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Wellbeing as a Principle for Infrastructure Investments

Full Frame Initiative



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Natural disasters and tragedies abound





Poll: predictors of recovery

**What are the biggest predictors of
who will recover fully and well
from a natural disaster
hitting their home and community?**

Social capital and resilience



Post-Hurricane Katrina Research Maps by the LSU Katrina Survey Team, Department of Sociology, LSU
<https://www.lsu.edu/fweil/KatrinaMaps/index.htm>

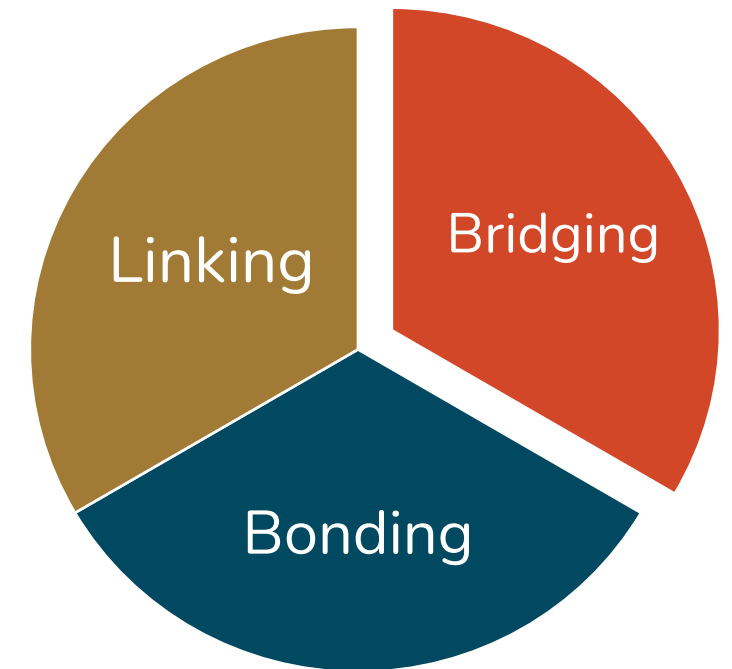


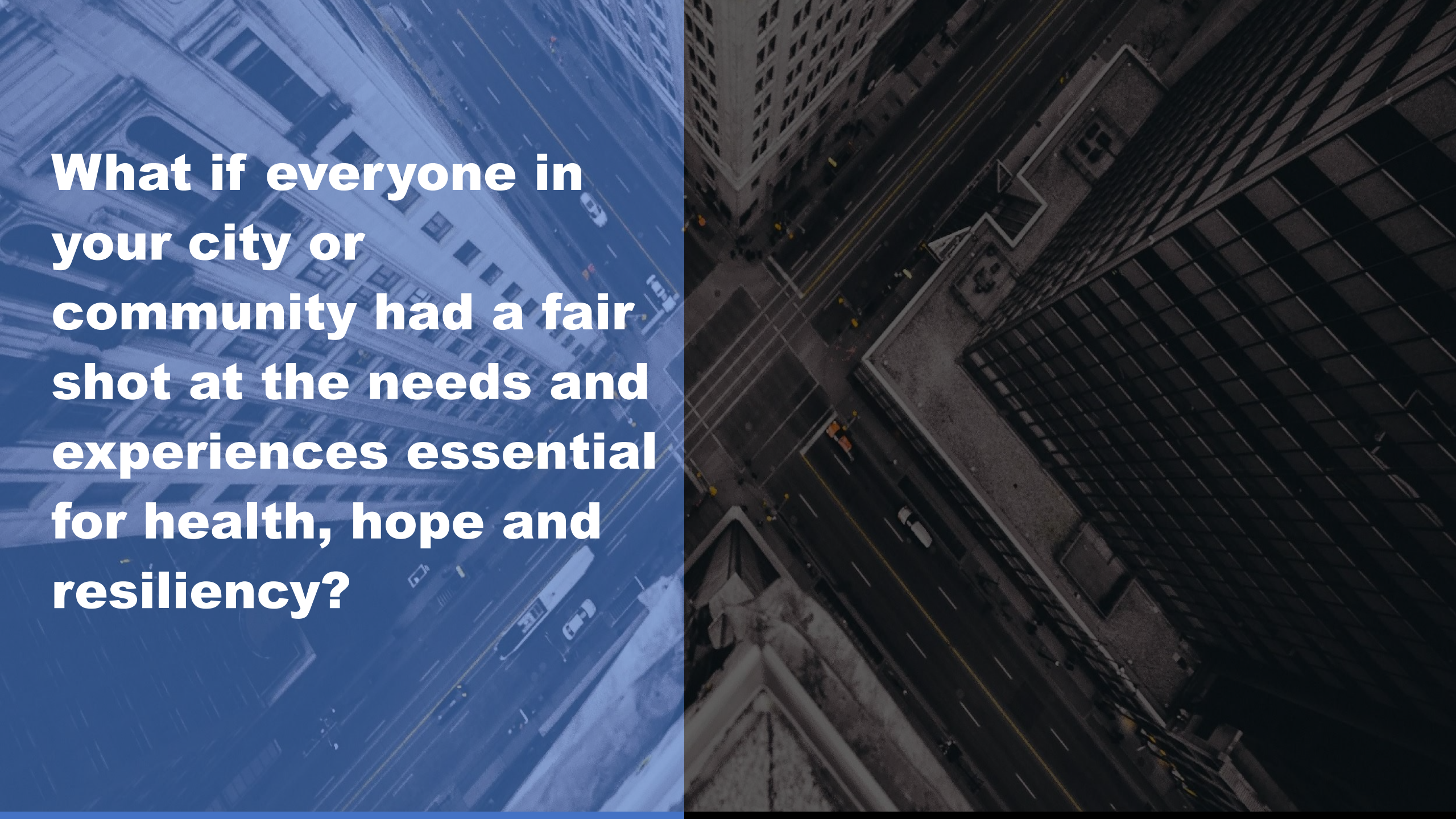
Social capital is not all the same

“**Linking** relations that connect people to representatives of public institutions (such as the police, banks, and agricultural extension agencies) are vitally important, as are **bridging** relations that connect individuals from different socio-economic and demographic groups.

Overwhelmingly, however, the poor have few extensive linking or bridging ties, and are left instead to draw upon their intensive **bonding** relations (family, friends, neighbors) to manage high levels of risk and vulnerability.” [emphasis added]

(Ritzen, Easterly, & Woolcock, 2000, 6)



An aerial, top-down view of a city street grid. The left half of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter, while the right half is in a darker, more muted color palette. The text is positioned on the blue side.

**What if everyone in
your city or
community had a fair
shot at the needs and
experiences essential
for health, hope and
resiliency?**



**The set of needs and experiences universally required
in combination and balance
to weather challenges and have health and hope.**

We are all hardwired for wellbeing





Where in your community do *you* find:

- Connection and belonging
- Safety
- Stability (predictability and familiarity)
- Influence and purpose
- Meaningful access to resources like food, clothing, shelter

