

SWOT ACTIVITY

In this exercise, you will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to regional economic development and think about land use approaches that could help capitalize on opportunities and address challenges. The exercise will take place as a large group discussion, and this worksheet is provided as a way for you to record your thoughts or take notes on the discussion.

Strength for Regional Economic Development	Land use approaches that could help maintain/enhance strength

Weakness for Regional Economic Development	Land use approaches that could help eliminate/mitigate weakness

Opportunity for Regional Economic Development	Land use approaches that could help capitalize on opportunity

Threat for Regional Economic Development	Land use approaches that could help avoid or minimize threat

Instructions:

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The goal categories are identified at the bottom of each tool slide and include:

1. Support the Rural Landscape
2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

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You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #1 begins with this slide. It focuses on the first goal and the first strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

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**GOAL #1:
SUPPORT THE
RURAL LANDSCAPE**

*Strategy A: Ensure the Viability of the
Resource Economy in the Region*

Script:

“The first goal we discussed was to support the rural landscape. A number of proven strategies can be used to help create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands. One of these strategies is to ensure the viability of the resource economy in the region. We will identify some tools and policies that support it, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, use value taxation.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy and mention the possible tools and policies related to it. Remind the participants that a list of all goals, strategies and tools is provided in Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

Script:

“Historically, regions have relied on agricultural production or other resource-related activities, such as logging, fishing, or resource extraction, for their economic foundation. A healthy resource economy creates the economic means for maintenance of the rural landscapes. Tools and policies related to this strategy include: use value taxation; tax credits for conservation; right to farm policies; renewable energy development; value-added farm and forest products processing; and ecosystem services markets. Many of these tools and policies are best implemented at the regional level, as resource-based economic activities often take place throughout a region, and communities and counties can be more effective by partnering with each other on these efforts.

We are going to focus on use value taxation. Details about the other tools and policies listed on this slide can also be found in Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.”

Strategy A: Ensure the Viability of the Resource Economy in the Region

To maintain rural landscapes, ensure that it is economically attractive for landowners to preserve the land for resource-based activities.

Tools and Policies

- Use value taxation
- Tax credits for conservation
- Right to farm policies
- Renewable energy development
- Value-added farm and forest products processing
- Ecosystem services markets



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the concept of use value taxation. In this case, “use” is pronounced like the noun, not the verb.

Script:

“Use value taxation involves collecting property taxes based on the current use of the property, such as agriculture or timber production, as opposed to the property’s market value, which is often much higher due to development pressures. The reduction in property taxes serves as an incentive for the property owner to maintain the rural landscape by not changing the use of their land and not selling it for development. The programs are voluntary, and the landowners must opt in and agree to land use restrictions for a period of time in exchange for the reduction in property taxes.

Use value taxation is already used in some form in every state except Michigan. The implementation of use value taxation is a function of the specific provisions for the program in state law, and choices made at the local (county or city) level about how it is administered, consistent with state law. Additionally, since use value taxation is voluntary on the part of the property owner, marketing of the program and property owner attitudes about the pros and cons of participation will also affect the use of this tool.”

Strategy A: Ensure the Viability of the Resource Economy in the Region

Use Value Taxation

- Assessed based on the income producing potential of the land versus market value
- Reduces property taxes in exchange for landowners maintaining the rural landscape
- Voluntary – landowners must opt in
- Preserves land for a set period of time that can be renewed



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 3

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of use value taxation.

Script:

“Several benefits are associated with use value taxation. It helps improve economics of agriculture and other targeted activities. The lower property taxes reduces pressure on landowners to convert land to development, and the knowledge that land will be preserved can encourage landowners to be better stewards of the land.”



Strategy A: Ensure the Viability of the Resource Economy in the Region

Benefits of Use Value Taxation

- Helps improve economics of agriculture and other targeted activities
- Reduces pressure on landowners to convert land to development
- Knowledge that land will be preserved can encourage landowners to be better stewards of the land

Goal #1: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of successful implementation of use value taxation.

Script:

“The State of Washington’s Open Space Taxation Act was enacted in 1970. Agricultural land, open space, and timber land can be taxed at its current use value as opposed to its potential value on the market (or fair market value). The land use can be preserved in its current use for at least 10 years. Approximately 75 percent of the state’s agricultural land has market value potential greater than the agricultural use value of the land. Farming value averages about 28 percent of the fair market value. Washington State has more than 11 million acres of land enrolled in use value taxation, according to the American Farmland Trust. Use value taxation is used in some form in every state except Michigan.”

Strategy A: Ensure the Viability of the Resource Economy in the Region

Example of Use Value Taxation

Washington

- Approximately 75% of agricultural land has fair market value greater than farming value
- Farming value averages about 28% of fair market value
- More than 11 million acres of land enrolled in use value taxation



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Additional Information:

Refer to the following publication from the State of Washington for more background information on this example:

http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/OpenSpace.pdf

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You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #2 begins with this slide. It focuses on the first goal and the second strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

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Script:

“The first goal we discussed was to support the rural landscape. A number of proven strategies can be used to help create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands. One of these strategies is to cultivate economic development strategies that rely on traditional rural landscapes. We will identify some tools and policies that support it, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, agritourism and ecotourism.”



**GOAL #1:
SUPPORT THE
RURAL LANDSCAPE**

*Strategy B: Cultivate Economic
Development Strategies that Rely on
Traditional Rural Landscapes*

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Successful economic development strategies are rooted in the unique characteristics of a place, including the community’s natural assets. For rural areas, this often means creating economic development strategies that link to the traditional rural landscape.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include: purchase of development rights; conservation easements; fee simple acquisition; and agritourism and ecotourism. Many of these tools and policies are best implemented at the regional level, as resource-based economic activities often take place throughout a region and communities and counties can be more effective by partnering on these efforts. We’re going to focus on agritourism and ecotourism. Information on the other tools and policies is included in Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.”

Strategy B: Cultivate Economic Development Strategies that Rely on Traditional Rural Landscapes

Successful economic development strategies leverage a community's natural assets. For rural areas, the surrounding landscape is an important asset.

Tools and Policies:

- Purchase of development rights
- Conservation easements
- Fee simple acquisition
- **Agritourism and ecotourism**



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the concepts of agritourism and ecotourism.

Script:

“Agritourism and ecotourism use the traditional rural landscape and its associated products and activities as a visitor attraction. Agritourism activities can include farm visits and overnight stays at farm bed-and-breakfast operations. This may include the chance to help with farming and ranching tasks. Agritourism can also include recreational activities like hunting and fishing. Ecotourism targets an ecoconscious segment of the population who want to engage in nature-related tourism on conservation lands while reducing the ecological footprint of their visit. This can include hiking, camping, birdwatching and a range of other outdoor activities. Agritourism and ecotourism promotion are best implemented at the regional level because tourists will be interested in visiting places across the region, and a strong regional brand will help strengthen local economic development efforts.”

Strategy B: Cultivate Economic Development Strategies that Rely on Traditional Rural Landscapes

Agritourism/Ecotourism: Capitalizes on the traditional rural landscape and associated products and activities as visitor attractions



- **Agritourism** - attracts visitors who are interested in learning about farming and agricultural products
- **Ecotourism** - attracts visitors who are interested in experiencing the natural environment

Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of agritourism and ecotourism.

Script:

“A major benefit of cultivating economic development strategies that rely on traditional rural landscapes is that it creates economic opportunity from the rural landscape while keeping it intact. In other words, it is not necessary to urbanize the landscape in order to have economic development. Agritourism provides an opportunity for farmers to diversify their income by serving visitors. This can include activities like “u-pick” produce operations, fruit stands, farm stays and bed and breakfast operations, pumpkin patches, and hay rides. Both agritourism and ecotourism rely on the ability to offer visitors the opportunity to experience an authentic rural landscape, which aligns the goals of economic growth with the goals of preserving rural character. Agritourism and ecotourism are not viable when the character of the rural landscape is compromised.”

Strategy B: Cultivate Economic Development Strategies that Rely on Traditional Rural Landscapes

Agritourism/Ecotourism Benefits

- Leverages the natural landscape to attract economic opportunity while preserving rural character
 - Not necessary to urbanize the landscape to have economic development
- Provides an opportunity for farmers to diversify their income by serving visitors



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of successful implementation of agritourism/ecotourism.

Script:

“As featured on this slide, California’s Apple Hill is an agritourism success story. The Apple Hill growers association was established in 1964 and has grown to over 50 participating ranches. The growers association markets the area as a tourist destination, where people from nearby urban areas in Northern California can visit working ranches and engage in activities such as apple picking, Christmas tree cutting, and winetasting. There are farmstands, restaurants, and other retail offerings. The association promotes a calendar of special events that occur throughout the year, and the association produces a printed guide to the area, as well as a website. According to an economic impact study commissioned by the association, the median ranch reported 70 percent of its visitors were from outside of the county, and the Apple Hill activities supported approximately 200 jobs and \$20 million in economic output, as of 2006.”

Strategy B: Cultivate Economic Development Strategies that Rely on Traditional Rural Landscapes

Agritourism and Ecotourism Example
Apple Hill, El Dorado County, CA

- Growers association markets area as a tourist destination
- Apple picking, farm stands, Christmas tree farms, wineries and vineyards, ranches
- Year-round special events
- Supported 200 jobs and \$20 million in output



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Additional Information:

Refer to the following publication for more background information on this example: <http://www.strategiceconomicresearch.org/AboutUs/AHGAImpacts.pdf>

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MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

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Script:

“The first goal we discussed was to support the rural landscape. A number of proven strategies can be used to help create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands. One of these strategies is to promote rural products in urban areas and support other urban-rural linkages. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, direct marketing to consumers.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Nearby urban areas represent a large and lucrative market for products produced in rural areas. Building better links between rural areas and urban areas can bring mutual benefits, including generating income for the rural producers, and providing fresh, healthy local foods for urban consumers.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include: direct marketing to consumers; government purchase of local products; and “buy local” campaigns. Many of these tools and policies are best implemented at the regional level, as resource-based economic activities often take place throughout a region and communities and counties can be more effective by partnering on these efforts. The following three slides will focus on direct marketing to consumers, providing a brief overview, a discussion of benefits, and a successful example.”

Strategy C: Promote Rural Products in Urban Areas and Support Other Urban-Rural Links

Urban areas represent a large and lucrative market for rural products. It is important to build links between the two for mutual benefit.

Tools and Policies

- **Direct marketing to consumers**
- Government purchase of local products
- “Buy local” campaigns



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the concept of direct marketing.

Script:

“Farmers and other producers can directly market their products to consumers, rather than selling into the conventional food supply chain involving packers, shippers, processors, distributors, and retailers. The 2007 Census of Agriculture indicated that direct sales to consumers represented \$1.2 billion in sales that year. This was an increase of 49 percent since 2002. New data from the 2012 Census of Agriculture should be available soon.

There are numerous models for direct marketing to consumers, including:

- Community Supported Agriculture programs through which members purchase shares in the harvest before planting season and, in return, receive an allotment of seasonal produce on a regular basis
- Farmers markets
- Direct sales to local stores.”

Strategy C: Promote Rural Products in Urban Areas and Support Other Urban-Rural Links

Direct Marketing to Consumers

- Farmers and other producers directly market their products to consumers
 - \$1.2 billion in direct food sales to consumers in 2007; up 49% from 2002
 - Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs
 - Farmers Markets
 - Direct sales to local stores
- A good fit with “buy local” campaigns



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

For More Information:

Review the USDA's Facts on Direct to Consumer Food Marketing document (from the 2007 Census of Agriculture) at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5076729>

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of direct marketing to consumers.

Script:

“Direct marketing lets farmers increase their profit margins by letting them capture the markup that would typically go to other players in the value chain, such as packers, shippers, distributors, and retailers. Direct marketing can support food security by enhancing the viability of local agriculture and bringing production closer to consumers. Consumers benefit from fresher food and knowing where their food comes from and how it is produced.

Creating more direct links between farmers and consumers creates a constituency among urban dwellers for the support and preservation of farmlands and farming. Those links also create a potential audience for agritourism. Local communities benefit from re-circulation of dollars within the economy, rather than profits being captured by businesses that are located outside of the area. And again, when producers can earn more from working their land, they are less likely to sell it for development, preserving this valuable asset and the rural character of the landscape.”

Strategy C: Promote Rural Products in Urban Areas and Support Other Urban-Rural Links

Benefits of Direct Marketing to Consumers

- Increases profit margins for farmers
- Supports food security by enhancing viability of local agriculture and bringing production closer to consumers
- Builds support among urban dwellers to preserve the nearby farmers and farmlands that produce their foods
- Local community benefits from re-circulation of dollars within the economy.



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 4

Time: 2 Minute

Instructions:

Share with the group one example of successful a farmers market.

Script:

“Be Local Northern Colorado is a non-profit organization that works to promote locally-based products and goods in the northern Colorado region. One special event sponsored by Be Local Northern Colorado is the Winter Farmers Markets. The region offers a variety of farmers markets, community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and other direct marketing opportunities during the warmer months, but the Winter Farmers Markets provide a unique off-season venue for regionally-based direct sellers of agricultural products in the populated city of Fort Collins. In addition to encouraging producers to expand their offerings and production volume, the Winter Farmers Markets are helping to accustom area shoppers to year-round availability of local agricultural products.

The Markets have grown from a single event per year, and now 14 Markets are held twice a month from late October through mid-April. Data from the 2010-2011 Winter Market Season (reported in the Northern Colorado Regional Food Assessment Project final report) shows that each market date featured 50-55 vendors, drew 1,500 to 2,000 visitors, and produced vendor sales of approximately \$25,000.”

