SOCIAL CAPITAL BENCHMARK SURVEY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FOR
THE CHARLOTTE REGION

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For:

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I. Background and Objectives of the Research

Social capital is the societal analogue of physical or economic capital—the value inherent in friendship networks and other associations which individuals and groups can draw upon to achieve private or collective objectives. In recent years, the concept has received increasing attention as accumulating evidence demonstrates the independent relationship between social capital and a wide range of desirable outcomes: economic success, improved school performance, decreased crime, higher levels of voting, and better health. Within communities, recent research supports the belief that social capital fosters norms of social trust and reciprocity, facilitating communal goals. The concept's theoretical richness and practical significance is becoming increasingly well-documented.

This purpose of the Social Capital Benchmark Survey, conducted nationally as well as in 40 U.S. communities, is to measure various manifestations of social capital as well as its suspected correlates to (1) provide a rich database for analysis by interested researchers who wish to better understand social capital and (2) provide a tool for communities and organizations to use in program development and evaluation, in part, by enabling relative assessment to other communities and the nation.

As a "benchmark" survey, it is the first attempt at widespread systematic measurement of social capital, especially within communities, and it will serve as a point of comparison for future research which attempts to assess changes in key indicators. It is hoped that discussion and use of the survey will also stimulate interest in the broader purpose of fostering civic and social engagement across the country and thus contribute to the revitalization of community institutions.

II. Study Characteristics

The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey was designed by the Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America, a project at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The principal investigator on this project was Prof. Robert D. Putnam, and the survey drew upon the lessons learned from a Social Capital Measurement Workshop held at Harvard University in October 1999. In addition, there was a Scientific Advisory Committee convened to advise on survey construction, consisting of some of the leading scholars on measuring social capital and cross-racial social trends. All efforts were made, where possible to use questions extensively tested in previous surveys.

The survey, averaging 26 minutes, was conducted by telephone using random-digit-dialing during July to November 2000, although interviewing in the national survey and in most of the community surveys was concluded by October. TNS Intersearch, an international survey firm, was commissioned to conduct the interviewing, and prepare the data for analysis. Roughly 29,200 people were surveyed. The national sample (N = 3,003) of the continental U.S. contains an over-sampling of black and Hispanic respondents to total at least 500 blacks and 500 Hispanics in all.

In addition, each sponsoring organization (largely community foundations) decided on the size and sampling geography for each community sample. Most of the samples range in size from 500–1,500 interviews. (A complete list of communities surveyed, their sample size and geographic definition are shown in Table 1 below.)

Table 1
Communities Surveyed, Geography of Area, and Sample Size

		Sample Size	
Sponsor	**Area**	Goal	Actual
Arizona Community Foundation	Maricopa County	500	501
Atlanta Community Foundation	Counties: DeKalb, Fulton, Cobb, Rockdale, Henry	500	510
Forum 35 Baton Rouge	East Baton Rouge Parish	500	500
Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (AL)	Counties: Jefferson, Shelby	500	500
Boston Foundation	City of Boston (includes oversample of 200 in 4 zip codes)	600	604
Boulder Community Foundation	Boulder Co.	500	500
Foundation For The Carolinas	Counties: N.C.: Catawba, Iredell, Rowan, Cleveland, Lincoln, Gaston, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Stanly, Union, Anson; S.C.: York, Chester, Lancaster	1500	1500
Central NY Community Foundation	Onondaga Co (includes City of Syracuse)	500	541
Chicago Community Trust	Counties: Lake, McHenry, Cook, DuPage, Kane and Will.	750	750
Greater Cincinnati Foundation	Counties: OH: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, Warren; KY: Boone, Campbell, Kenton; IN: Dearborn	1000	1001
Cleveland Community Foundation	Cuyahoga Co. (includes oversample of 100 Latinos)	1100	1100
State of Delaware	Kent County (342), Sussex County (342), city of Wilmington (342), non-Wilmington New Castle County (342)	1368	1379
Denver Community Foundation	City and County of Denver	500	501
East Tennessee	Counties: Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hawkins, Hancock, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, Monroe, McMinn, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier, Union, Unicoi, and Washington.	500	500
Fremont Area Foundation (MI)	Newaygo County (with screening)	750	753
Grand Rapids Foundation	City of Grand Rapids	500	502
Greater Greensboro	Guilford County, (includes oversample of 250 in Greensboro)	750	750
Greater Houston	Harris county	500	500
Indiana Grantmakers Alliance	State of Indiana	1000	1001
Greater Kanawha Community Foundation	Counties: Kanawha, Putnam, Boone	500	500
Kalamazoo Community Foundation	Kalamazoo County	500	500
California Community Foundation	Los Angeles County	500	515
Maine Community Foundation	Cities/Towns: Lewiston, Auburn, Greene, Sabattus, Lisbon, Mechanic Falls, Poland, Turner, Wales, Minot	500	523
Montana	State of Montana	500	502
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation	State of NH. (includes oversample of 160 in Cheshire County and 40 in I-93 corridor"*)	700	711
Peninsula/Silicon Valley	Counties: San Mateo, Santa Clara Part of Alameda County: Fremont, Newark, Union City	1500	1505
Rochester Area Community	Counties: Monroe, Wayne, Ontario, Livingston,	900	988

