Bourdieu 2008).

When social capital and community efficacy are strong, communities can sometimes solve market or political failures that governments or markets are unable to solve alone. This is attributed to the fact that the social network, not outsiders, are often privy to information about the inner workings of the community – from other member’s behaviors, to community capacity, and needs. Members use this information to uphold community norms and contribute to governance in a multilateral rather than centralized way, such as a subtle admonishment from a respected leader rather than a top down fine from the government. When outside institutions tap into this resource, projects are often more successful and stronger in the long term than the top-down approach.

The idea of using social capital to push collective action is inherently appealing to many institutions, particularly on potentially volatile subjects. However, social capital does not exist in a vacuum, and the existence of social capital can alter power relationships throughout the community field (Bebbington and Perreault 1999). Coleman asserts that the emergence of collective efforts from the social capital of the community field can only occur if two general conditions are met: the actors must be self-motivated and the actors must engage in reciprocal exchange with respect to achieving a common goal (1994). Based upon this argument, Parisi et al. (2002) determined that self-motivation and reciprocal exchange were key factors in determining a community’s capacity for efficacy.

Human-Economic Conditions

Since Wilkinson's initial assessment of the factors that contribute to community efficacy, additional research has found additional linkages between efficacy and other community factors (Luloff and Swanson 1995; Putnam 2001; Haines and Green 2011; Tolbert et al. 2002). Of these factors, Parisi et al (2002) found the human-economic condition of the community played a significant role. This is not unexpected. According to Hierarchy of Needs theory, individuals that are most vulnerable socially (minorities and other marginalized groups) and/or economically (low-income groups), place a greater emphasis on meeting basic needs of food, shelter, and safety than on higher level needs, such as social relations outside immediate familial and neighborhood groups (Maslow, Frager, and Fadiman 1970). This leads to fragmentation within the community field and so individual actors are unable to connect with others outside their social field to develop the common values with respect to the community field as a whole (Luloff and Swanson 1995). In such conditions, poor human and economic resources in a local population may translate to a diminished capacity for community efficacy. Even if community efficacy does develop, it is likely to be limited to isolated pockets of the population and not reflect the general welfare of the entire community (Luloff and Swanson 1995).

III. Methodology

In order to understand the relationship between community efficacy and economic development in the County, this study relied on the framework developed by Parisi et al to develop a series of questions to gauge the level of community efficacy – both generally and as it relates specifically to economic development – and to measure social capital in the County. Analysis includes the number of collective actions taken, number of actors involved, effectiveness of such actions, and level of reciprocity amongst actors to determine the level of community efficacy and social capital in the county. Additionally, data from the 2010 Decennial Census was the basis for human-economic conditions of the County.

Sampling

In November 2012, to collect data on community efficacy and social capital, I conducted an online survey. The target sample of the survey was formal and informal leaders in the County. Formal leaders are individuals that hold a position of power within the community. These individuals are often the elected, hired, or appointed decision-makers in the government.

Informal leaders are those that are recognized as a community leader but do not carry any official status or power. These leaders direct networks of civic engagement through voluntary organizations. Such leaders are important when viewing community efficacy due to their strong association to social capital development (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994).

Sampling informal leaders poses inherent problems as the informal leader position is due to community members' perception and the leader's level of activity within the community. In the Parisi model, the researchers developed a two-step community key informant methodology to find these local leaders. This methodology relied on a telephone snowball procedure in which the researcher called a members of the community. Researchers asked community members to provide contact information of individuals in the community knowledgeable about locally oriented community actions. This continued until the researchers developed a list of informants whose names came up at least twice by other members of the community. Researchers then contacted individuals from this list again to determine if they were willing to participate in the survey.

Due in part to Oregon's unique land use system, the County is primarily rural with one large urban core and several smaller urban areas scattered within a large geographical region. The sampling goal was to obtain a sample of leaders and decision makers at the county level. This poses significant difficulties in obtaining an appropriate sample of leaders that are representative of the county as a whole. In addition, the community key informant methodology developed for the Parisi model requires a large amount of resources and time.

In the interest of ease of distribution, human resources, and ease of collecting information, the survey sample was chosen from decision makers in public, private, and non-profit organizations with a stated mission to serve the County (see Appendix C for a partial list of these organizations). Organization information was obtained through a review local community actions, news releases, and social media or web presence. A sample of policymakers and professionals from cities throughout the County rounded out the participant poll.

In November 2012, email invitations to the online survey were sent to 112 individuals. Participants also were encouraged to suggest or invite additional participants into the survey upon request, providing for an additional 15 invitations. Individuals who had not responded to the initial invitation received additional reminders in subsequent waves within one week of the initial invitation. Four waves were conducted, resulting in the return of 55 surveys. This accounted for a 44% response rate.

As shown in Table 1, members of Citizen or Community Groups represented the largest percentage of participants, constituting about 41% of respondents. Of the participants that completed a survey, 52% were male and 48% were female. On average, respondents were 53 years old. All had at least some college, with 79% having a Bachelor's degree or higher. On average, respondents lived in the County for 25 years.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Survey Respondents

Variable	Mean/%
Gender	
Male	51.7
Female	48.3
Average Age	53.4
Level of Education	
Some College or Associate's Degree	20.7
Bachelor's Degree	37.9
Some Graduate Work	6.9
Graduate or Professional Degree	34.5
Average Years lived in Lane County	20.5
Type of Organization/Agency*	
County Government	5.7
Local Government	17.1
Non-Profit Organization	20.0
Economic Development Organization	5.7
Citizen or Community Group	34.3
Local Business	11.4
Other	14.3
Position in Community*	
Elected Official	17.1
Appointed Official	11.4
Government Staff	17.1
Volunteer	51.4
Business Owner	8.6
Informal Leader	31.4
Consultant or Employee	11.4
Other	8.6

**May equal more than 100%, multiple responses allowed.*

Measurement

Community Efficacy. Measurement of community efficacy comes from survey participant's awareness of local collective actions in the region. The survey asked participants in a yes/no format whether local collective actions of a general nature have occurred since 2007. Participants then indicated whether local collective actions specific to economic development strategies have occurred during the same timeframe. Finally, participants listed some examples of collective actions taken by the community, and the effectiveness of those actions.