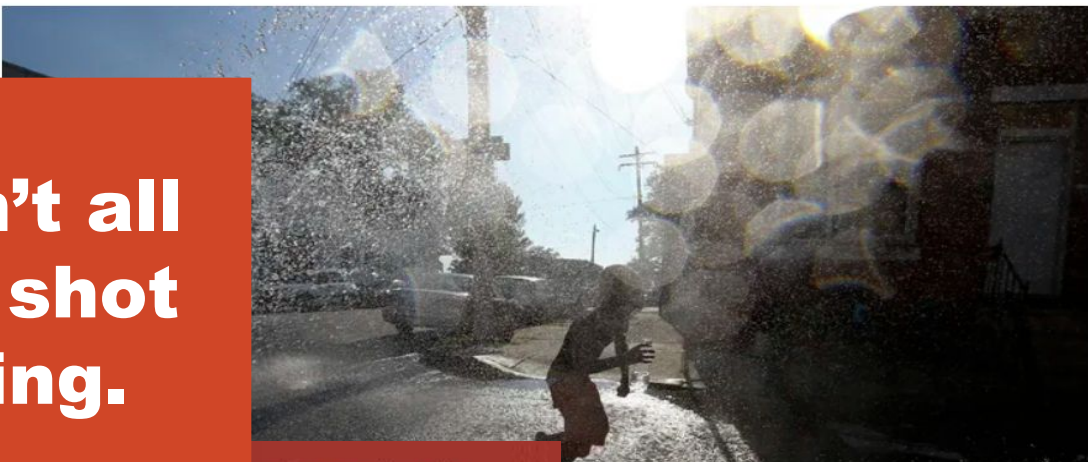




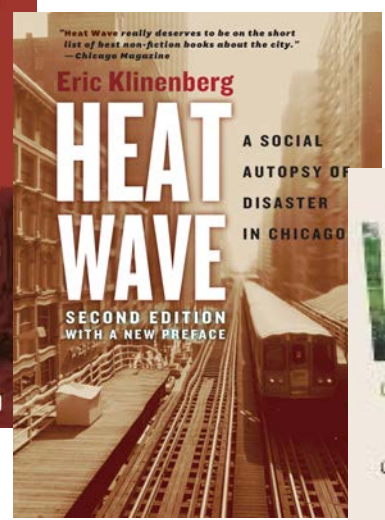
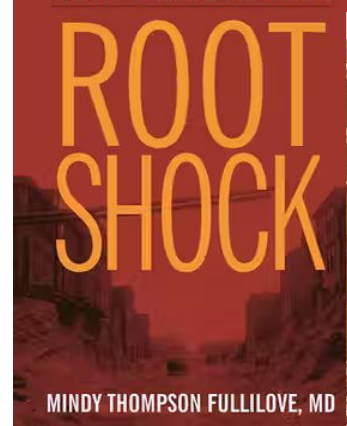
Climate change makes some Philadelphia neighborhoods extra steamy. The city has a plan.

Philadelphia has issued its first heat relief plan for a community as a way of grappling with climate change and found some startling facts in the process about how much more heat impacts one neighborhood versus another.

But we don't all have a fair shot at wellbeing.



How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT





When we're making a decision or a change, we're balancing tradeoffs: is it worth it to me?

- We're much more likely to make change when the tradeoffs feel worth it. If the tradeoffs feel unsustainable, the change becomes unsustainable.
- When people make choices that are different from what we expect or want, they may be weighing tradeoffs differently.
- People need motivation AND sustainable tradeoffs for change to last.





When we're making a decision or a change, we're balancing tradeoffs: is it worth it to me?

- We're much more likely to...
worth it. If
unsustaina
- When peop
want, they r
- People need

We get into trouble when systems force tradeoffs
that undermine lasting change
or we make assumptions about what other people want.





Moving towards a fair shot:

Cultivate environments
(*family, community, agency,
system, built environment*)
grounded in the recognition that:

- We are all deeply driven to meet our needs for wellbeing.
- Change is only worth it to us, and is only durable, when it doesn't deeply undermine our wellbeing.

Social infrastructure



“The physical places, and the organizations that have a physical plant, that shape our capacity to interact with one another.”

-Eric Klinenberg

- Community gardens
- Faith communities
- Sports or game leagues
- Libraries
- Rec centers
- Clubs and civic organizations

Community wellbeing reservoirs: a particularly important kind of social infrastructure



Wellbeing reservoirs are:

- Place-based.
- Low/no barrier to entry.
- Increase community access to wellbeing for a significant subset of the community.
 - Provide access to bridging and sometimes linking capital, as well as bonding social capital.
- Their intended purpose is not to increase access to wellbeing and to absorb shocks, but they have that effect.





Wellbeing reservoirs: quiet reflection

Think about a wellbeing reservoir that is important to you:

- How did you find out about it?
- How does it help you?
- What would happen if it were destroyed – or taken away?



Wellbeing reservoirs: small groups

- Get in groups of 2- 3 with people you don't know.
- Introduce yourselves.
- Each person:
 - What are the wellbeing reservoirs in your community that you don't use?
 - How do you know they're there?
 - How would you find out where and what others are?

