

**SECTION 5:  
PLANNING FOR ACTION  
WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**



# Step 1: Bring Your Neighbors Together



*Zion City residents participated in a community visioning and action planning process in November 2013.*

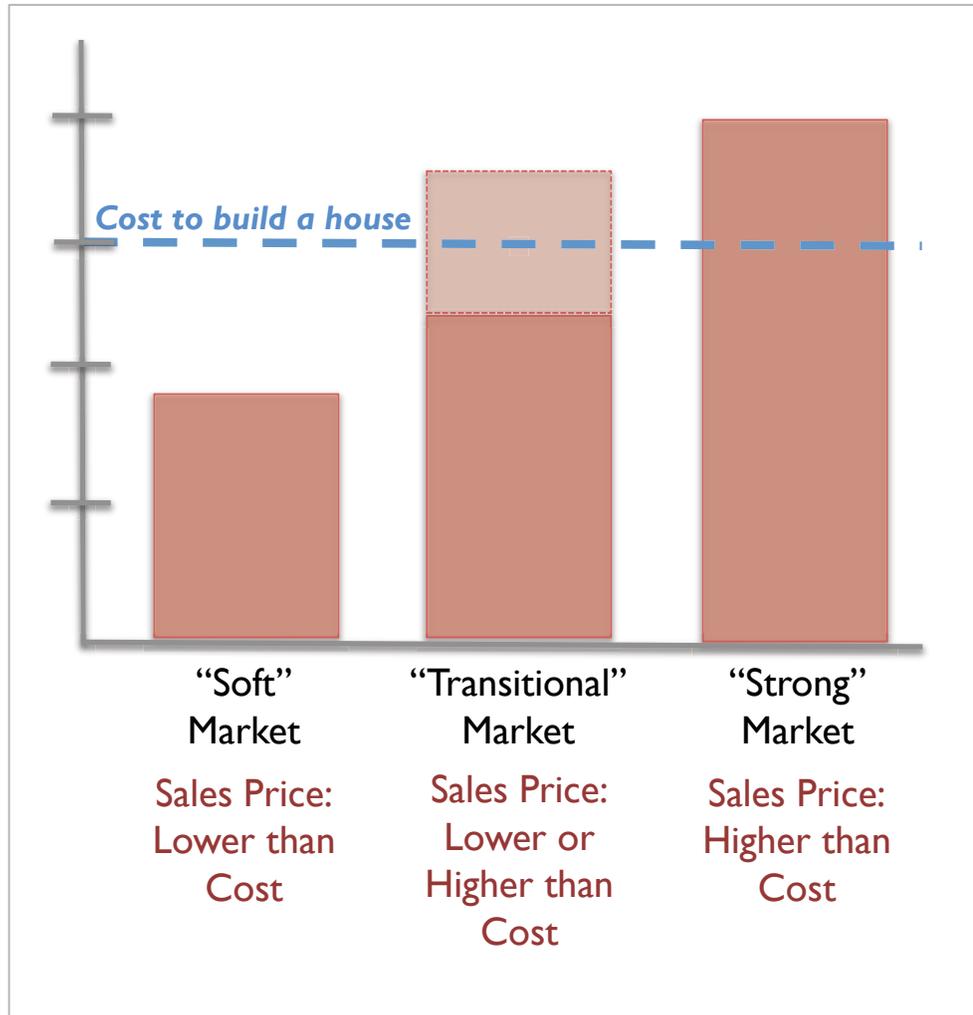
- For a strong visioning process, you need residents representing the diversity of the community to be part of a planning event or event(s).
- It's especially important to capture the views of youth and seniors.
- Schedule at least three hours to work on creating a vision and action plan for reducing blight and building assets.

## Step 2: Study Your Property Survey



- Use your neighborhood map of blighted properties to see where there may be clusters of blight, and where you see strategic opportunities to focus efforts.
- Take into account whether the majority of your blight is structures, vacant lots, or both.

## Step 3: Understand Your Market Type



- In a soft market (low property values), you need a long-term strategy for building assets and using vacant land – because when it costs more to build a house than that house sells for when it’s done, development takes time.
- In a strong market (high property values), development is easier – the issue is getting speculators to let go of properties.

## Step 4: Start Your Visioning with SWOT

<b><u>S</u>trengths</b>	<b><u>W</u>eaknesses</b>
<b><u>O</u>pportunities</b>	<b><u>T</u>hreats</b>

SWOT analysis helps identify elements and ideas you can use in your action plan. Use the **Activity 1** sheet to complete this activity.

Strengths = Advantages and assets from within your community

Weaknesses = Disadvantages and barriers within your community

Opportunities = Helpful resources, ideas, plans and partners from outside the community or neighborhood

Threats = Issues or problems coming from outside the community or neighborhood

## Step 5: Map Your Assets and Identify Partners

<b>WE CAN</b>	<b>WE KNOW WHO CAN</b>
<b>WE CAN'T AND WE DON'T KNOW WHO CAN</b>	<b>WE MAY NEED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WHO ELSE? WHAT ELSE?</b>

In this activity, you will sort a deck of “cards” related to blight reduction strategies that other New Orleans neighborhoods have used. Use the **Activity 2** sheet here.

We can – you and/or your neighbors can accomplish this strategy.

We know who can – a partner organization could execute this strategy.

We can't and don't know who can – additional partners would need to be identified to help with this strategy.

Additional resources would be needed. Use a “resources needed” card to write down what these would be.

# Step 6: Develop Short-Term and Long-Term Strategies

**Figure out who owns blighted properties**

**Warn blighted property owners about fines**

**Create a community asset like a park**

**Call 311 Help residents buy the property next door**

**Advocate for research on adjudicated properties**

**Map our assets & people who can help fight blight**

**Ground lease a property from its owner**

- Make a list: What are the 5 most effective things to do NOW?
- Make a list: What are the 5 things you would like to see happen – that will take time to advocate for or to create?
- Make a list: Which 5 properties will be easiest to acquire, or to change by working with the owner?
- Make a list: Which 5 properties most need to be improved?

# Toolkit Activities and Information

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For activity materials related to this section, see:

***Activity 1: SWOT Analysis***

***Activity 2: Asset and Partner Mapping***

That's the end of the teaching portion of this toolkit! If you have done a project to reduce blight in your neighborhood and would like to share details to help other communities learn and improve, please post it on our [nolablighttoolkit.com](http://nolablighttoolkit.com) website. Thanks!

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