Community Social Capital. Survey respondents' answers to questions about local community groups' self-motivation to engage in locally oriented collective actions - and reciprocal exchange between and among these groups - were the basis for measuring social capital. For the first condition, survey respondents were asked to rate the level of commitment of civic interest groups, local government agencies, and faith-based organizations in engaging in locally oriented collective actions toward economic development. To determine the second condition, the survey asked participants the number of individuals or organizations involved in such actions.

Averages of responses to questions on community efficacy and social capital became the basis for a community score of these indicators. An indicator with a low community score is weak within the community while communities with a high average are strong.

Human-Economic Characteristics. Sampson et al., (1999) indicated that human-economic characteristics could be gauged using five major indicators collected in the US Census: percent African-American population; percent of population in poverty; unemployment rates; educational attainment; and percent of female-headed households. Additional research shows that while African-American populations and female-headed households may lead to lower human-economic conditions, it is their marginalized status that puts them at risk to higher rates of poverty and lower educational attainment (Cloke et al. 1995). This indicates that the reality is all marginalized populations may represent similar concerns in the social fields (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1998). For the purpose of this study, therefore, the minority population

also includes Native Americans and the female-headed household category includes all single-parent households.

Due to the highly interrelated nature of human-economic characteristics, a factor analysis provided the community score for this indicator. A community with a lower level of available human and economic resources, the closer the composite score is to 1.0. The composite score for the County was 0.89.

Analysis

To discover the effect social capital and human-economic indicators have on community efficacy in the County, a series of logistical regression models were undertaken. The logistical model mirrored the multiplicative probability model of the Parisi model:

$$\left(\frac{P_i}{1 - P_i} \right) = e^{\beta_0 + \beta_i X_i}$$

P_i = Estimated expected probability of experiencing community efficacy

$1 - P_i$ = Estimated expected probability of not experiencing community efficacy

B_0 = Estimated vectors of log odds of the probability of experiencing community efficacy when the vector β_i equals 0

β_i = Estimated vector of the log odds of the probability of experiencing community efficacy for each unit change in the corresponding vector of independent variables.

The exponential relationship which results from this model implies that there is a multiplicative effect between the likelihood of a community experiencing community efficacy for every unit of increase in social capital and/or human-economic characteristics.

Limitations

The dispersed nature of the County's residential patterns provided a series of challenges and limitations to the study presented. The Metro accounts for the bulk of the County's population and economic focus. Of the satellite cities in the County, only a few are less than a 20-minute commute. This means most of the organizations this study used are also located in the Metro

and many of the outside communities lack representation in the leadership of these organizations.

The use of a survey as the primary instrument for data gathering brings additional limitations to the study. The online survey provide several benefits in a study such as this. Its anonymous nature provides people with a sense of security and allows them to be more open in their responses. Unfortunately, the inability to control for non-responses puts a larger burden on the researcher to create a participant pool that is sufficiently random and reflective of the population being studied.

Furthermore, the timing of the survey provided its own challenges. The survey occurred during the Winter holiday season. Initial invitations were emailed on the Monday immediately after Thanksgiving and the first wave remained open until 10 days before Christmas. A second, smaller wave focused primarily on individuals who had self-selected or were recommended by the initial participants started on December 15th and continued to January 1st. The busy nature of the holiday season may have influenced the response rate of the survey further skewing the sample.

Adding local formal leaders to the participant pool was one attempt to offset the disproportionate weight the Metro has on any regional analysis. Normally this would provide enough balance for regional-level generalizations. As a result of these challenges, this study was able to collect responses from two out of the six Census-designated Urban Centers (UC) outside of the Metro. In addition, the study was able to garner information for representatives of the County as a whole. The results of this study, therefore, can be generalized to the region, but may not be representative of any specific community.

IV. Findings

This chapter provides detailed information on the findings from the online survey administered to formal and informal leaders in The County. Respondents were generally satisfied with their community and were actively involved in community affairs (Figure 2). The survey showed mixed result on whether respondents believed the government was responsive to community needs.

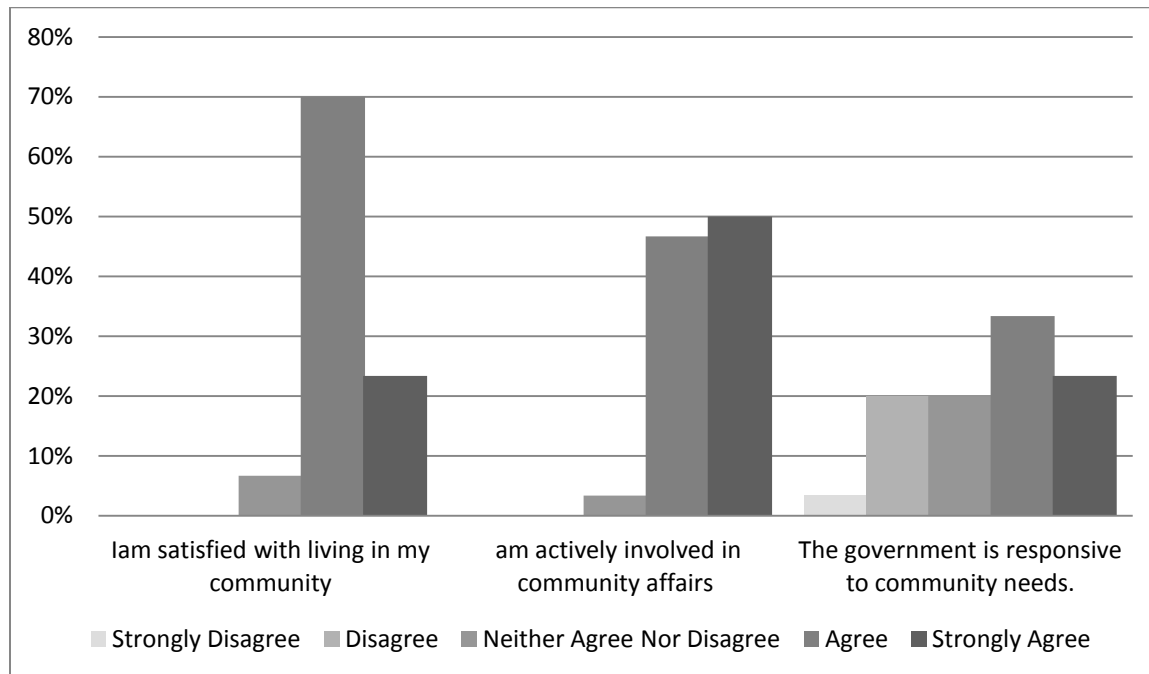


Figure 2 Respondents perceptions of community

The survey asked respondents to identify which community they were representing as they filled out the survey in order to determine if there were imbalances in responses. Figure 3 shows that Eugene had the highest percentage of respondents while few responses came from cities outside of the Metro despite the fact that countywide organizations represented a higher percentage of invited participants.

