Look Around!

- Community Planning,
- Natural Resource Protection,
- The Visual Landscape

An Interdisciplinary Middle School Unit for Social Studies, Language Arts, Math, Science and Art.
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Preface

Wise stewardship of a community’s built and natural environment requires public education. Few educational programs have been directed at middle and high school students to help them understand the choices and future consequences of community land use decisions, and equip them with the knowledge and skills to effectively participate in community decision-making.

Middle and high school students need to understand how choices regarding community land use can have long-term impacts on the visual appearance, economic vitality, and environmental quality of their community. In addition, students need to build citizenship skills and a sense of civic responsibility towards their community through active involvement in decision-making, community improvement projects, and helping to enhance the quality of life for community residents. This curriculum unit will provide a vehicle for youth involvement, as well as enhance public understanding of the land use choices to be made.

Essential Questions:

- What is important to consider for careful community growth?
- How can citizens have a say in how communities grow?

The question is not whether to grow, but how. As part of the Look Around unit, Learning targets for students are:

- I can describe the cultural and natural character of my community and identify what makes it visually appealing;
- I can give examples of design and planning tools that may be used to enhance my community;
- I can discuss perspectives on community growth and planning with planners, architects, realtors, and citizens invited into the classroom to share their expertise;
- I can photograph buildings, streetscapes, land uses, and viewsheds in the community, and develop a protection or enhancement plan;
- I can describe and discuss historic preservation and walkability, why they are important, and give examples in the local community;
- I can read examples of passages in books that show how authors feel about the places;
- I can design a community enhancement project.

The unit correlates with Washington State and national content standards for social studies, language arts, mathematics, and science.
Washington Essential Academic Learning Requirements

The LOOK AROUND curriculum is designed to satisfy different Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR) at the seventh grade level. More specifically, the lessons should directly satisfy the following Social Studies EALR for the following:

**Social Studies EALR 1: CIVICS**

The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation’s fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.

Component 1.2: Understands the purposes, organization, and function of governments, laws, and political systems.

Understands and analyzes the structure, organization, and powers of government at the local, state, and tribal levels including the concept of tribal sovereignty.

Examples:
- Explains the organization and powers of city and county government.
- Explains the organization and powers of the three branches of Washington State government.
- Explains the organization and powers of a local tribal government.
- Explains the populist features of the Washington State Constitution, including initiative and referendum.

Component 1.4: Understands civic involvement;

Understands the effectiveness of different forms of civic involvement.

Examples:
- Explains the influence of letters to the editor of the local paper on school funding and Instructional resources.
- Explains the influence of testimony at public hearings on laws regulating the use of private property.
- Explains how lobbying the legislature contributed to the passage of the “Becca Bill.”

**Social Studies EALR 3: GEOGRAPHY**

The student uses a spatial perspective to make reasoned decisions by applying the concepts of location, region, and movement and demonstrating knowledge of how geographic features and human cultures impact environments.

Component 3.2: Understands human interaction with the environment. Understands how the environment has affected people and how people have affected the environment in Washington State in the past or present.

Examples:
- Examines how the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project impacted the Yakima River.
- Compares how Washington State’s suburban and rural communities have impacted the environment differently.
- Examines the impact of urban sprawl on the natural environment and communities.
The American Planning Association

The American Planning Association (APA) provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

We, the APA, are the leader of a planning movement. We champion good planning through direct public advocacy at the national level, through technical support for our chapters’ efforts at the state level and division efforts at the national level, members’ efforts at the local level, and through our amicus curiae committee’s legal briefs in selected court cases. We advocate good planning through vigorous public information and education programs that include dissemination of materials to the media and through our web site.

We recognize that planning enables civic leaders, business interests, and citizens to have a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. We assure excellence in decision making by assisting planning commissioners, elected officials, and engaged citizens with training, information, and support. We offer workshops and training sessions during our national and chapter conferences, and a national clearinghouse of training materials.

We are proud to offer this newly developed curriculum for use in the Washington State Education system. Please feel free to reproduce, alter, and use these materials in whatever manner is most beneficial.

Lessons

- Lesson 1 – Discovering Your Sense of Place
- Lesson 2 – What is Suburban Sprawl?
- Lesson 3 – Who Decides the Visual Appearance of Your Community?
- Lesson 4 – What Do You Want Your Community to Look Like?
Lesson 1 - Discovering Your Sense of Place

Overview
Using a variety of activities, students will begin to explore what they believe are the essential ingredients of community, how the appearance of their community contributes to their sense of place, how they feel about changes to their community, and how others in their community feel about this place where they live.

Unit Pre-Assessment
Before beginning this unit, you may want to assess your students’ ability to define their sense of place and what they value in their community, and again after the unit. You could ask students to describe their “ideal” community by posing this question for students to write about in their journals, “What would be the perfect community?” Teachers be prepared to accept all ideas to keep this conversation very open.

Learning Targets
1. I can list at least three essential “ingredients” of community, and how the appearance of my community contributes to my sense of place.
2. I can identify my community’s three most important assets.
3. I can make predictions about what various age groups like and need from the community.
4. I can explore how others feel about their community through books.

Procedure
These activities can be conducted all on one day, as stations, or they may be done individually over a period of days.

Set up some or all of the following stations depending upon the size of the class and the amount of time you have. Use a large classroom or library. Identify and prepare separate spaces in the room for each station. Refer to the teaching aids on the following pages for more information on the needs at each station. It may help to start with having students reflect on the qualities of a perfect community, as suggested above, and sharing their thoughts.

Station A. Across These United States*¹
Using slideshow of photographs of different natural environments (beach, desert, forest, etc.) and built environments (small town, suburb, sprawl, large city), students identify those places that they like and those places where they do not. The slideshow has been provided as part of this curriculum's supporting materials.

For this exercise, project the slideshow and allow for each photograph to remain visible long enough for students to make notes. Then use the same slideshow to support the group discussion.

