

Name: _____

BOX-CITY / Urban Ecosystem Pre-Visit Activities Grades 3-5

Your class is going on a field trip to the Hilliard Art Museum. At the museum, you will build a box city. **Review the City Code with your teacher.**

What do you think cities or communities need? How will you meet these needs in your BOX-CITY design?

An urban designer is someone who plans and creates living spaces and green spaces for people. Urban designers have adopted many of the ideas and tools that scientists have created to study ecosystems. They sometimes think of cities or neighborhoods as human ecosystems.

Choose one ecosystem: a rainforest, desert, coral reef, etc. What animals and plants live there? How do they rely on the environment to meet their needs?

Imagine a city as a human ecosystem. What will people need in the city ecosystem? How will people move and live in the ecosystem? How will people interact with their environment? Write or draw your ideas below.

Case Study: West End District, New Iberia, LA

As part of your visit to the museum, you will design a building lot for one block of Hopkins Street in the West End neighborhood of New Iberia.

Neighborhood History and Statistics:

The West End, a once thriving commercial and cultural center with a majority African American population, has witnessed forty years of economic and social decline. According to the 2010 US census, the West End has disproportionately lower high school graduation rates, higher unemployment, a declining median income, and lower median home values when compared to other parts of New Iberia.

Since 2000, the population of New Iberia has declined by 6.1%, while Iberia Parish has not grown at all. Nationally, the population has increased by 9.4%. America is growing, but New Iberia is shrinking. For years people have left Iberia Parish following high school graduation to pursue educational or higher-paying job opportunities elsewhere. This has resulted in an overall decline in the physical, mental, and economic health of Iberia Parish residents. At the same time, the Gulf of Mexico swallows untold numbers of acres of Louisiana's coastline each year, presenting challenges and opportunities for future sustainable development.

Assets and Needs in the Community

Communities are based on people and their relationships. The community organization Envision da Berry is working to improve the neighborhood. Watch their video interviews with West End residents.

What are some of the community's strengths?

Who are some of the people in the community? List some of the things they need or want in their community.
