Visioning a Greenspace Network
With Smoketown YOUTH
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Smoketown is an urban core neighborhood that recently gained three new greenspaces in the past several years. One greenspace in particular, the Logan Street Greenspace, was created through neighborhood collaboration and activism. Two of these greenspaces are blank canvases, ready to be printed upon. Understanding that Smoketown is a young and diverse community – nearly 30% of Smoketown residents are under the age of 15 – the Urban Planning graduate capstone course at the University of Louisville saw an opportunity to bring youth ideas to life in these greenspaces.

Traditional urban planning processes have omitted youth participation. There are a range of reasons for this omission that essentially can be framed as the distortion of a child’s ability to provide meaningful contributions. This view posits youth as “future citizens,” and downgrades their position within the community to a passive user (Simpson, 2016). This perspective tends to segregate children from adult activities and divert them into highly supervised playgrounds, schools, or other spaces. The segregation and omission of youth voices in urban planning has resulted in spaces and structures that do not cater to the needs of children as children (Simpson, 2016).
Executive Summary

Greenspaces are neighborhood assets that strengthen community and cultural ties while improving the mental, physical, and emotional health of their users (Heckert, 2013). Since childrens’ movements through their neighborhoods are often restricted, parks and open spaces need to be within walking distances for children to enjoy their health benefits.

Even when not in use, greenspaces passively mitigate environmental disparities in neighborhoods by providing relief from air pollution and the urban heat island effect (Heckert, 2013). They also have the potential to become way stations or habitats for urban wildlife (Heckert, 2013).

Because of both the importance of including youth in planning decisions, and the elevated benefits of appropriately designed greenspaces for youth consumption, this community-engaged planning process focused on prioritizing the input of Smoketown youth input in visioning the future of four greenspaces in the neighborhood: Lampton Green, May-Hillerich Pocket Park, Ballard Park, and the Logan Street Greenspace.
The engagement process centered on more than 100 students from Chris Rasheed’s 6th grade classes at Meyzeek Middle School, along with ten Smoketown Girl Scouts in Rachel Mauser’s troop. Further, the engagement process was purposefully structured as a skill-building opportunity for Smoketown youth, focused on equipping the youth with planning and design skills (background research and observation, communication, and prioritization) through lessons built around the neighborhood greenspaces. Graduate students then interpreted this youth input and reimagined the neighborhood’s greenspaces through their eyes. Students wished to see spaces for contemplation, unstructured play, outdoor learning, and amenities (i.e. drinking fountains, bathrooms, trashcans, or seating).
Using the input and feedback from Smoketown youth, conceptual designs were created for Lampton Green and the Logan Street Greenspace, and programmatic recommendations were developed for Ballard Park and May Hillerich Pocket Park. While place-making is a central component of the conceptual designs, place-keeping through programmatic recommendations are also suggested. Outdoor art galleries, and neighborhood organized basketball tournaments could reaffirm youth ownership over the public areas of their neighborhood.
The purpose of this project is to envision a greenspace network with Smoketown youth. This work builds off of the previous neighborhood planning process, which started in August 2017 with a partnership between the Smoketown Neighborhood Association and the University of Louisville’s Urban and Public Affairs students in a the Neighborhood Planning Studio course. With formal and informal community engagement, and the exploration of past planning documents for the neighborhood, that partnership resulted in the creation of *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*.

The background research conducted during the semester-long planning project revealed that Smoketown has a higher proportion of youth compared to the entire Metro Louisville population. Almost 30% of Smoketown’s population is under the age of 15. 13.2% of the total neighborhood is under the age of 5 (2015 American Community Survey [ACS] 5-year Estimates). These levels are double Jefferson County’s portion of 6.5% (2015 ACS 5-year Estimates). Building upon the recommendations and research of *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*, and with the knowledge that Smoketown is a very young and diverse neighborhood, this project sought to engage Smoketown youth in visioning a greenspace network within their community.
Introduction • Collaborative Planning

Designing and creating a greenspace network in Smoketown needs to be a community centered activity. Community engagement cultivates “trust and local relationships; opportunities for deliberation; the ability to deal with anger and the legacy of previous poor engagement... opportunities for various stakeholder groups to participate” (King and Cruickshank, 2012, p. 7). Collaborating to create a local park is “one of the quickest and most effective ways to build a sense of community and improve quality of life” because it is a place where people can “connect and interact in a shared environment” (Francis, 2002, p. 2). This project of designing an open greenspace network in Smoketown is a chance to empower, unite, and inspire a whole neighborhood.

Scholarship on community engagement offers a variety of reasons for why it is important for planning processes. Community engagement not only helps ensure successful planning, but has implications for public health and social connectivity as well. Overall, community engagement can be seen as a part of “social planning” where “community builds consensus in a manner that is transparent, creates freedom from neighborhood problems like crime, maintains and protects social capital, and creates opportunities for economic and political engagement” (Walker, 2015, p. 872). In order for residents to tackle complex social challenges, research suggests the need for a planned “...effort among a wide range of people [in order] to alter behavior and maintain behavioral change,” which is also dependent on “the characteristics and conditions within a community,” (Miao, 2011, p. 121). Community engagement is a method for tapping into the special knowledge and experience of a neighborhood or city, and has the potential to inspire future activism (Walker, 2015).

Beyond the broader benefits to any neighborhood in a planning process, marginalized neighborhoods especially stand to gain from authentic engagement when they might otherwise not have sufficient representation in the larger community.

Images 3 & 4 - Young Smoketown residents having their portrait taken as part of the “Worthy of Everything” campaign organized by IDEAS xLab

top: Ty Howard
bottom: Denim Moore
(source: Smoketown Voice)
Smoketown is one of the oldest African American neighborhoods in Louisville, and was originally settled in what was largely a German American community following the Civil War (UofL MUP, 2017). Like other predominantly African American neighborhoods, Smoketown has suffered from federal and local government policies that have enforced residential racial segregation leading to the systematic disinvestment of its community (Rothstein, 2017). In cities like Louisville, past practices such as redlining have done grave harm to the health and cohesion of many neighborhoods (Poe, 2017).

In the Smoketown neighborhood specifically, there is a history of strained race and class relations, which to this day continues to engender feelings of distrust towards decision-makers. As a historic community of color, there have been moments of great tension between the neighborhood and local government officials. Many past planning decisions have been made with limited neighborhood input, and a sense of distrust remains when public participation has occurred. While racist policies and practices have been formally outlawed (though not entirely eliminated), many challenges remain at the human scale. For instance, older, long-time Smoketown residents have expressed lasting wariness of government agencies and city planning efforts; there is a fear of top-down change that could adversely affect the neighborhood (University of Louisville MUP, 2017).

The community’s weariness towards top-down planning decisions makes increased sensitivity towards public engagement initiatives all the more important for future planning endeavors. Early and genuine engagement could help to heal neighborhood skepticism of public projects.

Image 5 - Occupied and vacant shotgun homes in Smoketown (source: J. Crawford)
In 2011, Louisville Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMHA) was awarded a HOPE VI federal grant to revitalize Smoketown’s decades-old public housing project, Sheppard Square. The former barracks-style housing units were demolished and replaced with context-sensitive structures in order to better integrate public housing with the surrounding neighborhood architecture. Although the new units are a physical improvement compared to those formerly dilapidated buildings, the current housing stock serves fewer households than the Sheppard Square housing project pre-HOPE VI. The Presbyterian Community Center (PCC), which for years was the heart of community gathering and activities in Smoketown, was moved into a new building as a result of this redevelopment project. The former PCC building now includes 32 affordable apartment units and is home to the recently opened Smoketown Family Wellness Center.

Based on informal conversations with residents and discussions at community meetings held during the A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan planning process, while the physical condition of housing in the neighborhood has improved, an established community was displaced and almost completely dispersed to other housing options around the city, although some former residents have started to move back in recent years.

Many key neighborhood organizations were concerned about how this neighborhood change would affect the Smoketown community. This resulted in the creation of a number of planning documents and community assessments including, the Shelby Park and Smoketown Quality of Life Action Plan published by the New Directions Housing Coalition (NDHC) in 2011; a community engagement mapping project conducted by the Network Center for Community Change (NC3) in 2012; and the Vision Smoketown survey issued by Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC) in 2014.
Introduction • The Smoketown Neighborhood

Smoketown residents have fought independently to make neighborhood housing, community facilities, and educational opportunities available to all. The four public greenspaces focused on in this report make up the bulk of greenspace area in Smoketown. These four spaces cover over 15 acres and service both Smoketown and the surrounding neighborhoods. 351 homes are within a two-minute walk of these spaces, and 1,147 homes are within a five-minute walk.

SMOKETOWN GREENSPACE SERVICE AREAS

Figure 1 - Homes within 2 and 5 minute walk of a Smoketown greenspace (source: J. Crawford)
Introduction • The Smoketown Neighborhood

Smoketown’s Greenspaces

For nearly a century, Ballard Park, a component of the Louisville Metro Parks system, had served the Smoketown community as its only publicly open greenspace [For more information, see pages 36-39]. With a recent neighborhood success through community activism, Smoketown gained an additional 5 acres of unplanned greenspace in their neighborhood on top of the Metropolitan Sewer District’s (MSD) Logan Street Basin – the Logan Street Greenspace (now held by the LMHA) [For more information, see pages 40-44]. Additionally, through the redevelopment of Sheppard Square, a new greenspace has opened up directly north of Meyzeek Middle School - Lampton Green. This property is also owned by the LMHA, which is currently in talks with Jefferson County Public Schools to transfer control to Meyzeek Middle. [For more information, see pages 26-31]. Lastly, the May Hillerich Pocket Park opened in September of 2017 after approximately two years of planning. The site was transformed into a small public park through the collaborative efforts of Louisville’s Brightside initiative, the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, the Hillerich & Bradsby family, and the LMHA. [For more information, see pages 32-35].

These four sites – Ballard Park, Logan Street Greenspace, Lampton Green, and the May-Hillerich Pocket Park – compose the network of greenspaces at the center of this report and the associated community engagement processes.
Introduction • The Smoketown Neighborhood

Through the community engagement for *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*, neighborhood residents expressed fears of displacement and increased housing costs. Surrounding neighborhoods like Shelby Park and Phoenix Hill have already seen rapid change. With the recent redevelopment of Sheppard Square, and the creation of three additional greenspaces in the last several years, Smoketown has caught the eye of new residents and investors.