Break

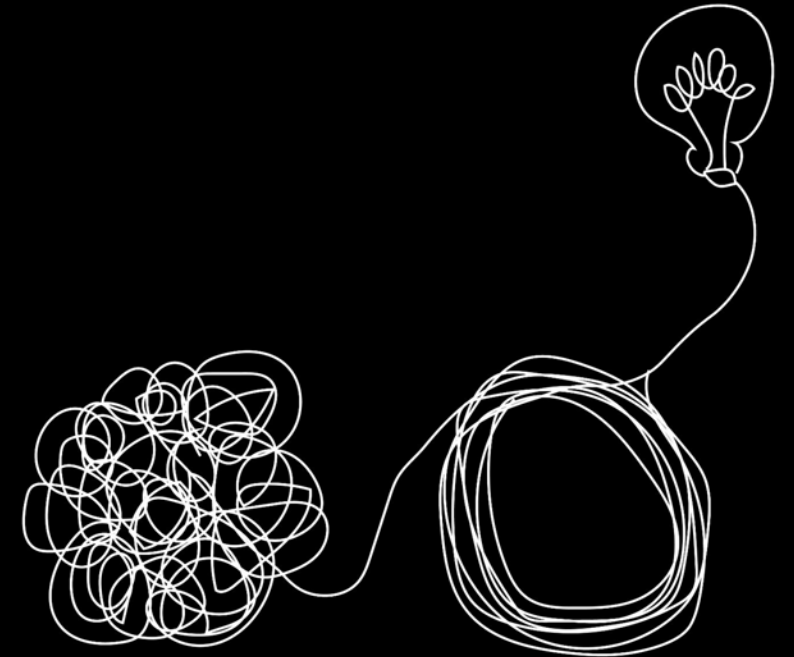


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With a nearly \$1T federal investment in infrastructure being made, America urgently needs new methodologies that center wellbeing – and help counter our history of inflicting harms.





A few questions to ask ourselves:

- How is social capital functioning in this community and how can this project enhance it?
- Who benefits or is harmed by this idea?
- Where did this idea come from?
- Are we treating the community as monolithic?
- How does this repeat or disrupt history?
- If it seems like a human problem, is it actually a built environment problem?



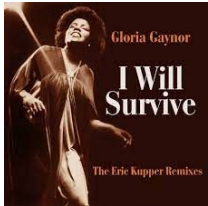
Which of the following song titles comes to mind when you think of community engagement?



