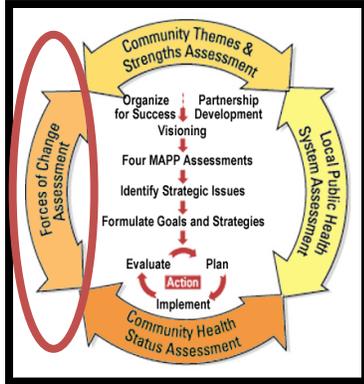


Stephens County Visioning & Forces of Change Assessment Summary

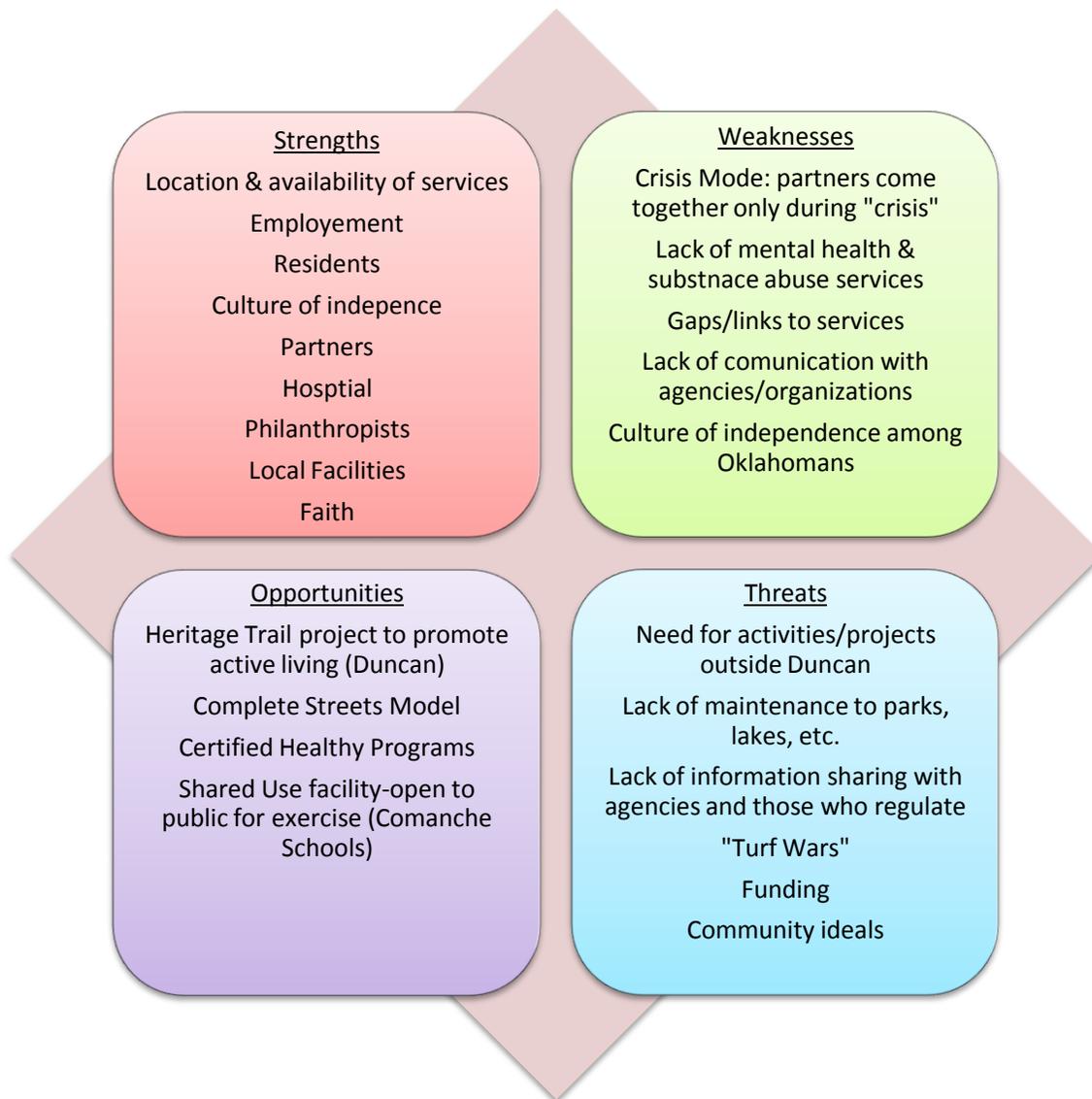


The Forces of Change Assessment is designed to determine what is occurring or might occur that could affect the health of a community or the local public health system, and the specific threats or opportunities that are generated by these occurrences. Forces can be identified as local, regional or global. Examples of such forces include but are not limited to: economical, environmental, legal, political, social, medical, technological, and ethical.

The Forces of Change Assessment was conducted in conjunction with the Visioning Session on January 23, 2013 in the form of a community meeting. A total of 17 individuals attended the session representing the following sectors: public health, health care, social services, local government, schools, business and industry,

and civic organizations. The process allowed participants to brainstorm and discuss as a community a “vision” for a healthy Stephens County, while also expressing concern for those forces either positive or negative that could result in the vision not being achieved. Information gathered will identify key strategic issues and offer guidance as to where the county wants to be with respect to health.

The group discussed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) to a healthy Stephens County as indicated in the visual.



The analysis also prepared attendees to determine the **greatest barriers** to creating a healthy community and adopting a vision that was attainable. Those barriers were identified as: **cost** (healthcare, healthy foods, preventative care), **culture** (value of a healthy lifestyle, inspiration to be healthy), **personal choice**, and **access to services** (location for some rural communities)

Forces identified in paragraph one was discussed in depth. Of those forces discussed the two most **prominent forces were: social and economical**. Social forces were: culture, partnerships, and communication. Culture was both a strength and weakness. Partnerships were a common theme and showed the need to have more communication amongst agencies and organizations in the community. Funding was a common theme throughout the entire assessment and one that proved to be a positive and negative force to attaining the vision.

Through this process it was also determined that there are gaps and partners missing that are vital to creating a healthier community. Some of the gaps discussed were: Early prevention measures for lifelong choices, linking services together, schools, and time. These gaps will be discussed throughout the remainder of this process and in the selection of priority areas and strategies.