Sponsor	**Area**	**Sample Size** Goal	 Actual
Foundation	Genesee, Orleans (includes oversample to achieve minimum of 100 Latinos and 100 African Americans)		
St. Paul Foundation	Counties: Dakota, Ramsey, Washington	500	503
San Diego Community Foundation	San Diego County	500	504
Haas Foundation	City & County of San Francisco	500	500
Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan	Counties: Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, St.Clair, Wastenaw, Monroe, Livingston	500	501
Winston-Salem	Forsyth County	750	750
York Foundation (PA)	York County	500	500
Northwest Area Foundation			
Minneapolis	City of Minneapolis	500	501
North Minneapolis	ZIP 55411 & ZIP 55405 north of I–394 (with screening)	450	452
Rural South Dakota	Rural South Dakota	375	368
Central OR	Central Oregon	500	500
Seattle	City of Seattle	500	502
Yakima	Yakima County	500	500
Bismarck	City of Bismarck	500	506

[*] Defined as: in Hillsborough County: Nashua, Hudson, Pelham, Litchfield, Merrimack, Bedford, Goffstown, Manchester, Hollis, Amherst; in Rockingham County: Salem, Windham, Derry, Londonderry

III. Dimensions of Social Capital

Social capital, like intelligence, generally coheres as a core concept. Some people are smarter than others, and people adept at math are likely to be good at poetry; which is why one can speak of IQs (Intelligence Quotients). However, at a finer grain, there are different types of intelligence—the best mathematicians are not the best poets, and neither are they necessarily emotionally intelligent.

The same is true of social capital. Among literally hundreds of different measures of social capital in the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, some people (or communities) broadly are more (or less) socially connected. People with lots of friends are more likely to vote more, to attend church more often, and to bowl in leagues. This means that you can speak of a person (or a community) as being generally high (or low) in social capital. On the other hand, closer examination reveals different sub-dimensions (comparable to the difference between mathematical, verbal, emotional, and spatial intelligence).

What follows is a brief description of the 11 different facets of social capital that have emerged from the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. There are two dimensions of "social trust" (whether you trust others), two measures of political participation, two measures of civic leadership and associational involvement, a measure of giving and volunteering, a measure of faith-based engagement, a measure of informal social ties, a measure of the diversity of our friendships, and a measure of the equality of civic engagement at a community level.

Trust

Social trust: at the core of social capital is the question of whether you can trust other people. Our first index of social trust combines measures of trust in neighbors, coworkers, shop clerks, co-religionists, local police, and finally "most people."

Inter-racial trust: a critical challenge facing communities attempting to build social capital is the fact that it is simply harder to do in places that are more diverse. The measure of inter-racial trust looks at the extent to which different racial groups (whites, blacks, Hispanics, and Asians) trust one another.

Diversity of Friendships

Diversity of friendships: equally important to their levels of social trust are how diverse people's social networks are. The survey asked whether the respondent had a personal friend who is a business owner, was on welfare, owned a vacation home, is gay, is a manual worker, is White, is Black, is Hispanic, is Asian, is a community leader, and was of a different faith. Then the number of categories each respondent mentioned were added together, and this summed score became the index.

Political Participation

Conventional politics participation: One of the key measures for how engaged we are in communities is the extent to which we are involved politically. This measure looks at how many in our communities are registered to vote, actually vote, express interest in politics, are knowledgeable about political affairs and read the newspaper regularly.

Protest politics participation: The data in the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey indicate that many communities that exhibit low levels of participation in conventional/electoral ways, nonetheless exhibit high levels of participation in protest forms, such as taking part in marches, demonstrations, boycotts, rallies, participating in groups that took action for local reform, participating in labor and ethnically-related groups.

Civic Leadership and Associated Involvement

Civic leadership and associational involvement: Many people typically get involved locally by joining groups that they care about. We measured such engagement in two ways:

Civic Leadership: this is a composite measure both of how frequently respondents were engaged in groups, clubs and local discussions of town or school affairs, and also whether the respondent took a leadership role within these groups.

