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Washington, By and By Beginnings

By Shane Hope, AICP



The graphic novel *Washington, By and By*, from APA's Washington Chapter, features Cricket, Ben, Jen, and Daniel, young people who find out why community planning matters and how they can get involved. Image courtesy Gabrielle Lyon.

Young people! They are the foundation of our future.

How can we attract and empower them to understand the civic process and become engaged in shaping their communities in ways that will make our world better? How can we reach out to a diverse generation that is coming of age and show them that planning is interesting and tangible?

As a planner, I've wondered about these questions for a long time and I'm glad to be able to participate in a new project that provides an innovative approach: a graphic novel about planning — for teens.

The graphic novel, *Washington, By and By*, is free for all to download and use. We aim to have it included in civic courses that will be taught in our state at the high school level with an aim to encourage other youth-oriented organizations to use it as well.

Housing is a focus of the novel, mainly because housing is something that everyone knows and has experience with — whether urban, rural, or elsewhere. Housing also relates to all kinds of planning topics: transportation, community character, mixed use development, affordability, gentrification, economics, land use choices, environment, equity, preservation,

growth patterns, and more. An important subtext of the novel conveys key aspects of how the public planning process works.

While some of the novel's themes relate specifically to Washington's growth management framework, most parts of the process would apply in any state. Understanding the public planning process — along with the issues at hand — is fundamental for anyone to be effectively engaged.



Cricket and Jenna arrive at the state capitol, Olympia, Washington. Image courtesy of Gabrielle Lyon.

The full-color, 48-page story follows the adventures of diverse teens from around the state who meet at a summer program on community planning held in Olympia, Washington's state's capital. The four main characters — Cricket, Ben, Jen, and Daniel — are forced to confront the intersections of power, development, displacement, and preservation in their lives and the lives of the people around them.

Deeply researched, the graphic novel encourages readers to examine some critical questions about growth management: How does planning happen? Why does it matter? What is the role and responsibility of youth in shaping where they live — now and in the future? The book will be supported with additional online resources.

The graphic novel approach, especially with its appeal to young people, is a tool that other planning chapters and community organizations should consider creating or adapting for their own use; this is a great resource to help show that planning is not some mysterious thing that grown-ups either shout about at public meetings or otherwise stay away from.

Washington, By and By can help most readers make sense of community planning — not as a set of statistics and maps, but as a well-illustrated story to which people can relate and see where they fit in. The graphic novel approach to planning might be useful for people of all ages, including those for whom English is not their first language.

This initiative has been made possible by the energy and vision of key APA members and support from the chapter's leadership and its Youth in Planning Task Force. Their efforts led the chapter to commission *Washington, By and By* for development by Gabrielle Lyon, Devin Mawdsely, and Kayce Bayer.

Lyon's creative team recently completed development of a graphic novel for the Chicago Architecture Center, [No Small Plans](#), which received critical praise and helped inspire Washington's own initiative.

I'm excited to see how this project unfolds. I see it as being good not only for our state, but also for our diverse young people. I hope it helps to inspire many other communities and planning organizations to achieve greater outreach and more thoughtful engagement.



About the Author

Shane Hope, AICP

Shane Hope is the development services director for Edmonds, Washington, and the former vice-president of APA's Washington Chapter.

What Is Planning?

By Cynthia Bowen, FAICP, President, American Planning Association

What is planning? Take a moment to wonder about your community. Why are homes located in a specific area? Why are businesses or factories located in another? How did someone decide where the roads would go — and how many lanes each road would have? How much park or open space is available to play in? Can you easily walk to a bus or train to get to your destination?

These questions are what planners think about and are at the heart of planning as a profession. The goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and economic well-being of residents in ways that reflect the unique needs, desires, and culture of those who live and work within the community.

Planning considers the big picture. While architects often focus on a single building, a planner's job is to work with residents and elected officials to guide the layout of an entire community or region. Planners take a broad viewpoint and look at how the pieces of a community — buildings, roads, and parks — fit together like pieces of a puzzle. And, like Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett did with the 1909 *Plan of Chicago*, planners also work to imagine what can and should happen to a community: how it should grow and change, and what it should offer residents 10, 15, or even 20 years into the future.



Box City teaches children about the process of urban development and the principles that make for sound architecture, design, and planning. Photo by Ryan Dravitz.

Each community is divided into parcels, or pieces, of land. The use of each parcel of land is guided by the community's zoning code. The zoning code is a set of rules that defines what each land parcel could or should be used for (such as housing, manufacturing or open space). Zoning codes try to keep different uses from being in conflict with one another. For example, imagine a company wants to buy the apartment building next door to you and convert the building into a factory, but the rest of the street is residential housing. A factory can have significantly different characteristics from a residential apartment: a large number of workers coming and going; freight deliveries; noise; and even the risk of hazards such as fires or chemical

spills. Such a drastic change of land use would impact the character, quality, and feel of your street and your home. By zoning your street as a "residential" area, factories can be kept separate from housing.

Planning involves the entire community. Beyond trying to prevent land use conflicts, planning also entails providing community members with choices. Consider your home. Is it an apartment? Condo? Single-family house? How do you get around your community? Walk? Ride your bike? Take

public transit? Is there any green space nearby? Are there any stores? Planning helps to ensure that you have choices when it comes to what type of home you want to live in, how you move around the community, and what is available nearby.

Planning includes considering ways to make communities safe and healthy for all ages. Safety includes factors such as ensuring you have areas to walk, ride your bike, or play. Can you safely cross the street to reach your grocery store? Can your grandparents? Beyond everyday risks, planners also look at larger hazards that could impact the safety of a community. Disasters such as floods and wildfires can devastate a community. Planners look at the potential risk a community might face if a river rises beyond its banks. How close are buildings that could be flooded? What can be done today, before a disaster happens, to minimize the risk and damage if the river overflows in the future?



Through the collaborative efforts of partners in the complex, along with the Vidant Medical Center Foundation and department of transportation, east and west sides of the complex are connected by one of the first "rural" crosswalks in the state. Photo courtesy Tracy B. Cash, Pitt County Planning Department.

Planning looks ahead. Planners are always thinking about today, but also about what tomorrow might bring. A community plan must meet the needs of its residents today, but also keep the future in mind. A community plan, often called a comprehensive plan, is a kind of map or blueprint for what a community aims to achieve in the future. Perhaps your ancestors moved around their communities by walking or by horse and carriage. Trains and automobiles came along and changed how people traveled — and the landscape itself by requiring roads and tracks. What's next that could potentially impact your community and how you live, work, and socialize? Next time you walk around your community consider some basic questions: Who planned that? How was that decision made? What will happen to this neighborhood in the future? If these questions seem interesting to you, you might want to be a planner!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Cynthia Bowen is president of the American Planning Association and the director of planning for Rundell Ernstberger Associates.