Between 2015 and 2016, Smoketown’s estimated population increased by 8.4% to 1,773 individuals across 608 households. The estimated population over the age of 25 increased by over 20% during this same period (2016 ACS 5-year Estimates; 2015 ACS 5-year Estimates) [See Appendix pg. 85]. The estimated median household income rose from $22,250 per year to $28,558 in 2016. In 2015, households earning between $50,000 and $74,999 made up only 10% of the total households in Smoketown, and those earning less than $10,000 composed 32%. In 2016, almost 17% of all households made between $50,000 and $74,999 a year and the share of those who earned less than $10,000 fell to 20% [see Appendix, pg. 87]. To understand if these trends were unique to Smoketown or if they were characteristic of other urban core communities, Smoketown was compared to another Louisville urban core neighborhood that has experienced the similar demographic shifts and disinvestment practices over the decades – the California Neighborhood.

The California Neighborhood sits in the west end of Louisville, and is bounded between 9th Street to the east, 26th Street to the west, West Broadway Street to the north, and West Oak Street to the south. As with Smoketown and Russell, California is one of the early, traditionally African American neighborhoods in Louisville.

Perhaps the most dramatic shift for Smoketown between 2015 and 2016 is the increase in household incomes. Similar patterns of change are not found in California. In 2016, the median household income in California was $19,591, compared to $17,470 in 2015. Smoketown’s median household income in 2015 is similar to California at $22,250, but by 2016 Smoketown’s median income rose to $28,558, almost $10,000 higher than California’s and a 28% increase from 2015 [see Appendix, pg. 87].
Shifts in age cohorts and racial composition also differ between Smoketown and California. When comparing age and sex compositions, in 2016 25.4% of California residents were under the age of 15. This is slightly higher than Smoketown’s estimated 21.9% in 2016, and lower than Smoketown’s 2015 estimation of nearly 30%. The largest cohort concentration of individuals in Smoketown are men between the ages of 30 and 34 (8.7%). In California, boys between the ages of 10 to 14 are the largest group (5.3%) (2016 ACS 5-year Estimates). Overall, California’s population is much younger than Smoketown’s in 2016. While the majority of Smoketown residents are between the ages of 20 and 34 (2016 ACS 5-year Estimates), most of California’s residents are under the age of 20 [see Appendix, pgs. 85 and 86]. An estimated 91% of California residents were of African American descent in 2016, up from 87% in 2015. In Smoketown, 65% identified themselves as African American in 2016, down from 69% in 2015 (2016 ACS 5-year Estimates; 2015 ACS 5-year Estimates).

Although these comparisons are limited to estimates of one year changes, it aligns with the qualitative data collected through community engagement for A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan, and indicates that Smoketown is indeed changing. Within this climate, there should be increased community involvement in the land use decision-making processes within the neighborhood. Empowering current residents to claim and reshape the spaces around them could be an important networking tool for preventing future displacements.
In Smoketown, youth coordination and participation in planning has the potential to help shape Smoketown’s identity in the wake of so much outside-driven change. The recent expansion of available greenspace in the neighborhood signals a Smoketown community filled with opportunity on the cusp of change. Because these new greenspaces are largely undeveloped, they hold great potential not just for improvements to their physical character, but also for social programming that speaks to the diverse wants and needs of the entire Smoketown community.

Through a literature review of youth engagement in planning and urban policy generally, four main themes were identified, each of which is further explored in this section: (1) justifications for including youth in planning, (2) reasons for youth being traditionally excluding from planning, (3) methods of understanding how youth participate and feel empowered, and (4) recommendations for best practices based on lessons learned from experience.
Introduction • Why and How to Plan with Youth

Why Include Youth?

Simpson (1997) advocates for youth engagement in urban planning, stating “it must be accepted that the needs of children do not always coincide with those of adults” (Simpson, 1997, p. 910). Children, too, consume the landscape around them, but are restricted in the production of place. Thus, viewing children as non-citizens is a barrier to incorporating a child’s voice into the planning process.

In a report produced by the Institute for Local Government, several benefits of including youth in planning are described. Youth gain skills and knowledge when they are included. There is a more effective use of youth-serving resources, and youth are exposed to careers in public service when they are able to participate (Amsler, 2010). Kathryn Frank (2006) exhaustively details the impacts on youth participants, such as increased assertiveness, confidence and enthusiasm for community involvement. She also explains the impacts that their participation had on their communities – such as a clearer community understanding of youth preferences and improved adult perceptions of youth.

A rights-based argument is also used for youth participation. In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations General Assembly established the legal precedent for requiring better protection of children’s rights. This treaty states that children are not only worthy of protection, but are instrumental in the development of the future (Chawla, 2002). Similarly, Knowles-Yáñez (2005) claims a rights-based approach provides the most holistic method for youth involvement in planning. This view champions a child’s right to participate in the decision-making that affects their lives (Knowles-Yáñez, 2005).

Finally, youth engagement can produce positive health outcomes through violence prevention and youth development. Research in the public health discipline asserts that community mobilization that includes youth engagement can reduce “youth risk” by strengthening social networks and enhancing opportunities for youth development. Including youth in community decisions can build social capital that is eventually reinvested in the community through other capital venues (Allison et al., 2011).
So why, then, have youth not traditionally been included in the processes of planning and urban policy? Frank contends that there are four views of youth that generally bar them from authentic participation (2006). The developmental view positions children as lacking the skills/knowledge/behaviors possessed by adults that are necessary for meaningful participation. The vulnerable view casts children as weak, where their influence (at best) would be co-opted by adults imposing their own agendas. This view also sees children as “tokens” and the participation process as too rough and political for their fragile psyches. The legal view places children as “partial citizens,” or citizens-in-training, and as such, questions the level of their influence. And the romantic view positions youth as distinct and different from adults. The separation of their voices can lead to insufficient integration of ideas (Frank, 2006).

The legal view that Frank describes was further explored by Simpson (2016), who provides an interesting legal framework on what being a child represents. This legal framework has hampered youth involvement in planning processes. Simpson argues that children are traditionally seen as “future citizens” and unable to fully participate actively in shaping their environment because they need to be nurtured and protected by adults. This notion has segregated children from adult activities, and has forced them into supervised playgrounds, schools, and the home. This segregation and omission of youth voices in urban planning has resulted in spaces/structures that do not cater to the needs of children as children – not future adults (Simpson, 2016).
In reviewing citizen participation theory, McCoy and Vincent (2007) discuss Hart’s “Ladder of Young People’s Participation,” a framework originally developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969 and adapted by sociologist Roger Hart in 1992 (McCoy and Vincent, 2007). Hart’s Ladder of Young People’s Participation is a hierarchy of different degrees to which youth are empowered to enact change. The lower three rungs of Hart’s Ladder represent forms of participation “where adults are in control and young people play predetermined and marginal roles” (McCoy and Vincent, p. 391). These three rungs are essentially: manipulation, decoration, and tokenism. The middle two rungs place greater ownership and power in the hands of youth, and are described as “assigned but informed” and “consulted and informed.” The top three rungs include youth voices throughout the entire planning processes, and the top two are the most authentically inclusive of youth voices (McCoy and Vincent, 2007).

Figure 4 - Hart’s ladder of youth participation in decision-making processes (source: J. Crawford)
Some of the literature reviewed offered best practices based for youth involvement. In her extensive literature review on youth participation in planning, Frank concludes that there are five lessons for effective practice that can be drawn from existing literature: (1) “Give youth responsibility and voice,” (2) “build youth capacity” in skills, knowledge, and confidence, (3) “encourage youthful styles of working” (that are social, expressive and artistic, for example), (4) “involve adults throughout the process” for expertise and support, and (5) “adapt the sociopolitical context” to make goals more achievable (Frank, 2006, p. 367-369). If youth engagement is to be successful, planners must confront the underlying social networks, norms, and rules created for youth. Planners must be conscious of these hidden frameworks as they engage in conversation with youth about their environment (Lieshout and Aarts, 2008).

Numerous publications followed a format of describing a specific initiative or program centered around youth engagement in planning, and provided recommendations for future efforts based on the lessons learned from their experiences.

Several common suggestions emerged from evaluating this literature. A successful youth engagement effort requires facilitators to build a trusting relationship with youth participants, make the project authentic and meaningful, and provide opportunities to be involved throughout the decision making process (Ramasubramanian and Gonzalez, 2007, McKoy et al., 2007, McKoy et al., 2015). Comparing the best practices developed from direct experiences versus best practices observed from reviewing literature illustrates a general shared understanding between practitioners and academics on how children can and are being engaged. In her closing remarks, Frank cites a “lack of reporting about cases of youth participation originating within local government planning” and she outlines an agenda for future studies (Frank, 2006, p. 370). When formal neighborhood planning comes to Smoketown, planners should acknowledge the literature and best practices, document the youth component of their community engagement process, and consider evaluating the successes and missteps of their efforts.
Introduction • The Importance of Greenspaces

Greenspaces are neighborhood assets that strengthen community and cultural ties while improving the mental, physical, and emotional health of their users. Even when not in use, greenspaces passively mitigate environmental disparities in the neighborhood by providing relief from air pollution and the urban heat island effect (Heckert, 2013). They also have the potential to become way stations or habitat for urban wildlife. These active and passive benefits help to create healthier communities in the neighborhoods that they serve (Heckert, 2013).

Since children are generally restricted in how they move through their neighborhood – usually via walking or biking – parks and open spaces need to be within short distances for children to enjoy their health benefits. However, it is not only access that needs to be considered when thinking about greenspace locations, it is also their usefulness to neighborhood residents. Greenspaces can only provide active benefits when they are used and loved, and to be used and loved they need to be reflective of the community’s needs and desires. With the creation of three new greenspaces in the last several years, two as completely blank canvases, Smoketown has an exciting opportunity to shape these spaces as they see most fit for their needs.

Literature about urban greenspaces and youth suggest that parks and playspaces are often designed by adults to be overly safe and restrictive for their youngest users. This trend towards risk aversion in outdoor play-spaces impairs a child’s ability to face challenges – creating a false sense of security. Natural play spaces that give children more opportunity to modify or re-create their surroundings open opportunities for inventiveness and social learning (Brunelle et al., 2016). And, studies suggest that a young child’s ability to access nature may increase the likelihood that they themselves become environmentally conscious adults (Brunelle et al.). Greenspaces and parks can also inspire and reaffirm neighborhood identity in youth.

Regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity, when children know where they can safely play in their neighborhood they are more likely to claim their surroundings as their own, creating a “sense of place” (Kroencke et al., 2015).

Image 14 - Children engaging with and modifying their surroundings in a natural playscape at “Nautre Nook” in Boston, MA
When visioning the long-term success of greenspaces in a neighborhood, landscape architects, planners, and the community need to think not only about the creation of inviting spaces but also about the maintenance of them. Without the appropriate maintenance, parks and greenspaces are likely to fail. This failure can be attributed to a lack of resources or understanding around the post-design/post-construction details — details that are more difficult to advertise and fund.

Well-maintained and loved public spaces have a balance of both place-making and place-keeping efforts (Dempsey and Burton, 2011). Constructing ownership of space is as important as building the structures that children or families might someday enjoy. It is also important to keep in mind that public spaces require time to mature and develop, and people need time to discover and enjoy their benefits.
Observing Greenspaces

Site History, Existing Conditions, and Behavioral Observations

Since redevelopment of the neighborhood’s Sheppard Square public housing project began in 2011, the amount of greenspace available for public use in Smoketown has increased significantly. Three new sites, in addition to the Metro-owned Ballard Park, represent an emerging opportunity to bring together new and long-time residents in vital civic spaces, and serve as potential nodes of a neighborhood, resident-centered identity.

The following is a detailed description of the four greenspaces in Louisville’s Smoketown neighborhood:

- **Lampton Green** | 722 S Jackson Street
- **May-Hillerich Pocket Park** | 813 S Jackson Street
- **Ballard Park** | 525 E Caldwell Street
- **Logan Street Greenspace** | 907 Logan Street

The information provided in this section could be used in the larger framework of a Smoketown Neighborhood Plan, and it is informed by a process of background research, field observations, and community engagement. Each site description includes a brief history of the space, an inventory of its physical characteristics, and an analysis of observed human behavior in the space.

In order to capture this information, we visited each of the four sites multiple times through the morning, afternoon, and evening. We observed signs of use patterns, and took note of people moving in and through each of the spaces. We noted activities, places where people congregate, paths used, and our own emotional response to each space. More broadly, our site inventories include (but are not limited to) weather conditions, wind and sun patterns, existing vegetation, litter, and other physical attributes like utility poles, lighting, seating, and trashcans. By expanding our inventory into behavioral observation, we were able to more fully capture the existing human animation of each site and articulate ways for enriching the spaces for neighborhood and city use.
Lampton Green is bounded by Lampton Street to the south, Jackson Street to the east, Roselane Street to the north, and Preston Street to the west. There is a commercial business located in the southwest corner of the block, which is not currently a part of the LMHA owned parcels. The two parcels that make up the Lampton Green have multiple addresses because it was once a part of the Sheppard’s Square public housing complex.

The razing and redevelopment of Sheppard Square in 2011 through a HOPE VI grant created this open space (Marshall, 2011). The site once contained 4 public housing units, but today is largely underutilized. Lampton Green holds strong potential for serving as a neighborhood “center” or focal point. Through community engagement meetings (UofL MUP, 2017), a number of residents expressed their desire for a neighborhood “center.” In 2017, several important community events took place at Lampton Green, including the Smoketown Wellness Center’s Community Celebration and the inaugural One Poem at a Time event hosted by IDEASxLab (Smoketown Voice, 2017), among others. Thus, this site holds great potential to serve as a neighborhood center, a community gathering place for neighborhood events, and a space for programming that could be used by the multitude of organizations and institutions currently serving Smoketown residents.
Observing Greenspaces

Lampton Green

Lampton Green sits in close proximity to existing (Meyzeek Middle School, YouthBuild, and the Smoketown Family Wellness Center) and future (Boys & Girls Club) youth-serving institutions. The site is at the center of the “Youth District” proposed in *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*. Additionally, Lampton Green is surrounded on two sides by homes that face inward towards the greenspace. The north entry to Meyzeek as well as the orientation of the surrounding homes will inform the design of wayfinding features (gateways, signage, and path markers) around the natural entry points to the site. It is also close to the neighborhood’s sculptural homage to Muhammad Ali, which could help the greenspace serve as an orientation point both for residents and visitors alike.

Image 20 - A panoramic photo of the eastern and southern portion of Lampton Green. 3/4/18 (source: M. Clark)

Image 21 - Children playing at Lampton Green during the Smoketown Family Wellness Center’s Neighborhood Celebration in 2017

Image 22 - Muhammad Ali Boxing Gloves statue by Louisville artist, Ed Hamilton, located near the former Presbyterian Community Center
Figure 5 - Proposed “Youth District” in Smoketown and around Lampton Green
Source: MUP 2017 (source: J. Crawford)
Observing Greenspaces

Lampton Green

Some additional physical attributes include:

- No signage to name or indicate the space is open for public use.
- Tree canopy/shade: there is a cluster of older growth trees in the southwest corner of the lot, plus over 20 newly planted shrubs and trees across the northern border.
- Substantial sunlight and grass coverage over site.
- A small wiffle ball field in the northwest corner of the site.
- A bike rack on the western edge of the site.
- Mixed gravel/paved alleyway cuts through the eastern side of the lot.
- Slight elevation of the site’s southeast corner.
- Lampton and Roselane are smaller east/west streets; Lampton has more foot and car traffic.
- Jackson and Preston are north/south (respectively) one-way streets; more car and foot traffic, and cars move at or above speed limit.
Observing Greenspaces

Figure 6 - Existing conditions of Lampton Green. Blue dots and lines are pedestrian observations (source: K. Haruff)
The May Hillerich Pocket Park, located across Jackson Street from Meyzeek Middle School, is bounded by S. Jackson Street to the west, homes and residentially zoned vacant lots to the north and south, and Simon Alley to the east. As recently as 2012, there was a building on this small lot, but it has since been demolished. Beginning in 2015, with the final ribbon-cutting in September 2017, the site was transformed into a small public park as part of Louisville’s Brightside initiative, with support and partnership from the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, the Hillerich & Bradsby family, and LMHA. The May-Hillerich Pocket Park is the second most recent greenspace to be created in the neighborhood.
Observing Greenspaces

May-Hillerich Pocket Park

The May-Hillerich Pocket Park is one piece of the Hillerich family’s continued investment in the neighborhood, even after relocating in the 1970s to a new factory on West Main Street. The Hillerich family has partnered with the Community Foundation of Louisville and the Kentuckiana branch of the Boys & Girls Club on The Wheelhouse Project, which will erect a new Boys & Girls Club in Smoketown in 2019 (wheelhouseproject.org). This project will resurrect a decades-old brownfield lot from asphalt and weeds into a vibrant zone for neighborhood youth. The proximity of the pocket park to this future youth center, as well as its location between Meyzeek Middle School and the LMHA Leasing Office playground and community garden, makes it a potential node in the neighborhood’s network of social spaces.

The Hillerich & Bradsby Co. manufactured Louisville Slugger baseball bats in Smoketown between 1901 and 1974, in a building on Preston Street north of the pocket park site. The park is named in honor of May Hillerich, the daughter of the original owner and manufacturer of the Louisville Slugger. May was a bright, devoted, and kind woman whose life was cut short at the age of 22. Given the park’s proximity to Meyzeek Middle School, the dedication was intended to inspire a new generation of bright and devoted individuals; an honorary plaque telling the story of the park’s namesake is in the works (as of March 2018).
Observing Greenspaces

May-Hillerich Pocket Park

Overall, the May-Hillerich Pocket Park appears well-maintained and quiet. More people were observed passing alongside or playing nearby, and less people occupying the site itself. At least two times, kids were seen (either in pairs or groups) at the LMHA playground. Once, two boys were seen dashing from the playground, across the alley, and into the pocket park; they did not stay but rather returned to the LMHA lot.

Other observations of physical and social characteristics of the site include:

- The paved path across the site provides a connection between Meyzeek Middle to the leasing office playground and community garden
- There are no physical signs of the path bridging across Simon Alley, creating an emotional “where the sidewalk ends” response.
- No signage naming the site or indicating its being open for public use
- The site is just around the corner from Lampton Green and is a 1-2 minute walk from Ballard Park
- Standing in the site, the vantage point to the community garden is marred by the garden’s high and barbed chain link fence
- More weekday activity (noise and movement) along the Jackson Street side, probably related to Meyzeek.
- At one time, there was a parked car sitting in the southwest corner of the lot; when it left, there were mud scars in the grass.
- No trash-can on the site, and litter is scattered in the landscaping and sometimes in the grass.
- Jackson traffic runs north one-way, Lampton St is smaller east/west route
- Site is elevated slightly from street level, shielding park users somewhat from car traffic speeding by
Observing Greenspaces

May-Hillerich Pocket Park

Figure 7 - Existing conditions of May-Hillerich Pocket Park. Blue dots and lines are pedestrian observations (source: K. Haruff)
Observing Greenspaces

Ballard Park

Site Address: 525 Caldwell Street
Zoning: UN - Urban Neighborhood
Form District: Traditional Neighborhood
Acreage: 0.99 acres
Dimensions: 219 ft. x 200 ft.

Ballard Park is bounded by Coke Street to the north, Waterman Alley to the east, Caldwell Street to the south, and Simon Alley to the west. Ballard is a part of the Louisville Metropolitan Parks System, and was created in 1919 (Louisville Metro Parks). In 2016, Habitat for Humanity hosted a “Love Your Neighborhood” 3-day event for repairing and rehabbing 6 owner-occupied homes around Ballard Park, as well as cleanup of debris and overgrowth within the park. The event brought 500 volunteers and residents out into the space.

