



Strong Towns, Smart Transportation and Fiscal Resilience

Workshop

**Prepared by:** James Corless

**Attachments:** No

**Approved by:** James Corless

**Referring Committee:** Not Applicable

**1. Issue:**

A workshop with Charles Marohn, founder and president of Strong Towns.

**2. Recommendation:**

None; this is for information only.

**3. Background/Analysis:**

SACOG is undertaking an update to its long-range transportation and land use plan, the 2024 Blueprint. The 2024 Blueprint will be focused on achieving the Triple Bottom Line of goals for the region:

- **Equity:** A just and inclusive region where government makes investments for and with historically marginalized communities so race can no longer be used to predict health or economic outcomes, and outcomes for all groups are improved.
- **Economy:** A diversified regional economy in which all people have access to resources that give them the opportunity to realize their full potential. This future economy will also capitalize on key economic clusters where the region can achieve a competitive edge over our peers across the country, including agriculture and food, health sciences, and innovative mobility.
- **Environment:** A safe and resilient region for all residents, where natural resources and air quality are sustainably managed so people can thrive here for generations.

This board workshop is an opportunity to explore how principles of smart and more cost-effective approaches to transportation and land use and fiscal resilience can be applied in the regional plan to achieve the Triple Bottom Line.

**4. Discussion/Analysis:**

Charles Marohn is the founder and president of Strong Towns. He is a land use planner and (retired) professional engineer with decades of experience. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, both from the University of Minnesota.

Strong Towns is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit media advocacy organization. Strong Towns produces content that analyzes the failures of the post-war North American development pattern while giving citizens the

knowledge and tools to start making places better today. The organization seeks to replace America's post-war pattern of development, the Suburban Experiment, with a pattern of development that is financially strong and resilient. They advocate for cities of all sizes to be safe, livable, and inviting. They work to elevate local government to be the highest level of collaboration for people working together in a place, not merely the lowest level in a hierarchy of governments.

**5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

This workshop is funded through the adopted SACOG OWP and budget.

**6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Objectives:**

**Goal 1 : Advance Economic Prosperity**

**Goal 2 : Connected Communities**

**Goal 3 : Vibrant Places**