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## Are “New Urban” Neighborhood Design Characteristics Associated with Greater Levels of Social Capital within Neighborhoods? : Evidence from Greenville, South Carolina

### Abstract

Proponents of “new urbanism” suggest that “new urban” neighborhood design characteristics promote social interaction within the neighborhood. In this paper we formally analyze the relationship between “new urban” neighborhood characteristics (e.g., grid street patterns, green space, mixed commercial and residential land use) and social capital formation. We conducted a survey in order to determine the presence of new urban characteristics in neighborhoods and levels of neighborhood-specific social capital in Greenville, South Carolina. We then constructed a social capital index, which we regressed against a set of new urban and control variables. We find that new urban characteristics which facilitate personal interactions are correlated with the social capital index, as are the “youthfulness” of the neighborhood, homeownership rates, fewer hours worked, and the presence of children 18 and under in the household. These results suggest that some aspects of new urbanism may help promote the development of social capital within neighborhoods.

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- Affiliation** Furman University
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## Introduction

“Social capital” refers to the creation of bonding and bridging relationships that individuals form that may positively contribute to their ability to find higher paying jobs, among other things. Operating similar to the accumulation of human capital (i.e. education and training), it is believed that one’s social capital increases over time as more and more relationships are formed. Some of the most intimate friendships and relational bonds are formed between neighbors.

With a greater focus on interdisciplinary cooperation, sociologists, urban planners and architects have not only focused on constructing new neighborhoods in the spirit of traditional neighborhood design but also the rejuvenation of downtrodden urban areas in the wake of urban sprawl.

According to *New Urban News*, one of the leading publications in new urban design, one of the tenets of the movement focuses on providing “sites for community meetings, education, and religious or cultural activities” (Steuteville). Another tenet relies on “A formal association that debates and decides matters of maintenance, security, and physical change” (Steuteville). New Urbanists also believe that an elementary school should be close enough so that most children can walk from their home, while residents can access small playgrounds not more than a tenth of a mile away. Moreover, streets within the neighborhood should form a connected network which provides a variety of pedestrian routes to any destination and creates an environment suitable for walking, rollerblading, and bicycling.

Based on the social capital literature, both of these objectives should contribute positively toward the formation and accumulation of social capital. Moreover, marketing

of new urban communities discusses the inherent linkage between social capital, although it is unusual for this term to be used, and residence in a New Urban neighborhood.

In this paper we formally analyze new urban development characteristics and social capital formation. We attempt to determine if the presence of new urban characteristics within neighborhoods promotes the development and accumulation of neighborhood specific social capital formation. We create a survey to determine the presence of new urban characteristics in neighborhoods and levels of neighborhood specific social capital. We then use the data to create a social capital index for each respondent and build variables for the prominent new urban characteristics. Finally, we examine whether social capital levels are affected by the presence of new urban neighborhood design characteristics.

### **Social Capital**

In his seminal work, *Bowling Alone*, Harvard professor Robert Putnam documented the disintegration of social structures and organizations and contemplated possible causes (Putnam, 2000). Compared to the “glory days” of the post-World War II era, Putnam posits that the United States has seen a dramatic shift away from social and civic involvement, his definition of social capital, to a more individualistic and desensitized society.

Putnam (2000) attributes some of the decline in social capital to the rise in the popularity of television and the substitution of financial capital for social capital. According to Putnam, Americans are willing to work more hours and forego interactions with friends in order increase their material wealth.

Another seminal work in the field of social capital was recently published by Durlauf and Fafchamps (2003). In their paper, Durlauf and Fafchamps try to discern a common definition for social capital in the pre-existing literature, and they also analyze econometric concerns associated with assigning causation of socioeconomic phenomena using aggregate data to define social capital. Ultimately, Durlauf and Fafchamps conclude that social capital is a code word used to describe a myriad of interdisciplinary and interrelated social science research interests. Thus, the quest for a concrete definition for social capital is futile because, for all intents and purposes, it is an unexplainable praxis.

In contrast, Costa and Kahn (2001) were interested in measuring the inputs into social capital rather than the total “number of interactions people have with each other,” as defined by Putnam and others. Social capital was examined in a context that captured volunteer activity, organizational membership and activity, and entertaining and visits with friends, relatives, and neighbors. Costa and Kahn concluded that volunteering and membership in organizations declined slightly between 1952 and 1998 and that a slightly larger decline in entertaining friends also existed.

Volunteering and entertaining appear to be two divergent approaches to measuring social capital. However, Lang and Hornburg (1998) developed a distinction between “social glue (the degree to which people take part in group life) and social bridges (the links between groups).” Essentially, the authors pontificated about differences between two distinct forms of social capital, the bridging and bonding social capital that Putnam had earlier described. Moreover, Lang and Hornburg posited that

connections with a diverse group of individuals often lead to much higher levels of social capital.

Glaeser *et al.* (2002) attempt to determine the primary mechanisms that work to create social capital. In contrast to a majority of the social capital literature, Glaeser *et al.* assess concentrations of social capital at the individual, rather than at the community, level. By modeling individual social capital investment similarly to the traditional approach to physical and human capital production functions, Glaeser *et al.* found that social capital follows a curve as an individual's age progresses and also declines with increased individual mobility. Furthermore, they evidentially correlated a decline in social capital to separation by physical distance.

Several other important conclusions are also derived from the work of Glaeser *et al.* (2002). Individuals in occupations with high expected returns to social capital, such as politicians and salesmen, heavily invest in social capital. There also is a strong correlation between high investment in human capital and high investment in social capital.

