

# Creating Sustainable Communities in an Era of Economic Uncertainty and Global Insecurity

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# Overview

- I. Characteristics of a Sustainable Community
- II. Civic Entrepreneurial Model of Community Health, Competitiveness, and Sustainability
- III. Drivers of Future Change
- IV. Discussion

# Triple Bottom-Line Sustainability Principles

- Do no harm to the environment and protect natural resources.
- Adhere to principles of social justice and equity in economic and community development efforts.
- Return strong shareholder/stakeholder value.

# Sustainable Places or Communities – General Principles

- Natural and historic resources are preserved
- Jobs are available
- Sprawl is contained
- Neighborhoods are secure
- Health care is accessible
- All citizens have the opportunity to improve their lives.

Source: Beatley and Manning (1997).

# Sustainable Places or Communities – Goals

- Minimize ground water extraction, air and water contamination, use of agricultural and forest lands, and disruption of biodiversity and habitat.
- Compact development patterns.
- Transportation systems less reliant on the automobile and more dependent on public transit, walking and biking.

# Sustainable Places or Communities – Goals *(cont'd)*

- Infill development and adaptive re-use of existing buildings.
- Protect and/or avoid ecological sensitive and hazard prone areas.
- Curtail land-use at the urban periphery.
- Minimize or cease to export waste and pollutants.

# Sustainable Places or Communities – Characteristics

- Nurture built environments and settlement patterns that are uplifting, inspirational, and memorable.
- Create a strong sense of place – a special feeling of attachment and belonging.
- Respect bioregional or natural and historical context.
- Strive to create and preserve places, rituals and events that foster attachment to the social fabric of the community.

# Sustainable Places or Communities – Characteristics (*cont'd*)

- Look beyond narrow, conventional solutions to social and environmental problems and address them instead from a broad, holistic view.
- Pursue development with the interests of other places and the future in mind.
- Strive to eliminate environmental and other forms of racism.
- View population diversity as a strength.
- Promote a full cost-accounting of its decisions and policies.

# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community

- Actively and aggressively pursues strategic alliances with other communities, domestically and especially internationally, with an eye toward developing not only cultural ties but also profit-centered activities that generate revenue and create jobs for the local citizenry.

# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community (*cont'd*)

- Creates a regulatory environment that promotes and supports the generation of new community wealth via civic entrepreneurial ventures and innovations that are designed specifically to sustain and enhance the health, competitiveness, and vitality of the community.

# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community (*cont'd*)

- Recognizes the need for, and is committed to continuous investment in, a world-class physical infrastructure that connects it to the regional, national, and international economy.

# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community (*cont'd*)

- Invests heavily in its educational system (K-12, community colleges, and four-year institutions) to ensure the availability of education and training programs for its citizens so that they can compete for new economy jobs, thereby enhancing the community's attractiveness to businesses.