- Students record their responses on individual table worksheets, and then transfer their responses to a large tally sheet posted on the wall for all class members’ responses.

¹ Adapted from Viewfinders (Activity 1-3) by the Dunn Foundation www.dunnfoundation.org
Compare and discuss student’s varied responses. Does everyone like the same place? Which do they like least? Most? Why? Which is most similar to where they live?

Station B. Values Barometer
(Adapted from Values on the Line, K-8 Project Learning Tree Activity Guide).
Make two signs (Agree Strongly and Disagree Strongly) to post on the wall about twenty feet apart. As the teacher reads one statement at a time (see sample statements on the following pages), students arrange themselves along the line between ‘Agree Strongly’ and ‘Disagree Strongly’ depending upon how they feel. Students will observe that there are many different ways to feel about one’s community.

Station C. What Is Special About Your Community?
Students list what is special about their community or what they like about their community on a large sheet of newsprint posted on the wall or use sticky notes to make it easier to sort the comments during further discussion. Later, note the similarities and differences in students’ responses.

Station D. A Memorable Place
Students write a paragraph describing a place that moved, inspired, or profoundly impacted them (positively or negatively).

Station E. Quotable Quotes
Students review a variety of quotes that describes their own sense of place and explain why. There are a variety of quotes available with the support materials.

Station F. Photo Comparison
Students compare photos of unique places. There is a power point slideshow that is included as part of this curriculum’s support materials. The photos include natural landscapes and the built environment, attractive and not so attractive settings. As an alternative, this exercise could be used as a warm-up for the other lessons. If you intend to supplement the slides or use your own, then possible photos to include are: franchise architecture, historic buildings, parks, parking lots, attractive landscaping and no landscaping (barren lots), billboards and attractive business signs, etc. Students record their responses to the photos.

Station G. Predictions
Begin preparing the students with an exercise highlighting the differences in ages. There is a power point slideshow that is included as part of the curriculum materials. After viewing the slideshow, the students will make predictions about what makes the area a good place to live for each of the age groups. Discuss whether all age groups have the same needs? Do the needs of some residents’ conflict with other residents’ needs for: safety, playgrounds, skate parks, ice skating rinks, golf courses, transportation options (bus?), fast food restaurants, libraries, etc. Is it possible for our community to provide for all residents’ needs?

Assessment
Each group completes all the stations and turns in their completed record/response forms.
LESSON 2- What is Suburban Sprawl?

Overview
In Part I, students find and read an article to gain content knowledge about the issue of suburban sprawl and its impacts, and complete a reading guide to develop a definition of suburban sprawl. In Part II, students watch a video to further explore the topic of community sprawl and consider possible solutions. These parts of the lesson can be spread out over as many days as are needed.

Learning Targets - Part I
1. I can identify areas around the U.S. that are experiencing suburban sprawl.
2. I can identify the effects of sprawl, such as visual pollution, loss of historic architecture, loss of local businesses, traffic congestion, etc.
3. I can identify possible solutions to urban sprawl.

Learning Targets - Part II
1. I can identify the differences between various kinds of communities.
2. I can explain strict/separate and mixed land uses.
3. I can explain the difference between compact housing units, cluster housing, and single-family homes.
4. I can identify problems with each type of community and discuss possible solutions.

Procedure - Part I
1. Begin by helping students explore their knowledge of suburban sprawl by using a word concept map.
2. Discuss the vocabulary definitions as a class to ensure that everyone has the same understanding. Discuss how students can figure out the meaning of words by using context clues.
3. Distribute a reading guide to be used with a selected article on sprawl. This may be done as an in-class assignment or as homework. The articles on sprawl are provided with the curriculum materials on the CD.
4. Ask students to discuss how walkable their neighborhood is. Choose a short list of specific locations (students’ houses, schools, businesses, etc) and have the students rank them in order of walkability. Then visit Walk Score online, and determine their quantifiable walkability. www.walkscore.com.

Procedure - Part II
1. View Historic Preservation video. Pause the video as needed for students to take notes and for class discussion. The video is approximately 30 minutes long and is provided with the curriculum support materials on the CD.
2. When video ends, allow time for students to complete their viewing guide.
3. Make an overhead transparency of the viewing guide and fill it in as a class. Discuss the information as it is filled in, allowing the class to share their thoughts.

Assessment
Students are able to define terms when given a vocabulary quiz (Note: The quiz is available as a handout in the back of this manual). The students are able to complete the reading and viewing guides and discuss what they have learned.
LESSON 3 – Who Decides the Visual Appearance of Your Community?

Overview
By observing their community and interacting with guest speakers, students will gain an understanding of community land use planning.

Warm-up – Legal Planning Process
Teachers may be able to discuss the planning process that is available as a short course through Washington State Department of Commerce. Power point slide presentation is available with the support materials.

Objective
Students will be able to:
1. Develop an awareness of the community planning process.
2. Recognize that some communities are planned and some are not.
3. Differentiate between planning and zoning.

Procedure
1. Invite a variety of community members that represent different perspectives on community land use planning to speak to your students. Ask speakers to make a 30 minute presentation that describes their role in the community, and discusses the following statement:
   “My vision for the community is…….. To accomplish this vision, I am doing…….”

Suggested speakers will be provided by the Southwest Washington APA Section President: [http://washington-apa.org/sections/southwest/](http://washington-apa.org/sections/southwest/). Speakers will include architects, government planners, planning consultants, park service employees, designers, elected officials, etc. Be sure to give each speaker a concise overview of your unit objectives, and the questions below that the students need to answer. Providing questions for the students, will better focus their listening and provide similar information for later comparison during classroom discussion.