In constructing a survey mechanism to analyze a household's social capital, many of the aforementioned characteristics were taken into consideration. Questions concerning volunteering, political activeness, and involvement in civic organizations were utilized to assess a household's propensity toward community based social interaction. More importantly, each household was asked to disclose interactions with their neighbors through a series of questions relating to frequency of interaction and trust. While the latter set of questions might be more indicative of increased social interactions within the neighborhood, it is crucial to consider total levels of social capital based on the

networking principles (i.e. bonding social capital), which could be enhanced through neighborly communication.

### **New Urbanism**

The new urbanism movement developed in the 1980s to counter conventional suburban development (CSD), which had grown to dominate America after World War II (Steuteville). CSDs are generally socio-economically segregated residential communities that require an automobile to meet daily needs. New Urbanists work to design more human friendly, walkable communities. Basing their work on traditional compact, mixed-use neighborhoods, they attempted to raise “our quality of life and standard of living by creating better places to live” (NewUrbanism.org).

In contrast with modern suburban community, typical of the CSD, where the main components of the community – housing, work, shopping, and civic institutions – are all separated from each other and connected by large roadways, new urban design aspires to create communities where all these components are in close proximity to each other (NewUrbanism.org). Such integration comes about through the presence of mixed use buildings, higher density areas, grid streets, sidewalks and bike paths, and public transportation systems.

Typically a new urban community is built around a distinct center (Steuteville). Often this would be a central square with shops, restaurants, or civic institutions, and places for pedestrians to relax. The residential areas would then be located around this center, but within walking distance from it. Housing is mixed in both architectural design and socioeconomic status to accommodate all sectors of society. Garages or carports are



placed in the back, so that buildings are close to the street. Streets are narrow and lined with sidewalks, bike paths, and trees. This slows down traffic and encourages environmentally friendly means of transportation. Moreover, the streets form a connected network, either grid or T-like to spread out traffic.

Ideally, within a 10 minute walk, one should be able to find almost all necessary amenities (NewUrbanism.org). Dispersed throughout the neighborhood are retail stores, restaurants, places of worship, parks, schools, and so on. Public transportation should be designed to connect different cities, towns, and neighborhoods. New Urbanists do not want to do away with the automobile, but instead decrease our dependency on it and provide a wider variety of option. Finally, to complement the idea of mixed use, diverse, sustainable community, the neighborhood should have a formal association to make governing decision on behalf of its residents.

Advocates claim that new urbanism provides benefits to everyone (NewUrbanism.org). Residents gain by the greater sense of community. With the closer proximity to the everyday needs of life people can walk more places, avoiding the stress and wasted time of traffic congestion. Friendly public spaces present greater opportunities for socializing and meeting new people. Business gains a large customer base due to the greater walkability. Less advertising is necessary and owners can live above their shops. Smaller, unique, niche market shops have a better chance of succeeding and adding diversity to the community. Owners can build greater ties to the area. Due to the higher density, less per capita spending on public services is required and the tax base is larger. People are more likely to participate in civic life. Public

transportation is more realistic and accessible. Overall, new urbanism works results in a better quality of life.

Since the movement is quite nascent, only a few quantitative analyses have been done on new urban communities. One of these studies, by Yan Song and Gerrit-Jan Knaap (2003) for the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland, attempts to value some of these characteristics of new urbanism through a hedonic house price model. Using Portland, Oregon, one of the pioneers of comprehensive new urban design, as the basis of their study, they found that,

Residents are willing to pay premium for houses in neighborhoods with a more connective street network; more streets, shorter dead-end streets; more and smaller blocks; better pedestrian walkability to commercial uses; more evenly distributed mixed land used in the neighborhood; and the proximity to light rail stations after the light rail was operated

While negative correlations with house prices were found with less external connectivity, higher densities, greater mixes of land uses and smaller lots compared to single family units, they concluded that, in aggregate, new urban neighborhoods command a price premium. Such work is critical in testing the claims of new urbanists and in determining the particular aspects of the movement that are most appealing to the public.

In its relatively short lifespan, new urbanism has quickly made a name for itself throughout the country. Over 600 new urban communities have been built or are in the works (Steuteville). Some of the more famous are Seaside and Celebration in Florida, Kentlands outside of D.C., and Orenco Station outside of Portland. Moreover, new urban ideas are employed in revitalization projects. A growing segment of designers and developers adhere to new urbanism. The Department of Housing and Urban

Development now uses new urban principles in its rebuilding of public housing projects (Steuteville).

Due to the lack of a new urban development within the vicinity of Greenville, South Carolina, new urbanism had to be dissected into distinct characteristics. Building upon the survey constructed by Song and Knaap (2003), questions regarding the presence of many of the purported amenities touted by New Urban enthusiasts and marketers were included in the survey. These include walkability, commercial and recreational amenities, activities and organizations, and neighborhood street patterns.

### **Relationship Between Social Capital and New Urbanism**

Much of the marketing of New Urban communities has focused primarily on their mixed-use nature. However, another significant factor attracting families to these neighborhoods has been the close proximity of certain amenities which the architects claim will induce a greater level of interaction among neighbors. To determine whether this claim is true, we first must identify what induces the formation of greater social capital in neighborhoods.

Lev-Wiesel (2003) discussed the construct of perceived community cohesion, a concept semantically similar to "social capital." After surveying neighborhoods in Israel, Lev-Wiesel posits two key conclusions. As people identify with their neighbors, they tend to personalize their homes to a greater extent. A mutual caretaking bond also develops between a person and a beloved place, such as a neighborhood.