Themes Used in Creating Washington, By and By

By Gabrielle Lyon, Ph.D.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The following was developed to guide the creation of a new graphic novel for Washington state teens about planning, housing and youth engagement. The document outlines key themes that emerged in a series of in-person and phone conversations, an interactive workshop, and an online survey conducted primarily during March 2019. It represents an initial collection of issues and thoughts about housing, planning and youth engagement in Washington state and is not intended to be comprehensive.



Over 50 people from several different organizations provided input. Participants - including planners, architects, educators, policy makers, youth commissioners and community members - were asked to consider *"What is most worth knowing and experiencing about HOUSING?"* *"What is most worth knowing and experiencing about PLANNING?"* and *"What might 'being engaged' (in planning) look like for teens?"*

HOUSING: WHAT'S MOST WORTH KNOWING?

Housing is personal.

- Everyone has a different ideal of what housing is (i.e. an apartment vs. a house with a yard)
- The address where you live affects so many things:
 - education, lifespan, health, wealth
 - whether you can walk to school, which school you get to attend
 - environmental issues of living in older homes or near industry
 - Housing conditions can affect health
 - Access (or lack of access) to transportation influences social relations
- Housing needs change throughout a person's lifetime
 - Housing needs change during different periods of life (ex. Being a child vs. being a college student vs. being a single person fresh out of college vs. being married or partnered without children vs. being married or partnered with children vs. being retired vs. being elderly and widowed vs. being elderly and widowed and disabled)
 - Housing is precarious; many people are subject to homelessness
 - Some people live in a house as a youth but wonder if they will be able to afford owning a home in the future
- Power relations between individuals and communities shape housing issues (renters, owners, developers, buyers, sellers)

Different types of housing exist.

- A variety of housing types and neighborhoods exist
 - Different housing types offer different advantages
 - Different types of housing "feel" different
 - Different ways to have a "home." All types can be good and make you happy.
 - More types of housing exist than just single family residences
- Types of housing and design include:
 - Mansions, single family detached units, single family attached units (townhomes), duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments, two to six story walkup apartments, high-rise apartments, accessory dwelling units, mobile homes, RVs, tent cities, temporary shelters
 - Construction and structural issues
 - Different layouts exist – single story ranch homes vs. multi-story narrow homes
 - Design homogeneity vs. design heterogeneity/diversity
 - Design changes over time - what seems fresh now may seem dated later

- With multigenerational families, larger homes are needed; existing houses can be converted into larger homes for multi-generational families
- When different types/sizes and affordabilities of housing exist in all neighborhoods, everyone has access to a range of neighborhood and housing opportunities. Neighborhoods are inclusive rather than exclusive enabling people to choose any neighborhood to live in that best meets their needs.

Housing is related to economics.

- People generate wealth through housing – this has had positive and negative consequences for different population groups
- Magnitude of housing in a budget - 30%
 - Trade-offs to affording housing
 - What affects the cost of housing?
 - 'Affordable' means different things to different people.
- A home is a commodity
 - Housing is a way to build equity and wealth
 - Land values affect housing
 - It costs to maintain a house
 - Downsides to home ownership exist (e.g. one can't move for a job as easily)
 - Housing options and prices are affected by supply and demand
- Different home occupancy models exist
 - Different ways to obtain housing exist
 - Different ways of renting include – single room occupancy/ micro-apartments, studio and 1+ bdrm apartments or houses, house sharing
 - Different types of ownership include – fee simple, condominiums, cooperatives, cohousing, land trusts; moving between these isn't always a step up or a step down
- Tradeoffs of housing types, ex. individual house vs. multi-family condo vs. camper
- Different affordability models exist
 - Market based incentives vs. subsidized housing
 - Section 8 vouchers vs. housing authority owned buildings
 - Mixed income communities (Hope VI) vs. communities with all subsidized units
 - Smaller sized units – cottage housing on smaller lots, micro-apartments
 - Temporary tax exemption for temporary affordability vs. for subsidies that require affordability for the life of the project
- The economy and job creation play a role in shaping housing demand and supply
- More desirable neighborhoods are more expensive to live in and lead to household sorting based on income. Contributing factors include:
 - High quality schools

- Proximity to jobs
- Proximity to high speed transit
- Proximity to parks, trails, open space and other amenities
- Low rates of violent crime

Housing is dynamic.

- As populations change neighborhoods change (and sometimes housing types change as well)
 - Population growth puts pressure on housing for different people in different ways
 - Demographic shifts happen and can happen over short or long times
 - Large developments have big impacts on neighborhoods
 - A complex relationship between new development and losing housing exists; gentrification/displacement
 - Decisions about housing styles affect future neighborhood character
- Changing idea of a "home" = house with a yard to an apartment
- Successful communities have a wide range of housing choices to accommodate all ages, incomes and households.

Several factors affect housing in Washington state.

- Population growth affects the density and distribution of housing
 - How can we accommodate a larger population in the same amount of space? How do you house 500K vs. 1M people?
 - How do we handle growth and deal with displacement?
- Different factors affect where housing is needed - areas grow through natural increase and immigration, which can be driven by job growth
- The make-up of households changes with familial, cultural, and age diversity
- Access to housing differs across the state
- Some parts of the state have patterns of low density; some have high density.
- Housing location, type and size affect affordability, commute times, preservation of open space, farmland, forests, wetlands etc.

Housing is fundamental.

- Housing is a human right; everyone needs housing
- Safe and stable housing as a right
- Tenants have rights
- Barriers to housing exist
- Housing is part of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Physical needs → Safety → Love/belonging → Esteem → Self-actualization

Housing involves local governments.

- Government policy has/will change housing development; regulation/government may be good, but also may be restrictive
- Decisions by members of government shape housing opportunities
- Housing, zoning and planning are related to one another

Housing and transportation are interrelated.

- Transportation decisions impact housing needs and housing locations
- Living in an auto-oriented place vs. one with public transportation
 - Cars love the suburbs
 - How being centered by a car/condo/mansion affects the rest of your life
- It makes sense to have housing near amenities and services

History shapes housing.

- Landscape/physical geography affects housing and planning
- Rural vs. urban is shaped by history
- History affects what you see - including racial and class segregation
- History shapes how people congregate, how cities form
- History of redlining, racism and racial covenants
 - ex. Bellevue and Seattle
 - ex. LIBERTY BANK. Community based organizations formed a bank to enable loans to African Americans.
- Your neighborhood's history is still happening
- What is kept/preserved and what is not? (Historic preservation)

Housing, urban form, equity, and environmental sustainability are interrelated.

