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## Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Is Community Development still effective?

By CED Guest Author

Article: <https://ced.sog.unc.edu/is-community-development-still-effective/>

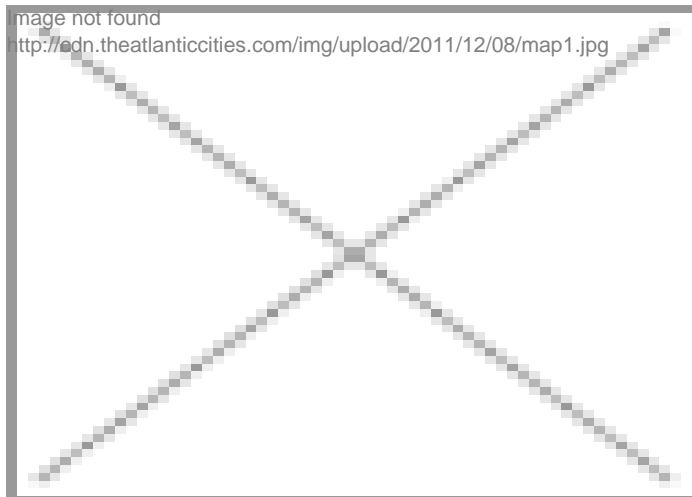
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In a chapter from *Investing in What Works for America's Communities*, Brookings Institution senior fellow and research director Alan Berube questions whether community development still has a role in addressing poverty in the U.S — arguing that the changing face of poverty since community development gained traction over 40 years ago may hamper the continued success of this antipoverty strategy.

Specifically, the chapter entitled *The Continuing Evolution of American Poverty and Its Implications for Community Development* poses three questions regarding the current relevancy and future success of community development as an effective tool to combat persistent poverty:

- Can it serve the needs of diverse communities in an ever-more pluralistic American society, where immigration and Latino growth are continuously transforming low-income populations and the issues they face?
- Can it shift its focus toward helping populations increasingly characterized by a lack of work in the post-recession economy, broadening activities well beyond housing and economic development to link people to much higher-quality skills than community-based job training has historically provided?
- Can it move well beyond inner-city communities in a world of majority-suburban poverty, where traditional place-based strategies may bump up against radically different physical, economic, and social environments?



Berube argues that "...today's poverty differs in several fundamental ways from the poverty that reformers set out to address more than four decades ago. Community development has evolved significantly, too, but perhaps not at the same pace as the underlying problems it set out to address. The incidence, location, and socioeconomic characteristics of poverty have shifted dramatically in some cases. These changes highlight a series of challenges for the future of place-based initiatives that aim to alleviate poverty, enhance economic mobility, and ultimately ensure that no one is severely disadvantaged by where they live."



The complete chapter can be accessed here.

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