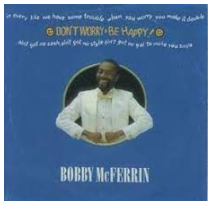
Help! by The Beatles



I'm so Excited by The Pointer Sisters

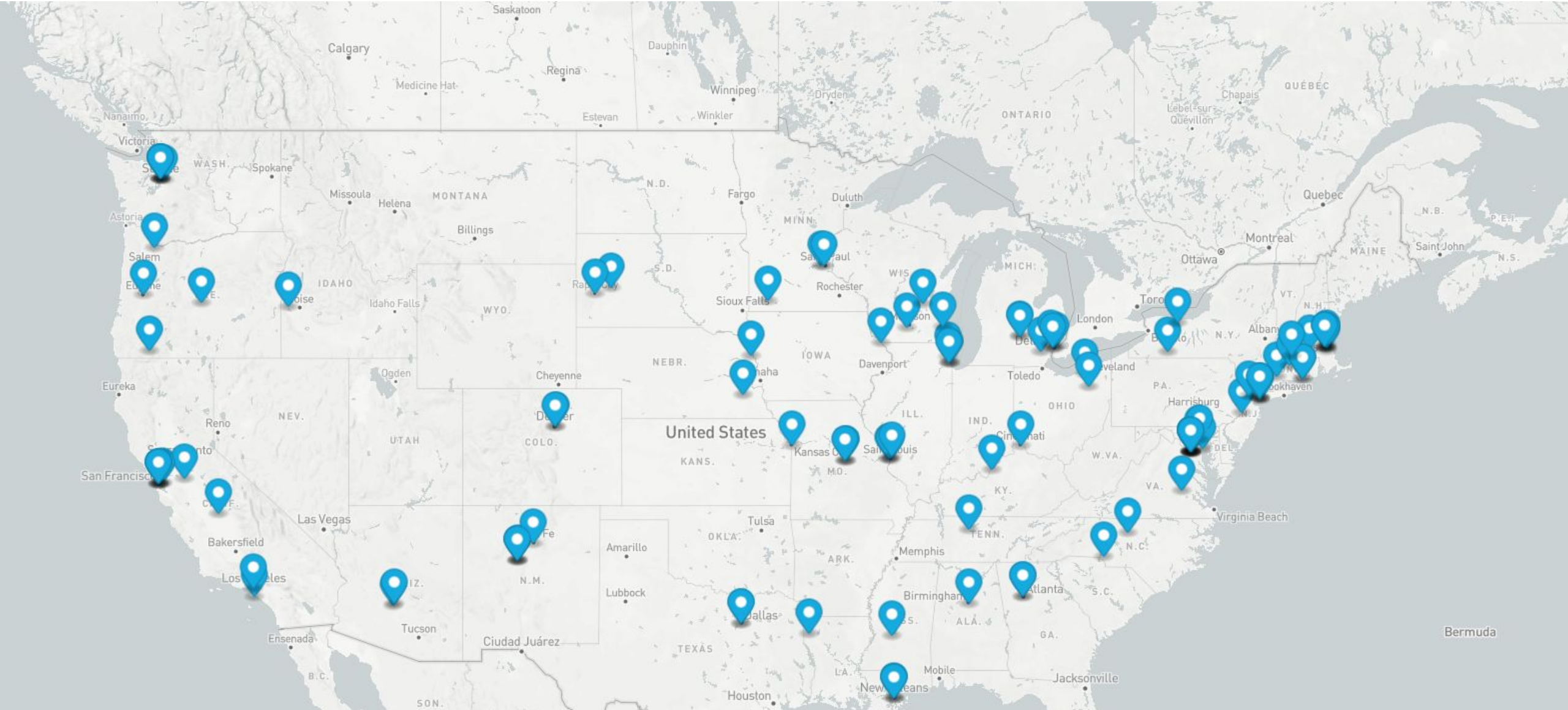


I Will Survive by Gloria Gaynor



Don't Worry Be Happy by Bobby McFerrin

There's momentum and knowledge to build on.





EXAMPLE: Sandy Hook



https://www.architectmagazine.com/design/sandy-hook-rebuilds_o

School Based Building Advisory Council:

Start with what matters to people with questions like:

- What do you love about your community? What does school mean to you?

Diversity of perspectives and knowledge:

- Custodial staff, students, parents, teachers, administrators and more

Recognize that process matters as much as product.



What's usually assessed when we're going to build:

- Economic impact
- Environmental impact

People also care about:

- Impact on my wellbeing and the wellbeing of my friends and family
- Financial impact
- Fairness
- Sensitivity to the history of harms and benefits in my community





How projects usually get built

Voices from our user research

“I didn’t realize my project was going to have a negative impact until we built it and the community got so upset. I wish I had known up front what was important to them.”

“Our community input is really about pitching them on the project – anything we could do to explore the impact of a project on community wellbeing would be a positive step forward.”

“We often assume the vacant lot is a problem that needs to be fixed. But what if we shifted our mental model and started by asking if it is actually a community asset?”

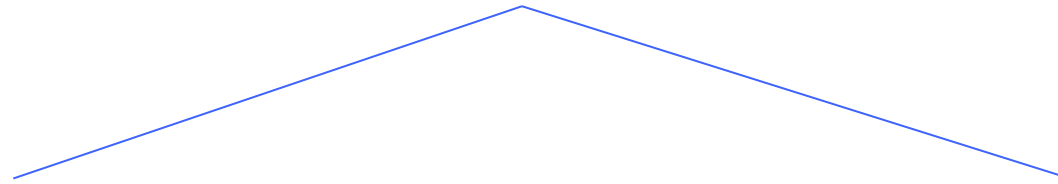


Example: The Wellbeing Insights & Tradeoffs Tool



What if we could make better local decisions about how, when, whether, and what we build?

WITT seeks to illuminate a project's projected impact on *equitable* access to wellbeing by democratizing data, disaggregated by race, income, age and other factors deemed relevant in the community.



Decision-makers and planners

can see which groups of residents' access to wellbeing will be most compromised or enhanced by the proposed project, and how; engage more deeply and/or adjust the project to increase equity

Residents and impacted people

can see how they and their neighbors are thinking about the project and wellbeing, and access data that can be useful for advocacy around asset preservation.



The tool has four components:

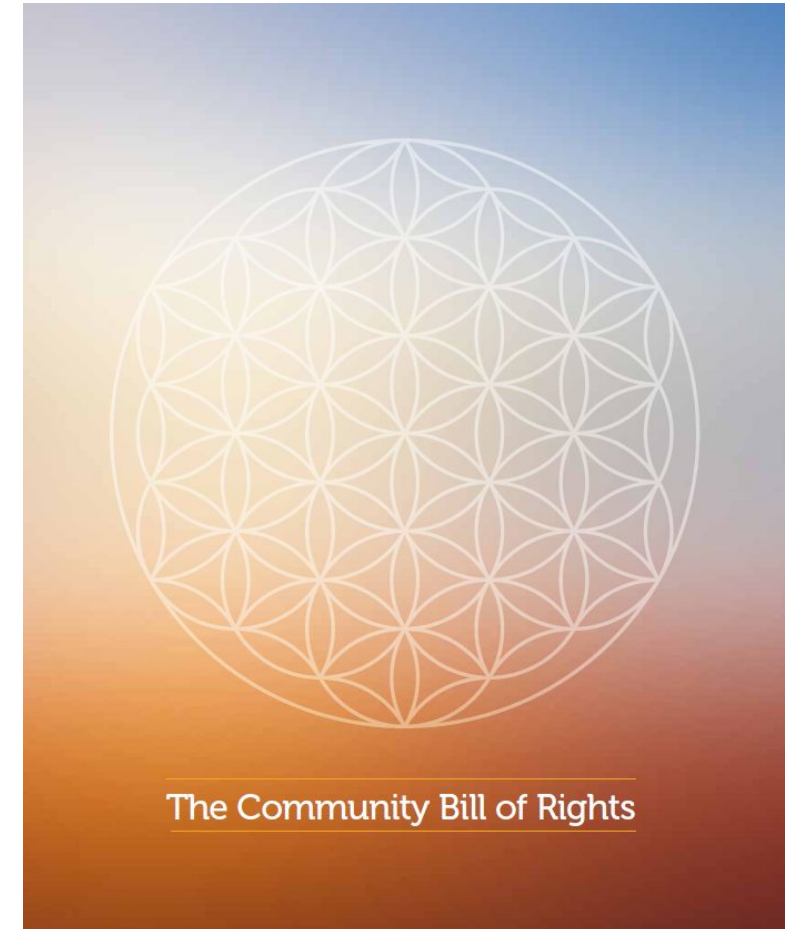
WELLBEING INSIGHTS & TRADEOFFS TOOL

- **Participatory Data**
Gathering responses from residents and impacted people to reflect how a proposed project will impact their access to wellbeing. *This is the core of the tool and is based on FFI's Policy Tradeoffs Analysis Tool.*
- **Representation Check**
Assessing response rates to see if certain populations have been over- or under-sampled. (Results are not valid or relevant without fair representation.)
- **Community Insights**
 - *Responses*
Participatory data (tradeoff analysis) disaggregated by race, gender, income and other factors relevant to equity considerations + qualitative responses.
 - *Profile*
Exploring open data sets that could provide insights into wellbeing reservoirs and community assets.
- **Implementation Support & Guides**
Providing guidance around how to create a wellbeing-oriented approach that improves the usual design process.

Where to start: engaging community differently



- Ask and learn about what a place means to people.
- Ask and learn about the history of a place.
 - If healing is needed, don't cut it short. Allow time for healing; build or restore trusting relationships.
- Consider whose voices are at the table: who is underheard?





How we fund matters!

- Procurement is not a neutral action.
- Procurement has the capacity to shift practice and narratives that entrench inequitable outcomes.
- Procurement can remove barriers and build communities so that people are in an environment that supports long-lasting wellbeing.



Example: New London, CT



- Started with using ARPA funding to address root causes: the systemic problems that create the need for services.
 - Spanned boundaries across government, organizations, business and community leaders to co-create an RFP plan.
 - RFP designed to build on assets in the community and share power with residents.
-
- Established a community of practice to center on wellbeing, identify structural barriers and disrupt “business as usual.”
 - Use data to identify structural barriers that should be fixed structurally, not by providing human services.

Highlights from Contracting for Transformation Toolkit



- Is the procurement centered around common assumptions that reinforce narratives of “othering” rather than acknowledging concepts like “we are more alike than different” and “there is always something that is working”?
- Does the procurement process consider equitable access to wellbeing?
- How does the procurement build in processes to design with, not for community?



Discussion: funding differently



What are a few questions to ask yourself,
communities, developers so that
you fund projects that create access to wellbeing?

Three questions to pose in your procurement



- How has the community been involved in the design of your proposal?
- How does your project direct as much funding as possible to the communities hardest hit in the last two years?
- What do you hope to try out or change using this funding that would help fix systems or change how you operate?





Today's themes

We all are hardwired for wellbeing, but we don't all have a fair shot at wellbeing.

Social infrastructure and wellbeing reservoirs are vital for economic and civic thriving.

Two additional places to focus:

- Partnering with community
- Procuring for wellbeing

Moving it forward



Next steps:

Try it out, and come to a one-hour coaching session with FFI!

Tools:

- [Procurement Toolkit: Contracting for Transformation](#)
- [ARPA Procurement Scoring Document \(adapted from New London, CT\)](#)
- [Community Bill of Rights Information Request](#)

Resources:

- [The Wellbeing in Action Map](#)
- [Wellbeing Bootcamp](#)