Image 33 - Aerial view of Ballard Park.
Image 34 - View of Ballard Park from Caldwell
Image 35 - Volunteer at Habitat for Humanity’s “Love Your Neighborhood” event in 2016 (source: WLKY)
Observing Greenspaces

Ballard Park

To increase future programmatic uses of Ballard Park, and re-cultivate a sense of place-keeping and neighborhood ownership of the site, design elements could be introduced to elevate the space as a block focal point and bring residents out together again. Currently, the park’s intended structural use seems to have been informally modified by and for residents’ actual use. Actual uses and needs can be seen through intentional holes in the fencing to create additional entrances, and worn walking paths through the grass across the site. During observations, kids were seen and heard playing either soccer or basketball a few houses down from the park, in a nearby vacant grassy or in a neighboring yard. This gave a clear impression that Ballard Park is not inviting as a space and/or not serving the needs of the surrounding residents.
Observing Greenspaces

Ballard Park

Other physical and social observations of the site include:

- Foot patterns were observed along Caldwell, and cutting through the park to either alleyway alongside

- It is a 1-2 minute walk south of the Pocket Park, and a 2-3 minute walk from the Logan St. Basin

- Young kids and a couple of adults (once, a father; another time, a grandmother) were observed in the park, but many were passersby.

- One youth was observed riding a moped in the basketball court

- Existing playground is peeling, dirty, but seems structurally sound

- Swings are used, but more casually; a pair of young women were seen using the swings while they talked, more like movable seats

- The southeastern corner is grass-covered and slightly sloped. The north edge of the site is elevated above the alley

- Older-growth trees along the western side

- Three basketball courts provide significant impervious ground cover, and likely add significant heat to the site.

- Signage includes: Metro Parks “Ballard Park” and a vandalized board of rules restricting use and behavior in the park.
Figure 8 - Existing conditions of Ballard Park. Blue dots and lines are pedestrian observations (source: K. Haruff)
Observing Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

Site Address: 935 Logan Street
Zoning: EZ1 - Enterprise Zone which allows C2 - commercial and M3 - manufacturing uses.
Form District: Traditional Neighborhood
Square Footage: Approximately 5.20 acres

Logan Street Greenspace is bounded by East Breckenridge Street to the north, Logan Street to the west, residential lots to the south and Beargrass Creek on the east. On the eastern border of the Smoketown neighborhood, this newly created greenspace is also easily accessible for homes in both the Paristown Pointe and Shelby Park neighborhoods. Beneath the grassy surface is one of twelve Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) systems built by Louisville's Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD). Originally proposed by MSD in 2014, the plan was to build an above ground CSO inside a windowless, bulky brick structure (Carter, 2016). The Logan St. MSD Basin serves a much-needed function in Metro Louisville, holding up to 12.5 million gallons of sewage and helping to manage Beargrass Creek flooding. However, it was the proposal’s inequity, not the use itself that made the site an epicenter of Smoketown’s struggle with the city.
At the beginning of its construction, the Smoketown CSO was the only one of the twelve proposed CSOs to sit above the ground, and the only one located in an underserved, predominantly African American neighborhood. Through a 20-month long neighborhood-driven campaign, Smoketown residents and community members succeeded in bringing the entire MSD Board to a unanimous vote to move the CSO below ground, leaving the majority of the site as open space for public use. Since the change was approved in April 2016, the Logan St. MSD Basin has morphed into a greenspace canvass ideal for continued neighborhood unity (Peterson, 2017). Observations of the site reveal much about its current use and existing assets, and illuminate various areas for design opportunities.

This is the largest of the four greenspaces, but is not particularly inviting and does not give a clear impression of being available for public use. Besides a group of three high schoolers seen practicing football in the greenspace, no one else was seen crossing through or utilizing the inner space of the site. Already, a number of graffiti tags mark the outer walls of the aboveground MSD structure. As of March 2018, the Smoketown Neighborhood Association has sought funding for installing a community-oriented mural to uplift and to inspire neighborhood residents. While MSD agreed to leave a “park” space on top of the CSO, little to nothing has been done to cultivate a civic space besides seeding it with grass.
Observing Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

Other physical and social observations include:

- There are still two structures on the site, but they each cover a small portion of the land area; both are now marked with graffiti.

- The entire eastern edge of the site along Beargrass Creek is screened by a large chain link fence; there is a gap cut in the fence in the northeast corner.

- It is possible to stand at the site’s edge and see the creek below.

- Beargrass Creek is a valuable asset to the site, with its bubbling sounds of flowing water, by attracting bird life and improving the site’s overall beautification.

- Lots of open air, unobstructed sunlight.

- Logan is a northbound one-way; Breckinridge is an eastbound one-way.

- There is an auto parts/sale/repair enterprise across Logan St and south of Caldwell St.

- There are several single family homes across Logan and north of Caldwell.

- It is a 2-3 minute walk to Ballard Park.

- Viewshed of Beargrass Creek and the old railroad bridge (neighboring Paristown Point).

Image 45 - A view along Beargrass Creek looking north. 3/4/18 (source: K Harruff)

Image 46 - A view looking across Beargrass Creek from the Logan Street Greenspace. 2/4/18 (source: H. Crepps)
Physical and social observations continued:

- Viewshed of old manufacturing buildings to the north; they are far enough away not to be imposing, but near enough to provide an historical element to the site’s character

- Observed pedestrian patterns almost exclusively along site’s edge, along Logan St; only males encountered

- A couple of dog-walkers, a few bicyclists passing up Logan St, a couple casual walkers

- No activity observed from neighboring homes across Logan

- Some activity (a few cars in and out) of Roppel Industries, Inc., the factory north of the site across Breckinridge

- Some human activity (not noisy) observed in the auto lot adjacent to the greenspace
Observing Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

Figure 9 - Existing conditions of the Logan Street Greenspace
Blue dots and lines are pedestrian observations (source: K. Haruff)
With helpful input from community leaders such as IDEAS xLab, Bernheim Forest, Louisville Metropolitan Housing Authority, and educators at Meyzeek Middle School, a lesson plan was developed to tease out input for greenspace design ideas while educating and empowering youth with planning skills.

The exercises in each lesson are organized to build upon each other, while reflecting the five progressive steps of the “design thinking” process (Rowe, Design Thinking, 1987). The activities are meant to be flexible, and can be blended or adjusted given time constraints and meeting opportunities. The lessons are intended to engage youth authentically through both memory and play, and to challenge them to think like planners and designers.

The overarching goal is to encourage Smoketown youth to reflect on their personal connections to the four neighborhood green spaces, to identify ideas and desires, and to practice collaboration while inspiring them to shape their own vision of Smoketown’s greenspaces.

By teaching youth that planning is more than just a profession - anyone can help shape the spaces around them - these exercises can offer kids an engaging, rewarding experience that is distinct from, but just as important as, input for designs for Smoketown’s greenspaces. A full replicable lesson plan is available in the appendix of this document on page 91.

Multiple Smoketown organizations were approached as potential partners in order to implement our engagement plan, including: YouthBuild, Steam Exchange, youth groups at Bates Memorial Baptist Church and Coke Memorial Baptist Church, the Smoketown Family Wellness Center, Meyzeek Middle School, and a neighborhood Girl Scouts troop. Given the time constraint of a semester-long project, Meyzeek Middle School became the primary focus of the project’s youth engagement.
Chris Rasheed, a Language Arts teacher at Meyzeek Middle School in Smoketown, opened his 6th grade classroom for three separate meetings. Across four different classes, approximately 125 children explored urban planning and greenspace design concepts.

The four classes combined represented a mix of children living in Smoketown and outside the neighborhood. Due to the nature of the curriculum, the children could participate equally no matter where they lived. The overarching goal of the engagement effort was to facilitate a meaningful learning experience about urban planning by using greenspaces as a point of entry. After attending class to observe and be introduced to the students, the engagement process commenced over three consecutive once-per-week meetings (approximately 165 minutes total) with each of the four classes.

Youth were introduced to concepts of urban planning and greenspaces, and shown basic planning and design tools. Students were also given the opportunity to practice broad urban planning skills in both individual exercises outside the classroom and group projects during class.
This introductory lesson was built around 3 key objectives:

1. Define and explain urban, planning, and greenspace.
2. Identify the tools and partners planners use in their professional work.
3. Explain how can students use planning skills in their daily lives.

This first lesson was primarily formatted as a presentation. Students looked at before and after images of designed public urban spaces. They engaged in a group brainstorm about the meanings of “urban,” “planning,” and “greenspace.” Presenters used web-based demonstrations of planning tools (i.e. Louisville’s data portal, LOJIC; SketchUp; ArcGIS) to help the students understand how planners seek out and use various types of data and information. Students were also asked to think about who planners need as partners (i.e. engineers, architects, community members).

While looking through before and after images of urban public spaces, the students generated lists of verbs and adjectives to describe the images. This brainstorm revealed how the students regarded greenspaces as places for recreation, beautification, and community.
During the brainstorm of meanings for “urban,” “planning,” and “greenspace,” the students demonstrated a wide range of understanding of these concepts. Some students were familiar with advanced terms like “urban heat island” and “tree canopy.” Most often, students related “urban planning” to the future, which seemed to help them realize why planners plan. When discussing “greenspace,” some students focused on the physical attributes of a space (i.e. flowers, shrubs, trees) while others related more to activities (i.e. running, playing sports, relaxing) or emotional aspects (i.e. contemplative, energetic, fun).

Building out from the discussion of collaboration and partners, when time permitted, students were told the story of Smoketown’s united opposition against the original MSD basin proposal. Chris Rasheed also interjected an even more recent neighborhood story of residents joining together, this time against the opening of another liquor store in the neighborhood. Both examples inspired a classroom discussion about the value of safeguarding a neighborhood’s physical character, as well as the importance of community rights and the power of collective action.
The second lesson began with refreshing the information learned during the first week: definitions of “urban planning” and “greenspace,” what planners do and why they plan, and the sorts of partners planners need to accomplish their work. Students spent a few minutes writing down thoughts individually, and then participated in a classroom discussion that recapped what they had learned as a group.

Students then spent the majority of classtime working on creating hand-drawn maps of their favorite greenspace memory. Some students mapped their backyards, others drew a park they had visited, and some chose to map their ideal greenspace. Towards the end of each class session, the students reported out to the group about their individual maps. On a voluntary basis, students presented their favorite and least favorite aspects of the greenspace. This group discussion allowed students to reflect on commonalities between their different maps, and to share their personal likes and dislikes. Together, the students gathered their personal observations into shared observations; they began to think about the role of urban planners as threading personal observations together into a shared vision.

