“Reinventing” a Tornado Ravaged Community: A Community Capitals Approach

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- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMzxHGNaIlR8
Twin Tornado Aftermath
Reinventing Pilger: A Community Capitals Approach
The Community Capitals

- **Natural capital**: Those assets that abide in a location, including resources, amenities and natural beauty.

- **Cultural capital**: Reflects the way people “know the world” and how to act within it. Cultural capital includes the dynamics of who we know and feel comfortable with, what heritages are valued, collaboration across races, ethnicities, and generations, etc.

- **Human capital**: The skills and abilities of people, as well as the ability to access outside resources and bodies of knowledge in order to increase understanding and to identify promising practices.
The Community Capitals, Continued

- **Social capital**: Reflects the connections among people and organizations or the social glue to make things happen.
- **Political capital**: The ability to influence standards, rules, regulations and their enforcement.
- **Financial capital**: The financial resources available to invest in community capacity building, to underwrite businesses development, to support civic and social entrepreneurship, and to accumulate wealth for future community development.
- **Built capital**: The infrastructure that supports the community, such as telecommunications, industrial parks, mainstreets, water and sewer systems, roads, etc.
Rebuilding the Community Capitals

Social Capital

- Heartland Center convened a series of town hall meetings designed to gather community input on Pilger’s reinvention
- Task Forces created which initially included
  - Community Center (Natural)
  - School/Pre-School (Built, Cultural)
  - Sustainability/Trees (Natural)
  - Bar/Restaurant/Coffee Shop (Built, Financial, Social)
  - Recreation (Natural, Social)
  - Communications (Built)
  - Community Clean-Up (Built, Social)
  - People Attraction/Branding (Human)
Rebuilding the Community Capitals

Financial

- Financial: Immediately following the destructive tornadoes, the CO-OP set plans in motion to rebuild grain elevators before fall harvest
- Midwest bank broke ground on their building in June 2015
Rebuilding the Community Capitals
Cultural Capital

- Pilger Days
- Church Services
- Horseshoe Pitching
- Pilger RE: A celebration of REbuilding, RESilience, and REcovery for anyone that has supported Pilger over the last year
- Eighty-one Seconds: The Attack and Aftermath as Tornadoes Hit Pilger, Stanton, Wakefield and Wisner, Nebraska
Rebuilding the Community Capitals

Built Capital

- Construction on the city office and new fire hall
- Community Center funding, site location and land donation
- Convenience Store and Restaurant both are in the process of business plan creation
Rebuilding the Community Capitals

Natural Capital

- Numerous trees have been donated by local organizations in the spring of 2015 and anticipated again this fall.

- Bushes and perennials may also become available
Rebuilding the Community Capitals
Human Capital

- Population was 352 now 200
- Community rebranding from “The Little Town Too Tough to Die” to “Pioneering Possibilities”
- New signage on highway with a 1950’s vintage feel
- Updated website
Next Steps
Thank You!

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