



Legislation Text

File #: 18-319, Version: 1

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council

THRU: Telly Whitfield, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Rebecca Jackson, Strategy and Performance Analytics Director

DATE: September 4, 2018

RE: Social Capital Survey and Community Forum Report

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S):
All- Countywide Survey and Community Forum

Relationship To Strategic Plan:

This project helped the City meet the objectives under Goal VI: Citizen Engagement and Partnerships, by informing and educating the public through increased community dialog and establishing collaboration partnerships.

Executive Summary:

Greater Fayetteville United, or GFU, is a nonprofit corporation, established over 20 years ago. GFU has been involved in several critical community efforts including Study Circles, community conversations, and mediation between law enforcement and residents. Membership includes representatives from local governments, public school system, higher learning institutions, local nonprofits, community agencies, businesses, public safety agencies and engaged residents. Several GFU founding members are still active participants. The mission of GFU is to serve as the convener of community resources and organizations to enhance the quality of life through education, cooperation, and empowerment. GFU is committed to the goal of establishing and sustaining dialogue and partnerships, in an effort to increase inclusion, civic empowerment, and social capital. GFU provided a first look into the level of social capital for Cumberland County and its seven municipalities with the completion of this benchmarking survey and community forum. Why is social capital important to the City? The City continues to grow and change. Now, more than ever, we face complicated issues and, just like communities across the nation, these issues demand innovative and collaborative solutions. We must focus on strengthening the social fabric of our community to improve the quality of life for all. Social capital is the glue that holds our community together. It is the measure of interracial trust, communication, engagement in politics, formal group involvement, giving and volunteering, faith based engagement, and informal social ties. Communities with a strong foundation of trust between and among different groups are healthier, thrive economically and educationally, and are more likely to take action to improve their community. Low levels of social capital often translate into a lower quality of life for residents. These communities

also have less civic engagement, which can diminish a community's ability to come together to solve its problems.

Background:

The social capital assessment project was a collaborative community project. GFU gratefully acknowledged the support of the Raymond and Eleanor Manning Family Fund of Cumberland Community Foundation, The City of Fayetteville, The Fayetteville Cumberland Human Relations Commission and Fayetteville State University for their generous support with this project. Cumberland Community Foundation funded \$20,000 and the City of Fayetteville funded \$12,460 for a total budget of \$32,460 for the survey and the community forum. The Director of Strategy and Performance Analytics Office for the City served as project team lead. The Human Relations Commission and Fayetteville State University assisted with logistics and venue for the community forum. Together, the survey and forum provided the data the community needs to establish a benchmark and empower residents and local agencies to work together to build stronger fabric and strengthen community bonds. The survey was conducted in May, 2017. It was administered by a nationally recognized consultant. The results of the social capital assessment point to community strengths and also key gap areas to improve. The full report is included as an attachment to the City Council Agenda Item.

GFU conducted a community forum focusing on the survey results and empowering residents and encouraging engagement to develop solutions to address lagging indicators. The forum provided the opportunity for the community to understand more about our social capital and come together to bridge the gap. The Fayetteville-Cumberland Social Capital Community Forum was held on September 19, 2017 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Fayetteville State University, Shaw Auditorium, 1200 Murchison Road. More than 160 residents from across the county attended the social capital forum to hear more about the results of the social capital survey and to participate in a collaborative discussion on moving community forward-- as one. A full report is included as an attachment to the City Council Agenda Item.

GFU meets every month on the first Wednesday at 7:30 am at the Kiwanis Recreation Center, 352 Devers Street in Fayetteville NC. ALL are welcome to attend.

Issues/Analysis:

None.

Budget Impact:

None.

Options:

Approve the report.
Do not approve the report

Recommended Action:

Approve the report.

Attachments:

1. Social Capital Project Briefing PowerPoint
2. Social Capital Survey Report
3. Social Capital Forum Report