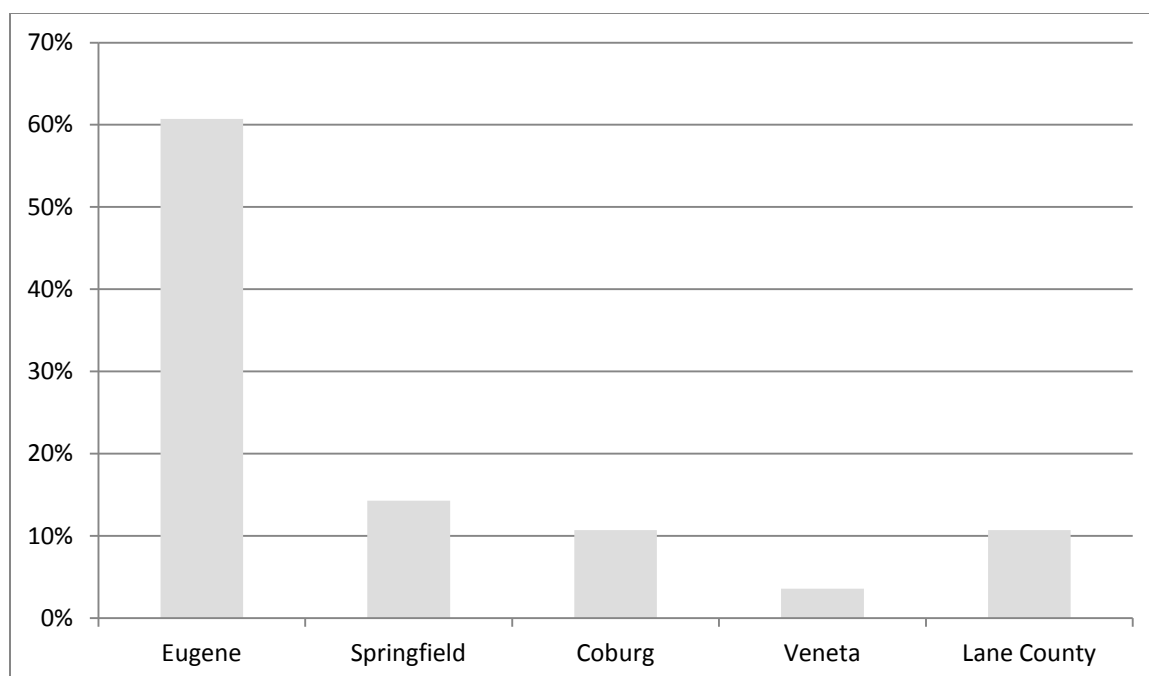


Figure 3 Percentage of Respondents by state recognized urban area

As described in Chapter 2, the survey questions addressed two informational objectives – measuring community efficacy and determining social capital. Below presents an overview of survey results by objective, followed by results from the US Census analysis of Human-Economic Characteristics. Appendix A includes the survey instrument, Appendix B presents responses to open ended survey questions, and Appendix C includes aggregated responses to the survey instrument.

Social Capital

Respondents rated Trade Union and Professional Organizations as the most self-motivated towards economic development, with an average score of 2.63 and 2.65 respectively. Although traditionally less focused on economic development, Social Welfare Groups (2.30) and Neighborhood Associations (2.29) also showed a high level of self-motivation. Respondents indicated high reciprocal exchange amongst actors, with most collective actions involving more than one actor.

The survey asked participants a series of questions regarding their perception of local group communication and organization by requesting their level of agreement or disagreement with

the statement provided. The questions focused on both intergroup communication as well as communication between local groups and the government. Figure 4 provides an overview of the responses answered for each statement.