2. Give students the following questions to answer as they listen to each speaker:
   a. What is the speaker’s vision for our community?
   b. How is the speaker involved in accomplishing their vision?
   c. Does the speaker prefer ‘planning’ or should we let things happen (a.k.a. “market-driven”)?
   d. What is the speaker’s definition of ‘visual environment’?
   e. What is the speaker’s preferred ‘visual environment’?
   f. What does the speaker think are the positive components of our community’s visual environment?

3. After each presentation, the teachers and students share their notes on the speaker’s responses to the above questions. The difference between community planning and zoning is clarified.

Optional Meeting Attendance:
- Clark County Historic Preservation Commission:
  Historic buildings and properties are the cornerstone of Clark County heritage and culture. They are the legacy of the spirited settlers and residents who shaped the land and the
history of the region. Older buildings showcase unique architectural styles and technical innovations. They are also a symbol of the pioneers' creativity and ingenuity. Today, preservation of these historic structures is also an important part of the county's future. The Historic Preservation Commission meets the second Tuesday evening of each month, at 6:00 PM. The meetings are held in the General O.O. Howard House on Vancouver’s Officer’s Row. The meetings are open to the public. Please contact Jacqui Kamp in Community Planning at (360) 397-2280 ext. 4913 for agendas, minutes or special assistance.

- **Design Review Committee**
  This Committee reviews plans for building and remodeling in Vancouver’s downtown area and Central Park to maintain and increase the attractive appearance and architectural tone of those areas. They encourage innovation and flexibility in design. The Design Review Committee meets the second and fourth Thursday of each month, at 4:00 p.m. They meet at 4400 N.E. 77th Ave. Vancouver (near the Westfield Shopping Mall) in Conference Room 3A. Contact Please Greg Turner at (360) 487-7883 for agendas, minutes or special assistance.

- Many cities and counties have commissions, committees and meeting such as these. Contact your local planning department or the APA for assistance.

**Assessment**

*What did the speaker say?*

After each speaker, the teacher and students compare their notes on the speaker’s responses to the above questions. Teachers identify two or three main ideas or ‘quotes’ from each speaker and write quotes on sheets of paper. Each group is given a list of all of the speaker quotes. Students, working individually or in their groups, must match each quote to the speaker who said it.

*Why did the speaker say that?*

Next, students write a short explanation of each speaker’s ‘point of view.’ The student should explain which quotes they agree or disagree with, and why.
LESSON 4 - WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE?

Overview
Students examine their community, or a neighborhood in their community, and sketch their plans for redesigning streetscapes or individual buildings to be more visually attractive and to enhance the overall visual appearance of their community using suggestions listed below.

Learning Targets
1. I can describe the character of my community or neighborhood.
2. I can suggest ways to make the community streetscape or individual buildings better.
3. I can explain why each modification is proposed and how this change will impact the community’s visual appearance.
4. I can incorporate the modifications from #2 into a drawing of my streetscape or building.

Procedure
Warm Up
Show students examples of what they are going to create from the Community Transformations websites (listed below) or the C-TRAN power point slide show that transforms Fourth Plain Boulevard, that is provided with the curriculum support materials.
http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/community/transformations/index.asp

Optional Seminar: Teachers may choose to hold a seminar to discuss the differences between neighborhoods. Students would have the lessons and observations from the previous lessons to draw upon.

Part I – Sketching Improvements
1. Students select a streetscape that is provided with the curriculum materials or find one on their own from other resources provided.
2. Next, students brainstorm a list of possible improvements to a building or streetscape to enhance its visual appeal and compatibility with community character. Possible improvements may include:
   - Location, size and shape of windows and doors on buildings;
   - Landscape design elements for buffering, screening, or aesthetic enhancement;
   - Size, location, height, materials, and design of street/building signage;
   - Pedestrian accessibility and safety;
   - Street furniture, benches, awnings;
   - Exterior building materials and colors consistent with community character and adjacent buildings;
   - Street lighting location and style; and location of utility wires.
3. Students sketch in the features that they would like to ‘add to the scene.’
NOTE: If digital photos are used and computers are available, students may do sketching improvements using Microsoft Powerpoint. Encourage the students to create a series of three photos depicting the streetscape: i) original photo, ii) critiqued photo, iii) new and improved streetscape.

Part II – Describing Improvements
Upon completion of the sketches, students will write a paragraph explaining what changes they have made to the original picture and why. Teachers may want students to present their ideas to the class. Have students respond to some or all of the following questions in their paragraph:

a) Why would changes to the landscape, streetscape, or a particular structure, benefit the community or viewshed?

b) What do you like about the visual appearance of the neighborhood? What is unique about this part of the community?

c) Does this area fit the surroundings or is there a way to enhance the structure(s) to better blend in with the character of the neighborhood?

d) Why did you select the “improvements” that you made to the overall ‘landscape’ or ‘streetscape’?

Assessment
Evaluate the following aspects of each student’s work:
♦ Attention to detail in their proposed improvements;
♦ Creativity in designing ‘improvements’ to their streetscape;
♦ Well thought-out responses to questions about concepts;
CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

As a young child explores the places and persons in his community, he discovers the answer to “what is community?”

Where Once There Was a Wood by Denise Fleming. 1996.
Examines the many forms of wildlife that can be displaced if their environment is destroyed by development and discusses how communities and schools can provide spaces for them to live. Pheasants, red fox, raccoons, great horned owl--these and other animals are brought to life in this exquisite book by Caldecott Honor winner, Denise Fleming. Her lyrical text and rich, exuberant art combine in an ecological tribute to our disappearing wildlife.

The Empty Lot by Dale H. Fife. 1996.
A man who is about to sell an empty lot to developers discovers that the plot of land is far from empty. The sights and sounds of nature’s tenants convince the man to save the lot from the bulldozers. The man finds that the area already has plenty of tenants: a tree is an apartment house for birds; frogs and insects share the stream; children have built a tree house. The man changes his sign to: “Occupied Lot. P.S. Every square inch in use.”