Additionally, this conversation helped prepare them for the third lesson, where they advance these skills and think about more specifically about what components of Smoketown’s existing greenspaces they want to preserve, add to, remove, or keep out.
Lesson 3

In the third and final lesson, students incorporated information from the first lesson about data collection, planning partners, and critical assessment, together with the second lesson’s concepts of personal and shared observations, to formulate a vision for redesigning a public greenspace. Working in small groups (3-5), students used a PARK (preserve, add, remove, and keep out) framework and collaborated over large scale site plans of either Ballard Park or the May-Hillerich Pocket Park, to determine what aspects of the spaces should be preserved, identify features they wanted to add to or remove from the parks, and highlight things that would be undesirable additions. Students reflected on the existing conditions presented in the site plans and then formulated their own map legends, using color-coding and symbols, to describe their design priorities for the greenspace.

Images 52-57 - Students used a PARK prioritization framework to assess the existing conditions of a site plan for Ballard Park; students also presented their work to their fellow classmates.
Some of the groups expanded their priorities to the properties adjacent to the parks, turning lots marked as vacant on the site plan into community gardens or expanded recreational areas. The students demonstrated planning skills in their prioritization choices and thinking about the needs and wants of future users of the space (i.e. adding water fountains and bathrooms, preserving tree cover for shade). The PARK exercise encouraged the students to think collectively about their shared observations, and afforded them an opportunity to practice clearly communicating their vision to others. As with the first two lessons, this final lesson allowed for a report-out period during which the different groups presented their prioritization maps to the whole class.

Images 58 - 60 - PARK maps created by Meyzeek students
(source: M. Clark)
Planning with YOUTH

Planning with Meyzeek Middle School

Lesson 3

The students’ PARK maps were compiled and synthesized, a process which helped illuminate the perspectives and values of the kids, and helped to shape the greenspace design process moving forward.

Image 61 - Results of team’s analysis of students’ PARK maps (source: J. Crawford)

Figure 14 - Distilled themes from PARK maps (source: J. Crawford)
In addition to this primary engagement with Meyzeek Middle School, Rachel Mauser, co-founder of Smoketown’s youth organization Steam Exchange, invited us to teach and learn from her Smoketown Girl Scout troop. Roughly ten elementary school-aged girl scouts were introduced to concepts of urban planning and greenspaces, and then participated in a collage-making activity which allowed the girls to create a visual representation of their favorite memory in a greenspace. Using cutouts from magazines, colored pencils and markers, and construction paper, the troop members articulated their personal preferences and priorities through their individual collages. Using a similar process as with the Meyzeek students’ PARK maps, the collages were analyzed to develop a set of core themes (Fig. 15). Thus, this visual information was added to the entire collection of feedback generated, helping to further illuminate how youth in Smoketown use and reflect on their neighborhood greenspaces.

Figure 15 - Distilled themes from Girl Scouts Troop’s collages (source: J. Crawford)
Planning with YOUTH

Reflections

Throughout the youth engagement meetings, the sixth graders at Meyzeek Middle School and the Girl Scouts were notably enthusiastic, responsive, and creative. They demonstrated an unanticipated depth of knowledge and adaptability. The activities described in this document generated substantial input on their perceptions of greenspaces in their community. Through these activities, Smoketown youth learned how to collect data, develop and share observations about familiar greenspaces, and worked together to produce a vision for a greenspace in their neighborhood.

This project’s approach to engagement underscores the value of bringing youth perspectives to the table through authentic interaction and encouragement by not only highlighting the vision of those who actually live and play in the greenspaces, but also by directly impacting the personal growth of the youth involved.

Inspired by Muhammad Ali’s 6 core principles (Muhammad Ali Center): Students gained confidence through participation in a process framed around helping them to develop the skills of planning and design in a way that fosters curiosity and reveals their abilities. Students exercised conviction by having the courage to articulate their personal observations, and to advocate for their neighborhood. By building their planning and design skills, students broadened their scope of options to affect change and practice devotion to something larger than themselves. Learning about the connections between urban planning and neighborhood issues helped to expand students’ options for giving back their time and efforts in a meaningful way. The engagement process taught students respect for their neighborhood and its valuable existing assets, and helped them understand the challenges of forming a collective vision for the future while respecting the diverse perspectives in their community. And lastly, students opened up their spirituality by exploring how a neighborhood intersects with nature, government, transportation, and a larger community, as well as tackling tough, complex questions around local and global issues such as racism and environmental justice.

Images 66 and 67 - Students presenting to their classmates (source: J. Crawford)
The community engagement process outlined in this document is one example of centering youth voices in important neighborhood planning conversations. Although this particular process focused on greenspace design, the broader approach could easily be translated to other key neighborhood issues (e.g., health and wellness, access to fresh food, environmental equity). In order to most effectively engage youth in greenspace design, neighborhood planning, or any other form of community organizing or activism, a community should carefully consider the why and how its youth should be included. Youth stand to gain meaningful skills, confidence, and exposure to future possibilities when they are given the opportunity to participate; additionally, youth are empowered when they feel valued and included by their communities. By implementing creative, interactive, and playful activities, youth can more meaningfully participate in community visioning and organizing.

While urban planning can often be perceived by the public to be an elaborate and bureaucratic process performed only by certain educated professionals, in truth, planning can actually be done by anyone, at any time, and on any budget. Hopefully, this documentation of a greenspace visioning process with the youth in Louisville’s Smoketown neighborhood will inspire others to engage and connect with youth in their own community.
In a city famous for its Olmsted Parks systems, the Smoketown neighborhood holds tremendous potential for having its own thriving greenspace network. Significant changes in recent history - the redevelopment of Sheppard Square and the building of the Logan Street MSD Basin - make way for other changes on the horizon like, the new Boys and Girls Club, additional construction of housing in Sheppard Square, the future open-air Logan Street Market, and the planned retail complex in Paristown Pointe. These upcoming developments speak to Smoketown’s valuable position as a nexus between retail, recreation, and community. In order to preserve the neighborhood’s character and to elevate the community’s voice in the face of these changes, Smoketown needs greenspaces that are more than beautifully designed spaces, but also vibrant, active places worthy of residents’ pride and devotion.

The following site designs and recommendations speak to two aspects of long-term successful parks: place-making, and place-keeping. First, suggested physical changes and improvements are based on the feedback generated through engaging with youth in the neighborhood about what they value in their greenspaces and what they would change to improve them. Such changes would help Smoketown’s greenspaces become places people recognize and want to spend time in. Second, programmatic recommendations and potential partnerships help foster pride in and ownership of the neighborhood greenspaces. In this way, Smoketown’s greenspaces can be cared for and cherished for the long term.
During the early engagement for *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*, community members voiced their desire for a neighborhood center, a new focal point of neighborhood pride in the wake of the closure of the former Sheppard Square Presbyterian Community Center. Additionally, many residents expressed concern about traffic speeds cutting through the neighborhood via one-way corridors. With so many one-way high-speed corridors, it is easier to pass through Smoketown than it is to move within it. This is particularly true at the pedestrian level, a level that children most often move throughout their neighborhood.

Inspired by the feedback already gathered from adults during the early engagement for *A Document to Inform the Smoketown Neighborhood Plan*, and in response to the ideas and voices heard from youth during this project’s engagement, it would be beneficial to think of Smoketown’s greenspaces as a network. Improving connections between greenspace “islands” in this network could both increase pedestrian safety for adults and children alike while encouraging the active use of Smoketown’s lovely greenspaces.

*Image 71 - Example of creative traffic calming with colorful street intersections in Arizona (source: web, ForConstructionPros.com)*
Reimagining Greenspaces

Smoketown’s Greenspace Network

SMOKETOWN’S GREENSPACE CONNECTIONS

Figure 16 - Smoketown’s Greenspace Network (source: J. Crawford)
Reimagining Greenspaces

Smoketown's Greenspace Network

Create Space for Gathering

Signs or way-finding markers could facilitate the cognitive creation of pedestrian safe connective corridors. Way-finding markers, like those used in Downtown Louisville, and place-making signage that identifies access points and welcomes all, will help highlight the available greenspaces and the pathways that connect between them. Signs should be scaled for both pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Using specific colors and similar graphic designs on the signage will help to distinctly identify pedestrian friendly crossings and connective corridors.

Improve and Provide Basic Amenities

In addition to signage that invites people in to use the space, and guides the way through Smoketown's greenspace network, improvement to basic amenities across all greenspaces is recommended. This includes supplying each site with trash and recycling bins; these can be designed to include “Smoketown Neighborhood” (like some already existing features in the neighborhood, and those found across the city) and can be additional place-making features. Pedestrian scale lighting such as lamp posts along Lampton Green and string lights crisscrossing May-Hillerich Pocket Park, could help to create a human scale atmosphere in larger open spaces. Installing drinking fountains and restrooms periodically across the greenspaces could allow for prolonged and destination use. Families could spend their day in one of Smoketown's greenspaces with these additions.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Smoketown’s Greenspace Network

- Way-finding markers/signage using connectivity map as a guide
- Improved signage welcoming residents and visitors into the spaces
- Uniform color scheme across all sites to further connect the spaces
- Pedestrian scale lighting (i.e. lampposts and string lights)
- Adequate trash and recycling, ideally at each intersection around the sites
- Basic human needs amenities (bathrooms, water fountains, seating)

Youth Advisory Council for Neighborhood Plan Process (potential sources: Meyzeek Middle School’s Justice League, Bates Memorial youth group, Steam Exchange...)

Establish a Youth Advisory Committee

Because all of these designs are intended to inform a future formal neighborhood planning process, the primary recommendation from this document is to establish a Youth Advisory Committee. Based on this project’s engagement and research, the young people of Smoketown have vision and passion and are keenly aware of their surroundings. Instead of relegating them to “future citizen” status, this project recommends incorporating youth into the official plan advisory committee. Doing so could also set a much-needed precedent for all future plan processes across Louisville Metro.
Currently, LMHA is working to transfer ownership of Lampton Green to JCPS and Meyzeek Middle School. Meyzeek intends to use the space for soccer, and lacrosse fields that would also be accessible to the public. With that known intent, designs were drafted including these field spaces. Placing a regulation scaled soccer field onto the site would require the removal of all old and some newly planted trees. Little else could be included into this design.