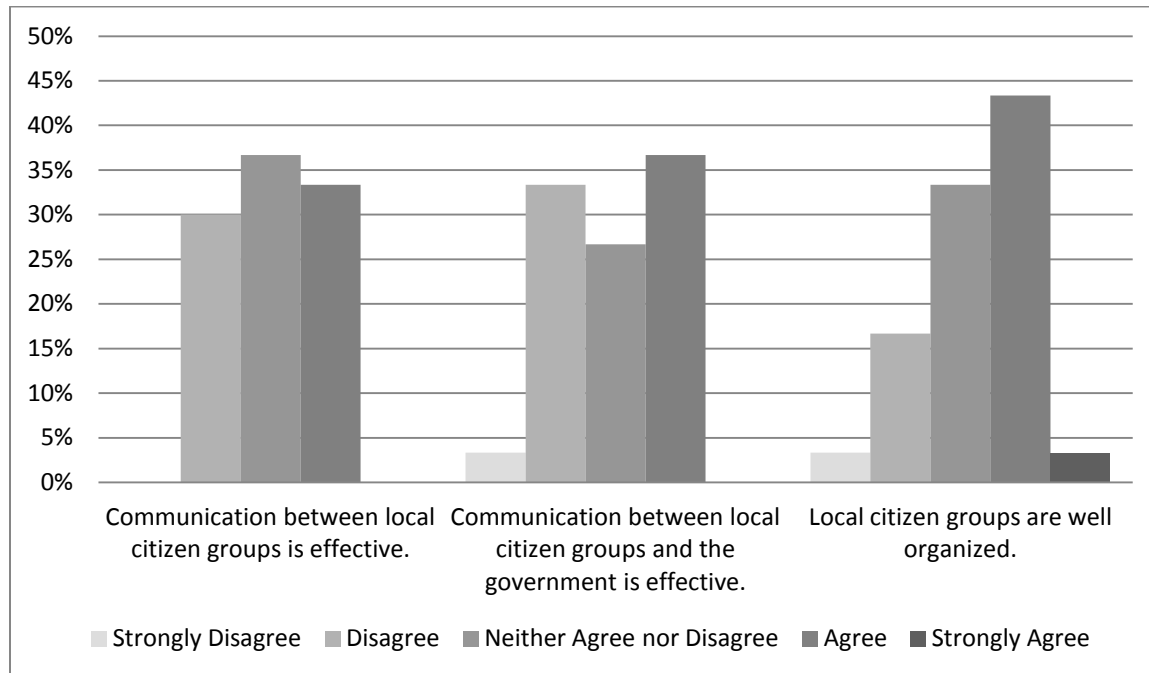


Figure 4 Perceived effectiveness of local citizen groups

Overall respondents did not show a strong opinion on the effectiveness of group communications. Less than 40% of respondents agreed with each of the communication statements, with almost an equal percentage showing a neutral or disagreement. Forty-three percent of respondents agreed that local citizen groups are well organized, while 3% strongly agreed with the statement.

Human-Economic Characteristics

On average the County has a low minority population compared to the rest of the country, accounting for only 6.8% of the population (Table 2). In addition, the County had approximately 10% with less than a high school diploma and 8.3% single-parent headed households. In terms of economic health, the County has a 6.4% unemployment rate and a 17.4% poverty rate.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Human Economic Characteristics

	%
Minority (by Race)	6.83
In Poverty (previous 12 months)	21.4
Unemployed	13.4
Less Than High School Diploma	7.2
Single Parent Households	9.1

Community Efficacy

Survey responses indicate that the County has high community efficacy overall at 0.93 (Table 3).

Table 3 Community Efficacy community scores for Lane County

Variable	CS
Community Efficacy	
General	0.93
Economic Development	0.63

Looking specifically at community involvement in economic development, however, respondents indicated that the public was not overly involved in local economic development (Figure 5). Nearly 74% of respondents indicated that public involvement was low or non-existent, economic development does not seem to be a priority for public engagement. This is consistent with the community score for economic development efficacy of 0.63. This shows that while community efficacy for economic development does exist it is low.

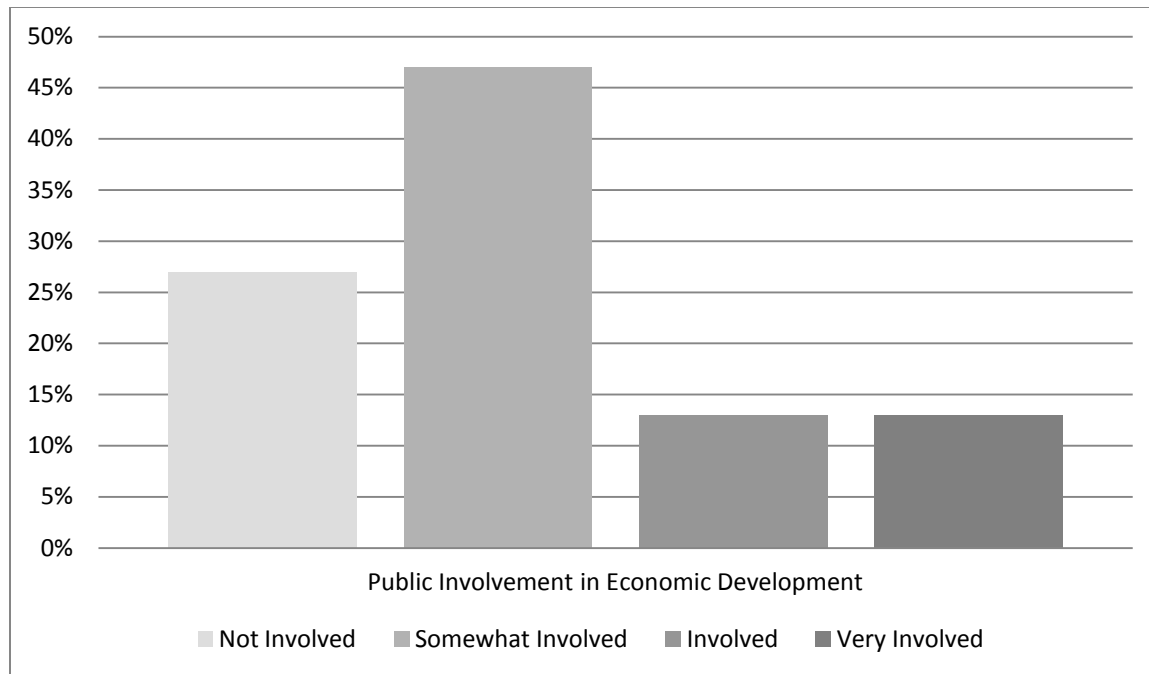


Figure 5 Perceived community Involvement in local Economic Development

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a variety of economic development options available to a community. Based upon the EDA report, the four activities most common in Oregon are expanding business, recruiting new business, retaining existing business, and providing information about the community. While this provided the basis for the community score for community efficacy, it is also useful to determine which activities are most likely to garner collective action. Responses indicate an even distribution of collective action throughout the provided strategies, although providing information seems to be most popular at nearly 30% (Figure 6).