When the snow flies, thousands of birds migrate south to avoid the icy temperatures and shortage of food. Cherry traces one wood thrush’s flight from Maryland to Costa Rica, and back again. The trip is filled with risks, both natural and manmade. Flute must battle natural foes like cats and harsh weather along both legs of his journey. Forests where he once took refuge have become suburban sprawls, and lawn chemicals taint insects Flute eats, making him ill. Cherry documents nature as it is today, without idealizing or fictionalizing the struggles of bird life.

Home is more than just the place we return to after being away. Home is something that becomes part of us as we live in it. For artists and writers, home can become part of how we see the world and how we shape our words or our artwork. For everyone, the place we call home becomes a part or our lives. This book contains poetic and narrative views of scenes from across the continent by such wellknown writers as Robert Frost, John Muir, and Washington Irving as well as modern writers such as Pat Mora, Jane Yolen, and Joseph Bruchac.

Peter’s Place 1996.
An incident that’s achingly familiar today is personalized in a quietly told disaster story. Peter’s place is a windswept ocean beach, full of life, until an oil tanker is wrecked on the rocks, and slick blackness spills everywhere. Foreman’s watercolors capture the wide view of the seacoast and the fragility of its wildlife. Slowly Peter helps a team clean the sticky slime away and helps save a special eider duck. The healing nature of time passing is credited, and the book ends with partial restoration of a safe habitat. The story is told in a clear unemotional tone, the effect of which underlines the sorrow. No blame is placed; no moralizing is apparent, but the message is clear nonetheless.
**River** by Debby Atwell. 1999.
With direct language and colorful paintings, Debby Atwell relates the changes that occur through the centuries along a riverbank, from the arrival of the first humans to the coming of the first settlers, from the industrial revolution to the present day. Over time, development occurs along its banks and the river gradually becomes depleted as more and more people use its resources to build cities, transport goods, and handle sewage. When overuse and carelessness finally take their toll, the river's natural beauty and resources are compromised. Travel downstream through time as Atwell's evocative text and narrative paintings show how the river changes.

Long before English settlers came to New England, a tribe of Algonquin Indians discovered a sparkling, clear river they called Nash-a-way. By the 20th century, waste being dumped into the river (now called Nashua) had all but killed it, until one woman and her supporters fought to clean up the river and restore its wildlife. An ecological fable encompassing 500 years of American history.

**Letting Swift River Go** by Jane Yolen. 1995.
The historic transformation of the Swift River valley and the creation of the Quabbin Reservoir told through the eyes of Sally Jane, who learns about reconciling necessary change with the enduring value of what is lost. Yolen's poetic narration, in the voice of a woman who was six years old when her family learned they would have to give up their home, recalls the tranquility of a rural community where children fished in the river and picnicked in the graveyard. Then, "it was voted in Boston to drown our towns that the people in the city might drink." Graves are moved, trees cut, homes bulldozed, and the river dammed to cover the little towns and create a new, quite beautiful landscape. In the last scenes, the narrator and her father revisit the scene in a rowboat, pointing out underwater landmarks and finally, looking "down into the darkening deep," letting go.

Chronicles the events and changes in a young boy's life and in his environment, from babyhood to grownup, through wordless scenes observed from the window of his bedroom.

**The Land of Gray Wolf** by Thomas Locker. 1996.
A young boy, Running Deer, and his small Native American tribe, struggle to preserve their land while holding onto their traditional way of life in a turbulent modern world.

**From Dawn to Dusk** by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock. 2002.
Chopping wood in the fall, hauling sap in buckets in the spring, and weeding and hoeing in the summer--that is life on a farm in the North. It is also seven months of slippery, impossible mud and snow season, and annoying bugs all summer-long. Why would anyone miss this place? A love of life and a love of place shine through in the rich prose, illustrated with evocative woodcuts. At the story's end, readers from cities, towns, and country will ask themselves, "What would we miss most about our home?"

As time passes, all living things change. They move, grow, and change appearance. Some changes are easy to see, and others you really have to look for. Each special place in this book, from all over the world, is shown twice: before, and then after time has passed. Readers are encouraged to look closely at the first picture, then turn to the second picture.
and figure out how things have changed. At the end of the book, the author describes each of the book’s paintings, calling them nature timescapes. Two additional questions may be asked: ‘How do humans affect the rate and types of changes to nature timescapes? ‘Do human communities change, as well?’

**Home** by Jeannie Baker. 2004. When baby Tracy is first brought to her new home, the view of the urban neighborhood through her window is not a pleasant one. Billboards and graffiti are everywhere, garbage is strewn across the streets, and only a few meager plants are fighting their way through the cracks in the cement. Bit by bit, as Tracy grows, the area is slowly reclaimed by its residents, so that the final view through the window is clean, lush, and green, with birds nesting peacefully in new trees and vistas that reveal glimpses of a blue river. Readers can note not just the physical changes, but also the people in the community actively engaged in affecting those changes and producing a true home. Baker uses natural materials to create detailed collages that tell a story in which words are superfluous.

**If the World Were a Village: A Book About the World’s People** by David J. Smith. 2002. More than six billion people inhabit the Earth. Smith compresses this impressively large number down to a more understandable figure, 100 persons, and in nine spreads offers data on such topics as nationalities, languages, ages, religions, and education as represented in a condensed global village.

**JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES**

**Green Teacher** quarterly journal for educators to enhance environmental and global education across the curriculum. Contains ideas and activities for enhancing one’s understanding and relationship with their environment and community.

[http://www.greenteacher.com](http://www.greenteacher.com)

**CURRICULA**


Contains collection of articles that includes tips on interpretive planning, showcases examples of ways to tell the stories of places using case studies that describe effective public education initiatives at a variety of sites.


