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# Governance and Civic Associations in City Regions

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# Governance in City Regions

- Socio-economic relations manifested in spatial and institutional ways
  - How do institutions shape these relations within and across spatial levels
    - Multilevel governance and ‘nested scales’
  - Role of institutional structures as compared to individual actors in supporting urban and regional innovation
    - Collaboration among actors mobilizes local assets and helps shape local institutional arrangements
- Governance in City Regions
  - Distinction between government and governance rests on recognition that
    - Policy outcomes depend on interaction effects among a range of social actors
  - Governing relations have moved from hierarchical to heterarchical basis
  - Distributed governance entails the dispersion of power over wider range of actors
    - Involves market forces, state institutions and civic association
  - Governance signifies a broadening and extension of the meaning of government
    - Boundaries between public and private actors and across different levels of government

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# From Social to Civic Capital

- Features of social organization of a region that facilitate coordination and cooperation among economic actors
  - Capital refers to asset
  - Social connotes that it is attained through community
- Civic capital consists of interpersonal networks and solidarity within a community based on a shared identity, expectations or goals and *tied to a specific region or locality*
  - *Bridging* not *bonding* capital
  - Comprised of formal or informal networks between individual community members, between communities, or between community and the state
  - Critical role of local leaders in intensifying and formalizing collaborative networks within and between communities.
- Define civic capital as sense of solidarity or interpersonal ties
  - *but also accounts for how it can be harnessed and intensified for meaningful regional governance by civic entrepreneurs.*

# Strategic Management of City Regions

- Regional response to globalization is emergence of strategic management policy
  - Not for firms, but for regions
    - Development and enhancement of factors of production that cannot be transferred across geographic space at low cost
  - “This strategic management of regions has harnessed the propensity for knowledge and innovative activity to concentrate geographically as a locomotive of regional economic development” (Audretsch, 2002)
- Collaborative institutions - formal and informal organizations that:
  - Facilitate exchange of information and technology
  - Foster cooperation and coordination
  - Enhance civic capital and improve competitiveness by:
    - Creating relationships and establishing trust
    - Forming collective institutions
    - Identifying common strengths and developing common agenda
- Strategic planning exercises draw upon civic capital created by these institutions
  - Generate trust by engaging key social partners in ‘talk’ – builds set of shared understandings and expectations

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# Competitive or Collaborative?

- Role and nature of local civic associations
  - How constituted?
  - How competitive?
  - How inclusive?
- Relations with formal government bodies or agencies
  - Complementary or otherwise?
  - Do associational activities support government initiatives?
  - How effective?
- Inter-organizational dynamics
  - Competitive or collaborative?
  - Degree of involvement of key industry actors
- How effective are the results of strategic planning efforts
  - Have they successfully mobilized the local community?
  - Do concrete initiatives results from the planning activities?
  - Impact?

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# Conclusion

- Some successes
  - Dense network of civic associations
    - But challenge of working across wide array of social, cultural and economic sectors – and
    - Spatial scales!
  - Some evidence of multilevel governance across jurisdictional scales
  - Progressive economic development strategy at urban level
    - But corporatist process
- Strong limitations
  - Lingering effects of neo-liberal amalgamation agenda
  - Competition between associational initiatives and civic government led ones
  - Limited cooperation across provincial and municipal government
    - New City of Toronto Act
  - But where are is the federal government
    - Urban Development Agreement for Toronto?
    - Community Futures for Toronto?