Lev-Wiesel also reported several psychological effects associated with the development of social cohesion. The existence of a social support network either

prevents or lowers one's feelings of loneliness. That being said, high levels of depression, feelings of loneliness, and anxiety were found among community members who reported on being alienated.

Although Lev-Wiesel's study appears to show a significant correlation between social capital and neighborhood identification, what is the mechanism that fosters such relationship and community building? Lang and Hornburg (1998) offer evidence that decent and affordable housing forms the core of community connectedness. Complementary to affordability, Lang and Hornburg allude to a study claiming that ethnic communities often sustain high homeownership and stable neighborhoods through multigenerational residency and strong extended families. For example, the Irish community in Boston and Puerto Rican community in New York City have high levels of social capital, as well as affordable housing.

However, Lang and Hornburg (1998) are quick to assert that higher levels of social capital do not always correlate with healthy, democratic, and economically affluent communities. For instance, in the aforementioned Boston Irish community, most residents are not affluent, and the community is often plagued with high levels of criminal activity. In *The Moral Order of the Suburbs*, Baumgartner (1989) asserts that some affluent areas may have plenty of financial capital but are deprived of social capital. In low-income areas, the reverse was found to be true. However, Costa and Kahn (2001) attribute the decline in social capital outside the home to rising community heterogeneity.

Corroborating Lang and Hornburg's (1998) hypothesis connecting home ownership and social capital, DiPasquale and Glaeser (1999) conclude that homeownership raises the values of seven different indicators of good citizenship. These

variables included belonging to a number of non-professional organizations, knowing the name of the local school board head and local U.S. representative, voting in local elections, gardening, owning a gun, and attending church. Moreover, DiPasquale and Glaeser conclude that better citizenship and higher investment in social capital are primarily due to longer community tenure by homeowners.

Although the literature lacks studies relating neighborhood amenities with social capital, it is essential to incorporate previously determined factors that have been shown to affect social capital development into a survey mechanism. Questions concerning the aforementioned characteristics, including neighborhood tenure, ownership, and identification with neighbors, were composed. It is also important to consider that while the purported amenities of new urban developments can also be present in suburban and traditional neighborhoods, it is important to assess which of the components are critical to developing social capital within neighborhoods. If, in fact, individual characteristics influence the attainment of social capital, policy can then be directed to incorporate the most critical of these characteristics not only into new urban communities, but also new suburban developments.

### **Data Collection**

Our data came from the Greenville Neighborhood Survey which we created and then administered to residents of Greenville County, South Carolina. The bulk of the Greenville Neighborhood Survey is based on the questionnaire from the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Support Survey, the Saguaro Seminar Short-form, and the Portland Neighborhood Survey. New Urbanism questions were derived from the Atlanta Travel

Survey and the studies by Song and Knaap (2003), as well as Podobnik (2001). Additional general demographic questions were taken from the Current Population Survey (employment) and Census Short-form (race and relationship status). Many were adapted to meet our specific needs.

In the past surveys such as the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Support Survey were conducted either in person or over the phone. Surveys that are conducted exclusively by phone may introduce a response bias since older people, who are often retirees, are likely to be over-represented. Since that time, the Internet has emerged as a potential tool for collecting data. Surveys that are administered exclusively online introduce a wealth and technology response bias. When both a phone survey and online survey are used to collect data, the response biases offset one another and the sample more closely resembles the population.

Five thousand randomly selected names, addresses and phone numbers of heads of households were obtained for the 61 most densely populated census tracts in Greenville County, South Carolina from Affordable Samples, Inc. Each household was sent a postcard containing a request to complete the online survey within a specific time frame. The phone survey was administered before the online survey invitation was sent for 2,000 households and after the online survey invitation was sent for 3,000 households. The phone surveys were administered over the course of three weeks during the hours of 3:00 PM to 9:00 PM to households that were selected randomly within each census tract.

## **The Model**

The survey data were used to create three categories of explanatory variables - social capital, new urbanism, and control. Responses to selected questions on the survey were converted into "index" variables in the following manner. We calculated the mean and standard deviation. Respondents with a value that was one standard deviation or more above the mean were assigned a "3". A response value lying one standard deviation or more below the mean was assigned a "1". A response value lying within one standard deviation from the mean was assigned a "2"<sup>1</sup>. If questions addressed a lack of social capital or new urban characteristics, a -1 was assigned if the answers were in the affirmative and 0 otherwise<sup>2</sup>. Questions that elicited true numerical answers were converted to variables using the numbers themselves. "Yes-no" questions were converted to dummy variables.

The questions specifically pertaining to neighborhood social capital, such as participation in neighborhood activities, number of friends living in the neighborhood, frequency of visiting with neighbors, borrowing and helping neighbors, security at home, conversing about neighborhood problems, presence of a neighborhood association, participation in social organizations, neighborhood volunteer work, and participation in local politics, were summed to calculate a social capital index, ranging between 7 and 22, for each respondent household.<sup>3</sup>

SCIN= See Appendix 1

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 1.

Each of the new urban characteristics was treated as its own independent variable. Neighborhood boundaries and presence of cul-de-sacs were included as binary variables. Variables that included more than one question (i.e. the presence of commercial and recreational amenities, a walkability index, the presence of activities and organizations, and the ability to walk to work) were all formulated using the same standard deviation approach and then summed, similar to the social capital index.

The mean and standard deviation of the number of organizations in which a household member participated that were within a ten minute walk from the respondent's house were computed. The same standard deviation approach as was used in obtaining the social capital index was utilized to assign this characteristic a 1, 2 or 3.

SCIN= (NEIBND, COMAMEN, RECAMEN, WALK, CULDES, ACTIV, ORGS, WLKWRK  
| ....)