**Keeping a Nature Journal** by Clare Walker Leslie and Charles E. Roth. This book describes nature journaling—the regular recording of observations, perceptions, and feelings about the natural world around you, and how to do it. Nature journaling provides a vehicle for building one’s sense of place, for identifying and recording what is of personal interest and importance in one’s community and surroundings. Nature journaling stimulates more careful observations, through drawings and short descriptions, and records one’s responses to, and reflections about, both the built and natural worlds.

This Land Is Your Land by MSU Extension's United Growth for Kent County project (2002). www.msue.msu.edu/kent/yourland A free, activity-based youth curriculum on land use issues from the internet. The curriculum was designed to enable young people to contribute solutions to current land use issues, as well as, participate in making sound decisions now and in the future.

Viewfinders (Gr.2-6) 1996. The Dunn Foundation, Warwick, Rhode Island (www.dunnfoundation.org) The eight activities in ViewFinders increase awareness of the visual environment through a hands-on approach to learning. The activities can be used either as a complete unit or as supplementary lessons. Teacher background materials, extension activities, a guide to additional resources and a student reading list are included.

Viewfinders Too: Exploring Community Appearance (Gr. 6-8) 2002. The Dunn Foundation, Warwick, Rhode Island (www.dunnfoundation.org) Provides lessons for students to explore their visual landscape and become active stewards of their community's visual environment. Students are challenged to look at their communities critically and creatively develop their vision of the future.


VIDEOS


Community of Choices. 2002. Edward T. McMahon, The Conservation Fund, 1800 North Kent Street, Suite 1120 Arlington, VA 22209 (30 minutes) Tel : 703-525-6300 www.conservationfund.org Illustrates how planning is the key to protecting and enhancing the natural, cultural, and historic characteristics of a community. Failing to plan, is planning to fail. However, protecting and enhancing communities’ unique characteristics will make them more attractive and promote commerce.

Looking at Change Before It Occurs. Produced by Maguire & Reeder. Available from Design Access, 401 F St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001. (17:20 minutes) Illustrates how planners can work with communities to develop visual displays of the consequences of choosing or not choosing various planning options.

Reference Books

Alvord, Katie. 2000. Divorce Your Car: Ending the Love Affair with the Automobile. Traces the history of America's dependency on the automobile and its impacts. Examine
substitutes for driving, such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, public transit, and alternative fuels.

Howe, Jim, Ed McMahon and Luther Propst. 1997. Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities. Island Press, Washington D.C. Emphasizes why and how to manage change in places where people really want to visit or live, while preserving community character and healthy natural systems, and promoting a vibrant local economy.

McMahon, Ed.
Land Conservancy (Tel: 410-827-9756; www.eslc.org )
Other student-friendly articles by same author:
All Development is Not Created Equal http://www.plannersweb.com/articles/look32.html
Have It Your Way: Fast Food Restaurant Design http://www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w286.html

Roberts, Elizabeth and Elias Amidon, Editors. 1991. Earth Prayers In forest clearings, beneath star-filled skies, in cathedrals, and before the hearth... women and men have always given voice to the impulse to celebrate the world that surrounds and sustains them. From Walt Whitman, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Black Elk, to Margaret Atwood, the varied voices offer songs and prayers for land, sea, and air; graces for food; invocations, and poems.