Strategy C: Promote Rural Products in Urban Areas and Support Other Urban-Rural Links

Direct Marketing to Consumers Example

Be Local Winter Farmers Markets, CO

- Sponsored by Non-profit organization, Be Local Northern Colorado
- Provides an off-season venue for local direct sellers
 - Produce and meat
 - Locally processed food products
 - Land-based crafts people (e.g., alpaca fiber, wood products)



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 5

Time: 2 Minutes

Additional Information:

For more information about this example visit the following websites:

Northern Colorado Regional Food Assessment Project:
http://larimer.org/foodassessment/final_conclusions.pdf

Be Local Northern Colorado:
<http://www.belocalnc.org/>

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Instructions:

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Script:

“The first goal we discussed was to support the rural landscape. A number of proven strategies can be used to help create an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands. One of these strategies is to link rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, transfer of development rights.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Linking rural land preservation strategies to great neighborhoods can help support the rural landscape by implementing sound policies that prioritize which land is most important to preserve and which land is best suited to accommodate future growth. Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include:

- Transfer of development rights, where development rights are transferred from working lands or conservation areas to areas more suitable for development
- Priority funding areas, which encourage development investment in certain geographic areas by providing targeted incentives, such as funding for infrastructure improvements. This can help to remove growth pressures from areas not targeted for development by making it more financially viable to develop in the priority funding areas.
- Agriculture, ranching, and forestry zoning, which restricts other uses, such as residential development
- Rural home clustering, an alternative to large lot, dispersed subdivision development

Many of these tools and policies are best implemented at the regional level, as resource-based economic activities often take place throughout a region and communities and counties can be more effective by partnering on these efforts. The following three slides will focus on transfer of development rights, providing a brief overview, discussion of benefits, and an example of successful implementation.”

Strategy D: Link Rural Land Preservation Strategies to Great Neighborhoods

With strategic and early planning, a community can prioritize which land is most important to preserve and which land can accommodate the projected need for future growth.

Tools and Policies

- **Transfer of development rights**
- Priority funding areas
- Agriculture, ranching, or forestry zoning
- Rural home clustering



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 2

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the concept of transfer of development rights as an example of one way to incorporate preservation strategies.

Script:

“Implementing a transfer of development rights (often called TDR) program allows a community to protect certain areas of land from development. TDR is a way to allow the right to develop a property to move to another property. For example, a farmer can sell the right to develop his farmland to a developer, who is then allowed to build at a higher residential density in a planned growth area. The farmer benefits financially by getting a financial return without selling his farmland for development. The developer benefits by being allowed to build at a higher density, or by building in an area that might otherwise not be designated for development. The lands designated for protection are classified as “sending areas,” and the rights to develop them are transferred to other areas, designated as “receiving areas.” These receiving areas are areas where the community wants to encourage growth.

TDR credits permit developers who buy them to build at higher densities in the receiving areas. They also provide financial opportunities for rural property owners to maintain their rural uses instead of selling them for development. There are a number of such programs in existence around the country, at all scales and sizes. They can be used to protect working lands to ensure that they can stay in production, as well as to protect sensitive natural areas. The public benefits both from the farmer preserving his farmland through the sale of his development rights and from the developer building more intense development in a planned growth area.

By adding the TDR tool to the zoning ordinance, the local government gives landowners in the sending area the legal ability to sever and sell development rights. The local government also determines how many TDRs the landowners have. For instance, the local government can grant one TDR for every five acres a landowner owns, so a landowner who owns 100 acres would have 20 TDRs. The local government determines how many TDR credits a developer must purchase to increase density.

Lands from which TDRs have been sold are permanently restricted from further

Strategy D: Link Rural Land Preservation Strategies to Great Neighborhoods

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

- Protects one area of undeveloped land (“sending area”) by transferring the rights to develop it to another area (“receiving area”)
- More than 100 TDR programs across the country
- 26+ states have legislation enabling TDR



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 3

Time: 5 Minutes

Script (Cont.):

development through a conservation easement. A conservation easement is a legally recorded restriction that generally limits the use of a property to farming, forestry, and open space. Other commercial, residential, industrial, or institutional land uses are not allowed, other than a primary residence for the farmer.

Local governments typically develop and administer these programs, however, they can also be administered as a regional program or by a land trust or other non-profit organization. TDR programs have administrative responsibilities, including monitoring the sale and transfer of development rights, and ensuring that conservation easements are put in place for protected lands. Some programs use revenues generated by sale of TDRs for purchase and protection of additional lands for farming or open space protection.”

Strategy D: Link Rural Land Preservation Strategies to Great Neighborhoods

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

- Protects one area of undeveloped land (“sending area”) by transferring the rights to develop it to another area (“receiving area”)
- More than 100 TDR programs across the country
- 26+ states have legislation enabling TDR



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 3 continued

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of transfer of development rights.

Script:

“A TDR program can help a community ensure that development happens where they want it to happen – in priority areas that have been designated as most suitable for additional development, while at the same time providing financial returns to property owners who wish to keep their land from developing.

TDR programs provide an economic incentive to conserve important lands such as agricultural areas, sensitive natural resources, and other working lands. The land owner can sell the development rights as an alternative to selling the land. When a landowner sells the right to develop his property, the landowner receives a cash payment. But the land is still private property, and the landowner retains all of the other rights and responsibilities of owning land. Additionally, the transfer of development rights allows developers who purchase TDR credits to build at higher densities than normally allowed in the receiving areas, resulting in more efficient use of land and infrastructure and potentially higher profits.

TDR programs also provide local governments with a means of funding landscape preservation by providing them with funds to purchase lands or conservation easements to protect farms, forests, and ranches. This way, rural property owners have the option of selling a conservation easement and continuing to keep the land in production, rather than having to sell the entire property.

Each TDR program is unique and must be tailored to the needs of each community and region in which it is to be operated, but in all cases the basic approach is similar – the severing and sale of development rights, to be purchased and used in designated locations where growth is preferred.”

Strategy D: Link Rural Land Preservation Strategies to Great Neighborhoods

Benefits of Transfer of Development Rights

- Provides an economic incentive to preserve land
 - Rural landowners have a financial incentive to not develop critical working lands (they can sell the development rights)
 - Allows developers to build at higher densities in desired development areas than they would normally be allowed
- Provides an economic mechanism to fund conservation
 - TDR dollars fund the local government purchase of selected rural conservation easements to protect farms, forests, or ranches elsewhere



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 4

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Provide an example of successful implementation of transfer of development rights.

Script:

“Montgomery County, Maryland, has a particularly successful transfer of development rights program. The county was losing 3,500 acres of land per year to sprawling suburban development before beginning its TDR program in 1980. Since implementing its TDR program, however, Montgomery County has been able to protect more than 93,000 acres of agricultural land. Today, Montgomery County has the highest percentage of farmland under agricultural land preservation easements in the nation.”

Strategy D: Link Rural Land Preservation Strategies to Great Neighborhoods

Transfer of Development Rights Example
Montgomery County, Maryland

- County was losing 3,500 acres of land per year to suburban sprawl
- Rural Density Transfer program started in 1980
- More than 93,000 acres (of the county's 316,000 acres) are still in agriculture



Goal #1: Support the Rural Landscape

Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Additional Information:
For an overview of their programs, see: <http://www.choosemontgomerymd.com/programs-incentives/agricultural-preservation>

Instructions:

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The goal categories are identified at the bottom of each tool slide and include:

1. Support the Rural Landscape
2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

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You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #5 begins with this slide. It focuses on the second goal and the first strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.



Script:

“The second goal we discussed earlier was to help existing places thrive. We must take care of existing assets and investments, such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places the community values. One strategy is to invest public and private funds in existing places. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, street and streetscape improvements.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Investing public and private funds in existing places can help those existing places thrive by leveraging future economic value out of prior investments. These existing places — whether they are main streets, historic buildings, walkable residential neighborhoods, or large, beautiful natural areas and parks — are assets that make a community distinctive and attractive to new residents and businesses.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include:

- Fix-it-first, an approach that prioritizes funding to repair and restore existing infrastructure before building new infrastructure
- Historic preservation and the Main Street Four-Part Approach, both of which emphasize preservation and revitalization of older, traditional business districts (developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Main Street Four-Part Approach is a national support program and revitalization strategy for participating communities)
- Street and streetscape improvements
- Targeted new development areas, where communities designate areas that are most suitable for new development in a comprehensive plan
- Highlighting large parks and natural resource areas as destinations, an approach that draws visitors and helps build an economy based on tourism

Many of these tools and policies are implemented at the local level. However, they strengthen the region as a whole, and the more communities that implement them, the more competitive the region will be. Regional plans are important for setting the policy priorities that can encourage municipalities to implement these ideas, and regional planning organizations can be key partners for gaining federal funding for infrastructure improvements.

We’re going to focus on street and streetscape improvements, starting with a brief overview of the tool, then moving on to benefits and an implementation example. For information on the other tools, see *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities* (ICMA/EPA).”

Strategy A: Invest Public and Private Funds in Existing Places



Development that leverages future economic value out of these prior investments can be the foundation for helping existing places thrive.

Tools and Policies

- Fix-it-first
- Historic preservation and the Main Street approach
- **Street and streetscape improvements**
- Targeted new development
- Parks and natural resource areas as destinations



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 2

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain street and streetscape improvements using the information on the slide.

Script:

“One good example of investing public and private funds in existing places is to invest in street and streetscape improvements in business districts and downtowns, making them more appealing to residents and visitors and helping to attract patrons to local businesses. These can include street paving, lighting, sidewalk improvements, trees and planters, and street furniture. Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle features as well as public transit stops and shelters can also make town centers more accessible to populations who do not drive, such as seniors and low-income communities.

In many states, funding is available through state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations and regional planning commissions for these improvements.”

Strategy A: Invest Public and Private Funds in Existing Places

Street and Streetscape Improvements

- Government organizations often have funding available
- Physical improvements encourage more investment
- Street paving, lighting, sidewalk improvements, trees and planters, and public transit structures



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of streets and streetscape improvements.

Script:

“In addition to making downtowns more appealing to residents and visitors and attracting customers to local businesses, street and streetscape improvements can also limit or slow automobile traffic by narrowing streets, making the area safer and more pleasant for walkers and increasing the likelihood that motorists will stop and shop. The addition of on-street parking spaces increases shopper access to local businesses and has the added advantage of narrowing the travel lanes, which can slow traffic and improve walkability. Improved walkability brings more pedestrians downtown to shop and also brings the community a host of health and social benefits.”

Strategy A: Invest Public and Private Funds in Existing Places

Street and Streetscape Improvement Benefits:

- Unique character and amenities draw people
- Increased pedestrian activity benefits/attracts retailers
- Lower traffic speeds encourage drivers to stop and shop
- Close-in parking for businesses
- Improved walkability



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of successful implementation of street and streetscape improvements.

Script:

“The town of Victor, Idaho, located near the Teton Mountains, is a good example of streetscape improvements on a tight budget. The community faced several challenges in revitalizing their Main Street, which also serves as a state highway and major transportation artery. The wide road’s heavy, fast-moving truck and car traffic passing through town created an unpleasant experience for pedestrians and a disincentive for quality future development in the downtown area. Victor did not have much funding for physical improvements to the street, so they elected to implement low-cost street re-striping options. Working with the Idaho DOT, Victor restriped Main Street to narrow travel lanes to help reduce truck and automobile speeds. They also created on-street parking and bike lanes. All these improvements have set the stage for future transformation into a landscaped boulevard. These improvements have helped lower traffic speeds, provided parking to serve local businesses, and created a more attractive environment for new businesses to open.

Their initial effort was relatively low cost, using re-striping to create narrower lanes to reduce speeds and create more on-street head-in parking. The town hopes to reconstruct the road to a boulevard with a wide, landscaped median in the future.”

Strategy A: Invest Public and Private Funds in Existing Places

Street and Streetscape Improvements Example

Victor, Idaho - Faced challenges of a wide road that serves as both a state highway and its Main Street

- Low cost initial efforts to re-stripe Main Street to reduce speeds & create on-street parking
- Future transformation into a boulevard



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Continue explaining this example of successful implementation of street and streetscape improvements.

Script:

“These pictures illustrate the difference between Victor’s Main Street before and after the streets and streetscape improvements. The rendering at the right of this slide shows the potential for a future boulevard in Victor that further enhances the change in the street’s character from a wide highway to a downtown street, especially the addition of a wide median.”



Slide: 6

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

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The goal categories are identified at the bottom of each tool slide and include:

1. Support the Rural Landscape
2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

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You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #6 begins with this slide. It focuses on the second goal and the second strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.

Script:

“The second goal we discussed earlier was to help existing places thrive. We must take care of existing assets and investments, such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places the community values. One strategy is to encourage private sector investment. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, overcoming barriers to infill development.”



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Economic development efforts will not be successful unless the private sector is willing to invest in land, buildings, equipment, and hiring employees. Public sector investment alone will not be sustainable, as private investment is needed to generate the tax base that makes public investments possible. But, public policies and incentives are needed to encourage private sector investment that supports community and regional goals. Sometimes regulations stop that from happening or slow it, and in those cases, regulatory barriers should be removed.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include: infill development incentives, overcoming barriers to infill, redevelopment readiness certification, and split-rate tax. Many of these tools and policies are implemented at the local level. However, they strengthen the region as a whole, and the more communities that implement them, the more competitive the region will be. Regional plans are important for setting the policy priorities that can encourage municipalities to implement these tools, and regional planning organizations can be key partners for gaining federal funding for infrastructure improvements. We’re going to focus on overcoming barriers to infill. An overview of this option, a discussion of its benefits, and an example follow.”

Strategy B: Encourage Private Sector Investment

Remove barriers and provide incentives to encourage private sector investments in places and development types matching regional and community visions.



Tools and Policies

- Infill development incentives
- **Overcoming barriers to infill**
- Redevelopment readiness certification
- Split-rate tax



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 2

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the concept of overcoming barriers to infill.

Script:

“Infill development involves undertaking smaller development projects on sites that are mostly surrounded by property that is already developed, often in downtowns or on main streets. These projects can be critical for reviving town centers and creating new destinations/amenities there.

Existing codes and ordinances geared towards new development in undeveloped areas (open spaces often called “greenfields” because there is no development there yet, and they are typically vegetated not paved) may make infill development more difficult. For example, there may need to be more flexibility in site development standards –such as not insisting on large setbacks or side yards. Communities that want to encourage infill need to ensure that their regulations align with that goal.

Infill development can be more costly for developers, due to the lack of economies of scale and the inherent complexity that comes with trying to fit a new development into an existing neighborhood. To encourage infill, communities can provide incentives to help reduce costs. This could include programs such as expedited permit processing or reducing impact fees for infill development when the infill project can use existing infrastructure.”

