Sustainability Ambassadors

Sustainable Community Conditions
Neighborhood Inventory Protocol and Impact Project Design

Purpose

Students will apply sustainable systems thinking and improve their geographic literacy by conducting an inventory of the current conditions of a defined area surrounding the place where they live.

Students will use voice-recording software to produce a narrated slide show of their investigation which will include their own photo documentation as well as screenshots of different GIS map layers and attributes. Working in teams, students will compare their neighborhood inventories to identify and prioritize a range of possible impact projects they can design and implement. Selected impact projects need to demonstrate a direct and measurable contribution to one or more policies, plans, or performance measures from city or county government. Students will identify and engage with stakeholders to refine their work and report impact to staff and elected officials in city or county government.

Learning Targets

1. I can observe and inventory human land use decisions that, over time, have resulted in the current conditions of a half mile to one mile radius surrounding the place where I live.

2. I can produce and narrate (using voice-over software) a slide presentation of my inventory, integrating my own photo documentation as well as screenshots of different GIS map layers and attributes.

3. I can collaborate with other students to compare and combine neighborhood inventories in order to identify and prioritize a range of possible impact projects that I or my team can implement.

4. I can demonstrate that the impact projects(s) I am designing will make a direct and measurable contribution to one or more policies, plans, or performance measures valued by my city or county government.

5. I can identify and engage with stakeholders to refine my project design and report the resulting impact to staff and elected officials in my city or county government.

Neighborhood Inventory Protocol

NOTE: We encourage you to work in phases over weeks, months, or even through different seasons of the year. Enjoy getting to know your neighborhood. Learn how you can help your neighborhood association, a local nonprofit, or your city government make improvements. That's how democracy works. You've got to participate in it.

Ask yourself three critical questions...

1. **What was this landscape like for a kid my age who was a member of the indigenous people living here prior to colonization?**

2. **How did this landscape get to be the way it is now? Based on what values?**

3. **What is the most sustainable vision I can imagine for my neighbor in the year 2050 or 2100, in a time when my children and then my grandchildren will be the age I am now?**

STEP ONE: Take an informal walk around your neighborhood and determine the area that you will investigate. Identify the streets or natural features that will set the boundaries for your inventory. Use one of the following scales:
1. My street (name)
2. 10 blocks (names of streets defining the area
3. Half-mile radius with my house or apartment in the middle
4. 1-mile radius (like the [one-mile maps]() of my school neighborhood)

You can work with the full **Neighborhood Inventory Checklist** or take one section per month as it pertains to a course of study. If you conduct this inventory over multiple sessions, it will be a really fun way to change up your study time, from being online to getting outdoors.

Here are all seven categories. Where would you like to start?

1. **Human Population and Land Use**
2. **Transportation Infrastructure**
3. **Food Access**
4. **Size and Condition of Green Spaces**
5. **Water Bodies, Description by Type and Conditions**
6. **Stormwater Infrastructure and Water Pollution**
7. **Tree Canopy Inventory**

STEP TWO: Print out the inventory category you are going to focus on or use your phone or tablet to make a detailed inventory of your neighborhood. You might also want to print out a

screen shot from www.mywater.world to help you see from above what you are experiencing on the ground as you walk about. Capture photo documentation of what you observe to use later in building your slide presentations. Your presentations should include the following.

1. The boundaries of your investigation (streets or other landform boundaries)
2. Specific observations for some or all of the items on the **Inventory Checklist**
3. Photo and/or video documentation
4. Photos of your field notes (or digital copy)
5. Your top 5 questions for further research based on what you observed
6. Your voice recording of what you observed and what you are curious about

STEP THREE: Review your field notes, photo and/or video documentation and decide how you want to storyboard an effective presentation for others to be able to fo the following:

1. See the current conditions in your neighborhood
2. Engage with your research questions
3. Support your recommendations for impact projects and how they are aligned with one or more policies, plans, or performance measures valued by your city or county government.
4. Consider that one of your audiences for this presentation might be local stakeholders, including your neighborhood association, a local nonprofit, staff or elected officials from your city or county government.

STEP FOUR: Use your storyboard to build your slide presentation and then use the following tips to record your voice-over narration.

1. Open Microsoft PowerPoint
2. Navigate to the 'Insert' tab
3. Click on 'Audio' and then 'Record Audio'
4. To start recording click on the red circle, to stop recording click on the grey square.
5. Edit and re-record as many times as necessary to produce an excellent presentation.

STEP FIVE: Present your Neighborhood Inventory and Impact Project Design to other members of your class or selected team. Collaborate with your team to build a larger patchwork of neighborhood inventories such that you can identify shared issues and opportunities for potential impact projects.

STEP SIX: For each issue or opportunity you identify as a team, research one or more policies, plans, or performance measures valued by your city or county government that would be directly improved if your impact project(s) were to be implemented. Work as a team to prioritize one or more impact projects that are specific and simple enough for you to accomplish.

STEP SEVEN: Implement your impact project(s) and evaluate their actual impact related to one or more policies, plans, or performance measures used by your school district, your city or county government.

STEP EIGHT: Report your methods, your project(s) and your impact to all of the stakeholders who need to know. Ask for feedback and support in increasing your impact. Use the feedback from stakeholders to strengthen your report. Consider the following stakeholders

1. My family
2. My neighborhood association
3. Local church, synagogue or mosque
4. Local nonprofit with a mission focused on one or more community issues
5. A service or civic organization like Rotary or Kiwanis
6. Chamber of Commerce and/or specific business owners in the neighborhood
7. School district staff or school board members
8. City or county government.staff or elected officials

STEP NINE: Post your report under Community Action on www.mywater.world. Notify classmates, your teacher, and stakeholders when your project is live on the map.

STEP TEN: Join with other student teams in your class to host a Sustainable Community Summit. Invite stakeholders from the community including staff and elected officials from your city and county. The goal is for all stakeholders to take turns sharing the projects they have accomplished and, from this foundation, build collective impact opportunities for combining or expanding projects to meet community needs.

STEP ELEVEN: How will you archive your project in a way that will be useful for students next year to pick up on? Maybe your project can be continued and expanded over many years which would lead to even greater impact in your community.