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Overview

Seminar Description

Advanced Land Valuation: Sound Solutions to Perplexing Problems focuses on unusual and complex land valuation assignments and uses a combination of lecture, discussion, question and answer, and sample case studies to lead participants to suggested solution strategies. The seminar was developed for residential and commercial real estate appraisers and consultants, real estate agents, landowners, land use planners, developers, and investors. Given the advanced nature of the topics to be covered, attendees are expected to have familiarity with discounted cash flow concepts and general valuation approaches, specifically yield capitalization.

Land can be appraised using several methods, which include the sales comparison approach, allocation, extraction, land residual technique, ground rent capitalization, and subdivision development analysis. All six methods are described in The Appraisal of Real Estate, 14th edition, and covered in various Appraisal Institute courses. This course focuses on the last three methods and in some cases presents more advanced methodology than the courses. For the land residual technique, this seminar uses a dynamic methodology employing discounted cash flow analysis. The presentation of ground rent capitalization uses yield capitalization to discount multiple forms of ground rent consideration into value. Lastly, for subdivision development analysis, the seminar includes complex properties and the incorporation of market analysis conclusions in highest and best use analysis. (See the table on the next page, which is a summary of the applicability and limitations of land valuation methods.)

The case study material will be demonstrated primarily in Excel, and a basic working knowledge of Excel is helpful but not required. Excel screenshots are provided in the handbook for attendees who are not familiar with Excel. Laptops are highly recommended but not required. The Excel models that are downloaded at registration can be used by participants in their day-to-day work. Class participation is strongly encouraged, since much can be learned from the collective experiences of the participants.

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**Table 17.1**  
**Applicability and Limitations of Land Valuation Methods**

**Sales Comparison**

**Procedure**  
Sales of similar, vacant parcels are analyzed, compared, and adjusted to provide a value indication for the land being appraised.

**Applicability**  
Sales comparison is the most common technique for valuing sites, and it is the preferred method when comparable sales are available.

**Limitations**  
A lack of sales and the comparability of the available data may weaken support for the value estimate.

**Market Extraction**

**Procedure**  
An estimate of the depreciated cost of the improvements is deducted from the total sale price of the property to arrive at the land value.

**Applicability**  
This technique is most applicable when
- The contribution of the improvements to total property value is generally small and relatively easy to identify. (The technique is frequently used in rural areas.)
- The improvements are new, their cost is known, and there is little or no depreciation from any causes.

**Limitations**  
The appraiser must be able to determine the value contribution of the improvements, estimated at their depreciated cost.

**Allocation**

**Procedure**  
A ratio of site value to property value is extracted from comparable sales in competitive locations and applied to the value of the improved subject property or comparable properties to develop the site value.

**Applicability**  
This technique is applicable when
- Valuing one-unit residential lots where ample sales of both lots and improved homes are available for comparison purposes. This method tends to be less accurate for commercial properties, especially when the number of vacant land sales is inadequate.
- For commercial properties or where relatively few sales are available, allocation can provide a check for reasonableness rather than a formal opinion of site value.

**Limitations**  
The allocation method does not produce conclusive value indications unless ample sales data is available. The method is rarely used as the primary land valuation technique for properties other than residential subdivision lots. Also, land-to-property value ratios can be difficult to support.

**Income Capitalization Methods**

**Direct Capitalization: Land Residual Method**

**Procedure**  
The net operating income attributable to the land is capitalized at a market-derived land capitalization rate to provide an estimate of value.

**Applicability**  
This technique is most applicable in testing the feasibility of alternative uses of a particular site in highest and best use analysis or when land sales are not available.

**Limitations**  
The following conditions must be met:
- Building value is known or can be accurately estimated.
- Net operating income to the property is known or can be estimated.
- Both building and land capitalization rates are available from the market.

**Direct Capitalization: Ground Rent Capitalization**

**Procedure**  
A market-derived capitalization rate is applied to the ground rent of the subject property.

**Applicability**  
This method is useful when
- Comparable rents, rates, and factors can be developed from an analysis of sales of leased land.

**Limitations**  
An adjustment to the value indication for property rights may be necessary when current rent under the existing contract does not match market rent.