Strategy B: Encourage Private Sector Investment

Overcoming Barriers to Infill

- Involves smaller projects in developed areas
- Existing codes and ordinances may make infill difficult
- More costly than development in “greenfield” areas due to lack of economies of scale and/or complexity
- Implement policy changes & incentives to support infill



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 3

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of overcoming barriers to infill.

Script:

“Infill development can fill the gaps in downtowns and on main streets, removing blight and helping to revitalize these important assets. It also saves communities money by building on prior public investments and maximizing the use of existing public facilities and services. Infill development reduces the need to consume farmland and open space, helping to maintain rural character and resource-based economies.

Infill also places new development closer to established shopping, schools, services, and employment centers. This can help to reduce transportation costs and travel time and improve mobility and access, particularly for the elderly and youth.”

Strategy B: Encourage Private Sector Investment

Benefits of Overcoming Barriers to Infill

- Builds on prior public investments
- Limits need to consume farmland and open space
- Places new development closer to established stops



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain this example of a successful approach to overcoming barriers to infill.

Script:

“The Land of Sky region in North Carolina is a mountainous area with a limited amount of land suitable for industrial development, and current development patterns are increasingly dispersed. The Land of Sky Regional Council was interested in mechanisms to preserve prime undeveloped industrial properties and also to encourage the redevelopment of vacant, underutilized, and brownfield sites. A system of incentives, policies, and regulations could make it more attractive to build compact development within and near existing growth areas and town centers. In order to achieve these goals, the Land of Sky Regional Council applied and used a grant from the U.S. EPA to evaluate local policies and regulations in a four-county region and examined how to overcome barriers to infill.

The report identified six local barriers including:

1. The need for leadership around the issue of regulations and strategic public investments to support infill
2. Lack of zoning appropriate for the type and intensity of development that would make infill feasible
3. The need for land assemblage and acquisition to facilitate infill
4. A lack of financial incentives for infill
5. Difficulties for developers to obtain financing for infill projects
6. Neighborhood opposition

The report then detailed a range of possible solutions that local governments could take to address the barriers. They include the need for leadership, strategic actions, and investments in infrastructure and public spaces; adjusting current zoning to make the desired type of development more feasible; land assemblage and acquisition; and financial incentives for infill development. Local governments have used the report as a tool to guide their work to remove barriers to infill.”

Strategy B: Encourage Private Sector Investment

Example of Overcoming Barriers to Infill

Land of Sky Regional Council, NC

- Used EPA grant to evaluate conditions in 4-county region & examined how to overcome barriers
- Identified 6 important barriers & possible solutions
- Cities/counties working to remove barriers



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 5

Time: 4 Minutes

Additional Information:

For additional information on this example, review the following publication: http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/losrc_brownfields.pdf

Instructions:

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Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #7 begins with this slide. It focuses on the second goal and the third strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.

Script:

“The second goal we discussed earlier was to help existing places thrive. We must take care of existing assets and investments, such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places the community values. One strategy is to build on past community investments. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, adaptive reuse.”



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“To make the most efficient use of limited public resources, try to build on past community investments rather than starting from scratch. Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include: adaptive reuse and school rehabilitation. The following three slides will provide a brief overview, benefits, and an example of adaptive reuse as a way to build on past community investments.”

Strategy C: Build on Past Community Investments

To make the most efficient use of available resources and strengthen community assets, restore and reuse past community investments.

Tools and Policies

- Adaptive reuse
- School rehabilitation



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the concept of adaptive reuse.

Script:

“Adaptive reuse involves recycling existing buildings for new uses, rather than demolishing them and building new structures in their place. This is a strategy to meet demand for modern buildings while preserving community assets that make a place distinctive. Federal and state historic preservation tax credits are a valuable incentive that can help building owners to create a financially viable project. It is important that local building regulations in your community are geared to facilitate adaptive reuse, so that regulatory barriers do not discourage property owners.”

Strategy C: Build on Past Community Investments

Adaptive Reuse

- Recycle existing buildings
- Use federal & state historic preservation tax credits help with financing
- Tailor local building regulations to facilitate it



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of adaptive reuse.

Script:

“By adaptively reusing older buildings, a community maintains its unique identity and a sense of place rooted in local history. As we’ve discussed, this can support economic development by attracting and retaining residents and businesses. Adaptive reuse also conserves resources and reduces waste that would otherwise occur from building demolition. In addition, it also encourages reinvestment in mature neighborhoods, rather than abandonment or disinvestment which can lead to neighborhood decline and other related social and economic problems.”

Strategy C: Build on Past Community Investments

Benefits of Adaptive Reuse

- Maintains unique identity and sense of place
- Conserves resources
- Promotes reinvestment in mature neighborhoods



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain an example of successful adaptive reuse.

Script:

“In 1902, the Carver Power Plant was built to provide the town of Steamboat Springs with electricity. The plant enabled the town to be the first in its county to have electricity, and the steam, a by-product of the system used to create electricity, was used to heat nearby schools and residences. In 1962, the plant property was sold, shifting it from use as a power plant to a storage building.

In 1999, Steamboat Springs’ municipal leaders became interested in the property as a potential site for expanded city offices and public meeting rooms. Faced with a choice of expanding to a site on the city’s outskirts or adaptively reusing an existing historic structure, the city decided to invest in its past. With financial and technical assistance from the State Historical Fund, the City repaired and restored the plant’s roof, exterior and interior brick walls, original doors and windows, concrete and plank flooring, and mechanical systems. Nearly a hundred years after its construction, the newly restored power plant is now the focal point of a larger municipal campus located in the heart of downtown Steamboat Springs.”

Strategy C: Build on Past Community Investments

Example of Adaptive Reuse

Centennial Hall, Steamboat Springs, CO

- Carver Power Plant built in 1902
- Rehabilitated in 2001 to become a new public facility



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 5

Time: 2 Minutes

Additional Information:

For more information, review the project summary on the History Colorado website:

<http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp/steamboat-springs-power-plant>

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2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

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You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #8 begins with this slide. It focuses on the second goal and the fourth strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.



Script:

“The second goal we discussed earlier was to help existing places thrive. We must take care of existing assets and investments, such as downtowns, infrastructure, and places the community values. One strategy is to foster economic development in existing downtowns. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, a local business survey.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Downtowns and main streets are traditionally the heart of rural communities, and the condition of the downtown can define the image of the whole region. An attractive and vibrant downtown is crucial to bringing new young people, creative workers, entrepreneurs, and businesses to the area. Communities should make maintaining and enhancing the viability of their downtown areas a priority. There are many strategies that can be used to foster economic development in downtowns. Two possible tools and policies related to this strategy include: local business surveys and business recognition programs. These tools and policies are often implemented at the local level. However, they strengthen the region as a whole, and the more communities implement them, the more competitive the entire region will be. The following three slides will provide a brief overview, benefits, and an example of a local business survey.”

Strategy D: Foster Economic Development in Existing Downtowns

Downtowns and main streets are key community assets, and supporting and strengthening them is an important economic development strategy.

Tools and Policies

- Local business survey
- Business recognition program



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the concept of a local business survey.

Script:

“A local business survey can be an effective tool to learn about the needs of downtown businesses. It could address topics such as maintenance, appearance, infrastructure issues, transportation access, leadership or others. Surveys are often undertaken by chambers of commerce, local government leaders or economic development officials. Surveys can be administered in many ways, including in-person interviews with business owners, or sent out by mail or via email. There are also many tools available for conducting web surveys.

A survey can be designed to cover a broad range of topics or to focus on a specific issue of concern. However, consideration should be given to brevity, as small business owners are often very busy with little time to respond. The results of a local business survey can help highlight areas where improvements may be necessary, such as streetscapes, parking, or other areas.”

Strategy D: Foster Economic Development in Existing Downtowns

Local Business Survey

- Determine needs of downtown businesses
- Given by chambers of commerce, local government leaders, or economic development officials
- Administer in person, mail, e-mail or web
- Cover broad range of topics or focus on specific issues



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of a local business survey.

Script:

“Conducting a survey to engage local businesses is a first step towards demonstrating that the local economic development organization values their businesses and opinions. A survey will help you develop a better understanding of what local businesses need in terms of economic development assistance and improvements to downtown. Learning about the strengths and weaknesses of a downtown area from business owners’ perspective can help local officials strengthen and improve the area and make it more supportive for businesses and more attractive for customers. All of this will help retain existing downtown businesses, attract new ones, and bring more customers downtown.”

Strategy D: Foster Economic Development in Existing Downtowns

Benefits of Local Business Surveys

- Develop a better understanding of business needs
- Improve downtown, making it more supportive of business and pleasant for customers



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Present an example of a successful local business survey program.

Script:

“This is an example of a local business survey sponsored by the McCook Economic Development Corporation, a public and privately-funded economic development organization located in McCook, Nebraska, a town of about 7,500 people. The survey was conducted as a web survey, using the online web survey tool, Survey Monkey. This website and others like it allow users to conduct simple surveys for free, with additional features available for a reasonable cost. Respondents follow a web link to the survey and then are lead through the survey process.

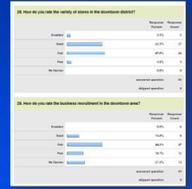
The town’s survey gauged business owners’ interest in participating in activities such as a downtown planning committee and zero interest loan or grant program to help with improvements. The survey also asked about downtown conditions, such as the overall appearance of the area and available parking. The information gathered from local business surveys can be very useful to address the programs, projects and other issues that businesses think are most important and needed.”

Strategy D: Foster Economic Development in Existing Downtowns

Example: Local Business Survey

McCook, Nebraska

- Undertaken by McCook Economic Development Corporation
- Conducted as a web survey using Survey Monkey
- Gauged business owners’ interests in participating in programs
- Explored opinions about downtown conditions



Goal #2: Help Existing Places Thrive

Slide: 5

Time: 2 Minutes

Additional Information:

For additional information on this example, review the following document:

<http://mccookne.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/McCook-Downtown-Survey-Summary-2012.pdf>

Instructions:

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2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

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Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #9 begins with this slide. It focuses on the third goal and the first strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.



Script:

“The third goal we discussed earlier was to create great new places that reflect the rural legacy and create economic, environmental, and community benefits for both new and existing residents. One strategy is to update strategic and policy documents to accommodate new growth through compact and contiguous development. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, visioning.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“As we discussed earlier in the workshop, it’s not uncommon for rural communities to have community plans and development regulations that are not up-to-date. These regulations often promote development that is not in keeping with the community’s character or desired development patterns. For instance, in many communities, current regulations require single-use development — only residential or only commercial in a given area — and prohibit the mix of uses, such as homes above shops, that is integral to so many traditional downtowns.

These outdated plans and codes are unlikely to produce the vibrant places people want today. Updating strategic planning, policy, and regulatory documents to accommodate new growth through walkable, contiguous development can help create great new places by providing the framework, codes, and specific policies to allow such development.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include:

- Visioning, a process communities use to define broad and long-term community and regional aspirations
- Defining places worth preserving, where the community considers which natural and working lands (forests, stream corridors, farms) are most important to protect and/or conserve
- Designating growth areas, which involves directing new growth into areas that are best suited for the creation of new places
- Defining infrastructure grid and transportation options, which develops sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure in a traditional grid pattern
- Preserving and strengthening distinctive local character, which emphasizes guidelines to ensure that new development reflects the cultural character of the region

These tools and policies apply at both the local and regional levels. Regional plans and policies can set a vision and goals for the broader area and ensure that growth happens in a way that benefits all communities and strengthens the region’s economy and competitive advantage. Local plans lay out a vision for that specific community and provide the framework for the regulations that implement the vision. Regional and local plans should be aligned and coordinated.

The following three slides will focus on one strategy, visioning. We’ll begin with a brief overview, focus on the benefits and end with an example.”

Strategy A: Update Strategic and Policy Documents to Accommodate New Growth through Compact and Contiguous Development

Policies and codes should be up-to-date and reflective of the community’s and region’s goals.

Tools and Policies

- **Visioning**
- Places worth preserving
- Designated growth areas
- Infrastructure grid & transportation options
- Distinctive local character



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 2

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Use this slide and the two that follow to explain visioning as a way of implementing this strategy.

Script:

“As you know from participating in the SET training, visioning brings a community or region together to understand and articulate the community’s broad aspirations for the future. The visioning process is best suited for identifying broad and long-term aspirations, as well as an area’s strengths and assets. Visioning can work as a stand-alone process for community and regional goal setting. It can also be incorporated into the steps of a larger planning effort, such as the creation or revision of a comprehensive or master plan.”

Strategy A: Update Strategic and Policy Documents to Accommodate New Growth through Compact and Contiguous Development

Visioning

- Understanding, articulating and documenting the community’s aspirations for the future
- Generally broad and long-term
- Recognizes strengths & assets
- Stand alone process or part of a larger regional planning effort



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of visioning.

Script:

“Visioning, especially when used as a precursor to the creation or update of a comprehensive plan, has the benefit of serving as means of creating additional excitement in the community or region. In looking long-range at the aspirations shared by residents, visioning may serve as a catalyst for change, or help to keep programs and projects on track. Visioning can build consensus around a direction for the community’s or region’s future and create momentum for policies and programs.”

Strategy A: Update Strategic and Policy Documents to Accommodate New Growth through Compact and Contiguous Development



Benefits of Visioning

- Creates excitement
- Serves as a catalyst for change
- Keeps projects on track
- Serves as a branding/marketing tool



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of a successful policy initiative through regional visioning.

Script:

“Envision Utah is a well known example of a large, regional visioning project. In 1997, the Envision Utah program acted as a neutral facilitator to bring together residents, elected officials, developers, conservationists, business leaders, and other interested parties to understand the region’s values and empower people to make informed decisions about how they should grow to create the communities they envision. The first phase of the project, the visioning process, lasted two years and engaged more than 20,000 residents in over 200 workshops. Before Envision could help preserve “Utah’s high quality of life” for future generations, it had to explore what residents value about living in the area. The workshops and research revealed a common dream: safe, close-knit communities; opportunities for children; time to do what matters most; and the security of a good job. The graphic on this slide shows the “peace of mind diagram” that illustrates the Envision Utah participants’ values and priorities.