- Sprawling single use development is inefficient – it wastes land and resources paving over wildlife habitat and farmland and leading to increased air, water and noise pollution
- Sprawling single use zones often segregate economic classes leading to inequity limiting safe, convenient, reliable access to education, job and social opportunities.

PLANNING: WHAT'S MOST WORTH KNOWING?

Planning has a long-time horizon.

- Need to take the long view
- Likely you'll change where you live and work
- Issues are multidimensional
- On-going nature of planning - not just a start/end
- Need to be mindful of future generations

Washington State requires planning for the future.

- The Growth Management Act (GMA) was created to help people across the state plan for growth and change in a comprehensive way
- The GMA has 14 goals, including:
 1. Concentrated urban growth
 2. Sprawl reduction
 3. Efficient multimodal transportation systems based regional priorities
 4. Affordable housing
 5. Economic development
 6. Property rights protection from arbitrary and discriminatory actions
 7. Timely and fair permit processes
 8. Natural resource conservation
 9. Open space retention and recreation enhancement
 10. Environmental protection
 11. Early and continuous public participation
 12. Adequate public facilities and services
 13. Preservation of historic resources
 14. Shoreline management
- Most planning takes place at the local level—city, town, or county—with some state involvement
- Washington has state-specific planning issues – for example, tribal lands, tribal history; unique natural resources
- Not all areas are the same
- A history of Tribal planning
- Past planning informs the present

Planning is a process.

- Everyone CAN participate in how their community will look and feel in the future
- You can participate
- Planning should be inclusive
- What is the planning process (where, who and how does it happen)?
 - Planners and community members assess existing conditions through an analysis of a community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) or something similar. Engagement with the community occurs via public meetings, surveys, tabling, online engagement or other means.
 - Planners engage community members, planning commissioners and members of city council in a visioning process to craft a statement of what they want their community to be in the future.
 - Planners analyze gaps between existing conditions and the community’s vision, and then work with the community and planning commissioners to

develop goal and policy statements that help guide future development decisions to further the community's vision. Goals and policies along with the vision statement become the community's plan.

- The plan is implemented through various actors. Many elements of the plan get enacted into code such as a city's zoning or critical area regulations. Other elements are implemented through specific system plans and investments such as the city's Capital Improvement Program.
- Planners regularly monitor progress toward community goals by analyzing metrics on development, transportation, economic prosperity, social equity and environmental quality. Often, they use surveys to assess how community members feel the city is performing in a variety of areas.
- Different kinds of engagement processes include charettes, open houses, committee meetings, public hearings
- Planning is a legislative process
- Planning can encourage civil/civic dialogue
- Conflict isn't always negative
- Participation of people representing diverse perspectives is important
- A key participant in the planning process is the media
- Preferences and conditions change
- Plans can change over time
- Change can be rapid locally vs. slower on a regional level
- Plans must get implemented to bring about change
- Societal norms and customs change over time, but often the framework of past plans persists

Elements of planning.

- Everything you experience in the built environment is planned (ex. building heights, sidewalks, stop signs)
- What IS a plan?
- What is density? Why is it needed? Density isn't bad
- How should local government and bureaucracy work when it comes to planning?
- Planning has connections to public health
- What happens with sprawl-type development? Can it evolve?
- Planning affects the environment and climate change
- Planning and land use is dictated by policies and code
- Crafting policies is a complex process
- Power dynamics exist (especially around access to resources)

Planning is about making decisions.

- No one knows their community as well as the people who live and work there
- Planning includes making decisions for people who are not living in a place yet

- Planning is about prioritizing – making choices based on limited resources
- How do decisions get made?
- Who is involved in making decisions? Who has the right to make decisions? Who are stakeholders?
- Consider what makes a place or setting the way it is – Was it planned or not?
- Contexts for decisions are important, unique and different
- Decisions are not static and forevermore, circumstances change
- Different planning issues require different sets of knowledge
- Decisions are messy and complicated
 - Decisions have consequences
 - Planners make mistakes
 - Having youth input is important
 - Avoid making the same mistakes in the future
- Planning affects future opportunities, life decisions and affordability. What does that mean for youth, and their future?

Planning offers an opportunity to engage.

- Everyone can participate in planning - not just professional planners
- Planning can be a way to be an activist
- Youth participation matters
 - Learn how to advocate
 - All youth should know they have a voice
- Where can they engage during day-to-day life?
- Get beyond "Nextdoor" and complaining online/social media
- Planning provides opportunities for community place-making

Native Americans have an approach to planning.

- Native American context and philosophy about planning and housing exists (Planning is not just about a physical building)
- Tribal planning history is long
- Planning for seven generations

IMPORTANT PLANNING and HOUSING EXPERIENCES

People can contribute to the planning process and make a difference.

- Feeling what it feels like to influence an outcome
- Change is constant - you can make change happen
- Change is hard, complicated
- A sense of urgency motivates people to engage in planning
- Planning is fun
- Planning fits into daily life

Planning requires engagement.

- Planning is complicated and messy, but not off-putting
- It involves tensions between conflicting ideas / tradeoffs (ex. How to use limited space - parks and open space vs. housing and jobs)
- Planning may involve compromise, conflict resolution and/or thinking out of the box
- Conflict resolution tools may include dots, sticky notes, markers
- Planning encourages interaction / talking with different people, people who are different from one another e.g. people with homes talking with people who are homeless
- Planning involves being open-minded
- It encourages collaboration
- Something exists for everyone
- The nature of planning can be open-ended

Experience different settings.

- Experience nature/quiet
- Explore other parts of the city, state
- Go to new urban neighborhoods and unfamiliar places
- Experience different housing forms and settings
- Experience life in a single-use auto-oriented neighborhood
- Experience life in a mixed-use, walkable transit oriented neighborhood
- What it is like to walk to work, school, the local ballfield or cafe?
- What is your sense of a neighborhood? Have you met all your neighbors?

Be visually aware of surroundings and "seeing" planning.

- Identify neighborhood characteristics
- Experience a place – do a site visit that looks more deeply at surroundings
- Emotional reactions to settings drive feelings about a place
- EX Denny re-grade, I-5 separation
- EX paving Duwamish River Valley

Experience a community meeting.

