

CAN Community Council Notes  
 June 16, 2025, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm  
 Zoom Video Conference

**Attendees:** Ara Merjanian, Caroline Reynolds, Donovan DePriest, Craig McNary, Nancy Gilliam

**CAN Staff:** Jelina Tunstill, Raul Alvarez, Carlos Soto

**Guests:** None

<b>Call to Order</b>	The meeting was called to order at 11:46 am. A quorum was not present.
<b>Approval of minutes from the March 24, 2025, April 21, 2025, and May 19, 2025 Meeting</b>	The March 24, 2025, April 21, 2025, and May 19, 2025 meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Donovan and a second by Ara.
<b>Community Council Chair’s Report</b>	<b>Summary:</b> Craig stated that the focus of today’s meeting is to continue planning the 2 forums in the fall. He is excited to give something to the Board that has community voice in it.
<b>Executive Director’s Report</b>	<b>Summary:</b> Raul shared that the CAN Board voted on economic indicators for the Dashboard. A couple passed and a couple need to come back for more conversation. He stated that we will be having a fundraiser in the fall, as well as, the community council forums, an expanding opportunity forum, and the dashboard release.
<b>Social Capital Forum Planning and Update</b>	<b>Summary:</b> Jelina shared that we confirmed our speaker Ivanna Neri. The date and location have been set and she will share the registration link in the chat.  <b>Comments and Suggestions:</b> Ara suggested making sure our location has ample free parking.
<b>Social Capital Atlas Overview</b>	<b>Summary:</b> Carlos shared the Social Capital Atlas Tool website. He explained that he used the tutorial available on the website to learn how to navigate it. He previewed the colleges setting since there were less of those on the map. Economic Connectedness, Cohesiveness, and Civic Engagement are the three factors the social capital atlas uses to measure social capital. He then showed how the data was gathered through Facebook data. Raul added that one thing we can point out is the scarcity of data regarding social capital. One of the things we can determine through the presentations we receive today is how we want to define social capital for our forum and what we want to focus on.

	<p><b>Comments and Suggestions:</b> Ara pointed out that there are some gaps in this data regarding data and age. Craig shared that meta pulls data across their platforms, but they would still be missing older people in the data regardless of platform.</p>
<p><b>Social Capital Report Review Report Outs</b></p>	<p><b>Report Out Summaries</b></p> <p><b>Ara -</b> Ara reviewed the <i>UI Article: How We Can Measure Social Connection</i>. The report stated the difference between social capital (which is measurable benefits and resources) and social connection (which is relationships). They also update the <i>Upward Mobility Dashboard</i> which measures association and connectedness. They argue that the best measures are local measures. They highlight a number of organizations focusing on social capital: The Foundation for Social Connection, American Time Use Survey, National Conference in Citizenship, Opportunity Insights Social Capital Atlas, and Aspen Institute’s Social Trust Index. He shared his conclusions that some of this could be helpful in helping us decide on definitions and questions we could ask in our forum. He stated this could also be helpful for the Dashboard Steering Committee and could lead to another indicator for civic engagement. Last, he shared that this report could be tied to our past reports.</p> <p><b>Nancy –</b> Nancy reviewed an article called <i>Did You Know Social Connection is the Key to Living a Happier, Healthier, and Longer Life?</i> She shared that the article labeled social connection as a basic human need. It also talked about social isolation leading to negative health effects such as obesity, sedentary lifestyle, stress, and inflammation. 13% of people experience loneliness often or always, there’s a 30% increase in premature death for people who are chronically lonely, and 69% of people know someone that is chronically lonely. The laid-out steps to address loneliness by making social connections a priority, maintaining and deepening relationships, limiting technology use, foster healthy social and emotional development, design the environment to invest in activity. Ara asked if the article differentiated between solitude and loneliness. Nancy stated that it did not.</p> <p><b>Craig –</b> Craig reviewed the <i>Executive Director of Healthy Places by Design</i>. This report talked about ways to build social connections in the community. He stated that the article felt like common sense that people should be connected to each other and designing the space so that people can connect. The 5 steps the article shared were designing public spaces, transit that allows connection, constructing housing that encourages community, investing in inclusive practices and community led solutions, and making social connectedness a community norm. He stated that we just need to give people the space to voice their needs and then build that out instead of what we assume they need.</p> <p><b>Comments and Suggestions:</b> Caroline suggested inviting someone from the City or the Parks and Rec department on a panel to discuss the impact of public spaces on social capital. Ara seconded Caroline’s point. Ara asked about craigs understanding of the difference between social capital and social connectedness. Craig explained that social connectedness is the connection to others and social capital is the connection of people to power/ systems/ resources and they are interconnected.</p>



<b>Planning: Economic Mobility Forum</b>	<p><b>Summary:</b> Jelina gave 3 options for potential names for the economic mobility forum: Addressing Barriers to Economic Mobility, How Can We Support Economic Mobility, and The Imperative of Economic Mobility. The group decided to go with a more positive tone with Paving the way for Economic Mobility as the handle. Jelina stated that regarding day and time for the forum, the first forum is happening the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September and if people wanted to follow that same timing for the October forum. Members agreed with the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October. Last, she opened the conversation up to suggestions of speakers. Craig suggested Yael Lawson with Workforce Solutions and Dustin Little with the City of Austin. Ara suggested keeping the speakers with a broad focus that can speak to systems. He suggested Steve Pedigo specifically. Raul suggested AUTMHQ. Ara suggested speakers that could speak to all the barriers. Ara asked if a tentative agenda could be presented at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Follow-up:</b> Jelina will create a run-of-show for the social capital forum.</p>
<b>Adjourn</b>	The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 pm