This vision helped serve as the backbone for the Quality Growth Strategy, which provides voluntary, locally-implemented, market-based solutions for regional growth and development. Since facilitating the Quality Growth Strategy, Envision Utah has partnered with more than 100 communities in Utah. The Envision Utah approach of regional visioning and civic engagement has been replicated by dozens of regions around the country.”

Strategy A: Update Strategic and Policy Documents to Accommodate New Growth through Compact and Contiguous Development

Example: Visioning

Envision Utah

- Involved 100+ communities, 200+ workshops, 20,000+ participants
- Explored values and vision for growth
- Empowered people to make informed land use decisions



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 5

Time: 2 Minutes

Additional Information:
For additional information on this example, visit the following website: www.envisionutah.org

Instructions:

Before the course, select four of the 11 tool topics to insert into the presentation, including at least one tool from each of the three goal categories. Replace each tool placeholder slide with the slides associated with each selected tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.

The goal categories are identified at the bottom of each tool slide and include:

1. Support the Rural Landscape
2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

Select tools that are relevant to the region where the module will be conducted. Each tool discussion features a real-world example of where it has been used. You may choose to select the tools with examples in a region the same or similar to the workshop location. For example, an instructor conducting a workshop in a rural Midwestern community may select tools that have examples pulled from other Midwestern areas (such as tools #8 and #10).

You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #10 begins with this slide. It focuses on the third goal and the second strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.



Script:

“The third goal we discussed earlier was to create great new places that reflect the rural legacy and create economic, environmental, and community benefits for both new and existing residents. One strategy is to reform policies to make it easy for developers to build compact, walkable, mixed-use places. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, policy alignment.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“For many communities and regions, the visioning process results in a goal of walkable, mixed-use places, but local land use regulations do not support their vision. Policy and regulatory updates are needed for the community to achieve the new development they’re looking for.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include:

- Policy alignment, ensuring that policies and regulations both reflect community goals, and make it easy for developers to create the desired patterns of development
- Promoting walkability, ensuring that new places are built that allow residents to walk or bike to their destinations
- Creating or protecting parks and open space, incorporating natural areas and recreational features into new development to provide important economic, ecological, and public health benefits
- Encouraging traditional neighborhood development in new places, which emphasizes compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods that are similar to traditional rural town development patterns. Traditional neighborhood developments typically include a range of housing types, well-connected streets and blocks, public spaces, and have amenities such as stores and schools within walking distances of residences.
- Using form-based codes that regulate the look and feel of development rather than just focusing on the type of land use
- Using context-sensitive design that links roadway planning and design to adjacent land uses and neighborhood type, so that roadways are more supportive of community character
- Promoting green street design options, aimed primarily at environmental enhancement, for example, using street trees and landscape areas to reduce pollution (more examples are provided in the Putting Smart Growth to Work publication)
- Using low-impact development, which uses natural landscaping to manage stormwater close to its source

Strategy B: Reform Policies to Make It Easy for Developers to Build Compact, Walkable, Mixed-use Places

Many communities want to build walkable and mixed-use neighborhoods to attract and retain residents and businesses, but need to put a new regulatory framework in place to do that.

Tools and Policies

- Policy alignment
- Walkability
- Parks and open space
- Traditional neighborhood development
- Form-based codes
- Context-sensitive design
- Green street design
- Low-impact design



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 2

Time: 5 Minutes

Script (Cont.):

Most of these tools and policies will be implemented at the local level, since local governments are the ones with the most direct influence over land use policies and regulations. However, it is important that any policy and regulatory changes made at the local level align with the overall vision and policy framework for the region, to maximize the competitiveness of the region as a whole.

The following three slides will focus on the policy alignment option. We'll go through a brief overview, discuss benefits and look at an illustrative example.”

Strategy B: Reform Policies to Make It Easy for Developers to Build Compact, Walkable, Mixed-use Places

Many communities want to build walkable and mixed-use neighborhoods to attract and retain residents and businesses, but need to put a new regulatory framework in place to do that.

Tools and Policies

- **Policy alignment**
- Walkability
- Parks and open space
- Traditional neighborhood development
- Form-based codes
- Context-sensitive design
- Green street design
- Low-impact design



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 2 continued

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain policy alignment.

Script:

“By aligning the various policy documents that regulate new development, such as master plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, and engineering standards, communities can encourage developers to follow the community’s vision by reducing barriers, such as time consuming zoning amendments or variances. For example, when the underlying regulations don’t permit building what the community wants, the developers have to go through a legal process to get the rules changed project by project. Most developers and builders are looking for a clear path to build their project. Policy alignment creates a powerful incentive by making it easy to build what the community wants. It also contributes to predictability in the development and decision-making process, which can save time and reduce the developers costs.”



Strategy B: Reform Policies to Make It Easy for Developers to Build Compact, Walkable, Mixed-use Places

Policy Alignment

- Reflects and supports the community vision
- Removes barriers for developers to pursue desired type of development
- Adds predictability
- Reduces the need for time-consuming code amendments or variances

Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of successful policy alignment.

Script:

“Hamilton County, Ohio, is a diverse county that includes a mix of 49 jurisdictions, many of which are small, rural communities. The Community Compass, the master plan for the county, sets forth a shared vision for the county and establishes long-range goals related to the physical, economic, and social issues and opportunities in the region. These regional goals strive for agricultural opportunities, energy and resource management, walkability, compact development, and transportation options, in rural and urban areas throughout the county. However, many of the adopted development regulations and codes for the county did not align with these regional goals.

In 2012, the county conducted a policy alignment project to help implement and advance the sustainability goals of the Community Compass Plan. The county’s development codes and regulations apply to very few of the townships and municipalities within its boundary because many of them adopt their own development regulations, so the project involved two levels of alignment. First the project involved an analysis of the county’s own codes. It also involved training for the smaller townships and communities to help them conduct a similar policy alignment exercise for their own codes and regulations.

The first step of the project involved an inventory and review of existing county policies and regulations that support the sustainability goals. Next, the county identified potential code barriers, incentives, and gaps for achieving its sustainability goals. Finally, the county identified a series of amendments that it could make to its development codes to better align them with the desired goals.

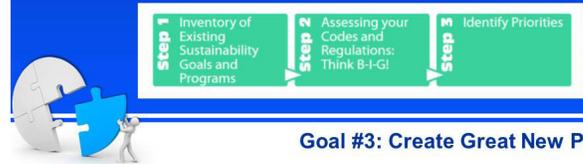
In addition to the internal work the county conducted on its own development codes, a training session was held to introduce the rural townships and communities to the idea and process for a policy alignment project. Using the county codes and findings as a model, the communities worked to diagnose their own codes and identify potential amendments to enhance alignment with the regional sustainability goals.”

Strategy B: Reform Policies to Make It Easy for Developers to Build Compact, Walkable, Mixed-use Places

Policy Alignment Example

Hamilton County, Ohio

- Existing codes and policies did not align with regional goals
- Examined potential code barriers, gaps, & incentives
- Identified priority development code amendments



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 4

Time: 4 Minutes

Additional Information:

Read the full report online at the following link:
<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/pdf/Hamilton%20County%20Diagnosis%20-%20FINAL%20Jan%2030%202012.pdf>

The training manual for the rural communities can be found here:
http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/pdf/Hamilton%20County%20Sustainable%20Development%20and%20Building%20Code%20Project%20Training%20Manual%201%2030%202012_SI.pdf

Instructions:

Before the course, select four of the 11 tool topics to insert into the presentation, including at least one tool from each of the three goal categories. Replace each tool placeholder slide with the slides associated with each selected tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.

The goal categories are identified at the bottom of each tool slide and include:

1. Support the Rural Landscape
2. Help Existing Places Thrive
3. Create Great New Places

Select tools that are relevant to the region where the module will be conducted. Each tool discussion features a real-world example of where it has been used. You may choose to select the tools with examples in a region the same or similar to the workshop location. For example, an instructor conducting a workshop in a rural Midwestern community may select tools that have examples pulled from other Midwestern areas (such as tools #8 and #10).

You may also tailor the selection of the tools to the workshop based on your knowledge about the needs or existing conditions of the region. For example, if a region is already using a Transfer of Development Rights Program (tool #4), it would be best to select a different tool from Goal #1 to introduce new concepts or ideas to the participants.

Finally, choose tools that you will be comfortable presenting and answering questions about. Prior to selecting the tools, you may find it valuable to review the detailed explanations of the tools are available in Handout Two: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

MENU OF TOOL TOPICS (Choose 4 out of the 11 listed)



Instructions:

Tool #11 begins with this slide. It focuses on the third goal and the third strategy listed under it on Handout One: Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities.

If you choose this tool to for discussion, replace one of the tool placeholder slides with the slides associated with this tool by moving or copy/pasting the slides from this section into the placeholder space. Delete the placeholder slide.



Script:

“The third goal we discussed earlier was to create great new places that reflect the rural legacy and create economic, environmental, and community benefits for both new and existing residents. One strategy is to recognize and reward developers that build great places using smart growth and green building approaches. We will identify some tools and policies that support that strategy, and then we will focus in on one specific tool, smart growth recognition programs.”

Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the strategy, and mention the possible tools and policies related to it.

Script:

“Recognizing and rewarding developers who build great places using smart growth and green building approaches will raise awareness of successful development projects and encourage other developers to adopt similar practices.

Possible tools and policies related to this strategy include:

- Smart growth recognition programs, which publicly recognize developers who build projects aligned with the community’s smart growth goals
- Promoting green building, a resource-efficient and healthy alternative to conventional building practices. Green building practices save energy and water, create healthier indoor and outdoor environments, and can be voluntarily sought by developers or regulated by zoning and/or building codes.

These tools and policies may be most likely to be implemented at the local level, but could also be implemented at a regional level to increase the region’s competitiveness.

The following three slides will focus on recognition programs and include an overview, their benefits, and an example.”



Strategy C: Recognize and Reward Developers who Build Great Places Using Smart Growth and Green Building Approaches

Rural communities can recognize and reward developers who build new places that honor & reflect rural legacy and generate economic, environmental, & community benefits.

Tools and Policies

- Smart growth recognition programs
- Green building

Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 2

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain the smart growth recognition program tool.

Script:

“Smart growth recognition programs acknowledge and reward developers who are creating great new places that increase housing and transportation choices, preserve rural character, and enhance economic opportunity. Many statewide smart growth organizations have existing recognition programs. Recognition for exceptional smart growth development can occur during the development process or after its completion, and most programs include an application process.”

Strategy C: Recognize and Reward Developers who Build Great Places Using Smart Growth and Green Building Approaches



Smart Growth Recognition Program

- Acknowledges/celebrates developers building projects that achieve community goals
- Helps illustrate and elevate local smart growth practices
- Recognition can occur during the development process or after completion



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain the benefits of a smart growth recognition program.

Script:

“First and foremost, publicly recognizing developers who build projects that align with the community’s vision encourages private developers to do more of this type of project. The recognition may also provide a marketing and publicity boost for the developers of these projects.

Additionally, recognition programs can draw additional attention to the community’s vision, strengthening the clarity of the vision by providing actual models for future development. Awards can further serve to remind other developers that great new developments and community priorities are not necessarily at odds with one another, and that many communities welcome development if it is in alignment with community goals.”

Strategy C: Recognize and Reward Developers who Build Great Places Using Smart Growth and Green Building Approaches

Smart Growth Recognition Program Benefits

- Promotes types of development community wants
- Provides marketing/publicity boost for developers
- Allows community to point to actual development projects as models (“do this”)



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain one example of a successful smart growth recognition program.

Script:

“The Delaware Valley Smart Growth Alliance, which covers Southeastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware, recognizes proposed projects for using smart growth and green building approaches. In this program, developers apply during the planning and permitting stage to receive a letter of endorsement and offer of testimony before local approval authorities, which can help the project get the go-ahead. This program has been in effect since 2005, recognizing projects in rural as well as urban locations.

To be successful, project applicants must meet five criteria that promote smart growth principles, including:

- Location-planned in a designated growth area
- Mobility-helps reduce dependency on cars by allowing for walking, biking, or transit use
- Community Design-promotes high-quality design, mixed-use development
- Environment-meets green building standards, conserves energy and water
- Community-involves the community in its design; provides affordable housing or other community benefits

The project shown on this slide is the Zurbrugg Mansion Redevelopment project in Burlington County, New Jersey. The aging property was converted into 25 affordable housing units for seniors, and an additional eight new market-rate townhomes were added to the site. The site has easy access to Main Street and county transportation for seniors. A strip of the property fronting along the Delaware River was retained as open space for passive public uses.”

Strategy C: Recognize and Reward Developers who Build Great Places Using Smart Growth and Green Building Approaches

Smart Growth Recognition Program Example

Delaware Valley Smart Growth Alliance

(Greater Philadelphia tri-state region)

- Recognizes proposed projects
- Developers apply during entitlement stage, meeting 5 criteria
- Compliant projects receive a letter of endorsement and offer for testimony before local approval authorities



Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Slide: 5

Time: 3 Minutes

Additional Information:

For additional information about this program, visit the following website: <http://www.delawarevalleysmartgrowth.org/projects.htm>

DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE SURVEY: INSTRUCTOR'S DISCUSSION NOTES

These notes are provided for use by the instructor only. The instructor should familiarize him/herself with the types of development illustrated, and some of the characteristics associated with each. As the group shares their favorite photos and the ones they dislike, the instructor may supplement the discussion with ideas and other considerations provided in the following notes.

Photo #		Comments
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows housing in a traditional neighborhood format, with generous front porches near the street, garages behind the housing units, sidewalks set back from the street, and quality design and building materials. • Garages and driveways do not interrupt the pattern of development along the street.
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows housing in a more suburban pattern, with protruding garages and driveways, larger front yards and setbacks, and very narrow rollover sidewalks adjacent to the street.
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows multi-family housing that is designed with front porches that are oriented to face the street, garages behind the housing units, sidewalks set back from the street, quality, unique and differentiated design between units. • Garages and driveways do not interrupt the pattern of development along the street.
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows multi-family housing that is designed as one large building surrounded by an expansive parking lot and few common areas or amenities for residents.
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows retail developed along a major street. • Notice how the parking/vehicular area is much more visible than the buildings, and the lack of sidewalks and considerations for pedestrians.
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo is of a traditional main street retail area. • Notice how the buildings are set right up against the street, with on-street parking and wide sidewalks, and the historic and interesting architecture and quality building materials.