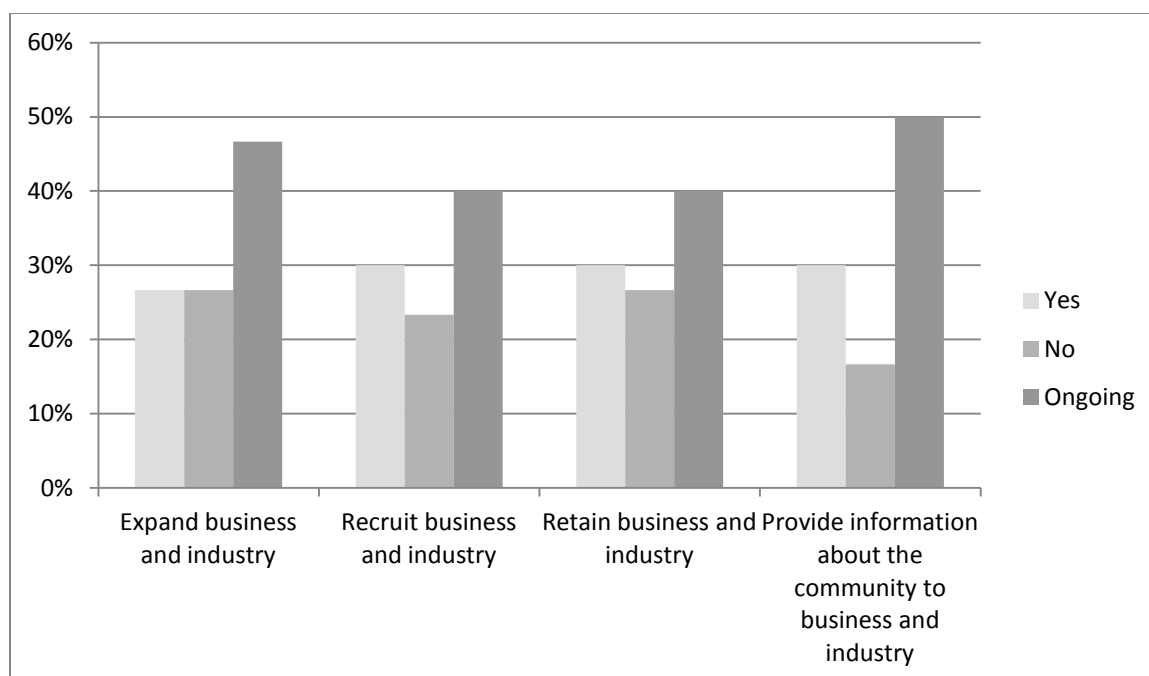


Figure 6 Responses to Collective Actions towards Economic Development

In addition, the question included the option of indicating if there were any ongoing collective actions towards each activity. This provides a rough gauge of whether collective action in the sector was a recent phenomenon. Ongoing collective actions were the most common in all economic development activities. This indicates that collective action towards economic development may be a new trend in the county, however further analysis is necessary to provide a complete picture.

The survey also asked participants to provide specific collective actions, not economic development related. For a complete list of the actions respondents provided, see Appendix B. Respondents were then asked to rate the effectiveness of those actions. Figure 7 indicates that overall respondents believed that non-economic development related actions were effective.

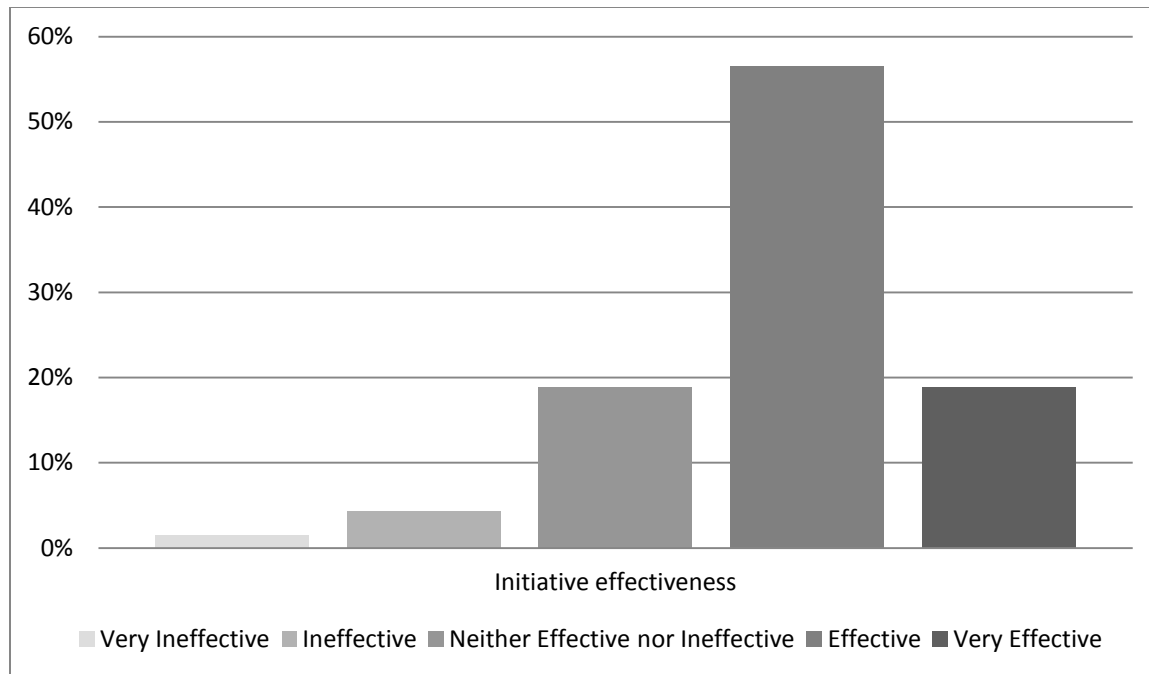


Figure 7 Average effectiveness of respondent-supplied collective actions

Community Efficacy and Social Capital

Analysis of the relationship between community efficacy and social capital showed no relationship between the two variables. Similarly, the relationship between community efficacy and human-economic characteristics show no statistically significant relationship. This finding is especially surprising. As noted in the literature, several studies have found at least some relationship between community efficacy and both social capital and human-economic characteristics. In addition, the choice to focus on only these two indicators for this project stemmed from the strong relationship found in the original Parisi Model. The next section will possible explanations of the lack of relationship between the variables.

V. Discussion

The main objective of this study was to address three questions. How strong is community efficacy in the region? Does community efficacy towards economic development occur in the region? Do gaps exist in the factors contributing to the capacity to community efficacy? Answering these questions may provide insight into possible gaps in the County supports for community efficacy. In doing so, it is possible for community organizers to encourage community efficacy as a means to promote increased public engagement in economic policymaking.