- Experience inclusive planning with diverse participation
- Attend a local community meeting: a city council meeting and/or a local public hearing

TEEN ENGAGEMENT

Activities

- Hands-on workshops with maps

- Walking tours
- Practice drawing and interpreting planning documents
- Create video/photo projects documenting their neighborhood
- Job shadow a planner for a day
- School projects about planning
- Trips to city hall or state legislature
- Discussions about civic issues
- Internship opportunities
- Senior capstone projects
- Open-house events held at assemblies

Approaches

- Ask teens to weigh in on options to understand what they need to engage and to make sure the kind of infrastructure they need is available
- Help teens understand why they should care now and how they can plug in / engage
- Let teens lead discussions on what they think planning is and if it is a priority for them
- Teens can share opinions in response to questions about values and priorities for their community, especially related to housing options
- Develop websites geared toward teens; present planning concepts in ways that are easy for them to understand and relate to
- Meet youth in the neighborhoods where they live/work/play
- Follow up with teens and prove their input matters, that it will be used
- Create models that allow free thought about possibilities, even if ideas aren't politically or financially feasible
- Organize community cafes that include youth-only
- Create an online game like SimCity or Minecraft with a greater direct connection to planning
- Create online-input options that teens can share with their friends and peers to gather input
- Ask teens questions:
 - Who are we planning for?
 - What are their different needs?
 - How do we know what different people want/need?
 - How can everyone engage in the planning process?
 - Who hasn't engaged? Why? What barriers to engagement exist?
 - Identify community Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Threats:
 - What do you like about this area that you want to preserve?
 - What are some of the area's weaknesses that you would like to fix?

- What near term opportunities exist to preserve and/or build on the community's strengths and work on its challenges?
- What is threatening the area now? What are people afraid of for their neighborhood/community?
- What are some different scenarios for the future? What drives those different scenarios?
- What is your preferred vision for the future?
- What are your goals for the community?
- What strategies would help further community goals?
- Who needs to do what, by when to implement the plan?
- What resources and relationships are needed to achieve results?
- How will you know if your strategies are effective? What will you see? What will you measure?

Meaningful Work

- Provide input on real-world planning studies and design reviews - in person is best
- Join a Youth Planning Commission / Council
- Host forums where youth lead and direct conversations that raise the voices of other youth



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Gabrielle Lyon is Executive Director of Illinois Humanities, Founder and Principal of Lyon Strategies, LLC, and author of [No Small Plans](#) and [Washington, By and By](#)

Local Government in Washington State

By Steve Butler

While most public attention is paid to the federal and state levels of government, decisions made at the local government level are what affect most Americans' lives, day-to-day. In Washington State, local governments include cities, towns, and counties.

Washington State consists of 39 counties, and 281 cities and towns. All land in Washington is part of a specific county. Cities and towns, which are located within a county, are typically concentrated settlement areas that serve as population and commercial centers. In general, cities and towns provide municipal services and facilities to people who live or work within their boundaries, while counties provide some of these services to the people outside of a city or town's limits. For planning purposes, cities and towns control land use and development inside their municipal boundaries; any land outside their borders is controlled by the county within which it is located.

Municipal services and facilities provided by local government include:

- police and fire protection;
- transportation facilities, such as roads and sidewalks;
- water and sewer service;
- solid waste collection and disposal;
- surface water management;
- municipal courts;
- parks and recreational facilities/programs;
- library services;
- land use planning and zoning; and
- building code review/inspection.

Local government pays for municipal services and facilities by collecting revenue from several sources, including but not limited to local property taxes, utility fees, and portions of State-collected taxes (such as sales tax).

Cities, towns and counties are governed by representatives who are chosen by voters in local elections, and who serve on city or town councils, county councils, or boards of county commissioners. Decisions made by elected officials include establishing local rules and regulations, setting budgets, deciding on key policy issues, and providing direction on how those policies are to be implemented. Local government staff/employees advise elected officials as they make their decisions and work to implement these decisions once they are adopted.

More information about local governments in Washington State may be found in the following resources:

CITIES AND TOWNS

- [City and Town Forms of Government](http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/City-and-Town-Forms-of-Government.aspx) - <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/City-and-Town-Forms-of-Government.aspx>
- [Washington City and Town Profiles](http://mrsc.org/Home/Research-Tools/Washington-City-and-Town-Profiles.aspx) - <http://mrsc.org/Home/Research-Tools/Washington-City-and-Town-Profiles.aspx>
- [Association of Washington Cities \(AWC\)](https://wacities.org/) - <https://wacities.org/>

COUNTIES

- [County Forms of Government](http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/County-Forms-of-Government.aspx) - <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/County-Forms-of-Government.aspx>
- [Washington County Profiles](http://mrsc.org/Home/Research-Tools/Washington-County-Profiles.aspx) - <http://mrsc.org/Home/Research-Tools/Washington-County-Profiles.aspx>
- [Washington State Association of Counties \(WSAC\)](https://wsac.org/) - <https://wsac.org/>
- [Washington Association of County Officials \(WACO\)](http://countyofficials.org/) - <http://countyofficials.org/>



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How do Growth Management decisions contribute to my Quality of Life?



When population grows, available land must be shared with new residents. Planning gives us a framework for making tough decisions about where that growth should occur. Centering growth in the city core and close-in suburbs protects rural and resource lands and reinforces a sense of community. Cities benefit because there are more people to support a wider variety of businesses and services within a short travel distance to more households.

How do local comprehensive plans relate to state-level growth management?



Each city and county within Washington State prepares its own comprehensive plan to fit together under the guidelines of the Growth Management Act. Comprehensive plans, written by planners and concerned citizens, help regulate development, conserve natural resources, and guide economic growth. Development regulations are the tools prepared to carry out the plans.

How does the Growth Management Act affect my rights to do what I want with my property?



The Growth Management Act contributes to stability within the real estate market because comprehensive plans define areas of development. People know the “rules” for development and can get a fair return on their investment. One of the thirteen statewide goals of the Growth Management Act is to respect property rights.

Good planning reduces the element of risk so that both you, as a property owner, and your neighbors know what to expect.

When and how can I get involved in the comprehensive planning process?



Amendments to comprehensive plans and development regulations may be adopted annually. At least once every seven years, a complete review of each city or county comprehensive plan and development regulations is mandatory. So, it's never too late to have your voice heard.

All meetings are public, and many communities are trying new methods to include more citizens in the process of planning. Look online for your community's planning process and for ways to participate, visit your local library to find a copy of the plan, and go to your city hall to talk to your local planning staff. They want to hear from you!

Why should I get involved in updating my local comprehensive plan?



Each community in our state is charged with the responsibility to plan for people, jobs, housing, and natural resources. When citizens get involved in the planning process, they can help determine priorities and shape the future of their communities.

It is important for you to know how and why your government makes growth and development decisions. You can help decide how fast and where urban growth can occur. When you participate, the comprehensive plan works for you!