Photo #		Comments
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of a big box retail store located in a community that required parking lot landscaping, high quality building materials (brick), variation in the building massing and roofline, and variation in the corporate design.
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of a prototypical big box retail store located in a community that does not require parking lot landscaping, high quality building materials, variation in the building massing or roofline, or tailoring of the corporate design.
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo shows a newer industrial development that features a metal building with few adornments like a defined entrance or windows and few site improvements like landscaping or signage.
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo shows another industrial use that produces and distributes goods. Notes that while the building still features metal components, it features variation in massing, windows and brick accents, and is complemented by attractive signage and landscaping.
11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of civic use (post office) located in the downtown area of a community. The post office features high quality architecture that complements the surrounding buildings
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of a civic use (community center). The building does not add visual interest or match the historic character or the surrounding community. Note how the blank walls are uninviting and do not project the positive character of the community.
13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of a gas station in a community that did not require perimeter landscaping.
14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This photo is of a gas station in a community that did require perimeter landscaping.

Photo #		Comments
15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows rural residential development clustered at the center of the community. • This type of development allows the homes to take advantage of centralized water and sewer service and helps conserve the surrounding agricultural land.
16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This photo shows a residential development pattern with large, spread out lots. • These residential uses can be located anywhere and can lead to fragmentation of agricultural lands and lack of coordinated water/sewer and other community services and infrastructure.

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:

The activity is particularly relevant to regions/communities interested in enhancing the visual character and quality of development. It may also be useful for regions/communities that currently have limited land use regulations but that want to remain economically competitive and attractive in the future. The best location for this activity in Part 2 of the module is before the introduction to all 4 tools (at the beginning of Part 2).

This activity will get participants thinking about different types and forms of development that may emerge in rural areas, exploring which types they feel are most and least desirable based on their visual impacts and other characteristics. The Development Preference Survey will help illustrate how land use policies and decisions can greatly influence the type, form, and appearance of development and the character and economic development potential of rural areas. The activity will also raise awareness about the types and forms of development that participants find more and less desirable and the possible implications for economic development.

This activity requires:

- PowerPoint slides #101-120
- Development Preference Survey Participant Worksheet (one per participant)
- Development Preference Survey Instructor Notes (one copy for instructor only)
- Flip chart or white board and marker for instructor to take notes on group discussion

Before the workshop begins, if you select this activity as the desired activity, insert the slides from the Development Preference Survey into the activity placeholder section of the main presentation and delete the placeholder slide.

Exercise steps:

1. Distribute the Development Preference Survey activity worksheets to the regional team.
2. Explain the exercise and allow for clarifying questions. Participants will view each photo for 30 seconds, during which time they are to rate each photo using the scale of 1 to 5 from the worksheet (1 = don't like at all, 5 = love the photo). For each photo, participants should also record their ideas about what it is they like or dislike about that type of development and whether or not that type of development in their community/region would support or detract from its rural character and economic development potential.



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

3. Work through the PowerPoint slides, showing each photo for 30 seconds (8 minutes total).
4. Give participants 5 minutes to individually identify their three favorite photos and three they most dislike. Participants should record their selections on their worksheets.
5. Use the remaining 15 minutes to discuss the development preferences as a group. Ask participants to volunteer which photo(s) they liked best, and why, and then repeat the process for the photos they disliked. The Instructor's Notes provide some ideas to supplement the discussion about the photos and development characteristics. Take notes on a large flip chart for everyone to see.



Strategy C: Recognize and Reward Developers who Build Great Places Using Smart Growth and Green Building Approaches

Rural communities can recognize and reward developers who build new places that honor & reflect rural legacy and generate economic, environmental, & community benefits.

Tools and Policies

- Smart growth recognition programs
- Green building

Goal #3: Create Great New Places

Script:

“This activity is intended to get you to think about different types of development that may emerge in rural areas, and identify which types feel most and least desirable based on their visual impacts and other characteristics. The activity will help illustrate how land use policies and decisions can greatly influence the type, form, and appearance of development and the character and economic development potential of rural areas. The exercise will also raise awareness about the types and forms of development that you find more and less desirable and the possible implications for economic development.”

Slide: 1 continued

Time: 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

Handout: Development Preference Survey Worksheet

Instructions:

Read the activity objectives and the instructions. Allow time for questions before the activity begins. The total length of the activity should be 30 minutes, so monitor the time as the activity progresses.

Script:

“I will now showing you a series of photos on the screen. These photos, which also appear on your Development Preference Survey Worksheet, illustrate various types and forms of development that could emerge in rural areas. When you look at each photo, please assign a rating of 1 to 5 to each, using the rating scale provided. A rating of 1 means that you don’t like that type of development at all. A rating of 5 means that you love that type of development. Record your ratings next to the photos on your individual worksheet. I will show each photo for 30 seconds. Please work individually, and we will discuss your preferences afterwards.

While you review the photo, also consider what it is about that type of development that you like or dislike. Is it the landscaping, building materials, position of the building on the lot, or other factors? Also, please consider whether this type of development in your community or region would support or detract from its rural character and potential to achieve economic development goals. Record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

Instructions

- Rate each photo

1	2	3	4	5
Don't like it at all!	Not my thing	Neutral	I like it	I love it!

- For each photo, consider
 - What is it about this type development that you like or dislike?
 - Would this type of development in your community or region support or detract from its rural character and economic development potential?



Slide: 2

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds and read the brief overview of the type of development pictured. Allow time for participants to rate and comment on each photo on their individual scoring sheets. No group discussion.

Script:

“Our first photo shows single family housing in a neighborhood setting. What is it about this type of development that you like or dislike? Would this type of development in your community or region support or detract from its rural character? Record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

1. New Single-Family Housing



Slide: 3

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo also shows single-family housing in a neighborhood setting. Again, what is it about this type of development that you like or dislike? Would this type of development in your community or region support or detract from its rural character? Record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

2. New Single-Family Housing



Slide: 4

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows new multi-family housing. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

3. Multi-Family Housing



Slide: 5

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows new multi-family housing. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

4. Multi-Family Housing



Slide: 6

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a shopping area. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

5. Retail Shops



Slide: 7

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a downtown retail area. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

6. Retail Shops



Slide: 8

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a large retailer, often called a ‘big box’ store. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

7. Large Retail Development



Slide: 9

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows another big box store. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

8. Large Retail Development



Slide: 10

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows an general industrial use or a flex-space used for activities like distribution, warehousing, and manufacturing. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

9. Industry



Slide: 11

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows an industrial use that includes processing and distribution. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

10. Industry



Slide: 12

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a civic use building, a post office. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

11. Civic Use



Slide: 13

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows another civic use building, a community center. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

12. Civic Use



Slide: 14

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a gas station. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”



Slide: 15

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows another gas station. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

14. Gas Station



Slide: 16

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows a rural residential development pattern. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

15. Rural Residential Development



Slide: 17

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Show this slide for 30 seconds, providing a brief overview of the type of development and allowing time for participants to rate each photo. No group discussion.

Script:

“This photo shows another rural residential development pattern. Please rate this photo and record your notes and observations in the comment area on your worksheet.”

16. Rural Residential Development



Slide: 18

Time: 30 Seconds

Instructions:

Allow a minute for participants to complete their ratings and comments for each photo, if necessary. Next, ask them to select the top 3 photos they like most and the 3 that they dislike the most and record their opinions at the end of the worksheet. They will also need to think about and identify any common themes or characteristics among their groups of likes and their group of dislikes (for example, a person may discover that all of their likes have extensive landscaping, whereas there dislikes lack sidewalks or buildings without character).

Script:

“Using your ratings and comments, please take a moment to identify your 3 favorite photos, as well as the 3 you most dislike. Record your choices in each category using the photo number in the space provided at the end of your worksheet.

After you’ve identified your top likes and dislikes, please work individually to review your comments for those photos to determine if there are any common characteristics or themes among these different types of developments that make you like or dislike them (for example, landscaping, building materials, parking lots, sidewalks, etc.)”

Top Likes and Dislikes

- Identify your top 3 likes and top 3 dislikes
- Note any common characteristics among the photos you like and the photos you dislike



Slide: 19

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

After participants have identified their top likes and dislikes and the common themes in each of these groups, use the remaining time to have a large-group discussion about several photos participants liked, and several photos participants disliked. There will likely be consensus among many of the participants on which photos they liked and disliked. Many of the most liked photos will probably be walkable, welcoming, mixed-use, safe, green, attractive, taking advantage of historic assets and traditional development patterns, and showing other characteristics that have been discussed in this module. Use Development Preference Survey Instructor's Discussion Notes to point out any qualities the participants did not notice. You may choose to record notes from this reporting out on a flip chart or whiteboard for the other participants to see. Close the exercise with a few take-aways about land use and economic development.

Script:

“Let's take a few minutes to talk about your reactions to the photos we've seen. Would someone like to share which photo was their favorite, and why? Did anyone else like that photo (or dislike it)? Why?”

[Repeat this several times to get different participants' thoughts on photos they liked.]

Now would anyone like to share which photo they liked the least. Why? Did anyone notice X quality... Did anyone else dislike that photo (or like it)? Why? Did anyone notice X quality? [Repeat.]

All of the places we've looked at — the ones you liked and the ones you didn't like — didn't just happen. They were shaped by the public policies, regulations, private decisions, economic trends, and other factors we talked about earlier. Some of those policies and regulations, particularly, do not encourage the kind of development you expressed preferences for. Don't worry, there are tools and policies you can use to create the types of places you like, and we'll talk about those many of these tools during today's training session.”

Development Preferences

- Let's discuss
 - Likes?
 - Dislikes?
- Other observations
 - Surprised by any of your ratings or observations?
 - Does the type, form, & appearance of development influence the character and economic development potential of rural areas?
 - Thinking differently about development in your community or region?



Slide: 20

Time: 15 minutes

DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE SURVEY

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

This activity is intended to get you thinking about different types of development that exist in rural areas, to build your awareness of the characteristics of development that you find more or less attractive, and to increase your understanding of the impacts of land use and development decisions on the character and economic development potential of rural communities and regions.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. RATE THE PHOTOS

The instructor will present a series of photos on the screen. These photos illustrate various types and forms of development. When looking at each photo, please assign a rating to each type of development using the following rating system:

1	2	3	4	5
Don't like it at all!	Not my thing	Neutral	I like it	I love it!

While you review each photo also, consider the following questions:

- What is it about this type development that you like or dislike?
- In your opinion, would this type of development enhance or detract from your region's character and economic development potential?

Record your responses to these questions in the comment space provided next to each photo.

2. IDENTIFY TOP LIKES AND DISLIKES

After each photo has been presented and rated, please review all of your ratings and responses and select your top 3 likes and top 3 dislikes. Record these top likes and dislikes by listing the photo number in the spaces provided on the last page of your worksheet.

Next, try to identify any common characteristics among these different types of development that make you like or dislike them (for example, landscaping, building materials, site orientation, etc.) Record your observations on the worksheet.

The instructor will then ask volunteers to report out to the group on their most and least preferred photos and their reasons for liking or disliking them.

Photo #		Rating (1-5)	Comments
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Photo #		Rating (1-5)	Comments
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			

PHOTOS YOU LOVE (TOP 3)

Photo #	Do these photos you love have any common characteristics?

PHOTOS YOU DON'T LIKE AT ALL (TOP 3)

Photo #	Do these photos you don't like have any common characteristics?

LAND USE MAPPING: INSTRUCTOR’S NOTES

These notes are provided for use by the instructor only. The instructor should familiarize him/herself with the benefits and tradeoffs associated with locating each type of land use in the different areas of the community. As the groups report out their selections, the instructor may supplement the discussion with ideas and other considerations provided in the following notes.

Land Use	Notes about Locating the Land Use in this Location		
	<i>Downtown Core</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Countryside</i>
1. Single-Family Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating single-family housing in the downtown core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and could add extra people and vibrancy to make the core area thrive. • Housing will be accessible to amenities and services and residents will have a variety of transportation choices, such as walking and bicycling and possibly public transit, as core areas are more efficiently served by transit than spread-out fringe areas. • Compatibility with existing residential and non-residential uses, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with locating single-family housing in the downtown core. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating single-family housing in the larger town area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and could add extra people and vibrancy to make the nearby core area thrive. • Compatibility with existing neighborhoods and availability of water/sewer and other public infrastructure are key considerations when incorporating new single-family housing in an existing Town area. So is lot size. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating single-family housing in the Countryside may initially seem like a good idea, but can present many challenges. First, spread out residential developments can be very costly to serve with infrastructure and services since they are farther away from the Town area. • Single-family residential housing must often utilize well and septic systems, which may not be a viable long-term solution in some areas. • Additionally, residential development can encroach on and conflict with existing agricultural operations (e.g., new housing adjacent to feedlots or loud farm equipment) and encroach on other working lands and natural areas—two drivers of the economy in many regions. • Locating single-family housing far from the core and the town can increase transportation costs for residents and force them to spend more time travelling. • If it is necessary to build single-family housing in the countryside, developers can cluster the homes. In other words, they can build the same number of units on smaller lots while preserving some of the developable land for agriculture or open space. This method conserves land and is easier to serve with infrastructure and services.