Several variables were entered as controls. Longevity/tenure in the neighborhood was assigned a value in total years lived in the neighborhood as indicated by the respondent.

Seven binary education variables were used in the model to denote the relative level of education. Each household was assigned to one of these categories based on the highest education level achieved by an individual head of that household. In the case that there was only one head of household, the assigned value still reflects that household's highest education level.

A similar approach was taken for the employment status of the heads of household. Each of the 6 possible responses was assigned a value between 1 and 6; 1



indicates that both the heads of household work full time, 2 that both work part time, 3 that neither head of household works, 4 that one works full time and one works part time, 5 that only one works full time, and 6 that only one works part time. These six different categories then became their own binary variables. In the case that there was only one head of household, the assigned value still reflects that household’s total work.

A political index was calculated summing the binary responses to questions 61-65 of the Greenville Neighborhood Survey. The sum was then averaged and the standard deviation was obtained. The same standard deviation approach as was used in obtaining the social capital index was utilized to assign this characteristic a 1, 2 or 3.

Finally, several binary variables were included – age ranges, whether the respondent owned their residence or not, whether the respondent was married or not, whether the respondent had children under the age of 18 or not, whether the respondent was a U.S. citizen or not, whether the respondent was Caucasian or not, and whether the respondent was male or not.

The final regression model is as follows:

$$SCIN = (NEIBND, COMAMEN, RECAMEN, WALK, CULDES, ACTIV, ORGS, WLKWRK | AGE2, AGE3, AGE4, AGE5, AGE6, OWN, LONG, EMPLOY2, EMPLOY3, EMPLOY4, EMPLOY5, EMPLOY6, EDU1, EDU2, EDU3, EDU4, EDU6, EDU7, MARRY, KIDS, CTZN, POLIND, WHITE, MALE)$$

|  |
|--|
| NEIBND – neighborhood boundaries (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| COMAMEN – presence of commercial amenities within a ten minute walk of home                                  |
| RECAMEN – presence of recreational amenities within a ten minute walk of home                                |
| WALK – walkability of the neighborhood   |
| CULDES – presence of cul-de-sacs in the neighborhood (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)                                 |
| ACTIV – presence of activities   |
| ORGS – presence of organizations   |
| WLKWRK – one or more heads of household works within a ten minute walk of home (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)       |
| AGE2 – age 19-25 (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| AGE3 – age 26-40 (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| AGE4 – age 41-55 (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| AGE5 – age 56-70 (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| AGE6 – age 71-85 (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| AGE7 – age 85+ (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| OWN – own place of residence (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| LONG – longevity in neighborhood   |
| EMPLOY1 – two full time heads of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| EMPLOY2 – two part time heads of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| EMPLOY3 – two non working, or one non working and one nonexistent heads of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise) |
| EMPLOY4 – one full time, one part time head of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)                             |
| EMPLOY5 – one full time and one non working or nonexistent head of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)         |
| EMPLOY6 – one part time and one non working or nonexistent head of household (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)         |
| EDU1 – less than a high school diploma or its equivalent (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)                             |
| EDU2 – high school diploma or its equivalent (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| EDU3 – some college (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| EDU4 – two year degree (associates degree/technical training) (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)                        |
| EDU5 – bachelor's degree (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)   |
| EDU6 – some graduate training (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| EDU7 – graduate/professional degree (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| MARRY – married (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| KIDS – presence of children under 18   |
| CTZN – U.S. citizen (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| WHITE – white (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |
| MALE – male (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)  |

A multivariate linear regression was then run to obtain the OLS-regression coefficients for the model.

## **Expectations**

NEIBND: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the neighborhood area would be more defined and self contained. As a result, people will be more likely to interact within the neighborhood nucleus.

COMAMEN: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the presence of commercial amenities within a ten minute walk of the home will encourage greater interaction between neighbors who frequently utilize said commercial amenities.

RECAMEN: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because places such as parks, schools, churches, and sports facilities within a ten minute walk of the home will provide the opportunity for neighbors to interact in collective social settings.

WALK: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the pedestrian friendly nature of a walkable neighborhood will increase the visible presence of individuals in the neighborhood, leading to greater interaction among neighbors.

CULDES: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be negative because cul-de-sacs decrease the connectivity of neighborhoods, making it more difficult for neighbors to interact with people throughout the neighborhood.

ACTIV: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the presence of neighborhood activities within a ten minute walk of the home will increase interactions among neighbors.

ORGS: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because neighborhood organizations promote activities that increase interactions among neighbors.

WLKWRK: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because if one works within a ten minute walk of home, one will spend more time within the neighborhood, increasing the likelihood of greater interaction with one's neighbors.

AGE: As compared to adults aged 86 and above, we would expect individuals to have less social capital, and thus, negative coefficients, due to the building of relationships over time. However, we believe there may be a bump in social capital when kids are present in the household and again when adults reach retirement age and relocate to areas where other individuals have similar demographic circumstances.

OWN: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because people who own their homes are more attached to and have a greater vested interest in the area (DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999).

LONG: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the longer one has lived in the same neighborhood, the more likely one would have a greater vested interest in the people, activities, safety, and upkeep of the neighborhood.

EMPLOY: As compared to a household with two full time workers, we would expect the other employment variables to have positive coefficients because more time is available to spend within the neighborhood.

EDU: As compared to households where the highest level of education is a bachelor's degree, we are uncertain on the signs on the coefficients.

MARRY: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because spouses can work as each others' agents in creating bridging social capital. Thus, each spouse will have the opportunity to meet more people than he/she would on his/her own.