Since this project is meant to express the creative of vision from Smoketown youth, an alternative site design is also discussed in the pages that follow. This design still recognizes the site’s close proximity and usefulness for Meyzeek Middle School, the future Boys and Girls Club, YouthBuild, and the Smoketown Family Wellness Center. We suggest that this greenspace resource be designed with these neighbors in mind as both major activators of the space and as potential stewards of the land.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Lampton Green Conceptual Design

Figure 18 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
Reimagining Greenspaces

Lampton Green Conceptual Design

Figure 19 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
In thinking about how Meyzeek and other youth organizations in the neighborhood could most benefit from Lampton Green, an outdoor classroom would create a space for dynamic learning and scholastic experiments. Adding a pavilion would provide shade, while adjustable furniture fixtures could allow teachers to arrange the space to best suit their lesson plans.

Figures 20 & 21 - Conceptual Greenspace Designs (source: K. Haruff)
Reimagining Greenspaces

Lampton Green Conceptual Design

Adventure Play

This project’s youth engagement finds that, not only do children desire adventure and more risky unstructured play, they stand to gain significant benefits to their mental and physical wellbeing from such opportunities for play. Keeping this in mind, the site should include an area for climbing, balancing, and pretending.

Figures 22 & 23 - Conceptual Greenspace Designs (source: K. Haruff)
Spaces for Contemplation

Additionally, to parallel Jefferson County Public Schools’ implementation of the Compassionate Schools Project (a program that exposes young students to mindfulness, yoga, and meditation, teaching these skills to encourage compassion) the Lampton Green site could also include a reflection and contemplation area for students to practice mindfulness. Combining a pollinator garden with calming features such as a small reflection pool/bubbling fountain and a walkable labyrinth would serve the students’ needs as well as encourage birds and insects into the greenspace.

**Figures 24** - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)

- Outdoor classroom space
- Treehouse with climbing ropes, balance bars, and other elements for risky, adventurous, unstructured play
- Meditation zone, pollinator garden combination
Reimagining Greenspaces

May-Hillerich Pocket Park - Programmatic Recommendations

Thanks to the recent charitable investment by the Hillerich-Bradsby Family, Louisville Slugger Museum, and the LMHA, the site’s physical character needs less improvement. Instead, the park holds greater opportunity for implementing programs to activate the space.

Outdoor Student Gallery

May Hillerich Park could serve Meyzeek Middle School as an “Academic and Art Gallery”. Student poems, short stories, and artwork could be installed on a rotating/temporary basis. Transforming the space into an extension of Meyzeek could nurture ownership of the pocket park while inspiring confidence and pride in the students.

Neighborhood “Paint the Park” Event

Students could also directly impact the look and feel of the park through a “Paint the Park” event. Such an event could be coordinated by youth organizations in Smoketown who could ask for student designs which would be used to chalk the brick walkways within the park. A “Paint the Park” event would be another way to invite residents and Smoketown youth into the space. A collaborative event like this could strengthen ties between Smoketown’s youth organizations and the community, while reinforcing the community’s physical connection to their greenspaces.

Defined Sings and Markers

Signage (i.e. banners, direction markers, specific use of color), while important for connecting the greenspaces, are especially important for May-Hillerich. Observed human-use patterns, and conversations with Smoketown youth, suggest that the space could be more clearly marked as public and available to everyone. Through stakeholder communications, it is clear that additional signage describing the park’s namesake, May Hillerich, is in the works; this signage could be part of a larger display of Meyzeek students’ art and writing (i.e. rotating outdoor exhibit station).
Reimagining Greenspaces

May-Hillerich Pocket Park

- Meyzeek Middle School “Academic and Art Gallery”
- “Paint the Park” Event
- Signage
- Outdoor exhibit fixture
- Crosswalks connecting to Meyzeek Middle School, LMHA playground, and Lampton Green
- Additional seating
- Pedestrian scale lighting

Image 76 - An outdoor art gallery (source: web, underastar)

Image 77 - Creative and colorful park seating (source: web, the adventures of cab)
On-site observation and feedback from youth in the neighborhood both indicate that Ballard Park is a well-used space. But it is also clear from signs of use patterns that the park’s current design is not aligning well with the needs and desires of those in the community who use the space.

**Redesign Basketball Court Fencing**

The fencing around and between the basketball courts are an example of resident modification of an intended use to a functional actual use. The fences have been cut in three places; large and tall enough for adult-sized people to pass through. In light of this, a suggested physical improvement is to remove the fencing between the larger and smaller courts, and install gates or entrance points at the cuts.

**Create Gathering Spaces**

Another opportunity for improving the usability of the site is adding more seating and table to create an inviting space for people to gather over a picnic or an outdoor game of cards.

**Add Useful Amenities**

In the prioritization mapping activity conducted with Meyzeek students, many of the groups drew in additional amenities like on-site restrooms and water features (i.e. fishpond, splash pad, etc.). While both such amenities would require regular maintenance, ensuring that the park is an inviting space where those living around it want to spend their time is the first step to encouraging the community to care for and feel a sense of ownership in the space.

**Create a Basketball Tournament**

With three basketball courts, Ballard Park is an ideal site to host a tournament. With three courts, there is a potential to have 3, 5 versus 5 games going on at all times or 6, 3 versus 3 games going all simultaneously. And because of Ballard’s central location within the city, the event could attract teams from the surrounding neighborhoods. Tournament organizers could reach out to the nearby University of Louisville Men’s and Women’s basketball teams to attend as special guests. University of Louisville Basketball teams could be a resource for coaching, mentoring, and tournament marketing.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Ballard Park - Programmatic Recommendations

- Remove fencing between basketball courts
- Add gateways/entrances where fencing has been cut
- Additional seating to create a gathering space
- Accessibility ramp entrance along eastern alleyway
- Public restroom
- Drinking fountain
- Create a Basketball Tournament

Image 79 - A public restroom and drinking fountain available at Louisville’s waterfront (source: web, Bravura)

Image 80 - An open and creative example of a basketball court (source: web, rajgovt)
As the largest undeveloped greenspace in the neighborhood, the Logan Street Greenspace affords a number of physical improvement opportunities. Recommended physical changes across the site all serve the purpose of elevating the greenspace as a neighborhood attraction in ways that compliment the upcoming changes to the surrounding neighborhoods (e.g. Paristown Pointe development, and the Logan Street Market) but also speak to the vision expressed by the youth throughout this project’s engagement.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace Concept

Figures 26 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
Reimagining Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace Concept

Figures 27 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
Articulate Neighborhood Identity and History

Along the western edge of the site, abutting Logan Street, a series of sidewalk panels can serve as an eye-catching display. At the vehicle scale (on the southern side) the panels could broadcast a community-oriented message, such as the inspiring Often Seen Rarely Spoken mural, “Smoketown Is Worthy Of Everything,” (one word per panel) located a few blocks away from the space. At the pedestrian scale (on the north side), the panels could feature more detailed messaging describing the timeline of the site’s history. Installing these sidewalk panels would be an opportunity for the community to share its motivational story of neighborhood cohesion and resident action to secure a greenspace site worthy of Smoketown.

Figures 28 & 29 - Conceptual Greenspace Designs (source: K. Haruff)
Provide Space for Food Vendors

Food trucks for special events, but also for regular neighborhood service, could be an extension of the Logan Street Market or other neighborhood vendors.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

Water Play

During the engagement process, most of the youth groups during the engagement expressed a desire for water in their neighborhood. Building a “carwash for humans” water feature using misters, in-ground sprays, and splash pads would provide fun and whimsy to the site, and offer a cooling oasis in the hotter months.

Enjoyment of Beargrass Creek

The site’s close proximity to Beargrass Creek is a significant asset in thinking about reshaping the space. Recommendations include incorporating a nature pathway along the eastern edge of the site with overlook points where visitors can either stand or sit and observe the water below. Another suggestion is to create a designated resting area - using design elements like planters, lighting, low walls, and seating - for enjoying the space and the creek in a more peaceful setting.

Spaces for Art

A number of youth expressed a desire for creative expression and an appreciation for artistic flair, like murals and street art. The Logan Street Greenspace provides a number of surfaces ideal for community-inspired murals, and new developments on the site could also incorporate outdoor exhibits of local artists, including Smoketown students.

Figures 31 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
Reimagining Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

Build Garden Plots

Since a large portion of the site is capped with only 18 inches of soil (since the MSD basin is below), adding vegetation could be an engineering challenge. Using wide, deep planter boxes across the site would circumvent the shallow depth while still providing opportunity for beautifying the space with pollinator-friendly plantings or even for adding neighborhood edible garden plots.

Given that many of the youth talked about their dogs and pets, the space could also include a dog park area where residents and neighborhood visitors could bring their canine companions. Site observations did indicate that people already walk their dogs along the space; incorporating a designated dog zone would elevate that already existing use.

Figures 32 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)
Create Space for Gathering

Given the size of the greenspace, mixing uses across the site would improve upon the site’s ability to attract and be enjoyed by a diversity of people. While one corner of the space (the southern portion of the site) is reserved for more passive enjoyment of nature and the water nearby, other parts can be more lively. Adding pergolas and pavilions (each with its own grill), with space and ample seating, would make for ideal gathering grill-out spots that Smoketown residents and visitors alike could enjoy.
Reimagining Greenspaces

Logan Street Greenspace

- Sidewalk panels along Logan Street
- Food trucks or cart parking area
- Water feature ("human carwash") using misters, in-ground spray spouts, and splash pads to add whimsy and fun, and a cooling oasis during the hotter months.
- Murals, sculptural elements, outdoor exhibit space for showcasing local and budding artists’ work
- Nature pathway along Beargrass Creek
- Pergolas and pavilions for shade and for providing gathering spaces
- Planters for attractive vegetation, pollinator stations, edible gardens, and additional trees

Figures 34 - Conceptual Greenspace Design (source: K. Haruff)

Image 82 - San Antonio’s Riverwalk Amphitheater (source: web, alamy)

Image 83 - Misting Sculptur in Chicago (source: web, inhabitat)
This work represents the efforts of six graduate students over a sixteen-week course. With time and resource restrictions, the degree of youth input was limited. However limited, the dreams, ideas, thoughts, and desires of Smoketown youth expressed in this document can still be useful for guiding the creation of a greenspace network in the neighborhood. This work is intended to be built upon, and to serve as a contribution to a larger neighborhood planning effort.