Land Use	Notes about Locating the Land Use in this Location		
	<i>Downtown Core</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Countryside</i>
2. Multi-Family Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating multi-family housing in the downtown core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services. The additional people brought into the core area by this kind of development can bring increased patronage to local businesses, and help the downtown to thrive. • When amenities and services are located in the core, this kind of housing development can also provide easier access to those destinations. This is particularly important for seniors, young people, low-income residents, and others without cars or who do not drive. Higher density development like this also can be much more efficiently served by public transit than spread-out fringe developments. • Compatibility with existing residential and non-residential uses, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with locating multi-family housing in the downtown core. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating multi-family housing in the larger town area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and could add extra people and vibrancy to make the nearby core area thrive. • Compatibility with existing neighborhoods and availability of water/sewer and other public infrastructure are key considerations when incorporating new multi-family housing in an existing Town area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-family housing usually requires centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most Countryside areas. • Multi-residential family development can encroach on and conflict with existing agricultural operations (e.g., new apartments adjacent to feedlots or loud farm equipment) and encroach on other working lands and natural areas—two drivers of the economy in many regions. • Locating multi-family housing far from the core and the town isolates residents who potentially lack mobility and makes it difficult for them to reach services and destinations they need (grocery stores, the post office, the doctor’s office, etc). It can also cause transportation costs to increase and force residents to spend more time travelling.
3. Retail Shop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating retail shops in the core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and will encourage further economic activity there. • The central location of retail in the core can make it easily accessible to community residents. • Compatibility with existing uses, access, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with locating retail developments in the core since the area is already developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating retail shops in the larger town area could take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and serve important corridors or other major community destinations beyond the core. • New retail areas outside of the core could increase competition with or take business away from the Downtown core. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail shops usually require centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most Countryside areas. • New retail areas outside of town could increase competition with or take business away from the town and core. • Retail located far from the core and the town may not have good access to its customer base. • Retail shops might be associated with some farming/agricultural activities and be appropriate in some limited locations, but traffic and visibility are important considerations. • Building retail shops in the countryside can also eat up important agricultural and natural lands and detract from rural character and scenic beauty.

Land Use	Notes about Locating the Land Use in this Location		
	<i>Downtown Core</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Countryside</i>
4. Big Box Store	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating a large big box store in the core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and can help bring customers to other nearby businesses. • Stores in the core are accessible to large segments of their customer base. • Stores in the core can more efficiently be served by public transit than stores in low-density outlying areas. • Compatibility with existing uses, access, large parking areas, and availability of land are some challenges associated with traditional large big box stores in the core because they typically have a large footprint and rely on a standard corporate design. • However, it is possible to design big box stores creatively so that they complement the character of the existing core. Parking, access, and building siting can all be addressed through creative site planning and/or reducing the parking needs by linking the store to transit service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating big box stores in the larger town area could take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and serve important corridors or other major community destinations beyond the core. • New big box stores outside of the core could increase competition with or take business away from it. • Building and parking design are important considerations when locating a big box store in town, so that the store adds to or enhances the existing character, instead of detracting from it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big box stores usually require centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most Countryside areas. Extension of services and infrastructure to new areas to serve this scale of development can be very costly. • New big box stores outside of Town could increase competition with or take business away from the Town and core. Big box stores often attract smaller retail development nearby, which could further detract from Town businesses. • Big box stores usually generate lots of vehicle trips, which may create traffic and access problems on country roads. • Big box stores in the countryside could damage the character of the community, particularly in gateway areas around its edges. • They are also not easily accessible by their customer bases and not easily served by public transit.
5. Civic Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating a civic use in the downtown core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and will help the existing core thrive by attracting more people to patronize businesses. • They will also be easily accessible by residents and more easily served by public transit than if they were in low-density outlying areas. • Compatibility with existing uses, access, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with civic uses located in the core. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating civic uses in the larger town area could take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and serve important corridors or other major community destinations beyond the core. • New civic uses outside of the core could draw large numbers of people to other areas of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic uses may require centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most countryside areas. • Civic uses are typically supposed to serve as gathering places for the community. Locating them in the Countryside may be useful where there is a high concentration of existing residences, but will otherwise be inconvenient for the majority of the population if located in the countryside.

Land Use	Notes about Locating the Land Use in this Location		
	<i>Downtown Core</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Countryside</i>
6. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating a school use in the Downtown core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and will support the core by bringing students, visitors and employees to the area. Compatibility with existing uses, access, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with school uses located in the core. Locating schools near residential neighborhoods means that students can walk to school, which helps to reduce traffic impacts on the surrounding uses and roadways and reduce transportation costs for families and school districts. Locating schools in central areas means they can be used for other activities outside of school hours, such as sports leagues, club meetings, theater productions, and voting, . This is particularly important in small towns that might lack other community facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating school uses in the larger town area could take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and serve individual neighborhoods or distinct areas of Town. Locating schools near residential neighborhoods means that students can walk to school, which helps to reduce traffic impacts on the surrounding uses and roadways. Schools attract a large number of students, visitors, and employees, and can help drive or attract additional development in an area of Town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School uses usually require centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most Countryside areas, and are generally very costly to extend. School uses often present traffic issues to the surrounding uses and roadways, especially County roadways that are generally not designed for high traffic levels. Schools attract a large number of students, visitors, and employees, and can draw people away from other parts of Town if located in the Countryside. Locating schools far from the core and the town means that students have fewer transportation options—i.e. they can't walk or bike to school and need to take the bus or get rides from parents. This can increase transportation costs for both the school district and for families. For more information see EPA's School Siting Guidelines, http://www.epa.gov/schools/siting/
7. Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating an industrial use in the core area will take advantage of existing infrastructure and services, and will bring increased activity to the area. Compatibility with existing character and uses, noise, odors, access, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with industrial uses located in the core. In some cases, these types of issues can be mitigated or addressed, and in some circumstances, it may not be appropriate to locate industrial uses with heavy impacts in a higher density core area. Locating employment uses in central areas can mean that employees have the opportunity to walk to work and can easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating industrial uses in the larger town area could take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and provide employment opportunities in other areas and along major corridors in the community. New industrial uses outside of the core mean that there are fewer employees around to support core businesses, and could cause new supporting development to sprout up near the industrial use. Compatibility with existing uses, noise, odors, access, parking, and available space are some challenges associated with industrial uses located in the Town area. In some cases, these types of issues can be mitigated or addressed, and in some 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial uses usually require centralized water and/or sewer services, which are not readily available in most Countryside areas. Extension of services and infrastructure to new areas to serve this scale of development can be very costly. New industrial uses outside the core could cause new supporting development to sprout up in the nearby countryside area. Industrial uses far from the core and the town can increase transportation costs and reduce transportation options for employees. They are less easily served by public transit. Some industrial uses are not compatible with other uses due, and therefore in some instances, the Countryside is an appropriate

Land Use	Notes about Locating the Land Use in this Location		
	<i>Downtown Core</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Countryside</i>
	<p>access the core’s amenities before and after work, possibly making that company more of an attractive place to work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The type, size, character, and potential impacts associated with an industrial use are very important to consider in any location of the community. 	<p>circumstances, it may not be appropriate to locate industrial uses with heavy impacts in a populated town area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The type, size, character, and potential impacts associated with an industrial use are very important to consider in any location of the community. 	<p>location for industrial uses that carry lots of impacts but that bring employment opportunities to the community. In these cases, these should be on transportation corridors/lines and adjacent to other industrial development when possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The type, size, character, and potential impacts associated with an industrial use are very important to consider in any location of the community.
<p>8. Energy Production/ Resource Extraction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating this type of use in the downtown core area may cause a lot of conflicts with existing development due to noise, odors, or other characteristics associated with these types of uses. However, some small-scale energy production facilities such as solar panels, small wind turbines, geothermal energy systems, and others are suitable in any location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating this type of use in the larger town area may cause many conflicts with existing development due to noise, odors, or other characteristics associated with these types of uses. However, some small-scale energy production facilities such as solar panels, small wind turbines, geothermal energy systems, and others are suitable in any location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These types of uses are generally most suitable in the countryside, especially if they are large in scale, noisy, have odors or other major impacts to a populated area. Even when located in countryside areas, these types of uses can result in heavy road wear and tear, visual and noise impacts, and other challenges with compatibility with nearby uses. Locating these uses in the countryside increases opportunities for landowners to jointly use land for energy production/resource extraction and other things like agriculture and ranching, which can augment their incomes.

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 Land Use Mapping activity is recommended for regions/communities that are experiencing rapid growth and development because it will enable participants to think comprehensively about their land use decisions and the impacts on their rural character and economic development potential. It may not be suitable for areas not experiencing growth or development pressures, since those regions/communities may not have many choices or opportunities for new land uses. This activity may be located midway between the discussion of the four selected tools, or after introducing all four tools. It would be meaningful to do this activity after introducing Tool #6: Overcoming Barriers to Infill or Tool #7: Adaptive Reuse. The total length of the activity should be 45 minutes, so monitor the time as the activity progresses. This activity lasts 15 minutes longer than the other optional activities, so be aware that the entire module will last an extra 15 minutes (4 ¼ hours).

This activity will expose participants to different types of land uses and their influence on a rural economy. The objective is to identify ways to protect rural character through land use decisions while also creating opportunities for economic development. Familiarize yourself with the Land Use Mapping Instructor's Notes for Discussion document. These notes are provided as background information so you will be knowledgeable about the benefits/tradeoffs associated with locating different land uses in the different areas of a community. During the activity, don't read these notes verbatim, but have them on hand to bring up additional points for consideration as the groups explain their choices.

This activity requires:

- PowerPoint slides (see slides #14-154)
- Land Use Mapping Participant Worksheet (one per participant)
- Land Use Mapping Instructor's Notes (one copy for instructor only)
- Flip chart or white board and marker for instructor to take notes on group discussion

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

Exercise steps:

1. Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 people. Each group will receive one worksheet to complete together.



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

2. Explain the instructions, and allow time for questions before the activity begins.
3. Spend five minutes on the introductory slides, followed by two minutes to briefly introduce each type of land use (spend 15 seconds for each land use type slide).
4. Each group should work to identify the area(s) where they think the land use makes the most sense to locate. Groups should also consider whether their selected locations support or detract from the goals listed on the worksheet by putting a + or – sign in the appropriate column. They should also identify other related issues or impacts associated with allowing that land use in their selected area. Spend about three minutes on each land use (24 minutes total).
5. Spend the remaining time (12 minutes) asking each group to report out which uses they selected for each area, highlighting a few reasons why they selected those locations and how those locations support the goals. The Instructor’s Notes provide some ideas to supplement the discussion about each location.



Slide: 1 continued

Time: 1 Minute (45 minutes total for activity)

Script:

“This activity will explore the influences of the different types of land uses present in rural communities on the local character and regional economy. During this activity you will be determining what types of land uses make sense in different areas of the community, and what opportunities and challenges are associated with different types of development. You’ll also focus on finding ways to protect rural character through land use decision-making, while also creating opportunities for economic development. This is important for economic development because, as we discussed earlier in the module, the location of development has a lot of implications for quality of place, and high-quality, walkable, mixed-use places will be more likely to thrive in the future.”

Instructions:

Introduce the different areas of a rural community where growth is most likely to occur.

Script:

“Each community will develop differently over the years, however, most rural communities have three main types of places:

- Downtown core – typically the historic center of the community, which includes the Main Street area, along with the surrounding blocks and buildings. In some rural communities, this will simply be a short main street.
- Town – generally the developed area surrounding the downtown core, which includes neighborhoods, community facilities, other business and industrial areas, and parks.
- Countryside – the rural area surrounding the town where development is generally very limited.

For purposes of this exercise, let’s assume our community has developed in a pattern similar to the map shown on this slide.”



Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

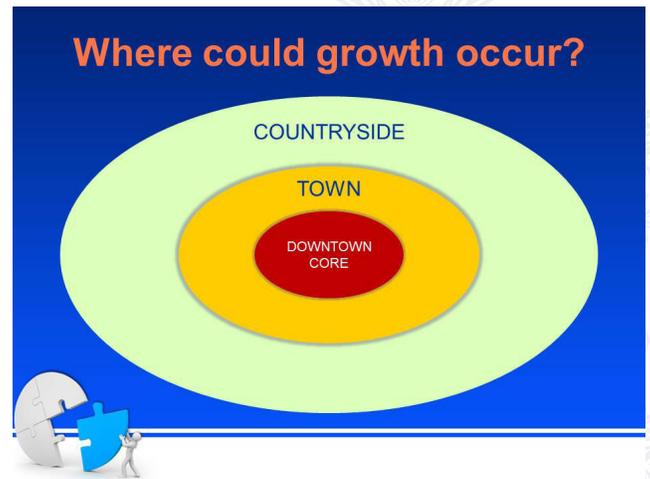
Introduce the different areas of a rural community where growth is most likely to occur.

Script:

“This general diagram helps illustrate the sizes and relationship of these different potential growth areas. Generally the downtown core is a somewhat compact area located near the center of the community. New development opportunities may be limited in the downtown core area because of established buildings and patterns of development.

The town surrounds the downtown core, and generally has much more space to accommodate new development than the downtown core. However, new development in this area should complement the character of the downtown core and provide access to its amenities. Development in the town should capitalize on existing infrastructure investments, such as major roadways, rail corridors, and water and sewer services.

The countryside generally surrounds the Town. The potential for development in the countryside appears to be limitless, but in reality, the availability of public services and infrastructure, and the presence of important agricultural uses and natural features such as forests and rivers can limit where potential growth could (or should) occur.”



Slide: 3

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

This slide makes the point that in any of the three areas, there might be places where growth should not occur.

Script:

“Before we go on to the exercise, I just want to make the point that in all three of these areas, there are places where growth should not occur. These include valuable natural spaces, from small parks to large open spaces or stream corridors, and important working lands, such as prime agricultural lands and forests. It is important to identify these assets and designate them as areas for preservation (i.e., not for growth) when doing your regional and local visioning and planning. Additionally, preservation of natural spaces and working lands can help support your region’s economic development goals by providing unique amenities to attract visitors and supporting natural resource-based employment.”



Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain that this activity involves determining where these different types of land uses should be located in their hypothetical rural community.

Script:

“I’m going to spend a few minutes going through examples of the kinds of growth and development that typically occur in rural areas. After I finish showing you these various types of land uses, you’ll work with your group to complete a worksheet to identify where you these land uses they should be located in the community.”

Types of Land Uses

1. Single-Family Housing
2. Multi-Family Housing
3. Retail Shop
4. Big Box Store
5. Civic Use
6. School
7. Industry
8. Energy Production/Resource Extraction



Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“I’m going to spend a few minutes going through some examples of types of growth and development that typically occurs in rural areas. After I finish showing you these types of land uses, you’ll complete a quick activity to identify where you think they should be located in the community.