KIDS: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because the presence of kids allows parents to meet the parents of their children's neighborhood friends.

CTZN: We are uncertain on the sign of this coefficient.

POLIND: We expect that the coefficient on this variable will be positive because political involvement indicates that one is more engaged and active within the neighborhood.

WHITE: We are uncertain on the sign of this coefficient.

MALE: We are uncertain on the sign of this coefficient.

**Results**

|     |               |            |
|-----|---------------|------------|
| n   | Adj R-squared | F(32, 327) |
| 360 | 0.2293        | 4.34       |

| <u>Variable</u> | <u>Coefficient</u>        | <u>Variable</u> | <u>Coefficient</u>      |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| NEIGBND         | 0.2009265<br>(0.2783)     | EMPLOY4         | 0.2858821<br>(.7158)    |
| COMAMEN         | 0.0132967<br>(.1806)      | EMPLOY5         | 0.0296869<br>(.7626)    |
| RECAMEN         | 0.3751203***<br>(0.21567) | EMPLOY6         | 0.307473<br>(.6838)     |
| WALK            | 1.073877**<br>(.6612)     | EDU1            | 0.305235<br>(.7027)     |
| CULDES          | -0.0851487<br>(.2809)     | EDU2            | 0.3956724<br>(.4496)    |
| ACTIV           | 0.683381****<br>(.2036)   | EDU3            | -0.44462<br>(.4150)     |
| ORGS            | 1.4617****<br>(.2767)     | EDU4            | 0.423543<br>(.4539)     |
| WLKWRK          | 0.4157108<br>(.3673)      | EDU6            | 0.4599929<br>(.5046)    |
| AGE2            | -1.619758*<br>(1.184)     | EDU7            | -0.0688049<br>(.3392)   |
| AGE3            | -0.6647366<br>(1.0099)    | MARRY           | -0.1283195<br>(.1003)   |
| AGE4            | -0.8653933<br>(.9772)     | KIDS            | 0.6166934***<br>(.3359) |
| AGE5            | -0.135148<br>(.9356)      | CTZN            | 0.0347083<br>(.9869)    |
| AGE6            | -0.1556625<br>(.9438)     | POLIND          | 0.2914995<br>(.2420)    |
| OWN             | 0.5224083*<br>(.3642)     | WHITE           | 0.3447644<br>(.4197)    |
| LONG            | 0.0086389<br>(.0112)      | MALE            | 0.2134035<br>(.2565)    |
| EMPLOY2         | -0.148453<br>(.6906)      | CONSTANT        | 2.337842<br>(2.0126)    |
| EMPLOY3         | 1.003746*<br>(.7325)      |                 |                         |

\*Indicates significance at the 20% level, \*\* Indicates significance at the 15% level, \*\*\* Indicates significance at the 10%

level and \*\*\*\* Indicates significance at the 5% level

The above table shows the outcome of our regression. With an F-statistic of 4.34, we can conclude that this model cannot be attributed to chance at a one percent significance level. Our adjusted R-squared value indicates that our model captures 23 percent of the variation in social capital index levels of respondents.

Four of the new urban variables are significant and with the expected coefficient sign at the 20 percent level. The regression confirms our hypotheses about RECAMEN, WALK, ACTIV, and ORGS. We can conclude that a walkable neighborhood with recreational amenities, such as parks, churches, and schools, neighborhood activities, and neighborhood organizations are positively correlated to our social capital index. The presence of all these things increases opportunities for interpersonal contact, facilitating the building of friendships and networks.

Additionally, four of the control variables were significant at the 20 percent level, confirming our predictions about age, homeownership, amount of time spent working, and presence of children. Relative to the oldest age group category of 86 years and above, the negative sign on the 19-25 age category indicates that this group has less social capital. This result makes sense due to the fact that these were the youngest respondents surveyed and thus the least likely to have established themselves in a neighborhood and gotten involved in its activities. They would be more focused on beginning a career than seeking out bonds within the neighborhood.

On the other hand, those who own their homes show more social capital than those who rent. This confirms the results of earlier studies into the social capital of homeowners by Dipasquale and Glaeser (1999). Homeowners, due to their penchant towards tenure in the neighborhood, are more likely to have a vested interest in the

safety, upkeep and quality of the neighborhood. As Temkin and Rohe (1998) postulated, this will likely enhance the interactions among neighbors and consequently increase neighborhood specific social capital.

Likewise, relative to two full time workers, households headed by two non working members have more social capital. Such heads of households would thusly have potentially more time to spend within the neighborhood and a greater opportunity to get involved. A prime example of this is retirees who may depend more heavily on neighbors to assist in basic tasks or to pass the time through visiting or joint activities.

Finally, households with children 18 years of age or under have more social capital than those who do not. This follows from the fact that parents of children of these ages are likely to involve themselves in their children's activities in schools, sports, clubs, etc. From this parents increase their potential pool of friends and contacts by meeting the parents of their children's friends.

## **Conclusions**

Of the many New Urban characteristics that could potentially influence the accumulation of neighborhood social capital, those that foster greater interactions among neighbors contribute most to the building of neighborhood social capital. For instance, the presence of neighborhood organizations like church groups, playing card clubs, and sports teams provide the opportunity for people with mutual interests to form relationships among themselves. Similarly, the presence of neighborhood activities and recreational amenities facilitates the formation of mutually beneficial relationships through a variety of non-casual means.



The common thread among these three characteristics is that they provide ease and opportunity for people to actively identify and connect with others who share similar interests and pursuits within the neighborhood. Furthermore, these characteristics promote interaction and cooperation among neighbors beyond a casual or necessary conversation.