Limitations of the Parisi Model

Before broaching the questions posed in this study, it is important to take time and discuss the pros and cons of the model in which it is build upon. Not only does understanding how well the model worked in this study help put the upcoming discussion of community efficacy in the County into better perspective. Understanding the replicability and nuances of this approach in the context of another community can better inform planning academics and practitioners in future endeavors of this type.

Unfortunately, the Parisi model fails to take into account many of the intricacies of human interactions. By focusing solely on empirical data to operationalize social capital, the model fails to take into account the nuances present in how social and community fields develop. Specifically, since the model assumes that any incidence of collective action defaults to proving the existence of community efficacy, it ignores the underlying power structure of the social fields. This is an important point, because social capital and community efficacy do not exist in a political vacuum. The existence and activation of social capital alters the power relationships between civil society and the state (Bebbington and Perreault 1999).

A true understanding of the intricacies of social capital and community efficacy should take into account the local knowledge of community residents beyond a specific subgroup of leaders acknowledged only by other community leaders. A framework which looks at not just the existence, but also the quality of collective actions would likely be better able to identify points at which timely intervention will achieve desired community goals (Kilpatrick and Abbott-

Chapman 2007). Such a framework would look at community efficacy in the context of the processes of social interaction producing particular community outcomes, rather than as an outcome in itself (Fenton, MacGregor, and Cary 2000).

A key point to such a framework would be looking beyond the immediately recognizable leaders and acknowledging that the lack of a homogeneous social and power structure in communities. This unequal distribution means that the nature and quality of opportunities for people to not only engage but also benefit from collective actions is also unequal. Walter best summed this concept up when he stated community 'can look very different depending on where one is sitting' (1997, 72). The quality of local leadership as perceived by the general population therefore may have more of an impact on the effectiveness of any collective actions than does the socio-economic characteristics of the community (Gittell and Vidal 1998; Falk and Kilpatrick 2000). This is best shown by communities with high social capital but low political and economic power in immigrant and low income neighborhoods (Laguerre 1999).

Community Efficacy in Lane County

Findings indicate that community efficacy in the County is high overall, but only moderate in economic development. Based upon the fact that respondents almost universally indicated they were responding for the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan region, it is possible to assume that much of the efficacy found is limited to this geographic area. Analysis of the known collective actions also shows community efficacy that heavily favors the Metro region. This relationship indicates a highly constrained and fragmented regional community field and little interaction between geographically dispersed social fields.

One possible explanation for the Metro focus is that community efficacy throughout the region was high before the most recent economic downturn. Since the populations that were most vulnerable to the present economic situation would be the first to become less socially involved, it may explain the lack of responses from surrounding rural area who were hardest hit by the loss of the lumber industry. However, this theory does not properly explain the lack of responses from other, more affluent urban areas in the County. In addition, observational and anecdotal information garnered from individuals interested in the project indicate that social

linkages between the Metro and satellite cities were never strong. Nor does the economic downturn explain that responses even from participants who are part of organizations with a regional mission, largely focused on the metro area.

Another explanation that could account for the focus on a single urban area is best understood by applying urban social structure theory to Oregon's land use system. Just as social fields must interact and overlap to create a local community field, local community fields become larger regional fields only if there are interactions between local community fields. The place where these community fields interact is often in the transitional zone between urban areas (Brown and Moore 1970). Transition zones can take many forms such, as neighboring residential areas along a boundary between two cities, suburbs, and small commuter towns, to name a few. Oregon's unique land use pattern consists of large regions in which transition zones between neighboring urban areas do not exist.

The dispersed nature of Oregon's land use began early in its initial settlement. Many cities grew in places originally used as work camps on lands granted to natural resource companies engaged primarily in lumber extraction. Camps often were set far apart to maximize the profitability of the land grant. As the workers settled, their families joined them and small towns formed. The distance between these original camps meant that many towns had not grown to a size where they would overlap by the time the Land Use Acts were adopted in the 1970s.

The Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan area's location along the Willamette and McKenzie put it in a strong position as an economic hub from the beginning. The building of Interstate 5 through the urban area further strengthened its position as the population and economic hub of the County. As the County's economic drivers Even with commuters, the distances between the work and home "communities" make it likely that the commuter's social fields will have limited information transfer unless there is strong incentive to do so (Simmie 2003). This is because social fields tend to be relatively small scale and limited by members' immediate contacts. In addition, community members often limit interactions outside the social and community field due to the preference to keep things "local" (Adger 2003). The commuter,

then, is part of two separate community fields. More important, these fields may have different norms and priorities that further reduce the likelihood of transfer.

The lack of information transfer between local community fields creates a fractured regional community field whereby each local community pursues its own desires and needs with little regard for the region as a whole. The lack of organized collective action on a regional scale reduces the collective bargaining power of each local group since it has to compete against similarly situated communities. This may create a power inequity in the region, whereby the needs of the smaller, less economically self-sufficient cities are largely overshadowed by the needs of the larger Metro.

Gaps in community Efficacy's Foundation

Based upon the limitations of the model, it is important to determine the extent of community efficacy before moving forward on determining any gaps in the factors contributing to community efficacy. To do otherwise would invite possible problems that could actually inhibit rather than enhance efficacy if such recommendations were inappropriate to the situation. Unfortunately the lack of response from outside the Metro inhibits any productive analysis of whether gaps exist in the foundations for community efficacy at the regional level. The high community efficacy at the Metro level and the lack of any significant relationship between community efficacy and community characteristics also limits any real analysis of the foundation for community efficacy at the local level as well.

Parisi and colleagues found in their research however, that three strongest indicators to high community efficacy were 1) commitment of the local government to engage in locally-oriented actions toward local economic development; and 2) human and economic characteristics played an important role in promoting community efficacy (Parisi et al. 2002). Based upon their findings an analysis shows that both these factors are low in the community. This indicates that if policy makers are interested in further developing community efficacy, particularly towards economic development, the local government should be the focal point to coordinate locally oriented efforts with other community groups. This means that investment in community social capital should be aimed at increasing the conditions that facilitate a civic/democratic dialogue

between local governments and other community organizations. Second, interested parties should invest in human and economic resources. This investment would increase the knowledge and the means to mobilize social resources into collective efforts. In terms of Lane County, efforts focused on poverty reduction and raising employment rates should be the primary goals of community and economic development.