Growth Management



How does it work for you?



The American Planning Association can connect you to many sources for additional information about planning in Washington:

Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association
603 Stewart Street, Suite 610
Seattle, WA 98101
Phone: (206) 682-7436
www.washington-apa.org

Prepared under a grant from the national American Planning Association



Why do governments plan?

Planning in America started in the early 1900s as polluting, noisy industries were built alongside growing residential areas, creating health and safety hazards for residents. Citizens urged the government to pass laws regulating land use to protect their homes and families.

After World War II, Federal funding supported the construction of highways and led to the development of homes well beyond city limits. Construction of new suburbs grew tremendously over the next half century, spreading development over once-rural areas and weakening city centers. By 1990, Washington State was at a crossroads where we could choose to continue to subsidize development outside cities or to conserve rural, farm, and forest lands. State leaders adopted legislation for the management of growth so that future generations will also be able to enjoy the abundance and diversity that Washington State has to offer.

Today, thanks to planning and regulation, we have grown to expect healthy and safe neighborhoods. In addition, planning works to protect Washington's natural beauty, conserve farmlands, and maintain renewable forest areas. Planning walkable communities with access to nature improves the health of residents.

Which growth pattern do you value?



These images illustrate two distinct approaches to growth and development: unregulated, and managed development. Which growth pattern do you value?

Without growth boundaries, low-density, car-dependent development pushes beyond the reaches of city limits into the countryside, requiring the public to pay for new roads and infrastructure, eroding the viability of farming and forestry.



Managed growth brings together Washington cities' and counties' comprehensive plans which preserve the rural and natural landscape, manage development, and provide for anticipated future growth.

Why do governments have the responsibility to regulate development?

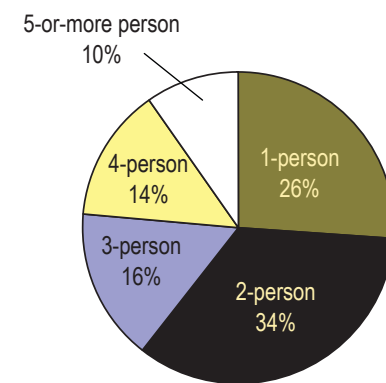
Government regulates development to promote health, safety, and the public good.



Development of private lands requires public money. New housing and commercial developments require infrastructure such as new roads, sewers, and utility lines. Communities also require social services like fire and police departments, libraries, schools, and parks. All this infrastructure is costly, and, as taxpayers, we all pay to support new development. These costs are higher per household when development is spread out.

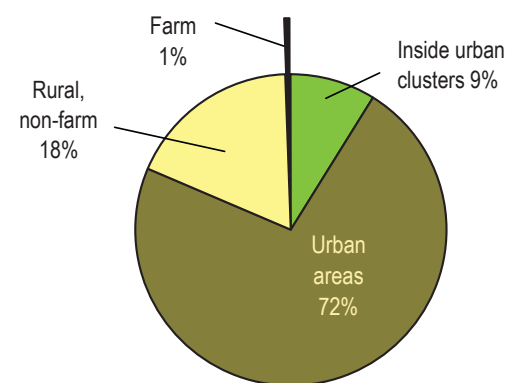
Did you know?

More than half of Washington households have 2 people or less



Washington household size in 2000

Only 1% of Washington households live on farms today, compared to the past



Washington State household locations in 2002

What's wrong with building more subdivisions?

We all have to pay to support development.



Most studies show that people want choices. Some people want a single-family house in the suburbs, but others prefer a farm in the country or a condominium in the city. Sprawling subdivisions spread out development and use a lot of land. They may suit the needs of some, yet the price to support their development is subsidized by everyone.

What does Growth Management offer taxpayers?



Fair treatment – The Growth Management Act requires public participation in developing and updating comprehensive plans. Everyone has a voice in determining future growth in their community.

Predictability – Comprehensive plans provide a reasonable expectation for future growth. Property owners have the security of knowing they can develop their land according to the comprehensive plan.

Why Growth Management is good for city residents:



- Growth management encourages new development to take place in existing urban areas where new streets and utilities are less expensive to taxpayers.
- Growth management supports a growing economy, more jobs, and a strong tax base for city services.
- Growth management promotes affordable housing, neighborhood schools, and community parks concurrent with new development.
- By establishing fair treatment and predictability for urban growth, communities can choose if they want to grow faster or slower.

Why Growth Management is good for farmers:



- Growth management limits development near farmlands and keeps property tax and land values affordable to farmers.
- Growth management protects valuable farmland from the pressure to develop.
- Growth management limits encroaching rural residential development; thus, fewer farming-practice restrictions are imposed.
- By protecting farmland through managing growth, Washington can sustain the land necessary to continue boasting that we are number one in the U.S. for production of apples, hops, spearmint oil, sweet cherries, and pears.

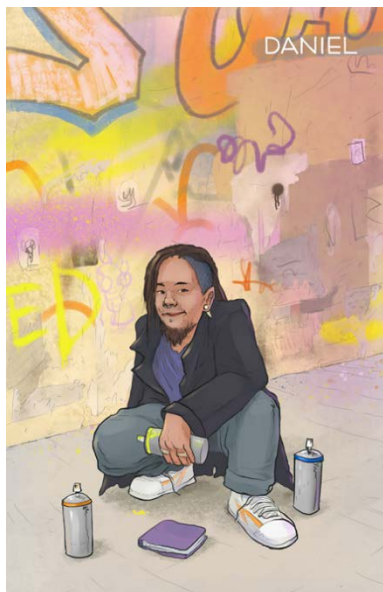
Character and Community Profiles



Stephanie, (aka **Cricket**), the daughter of property caretakers in Chelan, is an avid nature lover. The morning she departs for camp, Cricket learns devastating news: her family is selling their home. The mobile home they live in isn't worth much, but the property, set deep in nature on a beautiful lake, is worth a lot.

Learn more about Chelan County and the City of Chelan at:

- City of Chelan - <https://cityofchelan.us/>
- Chelan County - <https://www.co.chelan.wa.us/>



Daniel, a city-loving Tukwila resident with strong ties to his Quinault tribal community, is a keen observer, artist, and skeptic. He believes acknowledging the state's past is critical, but it's not until he argues with his new friends that he realizes his voice can help shape the future.