On the other hand, other new urban characteristics, like the presence of commercial amenities, do not necessarily encourage group activities. While they do provide the opportunity for neighbors to shop at the same stores, true interpersonal contacts are less likely to develop. Consequently, these characteristics may not be as probable to promote social capital accumulation.

However, neighborhood walkability does affect social capital accumulation. Greater degrees of walkability enhance the possibilities for chance encounters among neighbors. When these encounters increase, the opportunity for casual conversation to blossom into meaningful relationships grows.

One area of further research that could be pursued is the apparent relationship between increased neighborhood specific social capital and the presence of a child, age 18 or under, in the household. Children who are involved in the neighborhood, sports, and other activities allow parents to interact with other parents. For instance, a snack schedule for a youth soccer team may force parents to communicate who is responsible for drinks or munchies on given game day. In turn, "soccer moms" may find it beneficial to talk to one another about concerns at school or with the emotional health of their children. Frequent conversations such as these at games and practices may lead parents to discover friendships "beyond the field."

Additional research about online surveying as a tool for data collection should also be undertaken. Since our samples from data collection over the phone are separate from the online samples, it would be useful to examine the differences, if any, to the response patterns of the said individuals. Phone respondents were generally less affluent, less educated and more likely minorities than Internet respondents. Are these differences of any consequence to neighborhood specific social capital accumulation?

Without question, many additional studies could be carried out using the data from the Greenville Neighborhood Survey. Studies about trust, security, and the individual components of our social capital index might provide further insight into the psychology and sociology of an urban, New South city.

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## Appendix 1

Calculating the Social Capital Index:

A respondent’s neighborhood social capital index is composed of nine individual components.

- The respondent’s participation in neighborhood activities.
- The number of respondent’s friends residing within the respondent’s neighborhood.
- The frequency with which the respondent visits with neighbors.
- An index measuring the degree with which the respondent helps and is helped by neighbors.
- A proxy for the respondent’s trust in neighbors.
- Respondent’s participation in neighborhood association.
- Respondent’s willingness to talk about neighborhood problems with neighbors.
- A measure of the respondent’s participation in neighborhood social organizations.
- Amount of volunteer work completed within the neighborhood.

The social capital index for each respondent is equal to the summation of the numerical value calculated for each of the nine components. See below for details on how each component’s numerical value was calculated from responses to the Greenville Neighborhood Survey (GNS).

### *1. The respondent’s participation in neighborhood activities.*

The numeric value of this component is based on a respondent’s answer to question 13 in the GNS. If the respondent’s answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than this component of the social capital index was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent’s answer to question 13 fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this

component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 3.

2. *The number of respondent's friends residing within the respondent's neighborhood.*

The numeric value of this component was based on a respondent's answer to question 15 in the GNS. If the respondent answered none than this component was assigned a value of zero. Otherwise, if the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than this component of the social capital index was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 3. When calculating the mean and a one standard deviation range from the mean response, only the non-zero responses were used.

3. *The frequency with which the respondent visits with neighbors.\**

The numeric value of this social capital component was based on a respondent's answer to question 16 in the GNS. If the respondent answered none than this component was assigned a value of zero. Otherwise, if the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this

component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 3. When calculating the mean and a one standard deviation range from the mean response, only the non-zero responses were used.

4. *An index measuring the degree with which the respondent helps and is helped by neighbors.*

The numeric value of this social capital component was based on a respondent's answers to questions 18 through 23 in the GNS. First, the responses to questions 18, 21 and 23 were normalized. That is, the mean response as well as a one standard deviation range from the mean response was calculated for each question. (When calculating the mean and standard deviation for the responses to question 21 a value of 0 was used if the respondent had answered no to question 20. Similarly, when calculating the mean and standard deviation for the responses to question 23 a value of 0 was used if the respondent had answered no to question 22.) If the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 1 for that question. If the response fell with a one standard deviation range from the mean than the respondent was assigned a 2. If the response fell above one standard deviation from the mean response than it was assigned a value of 3. Second, if the respondent answered yes to question 19 than they were assigned a value of 1 for that response. Otherwise, they were assigned a 0. Third, the values assigned to the answers for questions 18, 19, 21 and 23 were summed. Than all summed responses were used to calculate the mean summed response and a one standard deviation range from the mean

summed response. If the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than this component of the social capital index was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 3.

5. *A proxy for the respondent's trust in neighbors.*

This component was assigned a value of -1 if the respondent answered yes to GNS question 27 otherwise it was assigned a value of 0.

6. *Respondent's participation in neighborhood association.*

This component was assigned a value of 1 if the respondent answered yes to GNS question 32 otherwise it was assigned a value of 0.

7. *Respondent's willingness to talk about neighborhood problems with neighbors.*

The numeric value of this social capital component was based on a respondent's answers to questions 33, 34 and 36 in the GNS. Questions 33, 34 and 36 each asked for a yes, no or don't know response to a question pertaining to a respondents willingness to talk to neighbors about neighborhood problems. First, for each individual question if the respondent answered yes than the response was assigned a value of 1, otherwise the



response was assigned a value of 0. Second, each individual's responses to the three questions were summed. For example, if a respondent answered yes to questions 33 and 34 but answered no to question 35 then the respondent would have a summed score of 2. Third, all summed responses were used to calculate the mean summed response and a one standard deviation range from the mean. If the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response then this component was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response then the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response then this component was assigned a value of 3.