VI. Further Research

This study seeks to start the conversation about regional community efficacy within the County community. The results of this analysis indicate there may be a lack of communication within the region, with the Metro accounting for drawing most of the focus in economic development discourse. While not unexpected given the Metro's position as the primary employment hub for the County, it may be overshadowing the needs or interests of the smaller satellite communities. Furthermore, this lack of communication may be impeding a true regional perspective towards economic development. This has major implications in the context of the currently proposed business plan, which focuses on regional cluster industries. Research focused on creating awareness of existing conditions (i.e. socio-economic, inter-city relationships) and determining how receptive communities outside the Metro are to a regional dialogue towards community efficacy building would likely be the best first step.

The Oregon land use system may present a significant barrier to the viability of developing any true regional perspective. The distinct urban-rural divide artificially maintained by the system creates unique challenges for organizations at all levels to consider when shaping and implementing an appropriate economic strategy. Determining the community efficacy and capacity for efficacy building at the local community level for each urban area may prove valuable for local and county organizations alike. Understanding the extent of community engagement in local actions may inform both formal and informal leaders of a way to move forward that is in the best interests of all parties.

Member's perception of groups outside an established social or community field are just as important as any quantifiable data for understanding any breakdown in community building. It would be valuable to speak with community leaders and members to determine if perception is a barrier to regional efficacy. In addition to providing a better understanding of intergroup relationships, members could provide a better insight to perceived barriers or opportunities to build strong relationships between various social and community fields.

Though building intergroup relationships is an important step to building healthy community relations, the effectiveness and organization of those groups can also be a significant barrier.

Finding that most participants believed communication between groups was not fully effective, formal and informal leaders may look at the communication methods in place and determine ways to increase their effectiveness. Knowing that only 3% of participants strongly agreed that civic organizations are effective demonstrates that there is room for groups to improve in this category. Looking at organizational structures may also prove valuable to the effectiveness of future collective actions.

The nature of community efficacy, and the factors which contribute to the building of community efficacy, means that it is in a constant state of change. Only through incremental steps can true progress occur. However, many of those steps also have a larger impact on the population as a whole. Diversification of skills and decreasing poverty rates may indeed lead to a more connected "community" who is better able to negotiate on the global economic field. However, it is just as true that these factors lead to a healthier, more economically stable community overall by creating a community that is attractive to business and to the highly skilled laborers they rely upon.

In many ways, the factors for community efficacy have a reciprocal relationship with the factors for economic strength, sustainability, healthy communities, and a variety of other initiatives many communities pursue to better the lives of the people who live there. Therefore, any decision to move forward cannot be based on what will yield the best monetary results. A conversation only focused on one aspect of community does not take into account the core values and needs of the community as a whole. Rather, any discussion must be in the context of what is better for the community at the local or regional level.

VII. Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Dear Participant,

Thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. The survey will take approximately twenty minutes. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from this project at any point during the survey by closing your browser window. You may also skip any question you prefer not to answer. To protect your confidentiality, data will be reported in aggregate and no individual information will be presented.

If you have any questions regarding this research or would like to receive a copy of the final report, contact April Buzby at (541) 264-1281, or Robert Parker at (541) 346-3801. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Compliance Services at the University of Oregon, (541) 346-2510.

By completing and submitting this survey, as a participant, you are providing your informed consent.

Thank you for your participation,
April A. Buzby
University of Oregon
Masters in Community and Regional Planning Candidate, 2013

In the first section of the survey, we want to understand the public's ability to self-organize in pursuit of a common goal, known as collective action. For each item, please choose whether the action has been taken by any organized group, agency, or citizens since 2007.

Q3 Please indicate if collective actions in any of the following areas of economic development have occurred in your community.

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Ongoing (3)
Expand business and industry (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruit business and industry (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retain business and industry (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide information about the community to business and industry (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 Has the community organized to address a need or problem not related to economic development? (If no, please skip to question 5)

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q5 Please give 1-4 examples of issue(s) the community organized around?

Q6 Were the above initiatives effective?

	Very Ineffective (1)	Ineffective (2)	Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)	Effective (4)	Very Effective (5)
Initiative 1 (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiative 2 (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiative 3 (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initiative 4 (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Interactions within and between social groups in a community are vital to a community's ability to act collectively. In this next section of the survey, we want to understand your perceptions of the community you are representing and the commitment of social groups' to engaging in actions in your community.

Q8 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I am satisfied with living in my community. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am actively involved in community affairs. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The government is responsive to community needs. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 In your opinion, how involved is your community's public in economic development?

- ☐ Not Involved (1)
- ☐ Somewhat Involved (2)
- ☐ Involved (3)
- ☐ Very Involved (4)

Q10 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about groups in your community.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Communication between local citizen groups is effective. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication between local citizen groups and the government is effective. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local citizen groups are well organized. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 For the following civic groups, what do you believe the level of commitment to engage in locally-oriented collective action toward economic development?

	Not Committed (1)	Somewhat Committed (2)	Committed (3)	Very Committed (4)
Social Welfare Groups (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faith-based Organizations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neighborhood Associations (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conservation or Environmental Groups (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fraternal Organizations (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education, Arts, and Culture Groups (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trade Unions (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional Organizations (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Organizations (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 Of all the collective actions taken, how many different non-governmental individuals or groups were involved?

- ☐ One to a few individuals (1)
- ☐ A few community groups (2)
- ☐ The entire Community (3)

In this last section we would like to know a little about you and your role in your community.

Q14 Gender

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)

Q15 Age

Q16 Level of Education

- ☐ Some High School (1)
- ☐ High School Degree (2)
- ☐ Some College or Associate's Degree (3)
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree (4)
- ☐ Some Graduate Work (5)
- ☐ Graduate or Professional Degree (6)

Q17 How many years have you lived in Lane County?