The first photo in the series is of single-family housing. Single family housing units stand alone on their own lots, with one family living in each unit.”

1. Single-Family Housing



Slide: 6

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of multi-family housing. This means that the housing units are attached or share one lot. Some examples of multi-family housing include townhomes, apartments, condos and housing for senior citizens.”

2. Multi-Family Housing



Slide: 7

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of a retail shop. Retail shops can be developed individually or as part of a larger planned development or center.”

3. Retail Shop



Slide: 8

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of a large “big box” retail store. This is a slang term for a physically large retail establishment, usually associated with a major chain. Big box stores can develop individually or in a group as part of a large planned shopping center. They are generally rectangular, single-floor structures, surrounded by large parking areas, like the example shown on this slide. However, in some communities, big box stores are designed differently (e.g., with a smaller building footprint or multi-story) to fit within other patterns of styles of development.”

4. “Big Box” Store



Slide: 9

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of a civic use. Civic uses include public buildings and spaces such as the town hall, library, post office, and museum.”

5. Civic Use



Slide: 10

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of a typical school building. Schools can include public and private schools for the primary and secondary levels, plus universities, community colleges, trade schools, and other educational institutions.”

6. School



Slide: 11

Time: 15 Seconds

Additional Information:
EPA's School Siting Guidelines:
<http://www.epa.gov/schools/siting/>

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of a industrial use. There are a wide variety of types and intensities of industrial uses, but in general they provide employment opportunities for rural communities. Typical rural industrial uses include mills, factories, transportation/distribution uses, and warehouses. In many cases, the storage of goods and materials (indoors or outdoors) is associated with industrial uses.”

7. Industry



Slide: 12

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Spend 15 seconds to introduce this type of land use by reading the script below.

Script:

“This photo is of an energy production/resource extraction uses. There are a wide variety of types and intensities of energy production and resource extraction uses, but in general they provide revenue and/or employment opportunities for rural communities.”

8. Energy Production/ Resource Extraction



Slide: 13

Time: 15 Seconds

Instructions:

Now that you've familiarized the group with the different types of land uses and potential locations, begin the Land Use Mapping activity by handing out the Land Use Mapping worksheets. Read the activity instructions to the groups and allow time for questions before the activity begins. Groups should have 24 minutes to complete the worksheet and should aim to spend about three minutes on each land use.

Script:

“We just walked through an assortment of land uses that are typical in rural areas. You should assume that each land use wants to locate in your community, and it is up to you to determine where in the community it makes sense for this use to be located (downtown core, town or countryside). Work in your small group to identify the area(s) where you think each land use makes the most sense. There are no right or wrong choices, but each land use can bring opportunities as well as challenges for rural communities.

Please consider the following questions as your group discusses each land use:

- What are the important issues that arise from allowing that land use in that particular area?
- Does locating this use in a particular area help or hinder the goal of supporting the community's rural landscape?
- Does locating this use in a particular area help or hinder the goal of helping existing places?
- Does locating this use in a particular area help or hinder the goal of creating great new places?
- Does locating this use in a particular area support your region's economic development goals and its long-term economic development potential?

Nominate one person in your group to serve as the scribe and take notes, and nominate another person to report out when we're finished with the worksheets. Work your way through the worksheet, and identify your community's desired location for each land use. If you believe that this location helps advance the goals identified, use a plus sign (+) to denote that the location supports the goal. If you believe that this location detracts from the goal, use a minus sign (-). Leave the cell blank if you don't think the goal is applicable or if the location that you selected has no impact on the goal.

Instructions

- Decide the best location for each land use
 - Downtown Core, Town, Countryside
- Discuss whether or not this location
 - Supports the rural landscape
 - Helps existing places thrive
 - Creates great new places
 - Supports your region's economic development goals
- Identify any key issues or impacts associated with allowing the land use in this area



Slide: 14

Time: 25 Minutes

Script (Cont.):

Finally, for each land use, please note any thoughts or ideas that you have related to potential impacts, benefits, issues, opportunities, or challenges associated with locating that use in your selected area. For example, what sort of traffic, noise, visual, or other impacts may result if you put a use in that location? You will have 24 minutes to complete this group work, so aim to spend about 3 minutes on each land use.”

Instructions

- Decide the best location for each land use
 - Downtown Core, Town, Countryside
- Discuss whether or not this location
 - Supports the rural landscape
 - Helps existing places thrive
 - Creates great new places
 - Supports your region’s economic development goals
- Identify any key issues or impacts associated with allowing the land use in this area



Slide: 14 continued

Time: 25 Minutes

Instructions:

Each group should spend some time reporting out which uses they think are most appropriate in the downtown core, town, and countryside areas, and some of their observations about potential opportunities and impacts associated with the different uses. Ask participants to discuss what the land uses in their chosen locations mean in terms of the goals related to supporting the rural landscape, helping existing places thrive, and creating great new places. The Land Use Mapping Instructor's Notes will help you guide or supplement the discussion about the land uses, as necessary. Spend the remaining 12 minutes on this portion of the activity.

Script:

“Now that you have identified your desired locations for each land use, let's spend a few minutes hearing from each group. Please pick one representative to tell us which uses you selected for the downtown core area, town area, and countryside. Why did you chose these locations? How do these locations help support the goals listed on the screen?”

Did your group note any potential impacts or other opportunities that should be considered when making decisions about land uses? For instance, did you talk about parking, traffic, utility services, or other issues? Did this exercise make you think differently about the location of these and other land uses in your community?”

Report Out

- Which land uses did you choose for the Downtown Core area? Town area? Countryside?
- How do these locations help support the goals?
 - Support the rural landscape
 - Help existing places thrive
 - Create great new places
- What other impacts & opportunities must be considered when making land use decisions?
- Did this exercise make you think differently about the location of different land uses in your community?



Slide: 15

Time: 12 Minutes

VIRTUAL WALKING AUDIT: INSTRUCTOR'S DISCUSSION NOTES

These notes are provided for use by the instructor only. The instructor should familiarize him/herself with the photos used for the virtual walking audit. As the participants share their ratings and opinions about each photo, the instructor may supplement the discussion with the ideas and other considerations provided in the following notes.

Street Photo	Accessibility	Welcoming	Convenience	Safety
<p>1. Main Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The street appears to be very accessible for vehicles and parking but does not appear to be very accessible to bikes (no bike lanes or racks). Because the street appears to be very wide, some of this area could be marked off for a bike like. The intersections are clearly marked with separate signals for pedestrians and automobiles, but the pedestrian crossings are exposed and not very visible to motorists. It is difficult to see how accessible the sidewalks are for disabled persons, but they should include ramps at the major crossings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The large mature trees make the street seem welcoming. Lighting is fairly limited, which could make the area less welcoming when it is dark outside. Street furniture and amenities such as planters, benches, patios, signs, and trashcans are very limited. Adding these would make the area seem more inviting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area appears to be pretty convenient for motorists, with a wide mix of uses adjacent to the street. Integration of bike racks, transit service, and signage to nearby destinations would enhance the area's convenience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The windows on the storefronts allow people to look out over the sidewalks which may enhance the feeling of safety for pedestrians, more patios or active uses could enhance this further. Low activity levels and store vacancy could make the area feel deserted or unsafe.

Street Photo	Accessibility	Welcoming	Convenience	Safety
<p>2. Gridded Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The street appears to be very accessible for vehicles. It is not clear if it is accessible for parking or bicyclists. Some signage would help clarify if on-street parking and bicycle travel is allowed. The sidewalks add some levels of pedestrian accessibility but lack of ramps could make them inaccessible for disabled persons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of signage, landscape maintenance, and lighting make the street seem neglected or uninviting. The sidewalks located to the front porches and large trees make it seem traditional and welcoming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The street could be a convenient bike route but lack of signage makes this indiscernible. The sidewalks system looks comprehensive and like it follows the grid network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of transparency in some of the landscaping materials limit visibility for motorists and pedestrians. Uneven sidewalks and lack of clear crossings make the street somewhat unsafe for elderly, disabled and very young pedestrians. The separation of the sidewalk from the travel lane makes pedestrians seem less exposed and more protected.
<p>3. Curvilinear Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The street appears to be very accessible for vehicles and off-street (driveway) parking. The sidewalks add pedestrian accessibility but the angled curbs can be challenging for disabled persons and bicyclists. Driveways provide access to each individual home, but visibility can be limited when backing out onto the main thoroughfare shared by pedestrians and cyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetlights are spaced far apart, which may mean the area is very dark for pedestrians in the evenings. The driveways protrude beyond front porches, people will probably enter/exit homes through garages rather than main entryways. Large front yards are attractive but do not encourage interaction between residents on their porches and pedestrians on the sidewalks. Large driveways lend themselves to outdoor storage (e.g., boats, campers, etc.) which is not an active use of the space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curvilinear design may mean that a simple or direct route is not available for pedestrians. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wide travel lane without any markings can lead to high speeds. Sidewalks not buffered from the street can be less safe for young children.

Street Photo	Accessibility	Welcoming	Convenience	Safety
<p>4. Highway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The street appears to be very accessible for vehicles. • Bike lanes are way too narrow to be comfortable for cyclists. • The sidewalks add pedestrian accessibility but the large number of driveways crossing the sidewalk limits their effectiveness. • Sidewalks appear to be in good condition for handicap accessibility but users may not feel comfortable at such large crossings. • Intersections appear to lack pedestrian signals and have minimal striping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The street appears cluttered and uninviting. • Seems like you are meant to drive through this area, not stop and look around. • No street amenities other than lighting. • Signage is all scaled for passing automobiles, not pedestrian scale (e.g., billboards, tall freestanding store signage, etc.) • Wayfinding signage almost too complex (lots of arrows!) but basic street name signs lacking. • Road does not project any sense of place or character about what this community has to offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land uses are very automobile oriented (parking in front, large signs). • Sidewalks don't appear to really go anywhere, they just follow the road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wide road width with multiple lanes and low speed limit seem to conflict with each other. • Sidewalks have a landscape strip separating them from the roadway but lack of street trees make them seem exposed and vulnerable. • No activity on the street other than automobile traffic.
<p>5. Rural Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The street appears to be very accessible for vehicles. • Shoulder/bike lane is uneven and may not be suitable for bicyclists. • Shoulder is wide enough for pedestrians but exposure/lack of separation from cars may limit pedestrian use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The street appears quiet and established. • Seems like you are meant to drive through this area, not stop and look around. • No street amenities, including almost no lighting. • Road does not project any sense of place or character about what this community has to offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street obviously serves a purpose but it doesn't appear to be convenient in terms of connecting major destinations or land uses. (maybe signage would help?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow road width appropriate to keep speeds under control. • Bicycle/pedestrian activities in the shoulder seem unsafe. • Tall fences and dense landscaping limit visibility and sense of security.

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 Virtual Walking Audit activity is particularly relevant to regions/communities that are currently very automobile-oriented and interested in making their areas more inviting to other types of transportation (e.g., walking, biking, transit). It may also be useful for regions/communities looking to revitalize their core/downtown areas. This activity may be located at the beginning of Part 2 of the module or midway between the discussion of the 4 selected tools. It would be interesting to do this activity after introducing Tool #5: Street and Streetscape Improvements.

This activity will help participants understand the role of streets and community design in enhancing rural character and economic development. Participants will identify the various components that make a community walkable and vibrant and will learn how to conduct a walking audit in their community.

This activity requires:

- PowerPoint slides (see slides #121-136)
- Virtual Walking Audit Participant Worksheet (one per participant)
- Virtual Walking Audit Instructor Notes (one copy for instructor only)
- Flip chart or white board and marker for instructor to take notes on group discussion

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

Exercise steps:

1. Discuss the idea of walkability and the parts of a street.
2. Distribute the Virtual Walking Audit activity worksheets to the regional team.
3. Explain the exercise and allow for clarifying questions.
4. Show photos of five types of streets often found in rural communities. Participants have one minute to examine and rate each photo, using a scale of “needs improvement” to “high quality” for four categories: accessible, welcoming, convenient, and safe. Allow a three-minute group discussion about each photo. Discuss whether or not the road is accessible to all users, welcoming, convenient, or safe. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor’s Notes provide some ideas to supplement the discussion about each photo.
5. Use the remaining time to discuss as a group if the photos make participants

ACTIVITY: VIRTUAL WALKING AUDIT



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

think differently about any of the streets in their communities. Do they think street design can influence the character and economic development potential of their community/region? Remind participants that this type of assessment could easily be replicated on streets in their own community.

Script:

“This activity aims to illustrate the role of streets, streetscapes, and community design in enhancing rural character and economic development potential. You will learn the different components of the street and how to audit and evaluate a street for elements such as pedestrian accessibility, design, safety, and attractiveness. You’ll be able to take this audit tool home and apply it in your own community.”



Slide: 1 continued

Time: 1 Minute (30 minutes total for activity)

Instructions:

Using the bulleted list on the slide, provide a brief overview of why walkability matters to rural communities.

Script:

“This activity is centered around the principle of walkability. Simply put, walkability is how comfortable an area is for walking. Many of our historic communities were designed to be very walkable, but over the years some have abandoned this notion and have grown increasingly reliant upon automobiles to get around throughout the community.

The walkability of an area provides more benefits beyond just the opportunity to walk. Walkable communities feature thoughtful street design, which often reflects the community’s historic and small-town roots. For instance, traditional main streets were designed for people to stroll around and check out various shops and services by foot.

Walkability also adds value to businesses by increasing the potential for people to slowly pass by storefronts rather than breeze by in a car, which means they are more likely to stop and shop. A walkable area looks attractive and invites people to stroll and linger. Businesses want to locate in walkable areas so that their customers have easy access, and so their employees can go out for breaks and have access to nearby restaurants and services.

Walkability also adds value to neighborhoods by providing opportunities for interaction with neighbors, a safe environment for children, and convenient access to nearby businesses and amenities. Walkable neighborhoods are often desirable areas, where people want to live and invest in their homes.

In terms of health and safety, walkable communities provide opportunities for residents to get out of their cars and get around by foot. Designing a community for walkability makes it safer for pedestrians, as well as for others including bicyclists, those with disabilities and in wheelchairs, visitors, motorists, and transit users. Finally, providing a walkable community means that residents of all ages have options to move throughout the community without needing to access a vehicle.”