Associational involvement: we measured associational involvement across 18 broad categories of groups (including an "other" category). Respondents were asked about participation in the following types of groups: organizations affiliated with religion; sports clubs, leagues, or outdoor activities; youth organizations; parent associations or other school support groups; veterans groups; neighborhood associations; seniors groups; charity or social welfare organizations; labor unions; professional, trade, farm or business associations; service or fraternal organizations; ethnic, nationality, or civil rights organizations; political groups; literary, art, or musical groups; hobby, investment, or garden clubs; self-help programs; groups that meet only over the Internet; and any other type of groups or associations.

Informal Socializing

Informal socializing: While the "civic leadership" and "associational involvement" measures above capture the formal social ties, the "informal socializing" dimension measures the degree to which residents had friends over to their home, hung out with friends in a public place, socialized with co-workers outside of work, played cards or board games with others, and visited with relatives.

Giving and Volunteering

Giving and volunteering: One of the ways that Americans express their concern for others is through giving to charity or volunteering. This dimension measures how often community residents volunteer at various venues and how generous they are in giving.

Faith-Based Engagement

Faith-based engagement: religion in America is a big part of social capital. Roughly one-half of all American connectedness is religious or religiously affiliated, whether measured by memberships, volunteering time, or philanthropy. This measure of faith-based engagement looks at: religious attendance and membership, participation in church activities besides services, participation in organizations affiliated with religion, giving to religious causes and volunteering at place of worship.

IV. Findings of the Study

A. THE NATIONAL SAMPLE

Most of the analysis that is being done at Harvard on the national sample as well as what will be done regarding the Charlotte region sample is based on the indices described in Section III above.

Table 2 shows how the forty communities that participated in the study scored on each of the ten indices using a statistical construct which is referred to as "Communities Like Mine." A score of 100 equals what is expected in comparison to the Communities Like Mine indicator, a score above 100 indicates a higher score than the demographics would predict, and, conversely, a score below 100 indicates a lower score than the demographics would predict.

TABLE 2

Community Quotients Using the Communities Like Mine Indicator

	Social Trust	Inter-racial Trust	Conventional Politics	Protest Politics	Civic Leadership
Atlanta Metro (GA)	83	91	88	85	89
Baton Rouge (LA)	99	91	106	76	116
Birmingham Metro (AL)	103	89	90	89	112
Bismarck (ND)	131	124	136	91	122
Boston (city of) (MA)	81	99	118	116	83
Boulder County (CO)	108	115	98	121	112
Central OR	90	98	95	108	104
Charlotte region/14 counties (NC)	93	78	91	87	97
Chicago Metro (IL)	81	86	89	100	92
Cincinnati Metro (OH)	102	95	81	91	107
Cleveland/Cuyahoga Cty. (OH)	96	91	94	105	108
Delaware	99	105	105	87	104
Denver (city/county) (CO)	99	109	101	120	105
Detroit Metro/7 Cty. (MI)	90	94	104	114	96
East Tennessee	81	81	91	94	86
Fremont/Newaygo Co. (MI)	97	92	92	106	96
Grand Rapids (city of)	111	108	96	102	99
Greensboro/Guilford County (NC)	96	95	101	86	109
Houston/Harris Cty. (TX)	85	85	81	67	78
Indiana	98	102	90	94	95
Kalamazoo County (MI)	103	99	89	108	98
Kanawha Valley (WV)	85	94	118	109	107
Lewiston-Auburn (ME)	104	131	135	104	92
Los Angeles County (CA)	81	83	86	97	96
Minneapolis (MN)	111	110	109	103	85

Montana	118	120	130	109	114
New Hampshire	102	122	90	104	91
North Minneapolis (MN)	75	94	103	111	104
Peninsula/Silicon Valley (CA)	110	105	99	96	74
Phoenix/Maricopa Cty. (AZ)	88	77	91	87	90
Rochester Metro (NY)	110	110	89	94	97
San Diego County (CA)	93	81	77	92	84
San Francisco (city of) (CA)	95	84	114	140	84
SE S. Dakota (rural)	150	143	124	93	161
Seattle (WA)	118	111	113	138	114
St. Paul Metro (MN)	120	106	112	88	93
Syracuse/Onondaga County (NY)	99	107	95	108	104
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County (NC)	98	85	99	80	89
Yakima (WA)	98	95	107	110	112
York (PA)	119	113	74	89	99

CQ = **100 when index is the same as for "Communities Like Mine"**
100+ = higher score than similar communities
100 - = lower score than similar communities

TABLE 2 (Continued)
Community Quotients Using the Communities Like Mine Indicator