Q18 What town or community are you representing as you fill out this survey?

Q19 What type of organization/agency are you representing as you fill out this survey? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ County Government (1)
- ☐ Local Government (2)
- ☐ Tribal Government (3)
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce (4)
- ☐ Non-Profit Organization (5)
- ☐ Economic Development Organization (6)
- ☐ Citizen or Community Group (7)
- ☐ Local Business (8)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (9) _____

Q20 What is your position in the community? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Elected Official (1)
- ☐ Appointed Official (2)
- ☐ Government Staff (3)
- ☐ Volunteer (4)
- ☐ Business Owner (5)
- ☐ Informal Leader (6)
- ☐ Consultant or Employee (7)
- ☐ Other (Please specify) (8) _____

Q21 Which civic groups, if any, do you belong to? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Social Welfare (1)
- ☐ Faith-based (2)
- ☐ Education, Arts, & Culture (3)
- ☐ Trade Union (4)
- ☐ Political Party or Group (5)
- ☐ Neighborhood Association (6)
- ☐ Conservation or Environmental (7)
- ☐ Professional Association (8)
- ☐ Youth Work (9)
- ☐ Sports or Recreation (10)
- ☐ Peace Movement (11)
- ☐ Animal Rights (12)
- ☐ Fraternal Organization (13)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (14) _____

Q22 Please write any other comments you have in the space below:

VIII. Appendix B

Collective Actions in Lane County, Oregon

Participant's responses to the question "Please give 1-4 examples of issue(s) the community organized around?"

- Traffic Calming on Minda Drive 2. Ending a proposed road "improvement" project on West Jeppesen Acres Rd 3. Traffic calming on East Jeppesen Acres Rd
- Homelessness education
- Trimming trees on Main Street.
- Homelessness Law enforcement/jail
- Homeless, schools,
- This all depends on how you term "economic development". It is more than building \$\$ profits! Try Social Capital: Thru developing neighborhoods and neighbors ability to withstand and mitigate climate change and energy vulnerability through use of permaculture principals related to local production through home food production and use of green building technique. #1) Eugene's Neighborhood Leaders Council Committee on Sustainability...has coordinated over 40 different "Green Neighbor (Bike) Tours" with over 700 attendees, designed to share knowledge on gardening conversion, chickenkeeping, beekeeping, 'hood initiatives, and then build social capital in the process. #2) Friendly Neighborhood has also successfully saved a meadow preserve from property subdivision and then cultivated local flora and fauna through this mission. #3) Developed from a stop on a Green Neighbor Tour, Friendly Neighborhood's "Common Ground Garden" has grown several thousand pounds of food in it's first 3 years, seen hundreds of volunteers attend work parties, from school youth to retirees, taught (master) gardening technique, built pride and accomplishment, and most importantly, the value of mutual worth and understanding through neighbors met in common value. Please read: www.eugeneweekly.com/2010/07/15/gardening.html
- Every issue is likely to be related to economic development in some capacity. There has been much organizing re access to shelter for the homeless, whether to extend bus rapid transit along west 11th, resolution for stopping coal trains, and the effort to save civic stadium
- Gang influx, violent street gangs, air quality, water quality

- Food security, public school property maintenance, natural land improvement
- some groups have organized to oppose mainstream economic development such as to downsize and localize lifestyles - reducing participation in the mainstream economic system
- School funding, 2. reduced energy consumption to address climate change, 3. renaming Beltline, 4. promotion of local food sources
- Lane metro partnerships ongoing efforts. Chambers of commerce ongoing efforts. Local governments ongoing efforts.
- The Regional Prosperity Initiative of the Joint Elected Officials is one example.
- Promote extension of EmX bus rapid transit service in west Eugene. Siting of Hynix computer chip plant. Use of urban renewal and tax increment financing for Riverfront Research Park and downtown Eugene projects.
- save Buckley House Sobering station from closure due to county budget cuts by asking other municipal partners and hospitals to help offset the cuts
- infill standards unruly gatherings homelessness
- Land use issues 2. Student behavior problems 3. Saving schools from closure
- Public safety; transportation needs; disaster preparedness; food access; human rights... there are MANY!
- Downtown development(city of Eugene, developers, LCC). Use of the Hynix plant (lane metro), food industry alignment (county)' homeless camp (non-Eco, ci of Eugene), emx - first three lines (Springfield' Springfield and Eugene, ltd)
- The need to be organized and understand the impact of development on our community.
- traffic, roads, land use
- Public Education early learning, health care access, other public services
- Homeless housing and other needs: medical, holiday meals, clothing drives Environment and sustainability issues: Good Earth Home Show, Neighborhood Faires, closing streets for public walking and biking
- Eugene's Friendly Area Neighborhood is putting together a business directory.

- Saving the Elementary school: 4J School District slated Coburg Elementary School for closure; parents and community rallied to to create Coburg Community Charter School which is now thriving. Community votes (for a second time) in favor of a munipcle wastewater system despite relatively high cost - grassroots effort to promote the project.
- The recent groundbreaking of the city's wastewater system.
- Wastewater system Charter school

IX. Appendix C

Survey Organization Pool

The following is a partial list of organizations that were used as the basis for the survey participant pool. To protect the identity of individuals, organizations with a small decision-making body are not included. In addition to the following list, a variety of local government officials and administrators for each of Lane County's incorporated cities was included in the participant pool. Please note, inclusion in this list is not indicative of receiving a completed survey from an individual in the organization.

Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians

Convention & Visitors Association of Lane County Oregon (CVALCO)

Department of Human Services

Employees Federal Local 2417, LCC

Experience Works

Industrial Corridor

L.C.C.D. Building Trades Council

Lane Community College

Lane County

Lane County Council of Governments

Lane County Human Services

Lane Education Service District and affiliated school districts

Lane Metro Partnership

Lane Metro Partnership

Looking Glass Youth & Family Services

Neighborhood Associations (both formally recognized and informal)

Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation

NLC Committee on Sustainability

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Oregon Employment Department

Saint Vincent de Paul

Sheet Metal Workers International Association #16

United Way of Lane County

University of Oregon

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