SWOT Subcommittee Committee

Oakland Comprehensive Plan

12.18.2017

4pm

Attendees: Robert Nutting, Dan Duperry, Kelly Roderick, Laura Tracy, and Donna Griffin

Facilitator: Garvan Donegan, CMGC

Agenda:

- Review SWOT Analysis – reflect on process, identify any gaps, and incorporate comments from group members absent on 12/5
- Prioritize SWOT

Review SWOT Analysis

Reflection on 12/5 SWOT exercise process: the group exhibited similarities of thinking; while they were on the same page for most concepts, members came at the concept from different perspectives. At times, the discussion was tunneled to "town government" because several sub-committee members are involved in town government; did the discussion reflect what a regular resident thinks? Also, the "Threats" section was an area of struggle, as reflected in the low number of response cards for that section. Overall, the SWOT exercise was extremely helpful, and it went very well.

Additions to SWOT analysis to fill gaps:

- Strengths: safe and low-crime; strong connections with churches and other civic institutions (e.g. Kiwanis, Lions)
- Weaknesses: Not enough streetlights (particularly on KMD), which is dangerous and uninviting; lack of attractions and social events – why does it stop at OakFest?; lack of cultural events; lack of public transportation (KVCAP stops at Ray Haskell Ford atop KMD)
- Opportunities: possibility of rail coming to area; repurpose rail for recreation; connectivity (e.g. broadband, wifi); coordination of civic groups (which will be explored further during stakeholder analysis); new track facility, which could attract states-level competitions and summer programs;
  - o Wishlist: an open space/park (with an ice rink) in the center of town – a visible, central gathering place that would make downtown look appealing; relatedly, a centralized downtown so people can "make a day/night of it" (perhaps bring "Main Street" close to the stream); fill FirstPark; develop a bike path (repurpose rail beds); improve and expand recreation department to include activities for all ages and all interests
- Threats: aging infrastructure; aging population; shrinking school population; rising costs of healthcare; competition for talent; unorganized growth

Further Discussion:

Data analysis can be used to boost the "Strengths" section. There is a particular interest to do so regarding natural resources - are there any natural resources that would support clean industry?

There is an interesting dynamic between Oakland's location as a strength (e.g. I-95, lakes) and as a weakness (e.g. lack of attractions and social/cultural activities).

Sub-committee members discussed downtown at length. Members wondered how Oakland can create a destination downtown, like Hallowell. Should the main street be by the post office, so that the lake is visible? Could downtown be centralized, and have an attractive gathering place (e.g. park with ice rink)? However, rail has been a barrier to developing downtown, and an otherwise perfect place for a central space is a private dirt lot.

Is FirstPark optimized for success? Should its charter be revised?

Prioritize SWOT:

All members were given 3 dots for each section. They were allowed to put as many of their 3 dots on a response card as desired. The response cards with the most dots are considered priorities; however, several response cards were similarly-themed, and so were grouped. The following list does not rank the priorities in any order.

- Strengths: low real estate taxes; strong central geography; strong school system
- Weaknesses: Perception of location makes it hard to get to / don't want to be a pass-thru town, but a destination town; lack of cultural events; lack of trained workforce TIED WITH lack of plan for too long
- Opportunities: Downtown (both as a "village center" and clustered); FirstPark; promotion of lakes
- Threats: Changing old mindsets and ways; need to develop youths' soft skills; need to attract young workforce; lack of planned growth

Action Items:

- Garvan will send out a Word document that clarifies which members are on which sub-committees
- CMGC will digitize the SWOT analysis, clean up and prioritize each section, convert into one-page chart, and create a slide deck
- SWOT sub-committee will review the one-page chart at its next meeting
- SWOT sub-committee will report out its SWOT analysis to the entire Comp Plan group in February

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Theriault

Meetings Minutes Appendix

Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

I. SWOT: Analysis Overview

Oakland Comprehensive Plan SWOT Analysis (*draft*)				
Strengths			**Weaknesses**	
Priority	*Theme*		*Priority*	*Theme*
1	• Low property taxes		1	• Poor perception as "pass-thru" town
1	• Central, convenient location		2	• Lack of cultural events/activities
1	• High-quality school system		3	• Lack of trained workforce -> lack of jobs -> lack of youth
Opportunities			**Threats**	
Priority	*Theme*		*Priority*	*Theme*
1	• Dense, clustered downtown		1	• Changing old mindsets about growth
2	• FirstPark		2	• Inability to attract young workforce
3	• 4-seasons recreation/broadband/P3		2	• Lack of adequate labor skills

Notes:

(1) This *is not* a comprehensive list of the SWOT Subcommittee's findings
(2) Draft Only
(3) Phase I SWOT Analysis
(4) Subject to further review, input, and analysis
(5) Additional community and public input is forthcoming
(6) For planning purposes only