Why does walkability matter?

- Supports small town character
- Adds value to businesses & homes
- Benefits health & safety
- Provides mobility options for all ages



Slide: 2

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain what walkability is and why it matters to rural character and economic development.

Script:

“Four criteria factor into an area’s walkability:

1. How Accessible-Focuses on the degree to which the environment allows and encourages all users
2. How Welcoming-Focuses on user comfort and attractiveness
3. How Convenient-Focuses on how conducive an area is to walking by means of connections to other modes of transportations and the surrounding land uses
4. How Safe-Focuses on how secure and protected the users feel

We’ll discuss each of these criteria briefly in the slides that follow.”



Slide: 3

Time: 1 Minute

Additional Comments:
The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute developed this list of criteria. For more information visit: www.walklive.org.

Instructions:

Explain why accessibility is an important element of walkability.

Script:

“Accessibility is the degree to which the built environment accommodates users to move around, including the elderly, children, and the disabled. This includes the design of different components of the street such as the widths and locations of sidewalks, bike lanes, vehicle travel lanes, driveways, and parking areas. It also includes the elements of intersections including the crossings, signals, and intersection configuration and location. It also includes compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements that address the placement and slope of handicap ramps, potential obstructions, driveways and other entry drives for vehicles.

Notice that in the left photo, accessibility is limited and pedestrians and wheelchair users opt to use the street instead of the sidewalk, probably due to the fact that the sidewalk lacks ramps, is disjointed, or uneven. In the photo on the right, ramps are highly visible to users, and crosswalks are clearly marked and designed to make pedestrian users visible.”

Accessibility

- Streets
- Intersections
- ADA Compliance



Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Additional Comments:

To learn more about accessibility, go to:
<http://www.access-board.gov/provac/draft.htm>

Instructions:

Explain why being welcoming is an important element of walkability.

Script:

“When it comes to determining how welcoming an area is, it is useful to ask, ‘would it be pleasant to walk here?’ Providing outdoor seating and places to linger is important, as are considering factors such as shade from the sun, other people around, and area’s appeal or attractiveness. Additionally, the placement of buildings and parking areas also play a critical role in the look and feel of an area. As shown in the image above, the lack of sidewalks or a clear area for pedestrians makes this area seem unwelcoming, whereas the tables and chairs, landscaping, and design of the public space in the bottom photo make that area seem very welcoming and inviting for pedestrians.”

Welcoming

User Comfort and Attractiveness

- Lighting
- Street furniture (benches, tables, trash cans, planters)
- Signage/ Wayfinding



Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Explain why convenience is an important element of walkability.

Script:

“Convenience is a key principle of walkability. By that, we mean the area is easy to use, and walking is a natural choice. Factors that contribute to convenience include the following:

- Connecting the sidewalk system so that there are not any unanticipated gaps or barriers
- Linking the pedestrian system to other modes of transportation by carefully locating bus stops, bicycle racks, and parking areas
- Designing things such as signs, lighting, and other streetscape elements at a pedestrian (not automobile) scale
- Paying attention to the orientation and design of buildings so that they are easily accessed and attractive to pedestrians
- Locating pedestrian-friendly land uses such as cafes and shops in close proximity to pedestrian areas.”

Convenience

- Connected system
- Links to other transportation modes
- Human scale design
- Building orientation
- Synergy with land uses



Slide: 6

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Explain why safety is an important element of walkability.

Script:

“Safety, or the feeling of being protected and out of harm’s way, is another important principle of walkability. Our perception of safety as pedestrians is influenced by physical factors such as how close we are to the street, what barriers exist between us and moving vehicles, and visibility as we enter crosswalks. Our perception of safety is also influenced by factors such as transparency, or the ability to see and be seen.

For example, notice how in the photo on the top of this slide has sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians, but as a user, this sidewalk might feel unsafe due to the fact that there is no barrier or protection from moving vehicles. Also, visibility at crossings is limited due to the tall wall, lighting is limited, and users might feel isolated due to the fact that the nearby houses seem to have their backs turned on the sidewalk. On the other hand, the photo below shows an area that seems very safe for pedestrians due to the pedestrian-scale lighting, generous crosswalk, landscape barrier between the sidewalk and street, and the sense of enclosure and visibility offered by the homes and businesses on the street.”

Safety

- Street & sidewalk design
- Visibility
- Transparency



Slide: 7

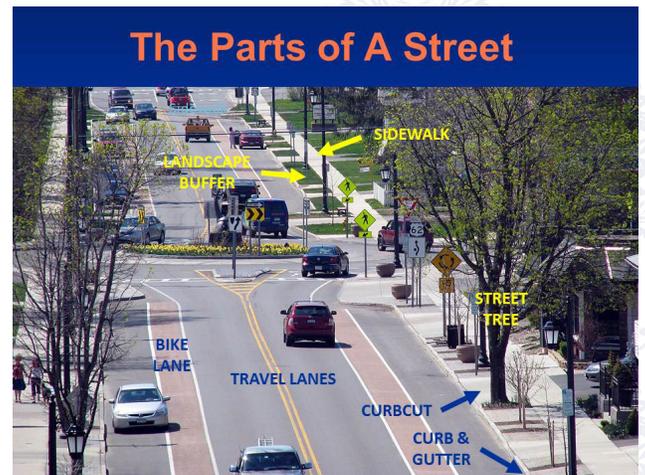
Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Using the labels on this slide, explain the various components of a street.

Script:

“A street can contain many different parts, including the travel lane (where the vehicles drive), bike lane, parking area, sidewalk, curb, gutter, and landscape buffer, which may or may not include street trees. A curbcut is the area where a driveway or entrance for vehicles crosses the sidewalk and intersects with the travel lanes. Some streets also have medians (not shown in this photo), which can either be a concrete or landscape divider between the travel lanes. The presence or absence of these components shape walkability and overall feel of the street.”



Slide: 8

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

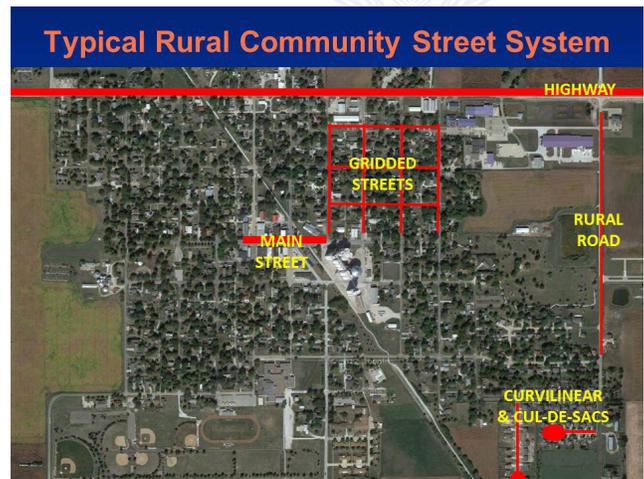
Introduce the different types of typical street types present in rural communities.

Script:

“Most rural communities share these street types:

1. A ‘main street’, which is often the principal shopping street in the downtown
2. Gridded streets, which usually run parallel or perpendicular to the main street area and surround the downtown or core community area
3. Curved or cul-de-sac streets, which are usually located farther away from the downtown core, usually in newer parts of the community. These often present challenges for walkability because they are disconnected and do not provide direct routes to destinations.
4. Highways, which are meant for high speeds and can be designated as state or interstate highways
5. Rural roads, which serve to connect places or communities (sometimes these are called county roads) and may be paved or unpaved. Some rural roads may also be designated as highways.

In this activity, we’ll look at each of these street types in detail and will conduct a brief virtual walking audit for each one.”



Slide: 9

Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Distribute the Virtual Walking Audit activity worksheets to the regional team. Read the Virtual Walking Audit activity instructions, and allow time for questions before the activity begins. The total length of the activity should be 30 minutes, so the instructor will need to monitor the time as the activity progresses.

Script:

“I will show you a series of five types of streets often found in rural communities. When you look at each photo, rate the perceived walkability, based on the four walkability criteria that we discussed a few minutes ago (how accessible, how welcoming, how convenient, how safe). The rating scale includes needs improvement, adequate, and high quality. Please record your ratings next to the photos on your individual Development Preference Survey worksheet.

While you review the photo, record your notes and observations about why you chose this rating. Also, please consider whether this street design in your community would support or detract from its rural character and ability to achieve its economic development goals. You’ll have a about two minutes to review and rate each photo individually, then we’ll spend a few minutes discussing our ideas as a group.”

Instructions

- Rate each street photo using criteria
 - How Accessible
 - How Welcoming?
 - How Convenient?
 - How Safe?
- Ratings
 - Needs Improvement
 - Adequate
 - High Quality



Slide: 10

Time: 30 Seconds

Handout:
Virtual Walking Audit Worksheet

Additional Comments:
Plan on spending four minutes on each photo. Two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by two minutes discussing each photo.

Instructions:

Spend about four minutes on this photo. One or two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by one to two minutes discussing the photo. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor's Guide contains notes which may be helpful to use to supplement the group discussion.



1. Main Street

Script:

“This photo is of a typical main street in the downtown area of a rural community. Please spend a minute and rate the photo based on your perceptions about its walkability.

Now that you've had a chance to review and rate this photo, let's discuss what you think.

- Do you think this main street is accessible to all users? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this main street is welcoming? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this main street looks convenient? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this main street looks safe? What would you add or change?”

Slide: 11

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Spend about four minutes on this photo. One or two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by one to two minutes discussing the photo. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor's Guide contains notes which may be helpful to use to supplement the group discussion.

Script:

“This photo is of a typical gridded neighborhood street in a rural community. Please spend a minute and rate the photo based on your perceptions about its walkability.

Now that you've had a chance to review and rate this photo, let's discuss what you think.

- Do you think this gridded neighborhood street is accessible to all users? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this gridded neighborhood street is welcoming? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this gridded neighborhood street looks convenient? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this gridded neighborhood street looks safe? What would you add or change?”

2. Gridded Street



Slide: 12

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Spend about four minutes on this photo. One or two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by one to two minutes discussing the photo. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor's Guide contains notes which may be helpful to use to supplement the group discussion.

Script:

“This photo is of a typical curvilinear neighborhood street in a rural community. Please spend a minute and rate the photo based on your perceptions about its walkability.

Now that you've had a chance to review and rate this photo, let's discuss what you think.

- Do you think this street is accessible to all users? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street is welcoming? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street looks convenient? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street looks safe? What would you add or change?”

3. Curvilinear Streets



Slide: 13

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Spend about four minutes on this photo. One or two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by one to two minutes discussing the photo. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor's Guide contains notes which may be helpful to use to supplement the group discussion.



Script:

“This photo is of a typical state highway passing through a rural community. Please spend a minute and rate the photo based on your perceptions about its walkability.

Now that you've had a chance to review and rate this photo, let's discuss what you think.

- Do you think this street is accessible? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street is welcoming? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street looks convenient? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this street looks safe? What would you add or change?”
-

Slide: 14

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

Spend about four minutes on this photo. One or two minutes should be allocated for individual rating of the photo, followed by one to two minutes discussing the photo. The Virtual Walking Audit Instructor's Guide contains notes which may be helpful to use to supplement the group discussion.

Script:

“This photo is of a typical rural county road on the periphery of a community. In some communities, a rural road can be a highway, but this one is just a rural county road that connects communities. Please spend a minute and rate the photo based on your perceptions about its walkability.

Now that you've had a chance to review and rate this photo, let's discuss what you think.

- Do you think this rural road is accessible to all users? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this rural road is welcoming? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this rural road looks convenient? What would you add or change?
- Do you think this rural road looks safe? What would you add or change?”

5. Rural Road



Slide: 15

Time: 4 Minutes

Instructions:

After discussing each of the photos, use the remaining time to discuss what these observations about different street types mean for the sense of character and economic development in participants' communities using the questions below. Encourage participants to conduct this audit in their own communities.

Script:

“Now that we have conducted a walking audit for these different types of streets, are you thinking differently about the streets in your community? How do you think street design can influence the character and economic development potential of your community or region?”

Observations

- Do any of the photos make you think differently about the streets in your community?
- How do you think street design can influence the character and economic development potential of your community or region?



Slide: 16

Time: 3 Minutes

Additional Information:

EPA Office of Sustainable Communities, Smart Growth and Transportation webpage:
<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/topics/transportation.htm>

Walkable and Livable Communities Institute:
<http://www.walklive.org/>

National Complete Streets Coalition:
<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>

AARP, Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide:
http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/d18311_communities.pdf

VIRTUAL WALKING AUDIT

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

This activity aims to illustrate the role of streets and community design in enhancing rural character and economic development potential. Participants will learn the different components of the street and how to audit and evaluate a street for elements such as pedestrian accessibility, design, and safety.

BACKGROUND

Walkability is defined as “how comfortable an area is for walking.” Walkability is based on four criteria:

1. **How Accessible** – the degree to which the built environment allows and encourages all users
2. **How Welcoming** – user comfort and attractiveness of the environment
3. **How Convenient** – how conducive an area is to walking
4. **How Safe** – how secure and protected users feel

We have the opportunity to choose how walkable our community will be by making decisions about what types of streets we build. This activity will expose you to many different types of streets, and help you discover how streets can enhance or detract from rural character and a community’s economic development potential.

INSTRUCTIONS

The instructor will lead you through a series of photos of various types of streets found in rural communities. For each photo, please rate each street in terms of its how accessible, welcoming, convenient, and safe you perceive it to be. Walkability ratings include: needs improvement, adequate, and high quality. Record any notes and observations about each criterion in the notes and observations section of the worksheet.

Street Photo	Walkability Criteria	Walkability Rating			Notes and Observations
		Needs Improvement	Adequate	High Quality	
1. Main Street	Accessibility				
	Welcoming				
	Convenience				
	Safety				
2. Gridded Street	Accessibility				
	Welcoming				
	Convenience				
	Safety				
3. Curvilinear Street	Accessibility				
	Welcoming				
	Convenience				
	Safety				
4. Highway	Accessibility				
	Welcoming				
	Convenience				
	Safety				
5. Rural Road	Accessibility				
	Welcoming				
	Convenience				
	Safety				