	Associational	Informal	Diversity of	Giving and	Faith-based
Atlanta Metro (GA)	104	77	108	116	108
Baton Rouge (LA)	102	116	97	121	124
Birmingham Metro (AL)	118	93	86	100	124
Bismarck (ND)	106	122	59	109	120
Boston (city of) (MA)	78	77	121	71	81
Boulder County (CO)	113	104	128	90	76
Central OR	107	89	102	76	74
Charlotte region/14 counties (NC)	114	78	102	125	121
Chicago Metro (IL)	93	95	90	85	99
Cincinnati Metro (OH)	112	104	92	108	105
Cleveland/Cuyahoga Cty. (OH)	107	94	81	77	99
Delaware	108	98	101	105	97
Denver (city/county) (CO)	101	98	125	102	88
Detroit Metro/7 Cty. (MI)	118	121	98	102	103
East Tennessee	89	94	87	107	115
Fremont/Newaygo Co. (MI)	107	113	111	102	100
	Associational	Informal	Diversity of	Giving and	Faith-based
Grand Rapids (city of)	116	99	100	123	119
Greensboro/Guilford County (NC)	111	87	101	125	118
Houston/Harris Cty. (TX)	68	78	88	87	106
Indiana	100	119	98	97	105
Kalamazoo County (MI)	109	132	111	108	99
Kanawha Valley (WV)	89	96	86	92	102
Lewiston-Auburn (ME)	79	133	89	86	87
Los Angeles County (CA)	97	88	105	103	99

Los Angeles County (CA)	97	88	105	103	99
Minneapolis (MN)	103	105	110	103	103
Montana	123	118	101	105	95
New Hampshire	90	98	101	80	74
North Minneapolis (MN)	99	87	111	95	83
Peninsula/Silicon Valley (CA)	62	89	106	79	83
Phoenix/Maricopa Cty. (AZ)	88	112	106	92	94
Rochester Metro (NY)	82	103	103	95	95
San Diego County (CA)	83	89	93	80	88
San Francisco (city of) (CA)	91	102	102	79	70
SE S. Dakota (rural)	116	84	74	127	128
Seattle (WA)	127	108	148	102	85
St. Paul Metro (MN)	80	92	90	112	107
Syracuse/Onondaga County (NY)	115	111	91	101	101
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County (NC)	98	77	96	123	118
Yakima (WA)	108	116	108	104	102
York (PA)	91	105	97	107	103

CQ = 100 when index is the same as for "Communities Like Mine"
100+ = higher score than similar communities
100 = lower score than similar communities

Table 3 extracts the scores of the three areas of North Carolina included in the study. These are Greensboro, Winston-Salem and the Charlotte Region, which also includes three counties in South Carolina (Chester, Lancaster and York).

Table 3
Scores on the CLM Index for Three Areas of North Carolina

Indices	Carolina's Areas		
	Charlotte	Greensboro	Winston-Salem
Giving and Volunteering	125	125	123
Faith-Based Involvement	121	118	118
Associational Involvement	114	111	98
Diversity of Friendships	102	101	96
Civic Leadership	97	109	89
Social Trust	93	96	98
Conventional Politics	91	101	99
Protest Politics	87	86	80
Inter-Racial Trust	78	95	85
Informal Socializing	78	87	77

These data indicate a Southern proclivity to be high on faith-based engagement and giving and volunteering and relatively low on social and inter-racial trust, conventional and protest politics, and informal socializing. Of the other three Southern cities involved in the study, Birmingham exhibits the same conclusions as the three Carolinas' cities and regions. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, produces a somewhat different pattern, probably because of the influence of French and Spanish cultures in that state. Knoxville also has a somewhat different pattern probably because of the impact of being a part of Appalachia and having, historically, a smaller African-American population than most southern cities.

Professor Putnam has described the type of social engagement found in the South as more of a "bonding" activity than a "bridging" activity. Southerners use their social capital and social engagement more as a way to "bond" with people who are similar to them rather than as a "bridge" to people who are different from them. One possible result of being engaged primarily with people like oneself is intolerance toward those perceived to be different. This finding has many manifestations in the data: a relatively high level of intolerance of those of different races, different socioeconomic backgrounds, immigrants, and gay people; and more of a willingness to ban library books not in agreement with respondents' point-of-view.

In describing Southern cities and regions, we are faced with a difficult juxtaposition: Southerners are engaged in faith-based activities and they are characterized as giving and volunteering to both religious and non-religious activities. At the same time, these giving people are often more intolerant toward people that differ from them then would be expected.

Referring back to Table 1, a close review identifies additional clusters of communities. One of these might be referred to as the big cities cluster. Communities such as Atlanta, Houston, Boston, San Francisco, Silicone Valley, Phoenix and others tend to be characterized by a high level of diversity, but relatively low social engagement.

A third cluster is what might be referred to as Yankee culture. This cluster is composed primarily of communities, many of them smallish and predominately rural, that are located across the northern tier of states. However, some rather large cities are included in this cluster, Seattle and Minneapolis for example. This cluster has a tendency for high levels of civic engagement but relatively low levels of diversity and faith-based activities. The idea of a "Yankee Culture" comes from the work of Daniel Elazar, a political scientist.

B. THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE CHARLOTTE REGION

The remainder of the analysis is based on the data from the Charlotte region. The level of social capital and social engagement varies across groups in the demographic categories. The three demographic categories most impacted are race, education and income. Age and years in community have some variation, and there is almost no variation across gender and urbanization categories.

The next section of this analysis will look at the demographic variation in relation to most of the indices that have been used up to this point. In Tables 4, 5 and 6, we will look at the relation of race, income and education to the indices.

Table 4
Race and Social Capital

Indices	Race		
	White	Black	Hispanic
High Social Trust	39%	7%	7%
High Racial Trust	27%	15%	8%
High Diversity of Friends	22%	20%	10%
High Civic Participation	21%	22%	5%
High Faith-Based Engagement	46%	55%	15%
High Informal Socializing	30%	29%	13%
High Protest Politics Index	20%	29%	7%
High Electoral Politics Index	32%	20%	11%
High Giving and Volunteering	40%	40%	2%
High Associational Involvement	32%	38%	11%

On the racial dimension, the most striking finding is the poor showing of the Hispanic community on all of the measures of social capital. Only on the organizational questions did the Hispanics respond with over ten percent in the high category; however, the highest ranking on these was 15 percent on the faith-based index. Social capital among Hispanics is exceptionally low.

In comparing Whites and Blacks, Whites were more likely to be high on the two trust scales and the electoral politics index. Blacks were more likely to be high on the faith-based scale, the protest politics index, and associational involvement. On the remaining indices the two racial groups are essentially the same.

In summary, while there are some differences on the dimensions of social capital between Whites and Blacks, the sharpest difference is between Hispanics and everyone else.

As Table 5 indicates, income has a dramatic relationship with social capital. Every index shows that higher income people are more likely to be involved or engaged in the activity than are lower income people. The sharpest differences between low and high income people are found on social trust (23 percentage points), diversity of friendship (21 percentage points), civic participation (31 percentage points), protest politics (22 percentage points), electoral politics (22 percentage points), giving and volunteering (45 percentage points), and associational involvement (33 percentage points). Social capital distribution among income groups is highly skewed toward the high income groups.

Table 5

Income and Social Capital

Indices	Income		
	<$30K	$30K< $75K	$75K+
High Social Trust	20%	29%	44%
High Racial Trust	19%	22%	29%
High Diversity of Friends	11%	23%	32%
High Civic Participation	9%	21%	40%
High Faith-Based Engagement	36%	47%	52%
High Informal Socializing	27%	31%	33%
High Protest Politics Index	12%	22%	34%
High Electoral Politics Index	17%	29%	39%
High Giving and Volunteering	22%	41%	67%
High Associational Involvement	20%	32%	53%

As can be seen in Table 6, education has much the same kind of relationship with social capital. This is not unexpected since these two demographic variables are often viewed as surrogates for each other. In other words, people with higher levels of education are also likely to have higher incomes.

Table 6

Education and Social Capital

Indices	Education		
	HS or Less	Some College	College Graduate
High Social Trust	22%	30%	48%
High Racial Trust	17%	24%	34%
High Diversity of Friends	13%	27%	31%
High Civic Participation	10%	23%	40%
High Faith-Based Engagement	38%	49%	53%
High Informal Socializing	25%	35%	27%
High Protest Politics Index	12%	23%	42%
High Electoral Politics Index	17%	30%	51%
High Associational Involvement	18%	39%	53%
High Giving and Volunteering	24%	45%	57%

Among those indices with the sharpest divergence between those with less and more educational attainment are social trust (26 percentage points), civic participation (30 percentage points), protest politics (30 percentage points), electoral politics (34 percentage points), associational involvement (35 percentage points), and giving and volunteering (33 percentage points).

This concludes the analysis of the three demographic variables that are most closely associated with the distribution of social capital across sub-groups of the population. Our attention now turns to some of the other demographics variables. Tables 7 looks at age.

Table 7
Age and Social Capital

Indices	Age 18-34	 35-49	 50-64	 65+
High Social Trust	19%	32%	34%	40%
High Racial Trust	17%	23%	26%	29%
High Diversity of Friends	22%	24%	25%	12%
High Civic Participation	14%	24%	25%	18%
High Faith-Based Engagement	35%	42%	57%	56%
High Informal Socializing	42%	29%	19%	17%
High Protest Politics Index	20%	23%	27%	15%
High Electoral Politics Index	12%	26%	36%	50%
High Associational Involvement	25%	37%	35%	34%
High Volunteering and Giving	30%	47%	44%	31%

The relationships of age with the social capital indices suggest a number of patterns. The most common pattern is for the social capital activity to peak in the mid years (categories 35-49 and 50-64) and fall off somewhat for those younger and older. To some degree, this pattern is found with the following indices: diversity of friends, civic participation, protest politics, associational involvement, and volunteering and giving. The second somewhat weaker pattern is that the social capital activity continues to rise across all of the age categories, as seen with social trust, racial trust, faith-based engagement, and electoral politics. Only informal socializing (schmoozing) decreases consistently across the age groups.