Websites
America's Most Livable Communities http://www.mostlivable.org/
American Planning Association www.planning.org
Center for Livable Communities www.lgc.org
Community Transformations:
http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/community/transformations/index.asp
http://www.jointventure.org/resources/photosims/sim_index.html
The Dunn Foundation www.dunnfoundation.org
Environmental Protection Agency http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/
Find Your Spot www.findyourspot.com (Online quiz to find the best places to live for you!)
Measuring Sprawl and Its Impact http://www.smartgrowthamerica.com/
National Trust for Historic Preservation http://www.nationaltrust.org/
National MainStreet Program www.mainst.org
Partners for Livable Communities www.livable.com
Planners Web http://www.plannersweb.com/
Scenic America www.scenic.org
Stealth Network Technologies http://www.stealthsite.com/ (Designs cell tower concealment sites)
Smart Growth Network www.smartgrowth.org
Terra Server (aerial photos) http://terraserver.homeadvisor.msn.com/default.asp
Urban Land Institute www.uli.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anywhere USA</td>
<td>Where the built environment contains primarily franchise businesses and franchise architecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barometer</td>
<td>Anything that indicates change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>Typically a large outdoor sign that you see on freeways, highways and streets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common good</td>
<td>The best option for most people affected by the development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community character</td>
<td>Both natural and built environment that reflects the community’s history, landscape, and unique “personality.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Planning</td>
<td>A process that addresses the needs of communities in a purposeful way, with varying levels of community involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion</td>
<td>Crowded with automobile traffic or lots of people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contaminants</td>
<td>Unnaturally occurring substances caused by human activities that may damage or kill plants, wildlife or humans, or upset the natural balance in an ecosystem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>A measurement of people, dwellings, etc. per unit acre. Basically, how many people live in a defined space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franchise architecture</td>
<td>The same exterior design, interior décor as everywhere else. Familiarity, a consistent product, and customer service are the keys to franchise success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franchise stores</td>
<td>A &quot;franchisor&quot; is the national company (e.g.: McDonalds, Starbucks, Subway) that holds the business concept, and the &quot;franchisee&quot; is the operator of the shop on a day-to-day basis. The franchisee pays a percentage of its earnings back to the franchisor, and in turn the franchisor provides the business plan, business methods, and help in real estate siting, signage selection, architectural design, and advertising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway community</td>
<td>Entrance to a state or national park, forest, historic attraction, or other unique or special geographic area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geologic formations</td>
<td>A formation of rock that is distinctive enough in appearance to plot on a map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green space</td>
<td>see &quot;open space&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat</td>
<td>A habitat is a natural environment that is home to a particular species of plant or animal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic buildings</td>
<td>A structure that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological or cultural value to the community, and generally at least dates back fifty years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use plan</td>
<td>A written document that is developed by a local governmental body (e.g. City Council), with public input, to guide community growth and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>(in this context is not your front yard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livability</td>
<td>The sum of factors that add up to a community’s quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally-owned</td>
<td>Means a business that is entirely owned by people who live in your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malls</strong></td>
<td>Also called shopping mall. A large retail complex containing a variety of stores and often restaurants and other business establishments housed in a series of connected or adjacent buildings or in a single large building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed Use</strong></td>
<td>Using a building or set of buildings for more than one purpose. Example: apartments on top of a ground floor grocery store.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Space / Green Space</strong></td>
<td>Forests, fields or landscaped areas used for recreation, visual appreciation, or to protect a natural resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedestrian Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>How easy it is for people to walk around an area without barriers such as high curbs or overgrown plants that block the sidewalk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential use</strong></td>
<td>An area of a city that only allows for houses, apartments, manufactured homes and other places to live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smart growth</strong></td>
<td>A community plan for growth that will reduce driving, provide livable neighborhoods and preserve rural areas and farms.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sprawl</strong></td>
<td>Sprawl and &quot;suburbia&quot; are not synonymous. Sprawl is characterized by auto-dependence and separation of uses. It is typically found in suburban areas, but it also affects the urban parts of our cities and towns. It is an inefficient use of land, energy, and water, and contributes to an increase of air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the loss of open space and natural habitats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Streetscape</strong></td>
<td>The view one sees looking down a street (for example: trees, buildings, roads, parked cars, pedestrians, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburban Sprawl</strong></td>
<td>Low-density, automobile dependent development beyond the edge of service and employment areas. Meaning that residents in suburban sprawl areas require a car to reach every destination. Typically such development patterns are to blame for time wasted in traffic, the exponential increase in new infrastructure costs, and health problems such as obesity. Social problems have also been linked to sprawl's isolation and lack of diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable</strong></td>
<td>A pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traffic congestion</strong></td>
<td>A measurement of vehicles and time that commuters spend idle in their vehicles.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unsustainable</strong></td>
<td>Not self-supporting in the long term.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Viewshed</strong></td>
<td>All that can be seen from a specific point, including the natural landscape or built environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual pollution</strong></td>
<td>The clutter of unattractive signs, graffiti, billboards, excessive power lines, run-down buildings or other items that make your view of an area unattractive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walkable, Walkability</strong></td>
<td>How enjoyable it is for people to walk in an area and also how easy it is to get from place to place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zoning</strong></td>
<td>Texts and maps that define permitted uses of property and the bulk, density coverage, and other limitations on property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strip malls</strong></td>
<td>Development along roadways leading into a community that often includes shopping centers, and fast food restaurants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Intentionally blank)
**Lesson 1 - Station A - Across These United States Tally Sheet**

Place an X in the column that best describes how you feel about the landscape shown in each postcard. Be sure you record your response in the correct row. Remember, you may not be starting at postcard 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postcard</th>
<th>Like Very Much</th>
<th>Like A Little</th>
<th>No Feelings</th>
<th>Dislike A Little</th>
<th>Dislike A Lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Questions**

1. Which landscape is most like your own?

2. Which landscape do you like the best? Why?

3. Which landscape do you like least? Why?
Lesson 1 - Station B - Values Barometer Statements

What do students value about different aspects of the community in which they live?
(Pre-teach vocabulary as needed)

As the teacher reads each statement below, the students position themselves along a continuum marked on the wall or floor, labeled Strongly Agree at one end, and Strongly Disagree at the other end. Have students note the variety of perspectives within their class. Would they expect the same responses from their parents? Grandparents?

1. I live in my community because I like the way it looks.
2. My community has a sense of pride.
3. Our area needs more malls and shopping centers.
4. Our area has too much green space.
5. Property owners should have the final say in what happens on their land.
6. Historic buildings are of little or no value.
7. Small, locally-owned businesses are important to our community.
8. We need more public land for recreation to attract homeowners and tourists.
9. Businesses should not be allowed to put up big billboards advertising their businesses, only smaller ones should be allowed.
10. Traffic congestion is a problem in our community.
11. We should have more big franchise restaurants and stores.
12. Unique natural habitats, geologic formations, and historical places in our area should be protected.
13. All franchise stores and restaurants should look the same in every community.
14. It doesn’t matter to me how our community changes in the next 20 years.
15. I should have a say in how my community grows.
16. Parking lots are just for cars. They don’t need trees or landscaping.
17. New buildings do not need to blend in with the buildings already in our community.
Farmland
Excerpt from Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard

Today is one of those excellent January partly cloudies in which light chooses an unexpected part of the landscape to trick out in gilt and then shadow sweeps it away. … West of the house, Tinker Creek makes a sharp loop, so that the creek is both in back of the house, south of me and also on the other side of the road, north of me. I like to go north. There the afternoon sun hits the creek just right, deepening the reflected blue and lighting the sides of trees on the banks. Steers from the pasture across the creek come down to drink; I always flush a rabbit or two there; I sit on a fallen trunk in the shade and watch the squirrels in the sun. There are two separated wooden fences suspended from cables that cross the creek just upstream from my tree-trunk bench. They keep the steers from escaping up or down the creek when they come to drink. Squirrels, neighborhood children, and I use the downstream fence as a swaying bridge across the creek.

Prairie marshland
Excerpt from Marshland Elegy from Sketches Here and There by Aldo Leopold

A dawn wind stirs on the great marsh. With almost imperceptible slowness it rolls a bank of fog across the wide morass. Like the white ghost of a glacier the mists advance, riding over phalanxes of tamarack, sliding across bog-meadows heavy with dew... Out of some far recess of the sky a tinkling of little bells falls soft upon the listening land. Then silence. Now comes a baying of some sweet-throated hound, soon the clamor of a responding pack. Then a far clear blast of hunting horns out of the sky into the fog.