Learn more about Tukwila and the Quinault Nation at:

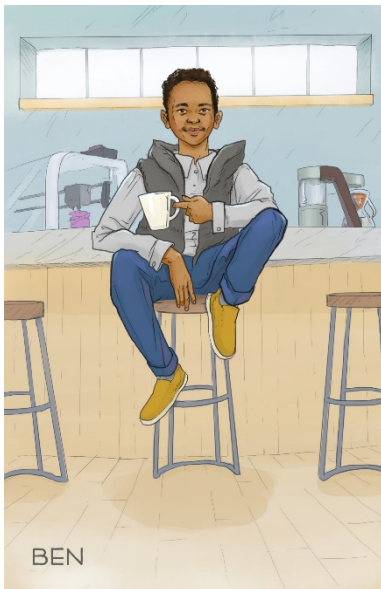
- City of Tukwila - <https://www.tukwilawa.gov/>
- Quinault Indian Nation - <http://www.quinaultindiannation.com/>



Jenna is a 5th generation apple farmer from the Yakima Valley. She has an economist's eye on housing and development issues until she realizes that some of the issues the team is debating might also be happening on her own family's farm.

Learn more about the City of Yakima and Yakima County at:

- City of Yakima - <https://www.yakimawa.gov/>
- Yakima County - <https://www.yakimacounty.us/>



Technophile **Ben** opens his heart and home in Medina to his new friends. When he realizes Cricket's dilemma might have been created in part by his own family's activities, he's forced to ask himself what his values might mean for other people.

Learn more about the City of Redmond and King County at:

- City of Redmond - <https://www.redmond.gov/>
- King County - <https://www.kingcounty.gov/>

Questions to Consider

1. On page 12 Jenna says, “I never realized everything is planned. Even where my farm is allowed to be.” Daniel comments, “Is there a public process? They say so, but how does anyone ever hear about it?”

Why does planning matter?

2. Cricket is upset about having to move away from her childhood home in Chelan (pages 13-14). Development in the area has put increasing pressure on landowners to sell their property. Chelan is changing, and Cricket feels like she is losing a part of herself. Daniel says on page 14, “It’s like gentrification... in the country.”

What does Daniel mean? Have you or your family experienced displacement? Or do you know someone who had to move because of new development in their area? What happened?

3. Over the weekend the team is given a homework assignment to gather pictures of where they live and explain how planning is a factor (page 15-18). Professional planners work to make neighborhoods, cities, regions and states livable by developing regulations for how land is used and creating long range plans for transportation, water use, housing, environment, preservation and sustainability.

Look carefully at each of the pictures on pages 15-18. How are they similar? What things are different? How might planning have shaped what you see?

4. When the team goes to the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, they visit exhibits on redlining and historic hotel rooms used by early Chinese immigrants (page 22). Jenna remarks, “These rooms are really small.” When Daniel responds, “Don’t YOU have workers? Ever been to their houses?” he is suggesting that the housing conditions for immigrant Chinese workers in the early 20th century are connected to housing workers on Jenna’s apple farm.

Do you think that is a fair question? Housing comes up throughout the story. Why is housing such a big issue?

5. Community planning is an approach intended to ensure all members of a community are involved and represented in decision-making processes. At the community planning meeting at the public library (page 24), Cricket comments, “No one is listening to each other.”

Why are people upset in this meeting? What are some of the different viewpoints? What do the teen presenters want planners to consider? Do you think community planning is important? How could this meeting have been run differently to ensure all voices were heard?

6. After the community meeting, the team discusses what they heard while walking along the Seattle waterfront (page 27-28). When Ben expresses support for the call to save green space, Cricket responds, “I don’t understand why you’re so vehement about green space HERE?! You’re building a second home on green space in Chelan.”

Why is Ben’s comment so upsetting to Cricket? How would you feel if you were Ben? How would you feel if you were Cricket?

7. On page 35, Daniel closes the team’s final presentation with the statement, “For teens, ‘By and By’ is NOW. Washington NOW. Washington, for all, now and in the future.”

How should people balance issues now with issues that will come up in the future? What is the role and responsibility of youth in shaping where they live – and where they might live in the future?

8. At the end of the story (page 35), Ben asks, “We’re doing this again next year, right?”

Do you think the group will stay in touch? How do you think Jenna, Ben, Daniel and Cricket were changed by their experiences in WALP’ers?

Basic Community Planning Vocabulary

ADUs (see “Accessory dwelling units”)

Accessory dwelling units (also called ADUs)

a smaller dwelling that is on the same property as a stand-alone house; the smaller dwelling can be a separate residence for one or more persons; depending on local rules, it may be within a house (such as in a basement), attached to a house, or detached from the house (such as a small backyard cottage)

Built environment

environment that is mostly characterized by buildings, pavement, and/or land that is landscaped or otherwise modified for human use (excluding natural resource use, such as farming and forestry)

City council

a group of publicly elected members who together make official decisions for a city or town government about adopting plans, policies, regulations, and budgets, and promoting various special activities

Code

regulations that provide standards and requirements

Commercial buildings

buildings used for business or commerce and where people sell things

Community planning

a way of planning for a community’s future, especially related to growth, development, and preservation of land and infrastructure

Comprehensive Plan

a local government’s official plan to guide long-term development and conservation related to population growth, land use, transportation, housing, environment, economy, and other key topics

County council

a group of publicly elected members who together make official decisions for a county government about adopting plans, policies, regulations, and budgets, and promoting various special activities

Density (or Building density)

how close buildings are constructed to each other in a particular area

Development

building or changing of land that occurs primarily through construction, remodeling, bulldozing, converting, or subdividing of property

Development regulations

a set of local government rules for development and use of land (see also “zoning regulations”)

Function / Use

a description of how a particular building or property is used

Growth Management Act (GMA)

Washington State’s primary land use law guiding growth and conservation across many areas of the state

Human scale

the size and proportion of an object compared to a person

Industrial buildings

buildings used to manufacture a product

Infrastructure

the system of transportation networks (such as roads, bridges, rail lines, sidewalks) and utilities (such as electricity, water, telephone) in a city or region

Institutional buildings

(also called a public building or civic building) buildings used for providing a service to the public; examples include hospitals, schools, houses of worship, and government offices

Local government

the government of a city, county, or other public authority that is at a lesser level than state government

Missing-middle housing

a phrase that refers to types of residences between the scale of spread-out individual houses and large apartment complexes; examples include townhomes, cottage clusters, small apartment buildings, and accessory dwelling units

Mixed-use buildings

buildings that have more than one use; typical mixed-use buildings in a city have commercial businesses on the first floor and residences in the floors above

Natural resource lands

lands that are set aside for agriculture, forestry, mining, or other use of the land's natural resources

Open Space

land that is preserved as a natural area, with few or no buildings

Park / Green space

land set aside for recreation, community gathering, or as a protected landscape

Pedestrian

a person traveling on foot (not using motorized power)

Planner

the person responsible for: (a) developing a plan and codes for a community or region that determine how land and resources should be used for future needs; and/or (b) developing or reviewing site and design plans of specific development projects

Planning (also community planning, urban or city planning, regional planning)

a process to identify desired outcomes, develop strategies to achieve the outcomes, and encourage actions to implement those strategies. The planning process may be used to guide future development and conservation in a community, neighborhood, town, city, county, or region.