To keep the movement and enthusiasm alive around these newly created greenspaces, current Smoketown institutions should collaborate in their planning efforts. Partnerships between youth organizations, religious congregations, and local businesses are necessary to ensure that neighborhood greenspaces realize their fullest community serving potential. We stress that Smoketown youth should not only be consulted in planning processes, but included in future decision-making around the greenspace network. A youth advisory council should be central in future partnerships.
Conclusions

Currently, a group already exists that could serve as a stakeholder for youth voices: The Justice League. The Justice League is a weekly after-school program focused on themes of social, environmental, and economic justice. These inspired students are already dedicated to place-making and place-keeping in Smoketown.

Lastly, Smoketown partnerships around this greenspace network should continue to gather youth input. The detailed lesson plans in the appendix between pages XX and XX could easily be used by any of Smoketown’s many youth organizations to build upon this engagement work.

Smoketown is a young and vibrant neighborhood, and its new greenspaces have the potential to project that identity while serving the community.
References


References


References


## Appendix - Demographics

### SMOKETOWN

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## CALIFORNIA

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### Appendix - Demographics

#### SMOKE TOWN

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*Median household income (dollars)*: 28,558

*Mean household income (dollars)*: 37,237

#### CALIFORNIA

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*Median household income (dollars)*: 19,017

*Mean household income (dollars)*: 26,942

---

Visioning a Greenspace Network with Smoketown YOUTH
# Appendix - Demographics

## SMOKETOWN

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## CALIFORNIA

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<td>Total</td>
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<td>White alone</td>
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<td>Two races including Some other race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two races excluding Some other race, and three or more races</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3.15%</td>
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### SMOKETOWN

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<tr>
<td>Less than 9th grade</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td>
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<td>Some college, no degree</td>
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### SMOKETOWN

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<th>Population 25 years and over</th>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 9th grade</td>
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<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
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<td>5.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
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### Appendix - Demographics

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<td>841</td>
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<td>Service occupations</td>
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<td>Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations</td>
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<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</td>
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<td>19.30%</td>
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### SMOKETOWN

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<th>Population 16 years and over</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Civilian employed population 16 years and over</td>
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<td>841</td>
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<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
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<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</td>
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<td>Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing</td>
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<td>3.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services</td>
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<td>Educational services, and health care and social assistance</td>
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<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
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<td>Public administration</td>
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Lesson #1 Background Research & Observation

Purpose:
What are green spaces? Who are urban planners?
Have you heard of the MSD Basin?
In this lesson, students will use the Smoketown MSD basin as a case study example of community activism in urban planning. This lesson will also focus on the importance of data collection and background research to the urban planning process. Overall, this session will serve as an introduction to planning, how community activism can shape the planning process, and lay the groundwork for future lessons.

Key Objectives:
2. What tools/partners planners need.
3. How students can act as planners in their community.

Key Terms:
- Tree Canopy
- Land Use
- LOJIC
- AutoCAD
- GIS
- Urban
- Map
- Site Plan
- Planning
- Greenspace
- Louisville Metro Government
- MSD - Metropolitan Sewer District
- Neighborhood
- Neighborhood Association
- Community
Appendix - Lesson 1

Materials:
- Example Images of Green Spaces
- Example Images of Urban Planning
- Example Images or Videos about Planning Tools
- Before & After Images of the Smoketown MSD Basin
- Post-It Notes
- Pens or pencils
- Large Notepad with Easel
- Name tags

Objective #1 Defining and understanding urban planning and green spaces:

Facilitator 1 should pass out name tags as facilitator 2 introduces themself. In your introduction, give your name, your interests within the planning profession, and what led you to become a planner (why you want to plan OR how you stumbled upon the planning profession).

Write the words “Urban”, “Planning”, and “Green Space” on the top of three large columns. Facilitator 2 will pass out sticky notes to the students as facilitator 1 asks students to think of their definitions of “Urban” (e.g. How would you define the word “urban”?) or What does urban mean to you?). Have the students write their responses, and then when finished ask them to come up to place their stickies on the board. Read each of the responses and ask students to describe what the definitions have in common and the ways in which they differ. Write these themes out alongside their definitions. Using these themes, create a working definition of “Urban” that we’ll use throughout the next few workshops. These definitions will be unique to each class, so be sure to record and store for future use.

Repeat the following exercise using the term “Planning”, and “Green Space”.

Objective #2 What tools/partners planners need:

Now that we have a working definitions, move to the slideshow. The slides will start with examples of successful planning, and plans that have transformed a city’s physical space. The slideshow will move into tools that are used by planners to achieve a communities goals. The toolkit could include: Sketchup, Autocad, GIS, Site plans, Demographic Charts/Graphs. The slides will move into a planner’s partners and who plans. (Residents, Community Institutions, City Officials,...).
Appendix - Lesson 1

Objective #3 How students can act as planners in their community:

Finally, an image of the Logan Street Basin today will display. Ask the students if they are familiar with this area or story. If they are, call on a student to tell the story around the photo. Help fill in where needed, but keep the narrative high level. Show the original MSD building plan.

“This new park was first designed as a windowless brick building. To keep water quality healthy, water treatment facilities and holding tanks were planned throughout the city. Smoketown residents came together and demanded that this area serve a second purpose as a greenspace. By making their voices heard, your community became planners and were able to shape the spaces in your neighborhood.”

Homework “Visit a Green Space”

Introduce the homework worksheet. Ask the students to “start” the planning process by making observations and conducting their own data collection through background research and observations. The students can pick any green space to observe; it doesn’t have to be a formal park, and it doesn’t have to be in the neighborhood. Walk through the questions on the handout, and ask if they have any questions. Emphasize that this homework activity will help them in our next class session around “Communication”!
Appendix - Homework 1

LESSON #1: BACKGROUND RESEARCH & OBSERVATION
HOMEWORK #1: Visit a Greenspace

Apply your background research and observation skills to the real-world! In this activity, you will visit a local greenspace and take notes on your observations.

Use the steps below to begin exploring the space. Please draw, write, or take pictures of your observations.

1. WHERE is the space? What is your location? Use the “blank” space below to draw or map your location. Write the name of the location.

2. WHO is using the space? Is there a large group of people, pairs of people, or individuals?

How old are the people using the space?
3. HOW do people use the greenspace? Are there certain activities that take place there? List your observations below.

4. WHAT special features are in the greenspace? Do they allow for the activities you listed above? For example, is there a basketball court that allows for people to play basketball. Use the below to draw or describe those features.
Appendix - Homework 1

5. WHEN did you visit the greenspace? What day of the week? What time of day?

Did you notice if the greenspace has more people during certain parts of the day?

What was the weather like? Did that influence the type of activities taking place?

Use the blank space below to write notes or observations:
Lesson #2 Communicating Ideas

Purpose:
The purpose of this exercise is for youth to understand how background research/investigation influences conversations around future planning. The activity will focus on the poetic nature of space via memory and storytelling. As they reflect on their own personal connections to these green spaces, they will see that a place’s “history” is influenced by those who tell it. Their stories are a part of this history, and when combined create a dynamic memory of place. This exercise will emphasize the importance of understanding a community’s history to the planner.

Key Objectives:
1. How to translate your memories onto paper.
2. Identify the physical and emotional aspects of a green space.
3. Develop a group image.
4. How to tell your story.

Lesson 2 Student Takeaways:
- Define Existing Conditions
- Explain Personal Observations
- Explain Shared Observations

Key Terms:
- Map
- Existing Conditions
- Site Plan
- Context
- Code of Ethics
- Historic District

Part One: Cognitive Mapping

Materials:
- 8.5 X 11 Sheets of computer paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils or markers
- Highlighters or yellow markers
- Timer
- Large Notepad with Easel
- Homework 2 Handout
Appendix - Lesson 2

Reintroduction/Recap/Homework

Lesson 1 Student Takeaways:
Define Urban Planning and Greenspace.
Explain how planners use data and background research.
Name a piece out of a planner’s toolkit.
Name a partner that planners work with.

Making personal and shared observations and conducting background research is an early step in the planning process. Data collected from these activities can help us understand where to go from here. This data is referred to as “existing conditions”. A person’s memory and emotional connections to a place are a part of those existing conditions, and when everyone’s memories are combined, they can be used to understand where the planning process should focus moving forward. We’re going to use your homework from last week to build existing conditions.

Ask participants to take out their homework from the previous week (Visit a Green Space). Where did they choose to go? Any park in within the neighborhood? What did the see? Have some share the their experiences in visiting those spaces.

Objective #1 How to translate your memories onto paper:

A key skill for planners is observation, taking note of your surroundings, and then being able to translate/communicate that information through drawing, designing, writing, and map-making. We will use your memories from homework 1 to create a “Memory Map” of an area’s existing conditions. (Show examples of pedestrian observation maps.) These are your personal observations.

Ensure that each participant has four sheets of 8.5 X 11 paper, pencils, and markers. Explain that there are no “right” memory maps. Their map will represent the space as they remember it. Participants who are unfamiliar/unable to finish HW 1 could draw a green space as they would imagine it.
Steps to making a mental map:
1. Write your name in the corner of the piece of paper.
2. Draw an outline of the green space (large, small, square, rectangular, etc.)
3. Mark the entrances to the green space
4. Draw any existing sidewalks or pathways that cut through the green space.
5. Mark the locations of any important features in your space.
6. Draw any trees, flowers, or shrubs.

Objective #2 Identify the physical and emotional aspects of a green space:

Recording observations is just one step towards describing an area’s existing conditions. We can understanding more about an area when we start to analyze features and think critically about what aspects are attractive, add value, have special meaning, should be preserved, or could be added. Thinking critically about the maps you just made...

Facilitator talking points:
- Place a star by your favorite places in the space
- If there are any special places in the space with specific memories, mark those with a check mark. If possible, write a few descriptive words next to those spaces. They could be emotions such as happy, sad, angry, joy, etc. Or they could describe a special event such as, “My 10th Birthday Party.”
- Next, outline portions of the space that you would like to improve. Write or draw what you would add to that space. Put a plus sign (+) next to your description or drawing.
- Lastly, cross-out (X) portions of the area that you would like to remove.
**Objective #3 Develop a group image:**

As planners, we are often asked to develop a vision or an image for a site, neighborhood, community, city, or region which requires listening to lots of different people’s observations and perspectives. As planners, we try to take multiple, sometimes differing, views and stitch them together to understand the area’s existing conditions. In the first part, we asked you to work on your own, but now you need to be part of a team. Like planners, you’re now going to try and stitch your table group’s maps together! Listening, explaining, and finding common ideas are all ways that planners discover an area’s existing conditions. Together, your personal observations become a shared observation.