The next variable to be considered is the length of time the respondent has lived in the area. Table 8 provides a picture of whether social capital varies among newcomers and old timers.

Table 8
Years in Community and Social Capital

Indices	Years in Community 5 or less	 6-20	 More than 20
High Social Trust	24%	30%	38%
High Racial Trust	20%	24%	26%
High Diversity of Friends	23%	22%	20%
High Civic Participation	16%	26%	20%
High Informal Socializing	29%	29%	28%
High Faith-Based Engagement	34%	48%	54%
High Protest Policies Index	20%	22%	24%
High Electoral Politics Index	17%	24%	42%
High Giving and Volunteering	30%	44%	41%
High Associational Involvement	28%	35%	35%

Since years in community has some relationship with age of respondent, some of the same findings occur. The indices that show significant variation between newcomers and old timers are social trust, faith-based engagement, and electoral politics. In each of these cases, people who have lived here longer are substantially more likely to exhibit social capital formation than are those who have lived here shorter periods of time.

Another pattern in the data is for those living here from 6-20 years to be more likely to score high on the social capital indices than either those living here less than five years or more than twenty years. Examples of this pattern are civic participation, and giving and volunteering. The variation found on the years in the community are relatively small and those that do exist clearly conform with basic logic.

The last table in this part of the analysis looks at the issue of urbanization. The measures for the Charlotte sample on this variable are:

1. Center City = Charlotte.
2. Mecklenburg County = the part of Mecklenburg County outside the Charlotte city limits.
3. MSA = the counties, excluding Mecklenburg, that are in the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). This includes Gaston, York, Union, Cabarrus, Lincoln, and Rowan.
4. Rural = the regional counties not included in the MSA. These counties are Anson, Stanly, Iredell, Cleveland, Chester, Lancaster, and Catawba.

Table 9 shows the findings from this analysis.

Table 9
Urbanization and Social Capital

Indices	Urbanization Center	 Mecklenburg County	 MSA	 Rural
High Social Trust	29%	35%	33%	25%
High Racial Trust	25%	23%	20%	21%
High Diversity of Friends	23%	21%	22%	18%
High Civic Participation	21%	24%	18%	18%
High Faith-Based Engagement	42%	49%	47%	46%
High Informal Socializing	29%	30%	27%	29%
High Protest Politics Index	25%	19%	15%	22%
High Electoral Politics Index	29%	28%	27%	24%
High Associational Involvement	35%	36%	27%	30%
High Giving and Volunteering	36%	46%	35%	37%

What patterns do we see in these data? Essentially nothing substantial. Where one lives in the region from a major city to rather remote rural areas or the burgeoning area of suburbia means little in terms of social capital.

C. VARIABLES WITHIN INDICES: COMPARISON OF THE CHARLOTTE REGION WITH THE NATIONAL SAMPLE

Each of the indices is composed of a number of variables. In this last part of the analysis some of the indices will be disaggregated so that any variation across the relevant variables can be captured.

The Social Trust index utilized a series of trust questions that were included in the survey. Table 10 compares the score of the Charlotte region with the national sample.

Table 10
Social Trust Variables

Social Trust Variables	Area National	Charlotte Region
Trusts most people	47%	39%
Trusts neighbors a lot	49%	48%
Trusts co-workers a lot	53%	47%
Trusts fellow-attendees at place of worship a lot	72%	72%
Trusts local store employees a lot	29%	24%
Trusts local police a lot	51%	50%

With the exception of the trust fellow worshipers question, the Charlotte region ranks below the national sample on all of the remaining questions, although marginally so on two of the questions. The most telling of these responses is that people in this region are less likely (by eight percentage points) than the national sample to believe that most people are trustworthy.

Racial trust, another one of the indices used in this study, is based on a series of questions about how much different racial groups trust one another. These results are found in Table 11.

Table 11
Inter-Racial Trust Variables

Inter-Racial Trust Variables	Area National	 Charlotte Region
Trusts Whites a lot	31%	28%
Trusts Blacks a lot	26%	23%
Trusts Asians a lot	25%	21%
Trusts Hispanics a lot	24%	19%

As with the measure of social trust, the Charlotte region scores consistently lower (although the margin of difference is small) than the national sample.

Diversity of friendships indicates how varied people's social networks are. This index is based on whether the respondent had a personal friend who was a: business owner, was on welfare, owned a vacation home, gay, a manual worker, White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, community leader, and of a different faith. Table 12 compares the national sample with the Charlotte regional sample on these indicators.