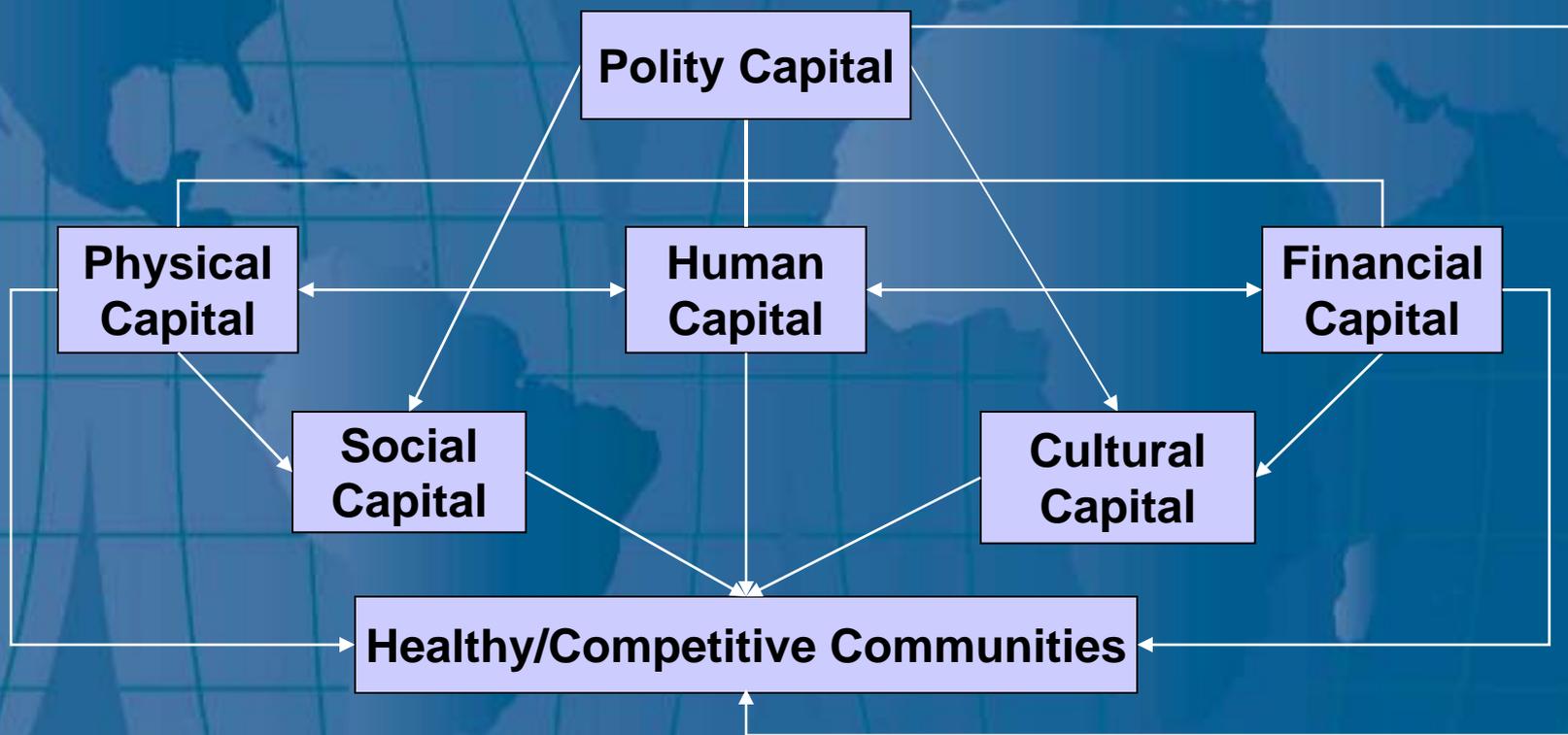
# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community *(cont'd)*

- Instills in its citizens, especially its youth, the attitudes, values, and beliefs about education and work that are key to upward mobility in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century.

# Characteristics of a Sustainable Community (*cont'd*)

- Strives to reduce, to the maximum extent possible, geographical, racial and/or ethnic, and class disparities by investing substantial resources in an array of community-building institutions (e.g., the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Boys and Girls Club) that seek to mend the social fabric and provide bridges to education and economic mainstream for its members, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

# Civic Entrepreneurial Model of Community Sustainability



# Community Capital Assets - Definitions

- *Polity Capital*: commitments from local government organizations to continuously strive to enhance the health and socioeconomic well being of local residents and advance the competitiveness of the local community in the global marketplace.
- *Physical Capital*: the network of highways, railways, airports, and telecommunications systems (telephone, Internet, etc.) that form the infrastructure of the community.

# Community Capital Assets – Definitions (*cont'd*)

- *Financial Capital*: traditional and non-traditional sources of revenue that support the provision of services and promote future economic growth and community development
- *Human Capital*: individuals with the requisite education, training, and “soft” skills to compete for jobs in the highly integrated world economy.

# Community Capital Assets – Definitions (*cont'd*)

- *Cultural Capital*: residents with the appropriate values, attitudes, and beliefs about their current life chances and their future opportunities in the local community.
- *Social Capital*: resources – personal and institutional – through which individuals maintain their social identity and receive emotional support, material aid and services, information and new social contacts.

# General Threats to Sustainability

- Uncertainty
- Insecurity
- Turbulence

# Drivers of Future Change

- “Browning” and “Graying” of America
- First and second waves of globalization
- Logistics as engines of economic growth and development
- Entrepreneurial government
- Communities must strategically position themselves to compete for business and talent.

# Drivers of Future Change (*cont'd*)

- New Economy workers are consumers of place.
- Quality of life factors are more important than traditional drivers of economic development.
- Branding increasingly used as an economic development marketing tools.

# Implications For Communities

- Change is the only constant
- Competitive intelligence gathering is paramount
- Speed
- Agility
- Flexibility

# Implications for Community Leaders

- Competitive drive
- Voracious consumer of competitive intelligence
- Tenacity
- Persistence
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Soft skills
- Hard work