**Yield Capitalization: Subdivision Development Method (Discounted Cash Flow Analysis)**

**Procedure**  
Direct and indirect costs and entrepreneurial incentive are deducted from an estimate of the anticipated gross sales price of the finished lots, and the net sales proceeds are discounted to present value at a market-derived rate over the development and absorption period. If entrepreneurial incentive is not deducted as a line-item expense, then the discount rate must reflect the full effect of any profit.

**Applicability**  
This technique is applicable when
- Subdivision development is the highest and best use of the land and there is market support for immediate absorption.

**Limitations**  
Discounted cash flow analysis requires significant amounts of data such as development costs, profit margins, sales projections, and the pricing of developed lots, together with a supportable forecast of market absorption.

Note: Certain US states do not recognize subdivision development analysis as a valid valuation method for litigation valuation or other purposes.
Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of the seminar, participants should be able to

- Utilize a land residual technique based on DCF analysis, the latter of which also incorporates the conclusions of a market analysis, to value land intended for two alternative, competing uses – for-rental apartments versus for-sale condominiums

- Determine the highest and best use of land when the legally permissible, physically possible, and financially feasible use(s) are very uncertain and cannot be determined using traditional methodologies

- Determine land value when its value is a function of a curvilinear relationship with its appropriate unit of comparison – in this case, determining the value of land suitable for apartment development as a function of density (allowable units per acre)

- Determine land rent using a nontraditional unit of comparison – in this case, land rental value based on average traffic volume

- Estimate the value of land subject to a long-term ground lease with multiple forms of financial benefits accruing to the landowner

Learning Enhancements

The seminar has been designed with a variety of elements to enhance your learning experience

- **Preview.** To give you a taste of what is to come, you will find a Preview page, which begins each Part. Included on the Preview page is a brief overview of the content, learning objectives to consider as you move through the content, and learning tips that will assist you in understanding the information you’re about to learn in the class.

- **Learning Objectives.** Each learning objective covers essential information you need to know to fully understand the concepts in the seminar. Look them over before each Part begins so that you have a frame of reference as you move through the material. At the end of each Part, reread the objectives. Are you able to perform what is stated? If not, this is the time to ask your instructor for help. Or, review the concepts that you do not understand.

- **Examples, Problems, and Discussion Questions.** Supplementing the discussions, we’ve included examples, problems, and discussion questions to help you visualize and practice what you are learning.

- **Case Studies.** The case studies in the seminar contain exercises and problems that allow practical application of the methods used to appraise unusual and complex land valuation assignments.
- **Review.** Each Part concludes with a review. Included in the review are the learning objectives and key terms and concepts that have been covered. Also, we’ve included recommended readings from textbooks, which will reinforce what you have learned in class.

- **Suggested Solutions.** A tabbed section of Suggested Solutions appears at the end of the Seminar Handbook. This component contains solutions to the discussion questions, problems, and case studies.

### Classroom Guidelines

To make the learning environment a positive experience for everyone attending, please follow these guidelines when class is in session.

- 100% attendance is required. No exceptions.
- Limit use of laptops and wireless devices to classroom projects.
- Communicate with business associates during break time instead of class time.
- Put away reading materials such as newspapers and books that are not used in class.
- Please silence cell phones.
- Please do not record the lectures. Recordings are not permitted.
- Refrain from ongoing conversations with those seated near you and other distracting behavior.

### General Information

- **Laptop.** A laptop is recommended but not required, and a basic working knowledge of Excel is helpful but not required. Excel screenshots are provided throughout the handbook, and participants can use those to participate in the case study. At registration, participants will be directed to a link with Excel worksheets, which relate to the case studies and can be downloaded. These worksheets could be useful models in their day-to-day practice.

- **Breaks.** There will be two 10-minute breaks during the morning session and two 10-minute breaks during the afternoon session unless noted otherwise by the program sponsor. The lunch break is one hour.

- **Attendance sheets** will be distributed during class to verify your attendance during the morning and afternoon sessions.

- **Certificates of completion** will be e-mailed after completion of the program. Attendance for the entire seminar is required.
Recommended Textbooks


Prerequisites

- None.
- A basic working knowledge of Excel is helpful.

Downloads

- At registration, each participant will receive a link to download four Excel spreadsheets used with Case Studies 1, 3, 4, and 5. Copies of the Excel spreadsheets are provided as screenshots in the handbook.