8. *A measure of the respondent's participation in neighborhood social organizations.*

The numeric value of this social capital component was based on a respondent's answer to question 37 in the GNS. If the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response then this component was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response then the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response then this component was assigned a value of 3.

9. *Amount of volunteer work completed within the neighborhood.*

The numeric value of this social capital component was based on a respondent's answer to question 42 in the GNS. If the respondent answered none than this component was assigned a value of zero. Otherwise, if the respondent's answer fell below one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent's answer to the question fell within a one standard deviation range from the mean response than the respondent was assigned a value of 2 for this component. If the respondent's answer was greater than one standard deviation from the mean response than this component was assigned a value of 3. When calculating the mean and a one standard deviation range from the mean response, only the non-zero responses were used.

## Appendix 2

### Greenville Neighborhood Survey:

1. Enter the survey code:

2. What is your age?

(1) 0-18

(2) 19-25

(3) 26-40

(4) 41-55

(5) 56-70

(6) 71-85

(7) 86-

3. Do you own or rent your home or apartment?

(1) Own

(2) Rent

*Now I would like to ask you some questions about your neighborhood. If you are unsure about whether or not you live in a distinct neighborhood, consider it to be the area within a 10 minute walking radius.*

4. When people ask you the name of the neighborhood, what name do you usually give?

5. How many years have you lived in this neighborhood?

6. Does your neighborhood have definite boundaries?

(1) Yes

(2) No (Skip to 8)

(3) Don't Know (Skip to 8)

7. Is the neighborhood gated?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(3) Don't Know

8. Does your neighborhood claim a greater loyalty, in the sense of concern about its general upkeep, from you than the rest of the community?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(3) Don't Know

9. Which of the following are within a 10 minute walk of your home? (Choose All that Apply)

- (1) Grocery Store
- (2) Retail stores
- (3) Place of worship
- (4) Health or medical services
- (5) Recreational facilities (such as sports fields/courts, movies, swimming, bowling, etc.)
- (6) Park/green spaces
- (7) Community center/Clubhouse
- (8) Sidewalks/bike paths
- (9) Bar/pub
- (10) Barbershop/hair salon
- (11) Restaurants
- (12) Bank
- (13) School
- (14) Day Care Center
- (15) Post office
- (16) Ice cream shop
- (17) Gas station
- (18) Video store

10. Is there a cul-de-sac within 500 feet of your home?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

11. Would you feel comfortable walking, jogging, or biking in your neighborhood?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

12. Which of the following activities do you have access to within a ten minute walk of your home? (Choose all that apply)

- (1) Neighborhood holiday parties (such as Easter Egg Hunts, 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ, Christmas Caroling)
- (2) Neighborhood picnic
- (3) Youth sports teams (such as a swimming or soccer team)
- (4) Adult sports teams (such as a tennis or soccer team)
- (5) Playing card club (such as poker or bridge)
- (6) Gardening club
- (7) Book club
- (8) Young mothers' club
- (9) Other Club

Please Specify \_\_\_\_\_

13. How frequently does your household engage in any of these above activities with your neighbors?

- (1) Never
- (2) 1-5 times per year
- (3) 6-10 times per year
- (4) 11-20 times per year
- (5) more than 20 times per year

***Now I would like to ask you a few questions about interactions with your neighbors and friends.***

14. About how many people do you currently consider really good friends?  
(RECORD NUMBER)

15. About how many of these people live in your neighborhood?  
(RECORD NUMBER)

16. How often do you visit with your neighbors?

- (1) Never
- (2) 1-5 times per year
- (3) 6-10 times per year
- (4) 11-20 times per year
- (5) more than 20 times per year

17. How often do you visit with friends outside of your neighborhood?

- (1) Never
- (2) 1-5 times per year
- (3) 6-10 times per year
- (4) 11-20 times per year
- (5) more than 20 times per year

18. How often do you borrow or exchange things with your neighbors?

- (1) Never
- (2) 1-5 times per year
- (3) 6-10 times per year
- (4) 11-20 times per year
- (5) more than 20 times per year

19. Within the past year, have people in this neighborhood helped you or you helped them with small tasks, such as repair work, yard work, pet care or grocery shopping?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

20. If you had the flu or a similar illness and needed some assistance in getting groceries or medicines, would you ask for help from a neighbor?

(1) Yes

(2) No (Skip to 22)

21. About how many of your neighbors would you be willing to ask for help?  
(Record #)

22. If you had the flu or a similar illness and needed some assistance in getting groceries or medicines, would you ask for help from someone outside the neighborhood?

(1) Yes

(2) No (Skip to 24)

(3) Don't Know

23. About how many of your friends residing outside of the neighborhood would you be willing to ask for help? (Record #)

***Now I would like to ask you a few questions about safety and security in your neighborhood.***

24. In general, how safe from crime and violence do you feel when you are in your neighborhood?

(1) Very safe

(2) Moderately safe

(3) Neither safe nor unsafe

(4) Moderately unsafe

(5) Very unsafe

25. Does your neighborhood currently have a neighborhood watch program?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(3) Don't Know

26. Comparing the safety of your neighborhood to the safety of the community at large, how would you rank your neighborhood?

