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Land Use Planning ...and Your Community

Getting Started

Your town or city has probably changed considerably since the first settlers arrived in the area. Their lifestyles and needs were likely different from yours. Imagine yourself among the group of pioneers who first began the settlement that later grew into your town or city.

- Why would you have chosen to settle in this area?
- What natural resources do you think the early pioneers found?

What do you think? Record your ideas about these questions in your *EarthComm* notebook. Be prepared to discuss your responses with your small group and the class.

Scenario

In recent years, the residents in your area have expressed an interest to the town council in establishing a number of new facilities in the community. Interest has been expressed in a sports complex, a theme park, an airport, a shopping center, a school or college, a housing community, a business complex, an industrial park, a hospital, a new facility for solid-waste management, a new water-treatment and sewage plant, a forested trail, and a picnic area.

Before making any decisions, the town council has decided to update the master plan for land use in your community. The members of council appreciate the need to maintain a favorable

living environment and at the same time protect the integrity of the area. They are looking for input from those who understand the importance of Earth systems to the development and growth of a community.

Chapter Challenge

Your challenge is to engage in a community planning project. To complete this project you will:

- Research the geological and climatological features, and the human use patterns and needs of your community.
- Use the information to develop a comprehensive land-use plan for the next 20 years.
- Include provisions for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural areas; water, sewage, and waste management; recreation; and the protection of natural resources and quality of life.
- Consider the impact of the plan on natural resources, including, but not limited to, water, air, and soil.
- Address any issues of human health and safety.
- Suggest modifications to the present land use.
- Assure that the plan adheres to local ordinances and land-use laws.



Assessment Criteria

Think about what you have been asked to do. Scan ahead through the chapter activities to see how they might help you to meet the challenge. Work with your classmates and your teacher to define the criteria for assessing your work. Devise a grading sheet for the assessment of the challenge. Record all this information.



Make sure that you understand the criteria and the grading scheme as well as you can. Your teacher may provide you with a sample rubric to help you get started.