Table 12
Diversity of Friendships Variables

Diversity of Friendships Variables	Area	
	National	Charlotte Region
Friends with - a business owner	64%	66%
Friends with - a manual worker	72%	75%
Friends with - a welfare recipient	38%	38%
Friends with - a vacation home owner	44%	54%
Friends with - people from different religion	77%	71%
Friends with - a White	91%	89%
Friends with - an Hispanic	49%	39%
Friends with - an Asian	34%	30%
Friends with - an African American	61%	74%
Friends with - a Homosexual	35%	34%
Friends with - a community leader	48%	49%

On this dimension the Charlotte region is very similar to the national sample. People of this region are more likely to have an African-American and a vacation home owner as a friend and less likely to have people of other religions and Hispanics as friends when compared to the national sample.

Lastly, we will look at some of the indices on which the Charlotte region scored relatively well. The highest score was on the giving and volunteering index. Table 13 indicates how the region fared on the variables included in this index.

Table 13
Giving and Volunteering Variables

Variables	Area	
	National	Charlotte Region
Volunteered for health-related organizations	35%	35%
Volunteered at place of worship	79%	86%
Volunteered with youth groups	59%	56%
Volunteered to help the poor or elderly	53%	61%
Volunteered with arts organization	22%	19%
Volunteered with neighborhood/civic group	39%	43%
Number of times volunteered in past year	9.5	8.5
Gave to religious organizations	70%	76%
Gave to secular organizations	64%	65%

As we can see, church based activities also account for much of our region's higher score on giving and volunteering. We volunteer at our place of worship and give more to religious organizations than is true of the national sample. We are also somewhat more likely to volunteer to help the poor and elderly and with neighborhood/civic groups.

The Charlotte region also ranked high on faith-based social capital. The way this index was formed was rather convoluted which makes it difficult to talk about individual variables. However, attending religious services and the frequency of such activity are the primary indicators on which this index is built. We all know that Southerners are both more likely to attend services and to do that more frequently than are people from other regions. Consequently, Charlotte's high ranking on faith-based social capital is a surprise to no one.

The region also scored relatively high on association involvement. Respondents were asked of their involvement in a whole host of organizations over the past twelve months. Table 14 shows those who responded "yes" to this question both for the Charlotte region and the national samples.

Table 14
Association Involvement Variables

Variables	Area	
	National	Charlotte Region
Involved in church activities other than services	45%	57%
Involved in non-church religious organization	16%	18%
Involved in sports/outdoor activity club	21%	20%
Involved in youth organization	22%	21%
Involved in parent organization	22%	26%
Involved in veterans group	9%	8%
Involved in neighborhood association	20%	28%
Involved in seniors group	14%	17%
Involved in social welfare organization	32%	38%
Involved in labor union	12%	4%
Involved in trade/farm/business organization	25%	21%
Involved in service/fraternal organization	14%	15%
Involved in ethnic/nationality/civil rights organization	7%	6%
Involved in public interest/political group	9%	7%
Involved in literary art/music group	17%	17%
Involved in hobby/investment/garden club	25%	22%
Involved in self-help/support group	17%	21%
Involved in online only group	3%	3%
Involved in other type of group	15%	14%

Again, involvement in church related activities is one reason the region scores well on the associational involvement index. In addition people in our region are somewhat more likely than the national sample to be involved with the following organizations and activities: parents organization, neighborhood associations, seniors groups, social welfare organizations, and self-help/support groups. No one is surprised by the finding that people in the Charlotte region are less likely to be involved with a labor union.

V. Conclusions

The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, a massive research undertaking, was conducted to assess the level of social capital in the United States at the time the survey was done (2000). Because this was the first national survey on this topic, the findings from this study provide the benchmark against which further studies on this topic can be compared. The local communities have had access to the local and national data for a very short period of time. Therefore, we must make the caveat that all findings in this analysis should be viewed as preliminary. Additional research will help us better specify some of the findings.

Through an amazing array of measures of social capital, we can make statements about how much social capital (or some surrogate measure) a particular group has, but we can say little about the subjective issue of whether this is good or bad. Just as when talking about economic capital when we say not everyone is a millionaire, we can say about social capital that not everyone is as well connected as he/she could be. In fact, the most meaningful discussion about "how we are doing" on a particular dimension will occur after two or more of these social capital surveys are done in our locale.

The data and the analysis of those data available to us, however, provide some interesting discussion points for the participating communities.

The Charlotte region's highest scores on the indices were on those related to religious activities: faith-based engagement, giving and volunteering, and associational involvement. Our lower scores were on the dimensions of trust, particularly inter-racial trust and informal socializing. Professor Putnam refers to this as using our social capital to "bond" with others who are like us rather than using it to "bridge" to those different from us.