(1) Safer than the greater community

(2) As safe as the greater community

(3) Not as safe as the greater community

27. When you are at home during the day, do you lock your doors?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(3) Don't Know

28. When you are at home during the night, do you lock your doors?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

29. When you are away from your home, do you lock your doors?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

30. Which of the following does your household currently utilize for security purposes? (Choose all that apply)

- (1) Security system or alarm
- (1) Gun
- (1) Dog
- (1) None

31. Is there currently any organization or group in this neighborhood that deals with neighborhood issues or neighborhood problems, such as a neighborhood association?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No (Skip to 33)
- (3) Don't Know (Skip to 33)

32. Does a member of your household belong to such an organization?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

33. During the last year, have you talked to any of your neighbors about conditions in the neighborhood that bothered you?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

34. If you were bothered by conditions in your neighborhood or by a neighborhood problem, would you normally talk to anyone in the neighborhood about it?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

35. If you were bothered by conditions in your community or by a community problem, would you normally talk to anyone in the neighborhood about it?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

36. Some people belong to organizations such as church groups, PTAs, social clubs, unions, little league and so on. How many of these organizations do members of your household belong to?

- (1) None
- (2) One
- (3) Two
- (4) Three
- (5) Four or more

37. How many of these organizations does your household have access to within a 10 minute walk of your home?

- (1) None
- (2) One
- (3) Two
- (4) Three
- (5) Four or more

38. Do any of your neighbors currently belong to the same organizations as you?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

39. Has anyone in your household done any volunteer work in the last year?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No (Skip to transition preceding 43)
- (3) Don't Know

40. Can you give an example?

41. Approximately how many total hours per month do members of your household spend doing volunteer work? (Record #)

42. Approximately how many total hours per month do members of your household spend doing volunteer work within a 10-minute walk of your home? (Record #)

***Now I would like to ask you some general demographic questions for statistical purposes only.***

43. Have you worked for pay or profit in the last week?

- (1) Yes (Proceed to 44)
- (2) No (Skip to 45)

44. Last week, did you work...

- (1) Less than 40 total hours



(2) 40 total hours or more

(Skip to 47)

45. Were you looking for work in the past week?

(1) Yes (Skip to 47)

(2) No (Proceed to 46)

46. How would you describe your status?

(1) Retired

(2) Stay at home parent

(3) Disabled

(4) Other (please specify)

47. In your most recent job, do (did) you work within a 10-minute walk of your home?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(3) Don't Know

48. What is the highest grade of school or year of college that you have completed?

(1) Less than high school (Grade 11 or less)

(2) High school diploma (including GED)

(3) Some college

(4) Associates degree (2 year) or specialized technical training

(5) Bachelor's degree

(6) Some Graduate training

(7) Graduate or professional degree

49. What is your current relationship status?

(1) Married

(2) Divorced

(3) Widowed

(4) Separated

(5) Never Married

(6) Other

If Married, continue with 50.

If any other, skip to 56.

50. Has your spouse worked for pay or profit in the last week?

(1) Yes (Proceed to 51)

(2) No (Skip to 52)

51. Last week, did your spouse work...

- (1) Less than 40 total hours
- (2) 40 total hours or more

(Skip to 54)

52. Was your spouse looking for work in the past week?

- (1) Yes (Skip to 54)
- (2) No (Proceed to 53)

53. How would you describe your spouse's status: retired, stay at home parent, other?

- (1) Retired
- (2) Stay at home parent
- (3) Disabled
- (4) Other (Specify)

54. In your spouse's most recent job, does (did) your spouse work within a 10-minute walk of your home?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

55. What is the highest grade of school or year of college that your spouse has completed?

- (1) Less than high school (Grade 11 or less)
- (2) High school diploma (including GED)
- (3) Some college
- (4) Associates degree (2 year) or specialized technical training
- (5) Bachelor's degree
- (6) Some Graduate training
- (7) Graduate or professional degree

56. Do you have any children under 18?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No (Skip to 60)

57. If you suddenly had to go away for a day or two, would you ask your neighbors to take care of your children?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

58. Do any of your children age 18 and under attend public, private, parochial or home school? (Choose all that apply)

- (1) Private or Parochial
- (2) Public
- (3) Home School

59. Do any of your children age 18 and under currently attend school within a 10 minute walk of your home?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

60. What is your current residency status in the United States?

- (1) United States Citizen
- (2) Permanent Resident
- (3) Work Visa
- (4) Other

61. Were you a registered voter during the last local election where candidates such as sheriff, city or county council and school board were elected?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

62. Did you vote in the last local election where candidates such as sheriff, city or county council and school board were elected?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

**Which of the following describes your personal activities in the past year?**

63. Did you donate to a local political campaign?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

64. Did you volunteer for a local political campaign?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

65. Did you attend more than two meetings of a political party?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Don't Know

66. How would you describe your race? (Choose all that apply)

- (1) White
- (2) Black or African American
- (3) Hispanic-Spanish/Hispanic/Latino

- (4) Hispanic-Mexican Am., Chicano
- (5) Hispanic-Puerto Rican
- (6) Hispanic-Cuban
- (7) American Indian or Alaska Native
- (8) Asian Indian
  - (9) Japanese
  - (10) Native Hawaiian
  - (11) Chinese
  - (12) Korean
  - (13) Guamanian or Chamorro
  - (14) Filipino
  - (15) Vietnamese
  - (16) Samoan
  - (17) Other Asian
  - (18) Other Pacific Islander

67. What is your sex?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female

68. We are interested in learning about the income levels in each of the neighborhoods in which we are interviewing; therefore, I would appreciate you telling me the range that includes your household's income before taxes last year. This should include income from all sources. I will not ask for your specific income. Rather, I will read a list of income ranges. Please tell me to stop when I read a category that includes your household income. (IF UNCERTAIN: What would be your best guess?)

- (1) Below \$20,000
- (2) Between \$20,001 and \$30,000
- (3) Between \$30,001 and \$50,000
- (4) Between \$50,001 and \$75,000
- (5) Between \$75,001 and \$100,000
- (6) Above \$100,000