Planning Commission

an official group of local residents appointed to advise or assist a city or county council on community planning issues

Population density

how close people live to other people; population density is usually measured by counting all the people that live within one square mile of land

Public space

space that can be used by everyone

Public transportation

a system of buses and trains to help people travel to their destinations

Private space

space that is owned by one or more individuals and not available for everyone's use

Redlining

a discriminatory practice of refusing or limiting loans, mortgages, insurance, etc., for certain geographic areas of a community (typically neighborhoods that include people of certain races, religions, classes, or incomes)

Region

a large land area that covers more than a single city

Residential buildings

buildings used by people as their home

Rural

land area that is mostly occupied by spread-apart houses, small farms, wooded areas, and open space

Setback

the distance a building sits from the edge of the street, sidewalk, and/or property line

Sprawl

the spreading of low-density housing or shopping centers into suburban and rural areas

Subdivision

the act of dividing a parcel of land into smaller parcels

Suburb

an area that is developed at a somewhat lower density than a typical city or town but not as low as a rural area

Urban

relating to a city or town

Urban planning

the practice of guiding future development in a city or town, based on a vision, set of principles, or another framework

Zoning regulations

a system of rules typically established by a local government to control the height, density, and use of buildings and the use of land in various areas of a city or county

How to Read a Public Space

by Stephanie Velasco

To do their work effectively, planners must be able to examine the built environment and understand how different decisions shape people's experiences. In other words, planners must be able to read the built environment. When you're learning how to read a book, you first learn how to read individual words, and then move on to reading complete sentences. Similarly, when you're learning how to read the built environment, you first learn how to read individual elements, and then move on to reading entire public spaces.

Goals Participants in this activity will observe how individuals and communities interact with the built environment, using Kevin Lynch's method for mental mapping. They will be encouraged to analyze why certain elements encourage interaction, while others discourage it.

Time needed 60 minutes or more

Materials Projector or copies of the "Kevin Lynch's Mental Map of Boston" and "Kevin Lynch's Five Elements of the Built Environment" handouts below; paper and pencils; clipboards; tape or pushpins

INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTIVITY (10-15 minutes)

Pre-Activity Discussion Topics

- If someone asked you to describe your neighborhood to them, how would you do it?
- There are many different kinds of maps, and different types serve different purposes. What are some types of maps you've seen or used, and what purpose did they serve?

About Mental Mapping

- The type of map we will be making today is called a mental map, and the method we'll be using was developed by an urban planner named Kevin Lynch in the 1960's. Kevin Lynch studied how people imagine cities in their minds, and his research focused on figuring out the basic elements people use when forming mental maps.
- Mental maps help users understand how people navigate through and interact with their neighborhoods. Planners can use people's mental maps to identify potential pathways, gathering spaces, barriers, and recognizable neighborhood markers, in order to improve people's experiences with the built environment.

- Kevin Lynch’s method for mental mapping uses five basic elements to describe and map out neighborhoods (see handouts).

PUBLIC SPACE MAPPING (30 minutes or more, depending on the size of the space(s) to be mapped – see “Tips for Choosing a Public Space”)

Choose a public space (or multiple spaces) and give participants ample time to walk around and make observations. Using the two handouts as guides, have participants create their own mental maps of the space(s).

Tips for Choosing a Public Space to Map

- Try to pick a place that will have a lot of user activity while you’re there. It can be difficult for participants to identify some of Lynch’s elements, particularly informal paths and nodes, when there aren’t many people using the space at the time of observation.
- If possible, find a public space that offers multiple vantage points for participants. Observing public space users from above can often provide additional information that would not be observed at ground-level. It’s also nice to find a space with seating options for participants to use while drawing their maps.
- Be mindful of participants’ pre-existing familiarity with the public space and the amount of time they will have to observe and map it. If participants are unfamiliar with the area they will be mapping, it may take some time for them to orient themselves before putting pen to paper. Additionally, keep in mind the size of the public space and the amount of time it will take for participants to see it all. Creating a mental map for a neighborhood park will take much less time than creating a mental map for an entire historic district.
- If you have time, you may want to choose a couple different public spaces to observe and map. Perhaps choose a space that is primarily passed through (i.e. many paths and edges), and pair that with a space that encourages users to gather and linger (i.e. a district containing many nodes).

GROUP PIN-UP AND WRAP-UP DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Group Pin-Up

Have participants pin (or tape) their mental maps up on one wall, either side-by-side or in a grid pattern. Give participants a few minutes to walk around and look at other participants’ mental maps. Prompt participants to take note of similarities and differences across the maps using the following questions:

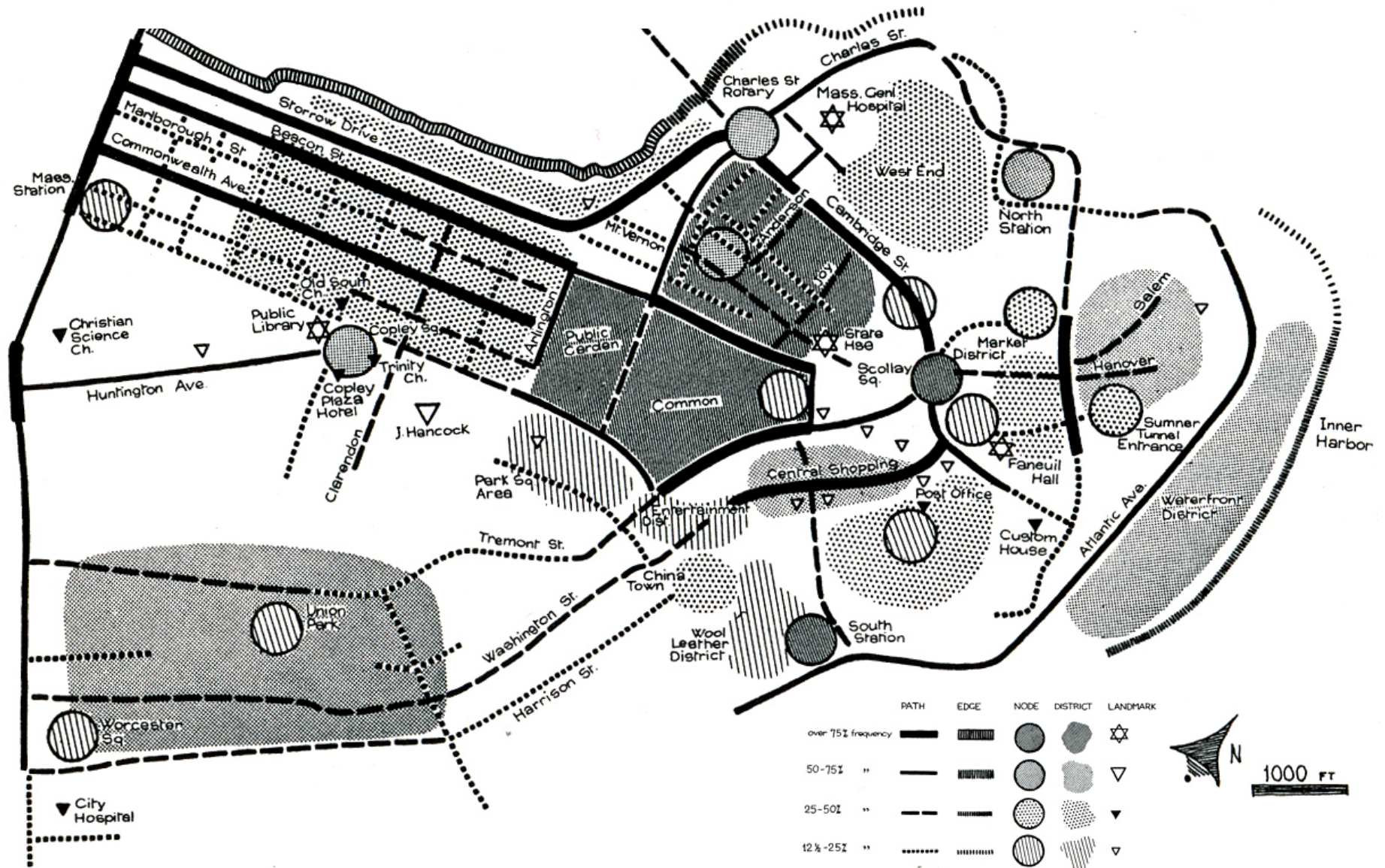
- What did other participants notice that you may have missed?
- What patterns do you see across all, or most, of the maps? What does that tell you?
- For the area(s) you mapped, what barriers to movement or user interaction did you observe? Alternatively, what elements of the built environment seemed to facilitate safe, efficient movement or spontaneous user interaction?

Additional Discussion Questions

- What elements of the built environment did Kevin Lynch leave out? How might you represent non-visual elements of the built environment, such as sounds or smells, in your mental maps?
- How might people's mental maps differ, based on their unique experiences of the built environment? For example, how might an able-bodied person's mental map differ from that of a person with a physical disability? How might race, class, gender, or other identities affect different people's mental maps of the same place?
- How can mental maps be used to influence decisions about how the built environment is shaped?

Kevin Lynch's Mental Map of Boston

from his book *The Image of the City* (1960)



Kevin Lynch's Five Elements of the Built



PATH

Paths are the linear channels of movement that people use to get around the built environment.

Examples: streets, alleys, highways, transit lines, canals, railroads



NODE

Nodes are specific points that are often the beginning or ending point of travel. Nodes may also be areas of concentrated activity.

Examples: street intersections, transit hubs, street-corner hangout, public plaza



LANDMARK

Landmarks are also points, but unlike nodes, you typically do not enter them. Landmarks may be simple physical objects and can either be manmade or natural.

Examples: street sign, public art, mountain



EDGE

Edges are linear, but unlike paths, you typically cannot traverse across or along them. Edges are seen as boundaries by people moving around the city.

Examples: shoreline, walls, edge of development



DISTRICT

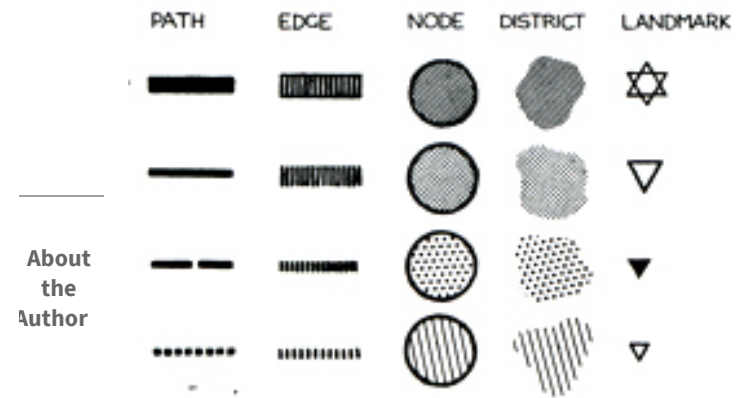
Districts are medium to large regions that have some common, recognizable character.

Examples: shopping district, business district, college campus

Representing the Five Elements in Mental Maps

The image to the right shows an example of how you may choose to represent the five elements in your mental maps. The thicker, bolder lines may represent more prominent paths and edges, such as highways. The thinner, dotted or dashed lines may represent less formal, or less trafficked, paths and edges, such as walking paths through a park. Similarly, the darker shading for nodes and districts may indicate more formalized or recognizable regions, and the symbol size for landmarks may correspond with the size or recognizability of the landmark.

Images by: Lucas Lindsey (top), Kevin Lynch



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephanie Velasco

Stephanie Velasco is a Community Development Specialist at the City of Seattle and a Summer Instructor at the University of Washington introducing middle school students to urban planning and architecture concepts.

Links to More Resources & Activities

American Planning Association

In Your Community: www.planning.org/communityoutreach

Teaching Young People about Planning: www.planning.org/educators

Video: “The Future Belongs to Those Who Prepare for It”: www.bit.ly/2GC2Wzb

American Planning Association – Washington Chapter

General website: www.washington-apa.org/

Youth in Planning webpage: www.washington-apa.org/youth-in-planning

10 Big Ideas for Washington’s Future: <https://www.washington-apa.org/ten-big-ideas>

Washington State Department of Commerce – Growth Management

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/>

Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) – Explore Topics

<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics.aspx>

Puget Sound Regional Council

www.psrc.org

Center for Architecture and Urban Design, Seattle

www.cfadseattle.org

Stewart, Jill, et al. *Planning the Pacific Northwest*. Routledge, 2015

Kenner, L. and Lyon, G. *Who is They?* Chicago Architecture Center, 2017

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/architecture-org/files/resources/nsp-essay-who-is-they-kenner-lyon.pdf>