Combine tables into 5 groups (ask Chris Rasheed to help). Each group should have a large post it paper and a facilitator. Give each student the opportunity to explain their maps. Once everyone has had a chance to share, find commonalities in each map and list them on the large post it. Are there similar things that students would like to see added? Changed? What feelings or activities do the students share? Bring all of the small groups back together. Allow each small group to present their common characteristics.

Facilitators identify the common characteristics between the groups, emphasize that these commonalities are apart of an area’s existing conditions. Each of these memories/emotions contributes to the area’s collective community history, and can be used as a baseline to understand where the planning process should focus moving forward. Pick out one or two positive aspects that people either wanted preserved or added to their spaces. Pick out one of two negative aspects that people wanted removed or kept out. The existing conditions that have been created here can be used to direct policies/goals/objectives for the future. This is planning.

Ensure that participants have written their name on their work. Collect all of the maps, keeping them separated by groups and class.
Appendix - Lesson 2

Part Two: Collage Storytelling

Materials:
- Copies of green space images spread out on a shared table
- 8.5 X 11 Sheets of computer paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks or tape
- Markers
- Timer
- Name tags

Objective #4 How to tell your story:

Spread images of green and urban spaces on a large table. Ask students to think of a memory about their favorite park or playground, and then ask them to pick a few images that are most representative of that memory (If participants can not think of a memory, tell them they can create their “dream day”). Students will use these images or piece of the image to create a collage on the 8.5 X 11 sheet of paper. Participants can use the markers to write words or phrases that help illustrate that memory.

Facilitator talking points: Think of a memory where...
- You wore yourself out from playing
- You laughed the most you’ve ever laughed
- You had a good day with your family
- You saw something amazing

As planners, we often have to speak in public and work with our planning partners. Who remembers a partner? For example, we might speak at neighborhood meetings, to local business owners, with elected officials and politicians. Being able to communicate clearly and tell a story is an important skill for planners, and now we want you to practice tell your story.

Storytelling time! Ask participants to share their collages, and tell their story. If a participant doesn’t feel comfortable sharing, they can let another participant present their work by interpreting the story through the images. Write down key things out of each response as the participants are speaking. Point to common characteristics to show that, when combined, their own personal connections create a history of place. Collect all the collages, and ensure that each participants name is on their work.
Appendix - Homework 2

Homework “P.A.R.K Exercise”

You’ve learned how to observe and interpret your memories of a space through mapping, collaging, and storytelling. You’ve also learned how to pull common things from your memories and observations and the memories and observations of your classmates, to build a collective vision of place. Planners use similar processes to try and experience the world through the memories and feelings of the people that use it. Understanding how a group of people interact with their spaces and identifying common patterns allows planners to create more effective plans.

Introduce the homework worksheet P.A.R.K. Ask the students to continue their planning process by thinking critically about the strengths and weaknesses of the green spaces they visited last week. Walk through the questions on the handout, and ask if they have any questions. Emphasis that this homework activity will help them in our next class session around “Planning”!
LESSON #2: COMMUNICATION

HOMEWORK #2: P.A.R.K. Exercise

Apply your observation and communication skills! In the previous activity, you visited a real greenspace. In this activity, you will think critically about specific parts of that greenspace and how they function.

Use the chart below to begin YOUR review of the space. P.A.R.K. stands for preserve, add, remove, and keep-out. The questions in the left-hand side are a guide to assist you as you reflect on the space. You can draw pictures or write descriptions that describe your response. There is no right or wrong answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>RESERVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What parts of the greenspace would you preserve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What were your favorite aspects of the greenspace?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there anything about the space that is special to you, your friends, or your family?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why are these important to you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ADD

- What would you add to the greenspace?
- Is there anything specific that would improve the greenspace?
- Are there activities or events you want to see in the greenspace?
- Why do you want to add these features to the greenspace?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REMOVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What would you like to remove from the greenspace?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is there anything specific you do not like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why do you want to remove these things?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**KEEP-OUT**

- What would you keep-out of the greenspace?
- What would you not like to see in the greenspace?
- Why should these features be kept-out of the greenspace?
Lesson #3 Planning!

Purpose:
The purpose of this lesson is to translate critical observations into creative responses through design and writing. In this lesson, students will use their P.A.R.K. exercises, collages, and memory maps to identify common themes as a group. Two concepts will be selected from the common set of themes. One team will select a “more tangible” idea to build-out through the use of drawings and model-making. The other team will select a “more intangible” idea to build-out through an action plan and programming. Facilitators will have the opportunity to introduce key stakeholders as the two teams compare and discuss their ideas. Lastly, students will be asked to share their ideas through written letters to community partners. This final discussion should encourage youth to engage in designing their neighborhood’s future.

Key Objectives:
1. Identify common themes as a group.
2. Translate ideas into physical space.
3. Translate ideas into programs and action.
4. Use community partners to plan!

Key Terms:
- Vision Statement
- Design
- Action Plan
- Programming
- Stakeholder
- Partnership
- Advocacy
- Advisory Committee

Materials:
- 8.5 X 11 Sheets of computer paper
- Large Notepad with Easel
- Notepads
- Sandtrays (x2)
- Objects for model building
- List of partners
- Stamped envelopes
- Name Tags
- Timer
- Tape or glue
- Scissors
Appendix - Lesson 3

Objective #1 Identify common themes as a group:

Ask participants to take out their homework from the previous week (P.A.R.K Exercise). Take the large sticky pads and place four around the room with one of the category titles (preserve, add, remove, keep out). Go through each category and write down student responses from their homework. With each answer, ask the class how many others also included it? Keep a “vote” tally next to the items. Once the class has exhausted their lists, go through and circle each response that “live” in the physical/tangible world. Explain that we will be working on two different exercises. One will focus on the physical/tangible aspects, the other on emotional/intangible characteristics. Split the class into two groups, and let’s start planning!

Hang the previously made collages/cognitive maps around the sand tray work station.

Objective #2 Translate ideas into physical space:

This team will select a “more tangible” idea to build-out through the use of drawings and model-making. There is no wrong idea!

This team should focus on:
- Where is this located?
- What does it look like?
- How does it feel?
- What does it do?
- What is the purpose of this design?
- What inspired the idea?
Appendix - Lesson 3

Objective #3 Translate ideas into programs and action:

This team will select a “more intangible” idea to build-out through an action plan and programming. Again, there is no wrong idea!

This team should focus on:
- Who does it involve?
- What does it do?
- When does it take place?
- What is the purpose of this program?
- What inspired the idea?

Objective #4 Use community partners to plan!

Each team will compare and discuss their ideas with the class. Facilitators will use this open discussion as an opportunity to introduce professionals or leaders. This conversation should encourage youth to become involved in neighborhood decisions! Youth should leave with the understanding - they can plan and design!

Facilitator talking points:
- What is common between the two teams' ideas?
- What is different between the two teams' ideas?
- How could the ideas be combined?
- What would the ideas look like in Smoketown?
### Appendix - Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Action Plan:</strong></th>
<th>A proposed strategy or course of action that includes goals, objectives, and people or resources required.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory Committee:</strong></td>
<td>This is a group of people who bring their unique knowledge or skills to make suggestions that inform decisions. An advisory committee can include residents, professionals, business owners, and others with unique backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy:</strong></td>
<td>The act of supporting or suggesting an action, idea, or a cause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Code of Ethics:</strong></td>
<td>The code of ethics helps planners to negotiate tough ethical or moral decisions that they sometimes face. This code of ethics is intended to remind the planners of the community’s true needs, and requires them to confront the context in which they are working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong></td>
<td>Conditions that influence an event, statement, or ideas; and become the way through which the event, statement, or ideas are understood. (i.e. Planners like to call this lenses!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community:</strong></td>
<td>Group of people who live in the same place or share similarities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design:</strong></td>
<td>A concept or idea that involves significant thought or creativity. Design can involve art or science. It can include drawings, writing, sculptures, music, buildings, or programs. Design is a very loose term that seeks to describe the process of bringing an idea into reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greenspace:</strong></td>
<td>These are areas designated for outdoor uses. They can involve parks, playgrounds, nature sanctuaries, community gardens, and other vehicles for outdoor activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historic District:</strong></td>
<td>This is a group of buildings, properties, or sites that are proven historical or architecturally significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Louisville Metro Government:</strong></td>
<td>People often use this word to describe the services, employees, and leaders who work for the City of Louisville.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MSD - Metropolitan Sewer District:</strong></td>
<td>Is owned by the City of Louisville. MSD provides services and professionals who work to keep our waterways safe and clean.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix - Glossary

**Neighborhood**: Is a district that is its own community within a larger city. People might interpret or identify their neighborhood in different ways.

**Neighborhood Association**: This is a group of neighborhood residents or property owners who work together to organize activities or advocate change in their neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Plan**: A guiding document that set goals and identifies priorities to help shape future development in a community. Through the neighborhood planning process, residents, and community stakeholders come together to identify existing opportunities and challenges and set a course to identify, preserve, and build on the positive qualities of their neighborhoods.

**Partnership**: People who join together for a common cause.

**Planning**: Involves community members, leaders, and professionals who work together to provide a vision for the community today and where the community wants to be tomorrow.

**Programming**: Process of writing and organizing actions, events, or activities linked to a place or group of people.

**Site Plan**: A two-dimensional drawing that illustrates the existing and proposed conditions of a site - or property. (i.e. Think of your backyard. What is in your backyard? Are there trees? Is there a shed? A site plan is a drawing that reflects the location of these items.)

**Stakeholder**: Someone who is invested in something. Their investment could involve personal interest or concern.

**Urban**: A city or town. Area that is dense and populated.

**Vision Statement**: A statement created by community members for the purpose of describing the future character and standing of their neighborhood. Typically, a vision statement introduces a neighborhood plan and sets the tone of the overall document.
Visioning a Greenspace Network with Smoketown YOUTH