Our analysis indicates that there is a substantial difference between Whites and Blacks on the trust indices; however, on the other measures of social capital the differences between Whites and Blacks are inconsequential. The real racial divide is between Hispanics and other racial groups. The findings show that those with higher incomes and education were more likely to rank high on the various measures of social capital. This finding is surprising to no one and is, in fact, almost universal. However, the characteristic that differentiates the South (and Charlotte) from the Northern tier of states and cities (such as Minneapolis) is the magnitude of difference Hispanics and other racial groups, between those of higher and lower incomes, and between those of higher and lower educational levels. For example, when looking at the results in Minneapolis and Seattle (both of which are larger and arguably more diverse than Charlotte), one sees that the social capital levels are more uniform across the demographic groups.

In many ways, the central theme around which the social capital issue is analyzed is trust. For us in the Charlotte region, the paramount question is why do we rank so low on the two trust indices: social and inter-racial trust? Not only do we rank below the national sample, we also rank lower than Greensboro and Winston-Salem. Some might surmise that this low rating is because of all the turmoil about school reassignment in Mecklenburg county, but the data suggest that this is not a factor. Actually Charlotte and Mecklenburg County rank higher on both of the trust indices than do the other MSA counties and the rural counties outside the MSA but within the Charlotte region.

This lack of social and racial trust may be firmly rooted in our history. How Whites treated Blacks in the South—slavery, sharecroppers, and Jim Crow restrictions—is the legacy that we all live with and while conditions are much better, we all know the legacy continues. In this kind of situation, the building of social capital across racial groups was all but impossible. It is easier to do so now, but interaction and involvement continues to be restrained.

The Hispanic issue, which has been quietly dormant, is likely to become a significant social problem in this community. Hispanics essentially have no ties to the larger community because of language problems, their temporary residential status, their being here illegally, or some other reason. What ever the cause, it is difficult to think that this large population group with almost no ties to the community can continue to co-exist with the rest of us without significant social problems surfacing. Some would say the social problems have already surfaced, but that most of us have failed to recognize this situation.

The survey did ask people about barriers to civic involvement. The biggest barrier to becoming more involved in the community is the occupational barrier, that is, people simply do not have the time. In the Charlotte region, 85 percent said their occupation limited their involvement somewhat. While questions were not asked as to how occupation limited involvement, the answer is fairly clear. The Charlotte region has more two-parent households where both parents work than most any other part of the nation. Many lower income people work two jobs to make ends meet. Many others may work only one job, but spend many more than 40 hours a week doing it. Of the other barriers asked about in the survey, 50 percent said lack of transportation was a limiting factor; 40 percent noted a feeling of being unwelcome; 67 percent mentioned safety concerns; 73 percent believed that their lack of information was an impeding factor; and, 56 percent mentioned their perceived inability to effect change. Time, however, is probably the major barrier.

The challenge ahead for the Charlotte region is how to build on the social capital that we already have and which results from the high level of religiosity in our communities. The time during the week that our people are most segregated is the very time that they are practicing their religious beliefs by attending services. In some way, we must become more tolerant of and better connected with people who are different from us. The faith community has a significant role to play but before that role can be undertaken for the community at-large, it must occur within our houses of worship.

Our task ahead is to build the infrastructure for community involvement. We are most likely to think of the social dimension when we think of infrastructure. How can we bring people together? How do we bridge the racial and socioeconomic divides? These and many other questions are being addressed by various groups in our community. These questions have no easy answers.

We would like to introduce the physical element of the infrastructure. It is difficult to have informal interaction, an important aspect of social capital, if we have no parks to go to, no sidewalks to walk on, no crosswalks to allow us to cross streets, no community centers to go to and no neighborhoods where services are available in easy walking distance. Our region is characterized by suburban and rural sprawl and the resulting long commuting trips. The isolation found in gated and walled subdivisions and in the steel frame of a car on a commuting trip are certainly not conducive to the formation of social capital.

Building mixed-use neighborhoods with services readily available, with sidewalks to get to the services and crosswalks to get across streets where traffic is already slowed by traffic calming devices, with mixed-income housing, and with a community center and parks may promote social capital more than we might believe and is, in many ways, easier to accomplish than changing the social dynamics.

In summary, many of the findings from this social capital survey simply confirm long-standing beliefs for many. Although for analysis purposes, we have talked about the Charlotte Region being either higher or lower on the measurement indices than the national sample, overall the Charlotte region is, in fact, very similar to the national findings. The most significant finding from this study is that the Charlotte region needs to build social capital including social and inter-racial trust if it is to continue to be viewed as a growing, dynamic Southern and national city. Failure to develop a higher level of social capital will defer if not destroy this dream.