High horns, low horns, silence, and finally a pandemonium of trumpets, rattles, croaks and cries that almost shakes the bog with its nearness, but without disclosing whence it comes. At last a glint of sun reveals the approach of a great echelon of birds. On motionless wing they emerge from the lifting mists, sweep a final arc of sky, and settle in clangorous descending spirals to their feeding grounds. A new day has begun on the crane marsh.

A sense of time lies thick and heavy on such a place. Yearly since the ice age it has awakened each spring to the clangor of cranes. The peat layers that comprise the bog are laid down in the basin of an ancient lake. The cranes stand, as it were, upon the sodden pages of their own history. These peats are the compressed remains of the mosses that clogged the pools, or the tamaracks that spread over the moss, of the cranes that bugled over the tamaracks since the retreat of the ice sheet. An endless caravan of generations has built to its own bones this bridge to the future, this habitat where the oncoming host again may live and breed and die.

To what end? Out on the bog a crane, gulping some luckless frog, springs his ungainly hulk into the air and flails the morning sun with mighty wings. The tamaracks re-echo with his bugled certitude. He seems to know.
Desert Places by Robert Frost

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast
In a field I looked into going past,
And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,
But a few weeds and stubble showing last.

The woods around it have it—it is theirs.
All animals are smothered in their lairs.
I am too absent-spirited to count;
The loneliness includes me unawares.

And lonely as it is, that loneliness
Will be more lonely ere it will be less—
A blanker whiteness of benighted snow
With no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
Between stars—on stars where no human race is.
I have it in me so much nearer home
To scare myself with my own desert places.

Hawaiian jungle
Excerpt from Volcano by Garrett Hongo

Just below the fault line and the summit, where the old highway divided off and led into the old village, we drove off the highway into a grid of asphalt roads carved into a thin forest of oh‘i‘a, the native trees that can colonize fresh lava flows within month of their cooling. A mile in, I noticed a lonely street sign beside a huge gray scar in the earth, a lot freshly bull-dozed and scraped bare of its greenery of ferns. Left down a lane narrowing into oh‘i‘a and ferns, we passed two or three small jerry-built homes of the self-reliant. Right down a gap in the forest, an even smaller lane carved through the plants and scraped over its bed of black and gray lavas shining in the rain. There was just room enough for the tiny compact car to maneuver, but the green ferns crowded in against the doors and windows like a forest of above-ground kelp. I had a feeling I was a kind of Nautilus cruising under Nemo’s rich sea.

Our rental home was a tiny cottage tucked under the dripping canopy, plastic flumes and pipes from its galvanized roofing running audibly with the rushing rain that filled an aluminum sided standing swimming pool that was its companionable water tank. The instructions said to get the key on the left of the porch, “under the clay mask.” I found the thing, squat and goblin-like replica of the fourteenth-century Japanese Noh masks of demons who guarded minor temples and wayside shrines scattered in the country… I found the key, a common brass thing, and shoved it in the dead-bolt lock of the cottage door. When it swung open, the forest silence and the drizzling night seemed suddenly swollen with all my senses and in the briefest instant before I knew I had thought anything at all, it shut around us like the huge eye of an African flower closing its petals down at dusk…
Excerpt from Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson

Snow fell that morning outside the courthouse windows, four tall, narrow arches of leaded glass that yielded a great quantity of weak December light. A wind from the sea lofted snowflakes against the windowpanes, where they melted and ran toward the casements. Beyond the courthouse the town of Amity Harbor spread along the island shoreline. A few wind-whipped and decrepit Victorian mansions, remnants of a lost era of seagoing optimism, loomed out of the snowfall on the town’s sporadic hills. Beyond them, cedars wove a steep mat of still green. The snow blurred from vision the clean contours of these cedar hills. The sea wind drove the snowflakes steadily inland, hurling them against the fragrant trees, and the snow began to settle on the highest branches with a gentle implacability. … Amity Harbor, the islands only town, provided deep moorage for a fleet of purse seiners and one-man gill-netting boats. It was an eccentric, rainy, wind-beaten sea village, downtrodden and mildewed, the boards of its buildings bleached and weathered, their drainpipes rusted a dull orange. Its long, steep inclines lay broad and desolate; its high-curbed gutters swarmed, most winter nights, with traveling rain. Often the sea wind made its single traffic light flail from side to side or caused the town’s electrical power to flicker out and stay out for days. Main street presented to the populace Petersen’s Grocery, a post office, Fisk’s Hardware Center, Larsen’s Pharmacy, a dime-store-with-fountain owned by a woman in Seattle, a Puget Power office, a chandlery, Lottie Opsvig’s apparel shop, Klaus Hartmann’s real estate agency, the San Piedro Café, the Amity Harbor Restaurant and a battered, run-down filling station owned and operated by the Torgerson brothers. At the wharf a fish packing plant exuded the odor of salmon bones and the creosoted pilings of the state ferry terminal lay in among a fleet of mildewed boats. Rain, the spirit of the place, patiently beat down everything man-made. On winter evenings it roared in sheets against the pavements and made Amity Harbor invisible.

