

## *Instructions:*

Part 2 of this module's PowerPoint presentation features a placeholder for one optional activity. This menu contains four possible activities. Before the workshop begins, select one activity from the four options provided. The activities help reinforce concepts introduced in all of the tools, however, some activities align more closely with specific tools. See the table in the Instructor's Guide for a list of which activities closely align with which tools.

You should select the activity you are most comfortable with, as well as an activity that reinforces the concepts introduced by the tools. Additionally, you should select an activity that meets the needs and/or experience level of the regional team. For example, the virtual walking audit activity may not be challenging for participants who come from communities that have completed streetscape improvements.

Replace the activity placeholder slide with the slides associated with the activity you select by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this menu into the placeholder space, then deleting the placeholder slide. In addition, you also need to prepare the associated materials (instructor's notes and worksheets) that correspond with the selected activity.



## Instructions:

This SWOT activity is particularly relevant to regions/communities that are in the early stages of preparing economic development strategies and/or regional/community plans. It is also one of the simpler activities to prepare for, so you may select this activity if you have limited time to prepare or less experience with the concepts explored with the other activities. This activity may be placed at the beginning of Part 2 of the module, midway between the discussion of the four selected tools, or after discussing the four selected tools. It would be meaningful to do this activity after introducing Tool #9: Visioning or Tool#10: Policy Alignment.

This activity will provide an opportunity for participants to identify what economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) exist in the region and the potential linkages to land use policies and decision-making. Participants will gain an understanding of the role of land use policies and decisions in supporting or hindering economic development potential. The total length of the activity should be 30 minutes, so monitor the time as the activity progresses.

This activity requires:

- PowerPoint slides (see slides #137-139)
- SWOT Participant Worksheet (one per participant)
- Flip chart or white board and marker for instructor to take notes on group discussion

Before the workshop begins, if you select the SWOT analysis as the desired activity, insert the slides into the activity placeholder section of the main presentation and delete the placeholder slides.

Exercise steps:

1. Explain the exercise and distribute the SWOT worksheets to participants.
2. Facilitate a discussion to identify local economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (4-5 in each category) and record these on the large notepad.
3. Ask participants to identify possible land use linkages between each strength, weakness, opportunity and threat and record them as well.
4. Conclude with some comments about the need to ground economic development strategies in a realistic assessment of the local situation, and the opportunity to use sound land use planning to better support economic development.

### ACTIVITY: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT)



**Slide:** 1

**Time:** 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

## *Script:*

“Local land use policies can either strengthen or hinder local economic development strategies. The goal of this activity is to identify some local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as they relate to economic development, and then think about the potential role of local land use policy in helping to address them. This exercise is a facilitated group discussion.”

### **ACTIVITY: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT)**



**Slide:** 1 continued

**Time:** 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

## Instructions:

Solicit input from the workshop participants on what they see are the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to regional economic development, and record these on the flip chart. Strengths and weaknesses reference current conditions. Opportunities and threats reference anticipated future conditions. Record 4-5 strengths, then move on to weaknesses, etc. Spend about three minutes on each category for a total of 12 minutes for the SWOT brainstorming.



## Script:

“For this part of the exercise, we are going to quickly brainstorm economic development strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in this region. We will identify 4-5 items in each category that you can record on your SWOT worksheet. Keep in mind that strengths and weaknesses refer to current conditions, while opportunities and threats refer to possibilities for the future.

First, we will identify a handful of current regional strengths as they relate to economic development. Would anybody like to start by identifying one strength? [Continue until 4-5 strengths are recorded. If people are stuck, give an example: historic building stock, etc.]

Next, we will identify 4 or 5 current regional weaknesses related to economic development. Does anybody have one that they would like to share? [Continue until 4-5 weaknesses are recorded. If people are stuck, give an example: deteriorating downtowns, etc.]

Now we will shift our thoughts to future conditions. I would like the group to identify 4 or 5 emerging opportunities for regional economic development in the future. [Continue until 4 or 5 opportunities are recorded. If people are stuck, give an example: local elected officials have indicated interest in collaborating as a region, etc.]

Finally, can anybody identify a threat that could affect regional economic development in the future? [Continue until 4 or 5 threats are recorded. If people are stuck, give an example: demand is collapsing for regional agricultural products, etc.]”

**Slide:** 2

**Time:** 12 Minutes

**Handout:** SWOT worksheet

## Instructions:

For the second part of the activity, reference the flip chart listing of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the group just identified. For each item on the list under each category, ask participants to volunteer an idea about a possible linkage between that item and local land use policy and then record that linkage next to the applicable strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat. Examples are provided for the sample strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats listed above. End the exercise with some comments about how the SWOT analysis can form the basis to develop economic development strategies designed to retain, expand, and recruit new businesses, and how there are opportunities to support those economic strategies with land use policies that are linked. Spend about three minutes on each category, for a total of 12 minutes on the land use linkages discussion.

## Script:

“First, we will identify one linkage with land use policy for each of the items listed under the strengths category. Would somebody like to share an idea about a land use policy that could help to maintain and enhance the first strength?”

[Continue identifying land use policies that could help to maintain and enhance each strength. For example, sample policies that would support historic building stock: zoning codes that encourage the reuse of historic buildings, design guidelines for historic districts, etc.]

Next, we will tackle the weaknesses. Would somebody please share an idea of a land use policy that could help to eliminate or mitigate the first weakness listed?

[Continue identifying land use policies that could eliminate or mitigate each weakness. For example, sample policies that would address deteriorating downtowns: fix-it-first policies, streetscape improvements downtown, zoning codes that encourage infill development.]

Now we are moving on to the future. Does anybody have a suggestion for a land use policy that could help the community to better position itself to take advantage of the first opportunity?

[Continue listing ideas for land use policies that would leverage each opportunity identified. For example, sample policies that would support local elected officials collaborating as a region: developing a regional vision/plan.]

## Group Discussion: Land Use Linkages

- Maintain and enhance strengths
- Eliminate or mitigate weaknesses
- Position to take best advantage of opportunities
- Avoid or minimize threats



Slide: 3

Time: 12 Minutes

## Script (Cont.):

Thinking about possible future threats, are there land use policies that can help to avoid or minimize the threats we identified? Does somebody have an idea about a land use policy for the first threat?

[Continued sharing land use policies that could address each threat identified. For example, sample policies that would address collapsing demand for regional agricultural products: buy local campaigns/encouraging the purchase of products from the region, government purchase of local products.]

It is important that local and regional land use policies are not at cross purposes with your regional economic development strategy. Local and regional land use policies can do a lot to strengthen your economic development strategy. What's more, aligning land use and economic development efforts ensures that you're engaging in economic development that takes advantage of the built and land-based assets in your region. Hopefully this quick exercise has given you some ideas about the opportunities to support local economic development by recognizing links between land use and economic development and ensuring that land use policies support the economic strategies."

### Group Discussion: Land Use Linkages

- Maintain and enhance strengths
- Eliminate or mitigate weaknesses
- Position to take best advantage of opportunities
- Avoid or minimize threats



**Slide:** 3 continued

**Time:** 12 Minutes