Cities

Last Night I Saw the City Breathing by Andrew Fusek Peters

Last night, I saw the City breathing
Great Gusts of people
Rushing in and
Puffing out
Of Stations singing mouths

Last night, I saw the City laughing
Take-aways got the giggles
Cinemas split their sides,
And living rooms completely creased themselves

Last night, I saw the City dancing
Shadows were cheek to cheek with brick walls,
Trains wiggled their hips all over the place,
And the trees
In the breeze,

Put on a show for an audience of windows
Last night I saw the city starving
Snaking Avenue smacked her lips
And swallowed seven roundabouts!
Fat office blocks got stuffed with light
And gloated over empty parking lots

Last night I saw the City crying
Cracked windows poured falling stars
And the streets were paved with mirrors

Last night, I saw the City sleeping
Roads night-dreamed,
Street-lamps quietly boasted,
“When I grow up, I’m going to be a star!”
And the wind
Like a cat,
Snoozed in the nooks of the roofs.
Quotes about New York City

New York has a trip-hammer vitality which drives you insane with restlessness if you have no inner stabilizer. ~Henry Miller

New York is to the nation what the white church spire is to the village - the visible symbol of aspiration and faith, the white plume saying the way is up! ~E.B. White

It isn't like the rest of the country - it is like a nation itself - more tolerant than the rest in a curious way. Littleness gets swallowed up here. All the viciousness that makes other cities vicious is sucked up and absorbed in New York. ~John Steinbeck

I moved to New York City for my health. I'm paranoid and New York was the only place where my fears were justified. ~Anita Weiss

I think my favorite sport in the Olympics is the one in which you make your way through the snow, you stop, you shoot a gun, and then you continue on. In most of the world, it is known as the biathlon, except in New York City, where it is known as winter. ~Michael Ventre, L.A. Daily News

Quotes about California

The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco. ~Mark Twain, attributed

California can and does furnish the best bad things that are obtainable in America. ~Hinton R. Helper

Nobody can tell about this California climate. One minute it's hot and the next minute it's cold, so a person never knows what to hock. ~Anita Loos

California, that advance post of our civilization, with its huge aircraft factories, TV and film studios, automobile way of life... its flavourless cosmopolitanism, its charlatan philosophies and religions, its lack of anything old and well-tried rooted in tradition and character. ~J.B. Priestley

When its 100 degrees in New York, it's 72 in Los Angeles. When its 30 degrees in New York, in Los Angeles it's still 72. However, there are 6 million interesting people in New York, and 72 in Los Angeles. ~Neil Simon
**Miscellaneous**

The worst of a modern stylish mansion is that it has no place for ghosts. ~Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Poet at the Breakfast Table*, 1872

Las Vegas: all the amenities of modern society in a habitat unfit to grow a tomato. ~Jason Love

This school was on top of a hill so that God could see everything that went on. It looked like a cross between a prison and a church and it was. ~Quentin Crisp

Venice is like eating an entire box of chocolate liqueurs in one go. ~Truman Capote

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“From scattered farmsteads and villages, the network of highways, rail lines and power lines begins to converge as the density of dwellings and other buildings steadily increases. Finally, if the city is a large one, the skyline of the central business district will appear, proclaiming dramatically that here activity is so concentrated that it cannot be contained at ground level, but has been pushed into the sky itself. Nothing is so fundamental to a city as the concentration of humans and human activity within a small compass.”
Lesson 1 - Station F - Photo Comparison

Look at the variety of photographs throughout the slideshow. Select one photograph that you really like, and one that you don't find attractive. Then answer the following questions about the photographs.

1. I think # _____ photograph is attractive because:

2. Photograph # _____ reminds me of:

3. Photograph # _____ could become more attractive if the following was changed:

4. If I lived in # _____, I would:

5. I don’t like photograph # _____, because:
Lesson 1 - Station G - Make Predictions

For each of the categories listed below, list 3 predictions about what makes our community a good place to live for each age group.

Babies and Toddlers (0-5 years)

Elementary Students (6-11 years)

Middle and High School Students (12-18 years)

Adults (19-39 years)

Adults (40-59 years)

Senior Citizens (more than 60 years)
Lesson 2 - Reading Guide


Answer the questions the best you can, using the articles provided and your own ideas:

1. What do you think are some of the negative effects of sprawl? Which do you think are the worst and why?

2. Do you see evidence of sprawl in your community? Do you see evidence of ways that sprawl is being reversed or better managed in your community?

3. What are some solutions to the problem of sprawl?

4. Where do you think the United States has the most trouble with sprawl? In big cities? In smaller towns?

5. One article examines sprawl after it has gotten out of control. One article examines sprawl that was planned for before it got out of control. Do you believe it would be easier to plan for sprawl before it gets out of control rather than try to manage and reverse it? What are the key differences between planning for sprawl before there is an issue and managing sprawl after it gets out of control?

6. Which article do you think best represents most areas in the United States? Do you think there are many places that are represented by each?
Lesson 2 - Walkability Exercise

Based on the classroom discussion and readings, answer the following questions.

1. What makes a community walkable?

2. What detracts from a community’s walkability?

3. List walkable neighborhoods in your town.

4. List neighborhoods in your town that are not walkable.

5. Explain at least three of the benefits of walkable neighborhoods.
Lesson 2 - Planning Vocabulary

Match the following words. Place the ‘letter’ from the right column, next to the word that it defines in the left column.

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<tr>
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<td>12. Open/Green space</td>
<td>M. Where the built environment contains primarily franchise businesses and franchise architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Visual pollution</td>
<td>H. What is best for most of the people affected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Land use plan</td>
<td>E. Not self-supporting in the long run</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planning Vocabulary – Correct Responses

Match the following words. Place the ‘letter’ from the right column, on the line next to the word that it defines in the left column.

__O__ 1. Sprawl
__D__ 2. Streetscape.
__M__ 3. Anywhere, USA
__E__ 5. Unsustainable.
__C__ 7. Gateway community.
__B__ 8. Contaminants
__P__ 9. Community.
__F__ 10. Viewshed.
__A__ 11. Smart growth.
__L__ 12. Open/Green space
__K__ 14. Land use plan.
Lesson 2 - Historic Preservation in Downtown Vancouver

As you view the video, fill out this sheet.

1. What is my favorite Historic Building in downtown Vancouver and why?

2. What year was it built?

3. What are some benefits of preserving our historic downtowns?

4. What downtown buildings do I want to go and visit?

5. What other places have I visited that are like downtown Vancouver?

6. What places are most unlike downtown Vancouver?

7. What organizations are working to preserve our Historic Buildings?

Name: