



# Culminating Organizing Project Endeavors

Cope: "...b : to deal with and attempt to overcome problems and difficulties..."

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10<sup>th</sup> ed.

"Power is the ability to define phenomena - and make it act in a desirable manner."

Huey P. Newton, Black Panther Party

## Our Culminating Projects are called COPE... Why COPE?

COPE pertains to learning about and dealing with actual problems in a more powerful – less classroom contained – way. For every CGCT unit endeavor, students will be asked to extend beyond the classroom and cope with studied realities in a productive and meaningful way. Basically, if we're going to spend time learning about a history of urban renewal and removal, and if we're going to do a project, it may as well be useful and applicable! Otherwise, what's the point? In order to "make things act in a desirable manner" such as what happens with land, housing and development in our neighborhood, we've got to organize ourselves, take a look what's going on, create our needs-analysis, formulate a vision, and act upon it. We will COPE!

## This COPE is a YPCP: What is the Young Peoples' Community Plan (YPCP)?

This COPE is an urban planning project intended to help you make connections between historical learning and current realities in order to improve future realities. It's called the Young Peoples' Community Plan. A guiding tenet is that students and families should be directly involved in the processes of determining local change around housing, land-use, and development in the community in which they live – or go to school.

## Overall Project Objectives?

Students will create a plan for their neighborhood that addresses the needs and wants of the people of that community. Students will provide a written history of their community as a basis for the rationale of their plan. Finally, students will take their visions and plans to the community by presenting, communicating, organizing, outreaching, and documenting...taking action based on learning and analysis.

## Keys Goals of a Young Peoples' Community Plan?

- 1) students should become aware of the forces that have shaped this city and the world we live in today;
- 2) students should construct a vision of their own reality by taking a more active role in shaping the community dialogue and events around them; and
- 3) students should develop particular academic skills for college readiness and lifelong learning (e.g. higher order thinking skills, engagement with challenging text, producing interesting writings, participating in peer dialogue and debate, utilizing multimedia, and creative expression.

## This Project Guide's Contents?

Overall Objectives  
Key Learning and Action Goals  
Culminating Product Explanation  
Investigations and Essential Questions

Student Checklist & Expectations  
Evaluation / Assessment Rubric  
Step by Step Project Guide

## Culminating Products? (various options – see appendix)

Survey analysis and reflection  
Large scale community vision map  
Joint classroom proposal – YPCP

Letter to local officials to meet  
Photographic essay presentation  
Fact sheets on various issues / needs

# Culminating Project Checklist / Overall Expectations

The following project checklist sets the general expectations for our work. It is important that you (your group) determine ahead of time which of these you will take on. Highlight, or mark off in some way, the project aspects you'll work on. This project is most meaningful and effective if participants have read parts or all of the accompanying text, *Urban Renewal or Urban Removal? A Grassroots Look at the Struggle for Home and Community*. In addition, the more activities accomplished in this Learning and Action Journal, the more prepared you'll be for this work. In a way, everything builds up towards this culminating project.

10 Culminating Project Steps	Some Key Details	Schedule / Notes
<b>1. Present a personal account of your local connections (e.g. hangouts, observations, experiences, opinions)</b>	Refer to the <i>Learning Appendix</i> for lists of possible presentation formats	
<b>2. Determine elements of a strong neighborhood (a holistic look at local needs) and create a Map of Elements</b>	This is classroom-based group work; follow the guide provided	
<b>3. Conduct a well-rounded neighborhood analysis (evaluate the state of each element you targeted)</b>	Utilize the recording sheet provided; try to uncover serious issues and great strengths	
<b>4. Survey an informed person about gentrification / displacement (find out if gentrification is occurring locally)</b>	See two-part survey activities to prepare and implement the surveying process	
<b>5. Apply historical analysis to better understand research results (connect learning from the reading &amp; activities)</b>	Utilize the main reading, prior activities, and your own knowledge	
<b>6. Produce a summary of findings and host a <i>State of the Community</i> event for a larger audience – obtain feedback</b>	Present a 2 to 3 pg summary with key areas (we'll brainstorm these); present to local audience and obtain feedback	
<b>7. Make the <i>Young Peoples' Community Plan</i> model – an urban planning project based on local needs / wants</b>	Details are provided to create a physical model depicting your community vision	
<b>8. Synthesize everything into a <i>Young Peoples' Community Plan</i> – consider prior activities, writings, images, etc.</b>	Put it all together in a well-organized, neatly-packaged, and comprehensive way	
<b>9. Present these findings, model, and proposal to a larger audience; kick off ways to implement part/all of plan</b>	Host or attend a larger event and present all your key findings and visions; prepare to defend your plan	
<b>10. Take further action to accomplish the plan, including writing a letter to the alderman or other local officials</b>	Bring your plans to the community, gain support, and take it to those with planning and development power	

# Step 1...

## Present a Personal Account of your local connections (e.g. hangouts, observations, experiences, history, ideas, opinions)

**See Guides:** Choose from a variety of writing formats and decide which format(s) will best present your story. See the list of writing styles and formats in the Extended Learning Appendix (see List of Assessments or Project Ideas). As for a writing guide, ask the facilitator (teacher) to help you create a writing rubric, maybe similar to the rubric in the Literacy section. Your personal account should be reflective, include details, and help educate others about where you're from!

# Step 2...

## Determine Elements of a Strong Neighborhood (create a holistic look at local needs)

**Objectives:** Students will identify eight institutions and other key supports necessary for the existence and sustenance of an affordable and just community – with specific examples for each.

### Steps to determine elements and begin urban planning vision:

- Divide class into small groups (4 to 5) – unless they are already in groups.
- Provide each group with a sheet of “big paper” - preferably the grid type for later use.
- On separate paper, each group brainstorms eight to ten important institutions and some key supports for an affordable and just community – focus on immediate and long-term needs in major areas of life.
- Then, on another sheet, each group creates a graphic organizer (GOs) showing the “Elements of a Community.” The facilitator should present various forms of GOs – and look in the Journal.
- Each student then chooses and becomes responsible for one harder or two easier “elements” and further brainstorms ideas such as: *How should this institution best serve the community? What does affordable and just service look like? Where should this institution be positioned in the community – your initial thoughts?* Record these thoughts on separate paper.
- Each student produces a symbol for their “element” – either a drawing, cut-out, printed image, etc.; everyone shares with each other their brainstorm and symbol on one or two elements; everyone records the main points for each “element” into the activity sheet provided on the next page.
- As a group, students will place symbols on the “big paper” that represent their elements institutions.
- Students will create a legend for their map.
- Each group will present their Map of Community Elements to the class.

### Guided questions:

1. **Boundaries:** How big will the community be? Why? How will you separate the different institutions within the community? (These questions will also get figured out as you continue – but start here.)
2. **Employment:** What kind of jobs will be available in this community? Will there be diversity in the jobs offered as well as their wages?
3. **Housing:** Affordable single family/apartment complexes/ retirement homes/ foster homes, etc.?
4. **Open space recreation:** Parks, playgrounds, meeting grounds?
5. **Shopping:** Strip malls or shopping malls? Grocery stores, hardware stores, etc.?
6. **Religious facilities:** Churches, schools, day cares?
7. **Civic facilities:** Politician offices, post offices, schools, community centers?
8. **Support services:** Unemployment, day cares, welfare offices, counseling, clinics, transportation, etc.?



# Step 3...

## Conduct a well-rounded **Neighborhood Analysis** (evaluate the state of each element you targeted)

**Note:** This process works best with a “walking field trip” through the targeted neighborhood. If this is not possible, use google-earth to scan through the community. Both are highly recommended. If neither are available, conduct more intensive in-class brainstorms and interview people about local issues, needs, and wants. All four inquiries are most recommended.

**Objective:** Figure out a snapshot of the current state of things in your targeted neighborhood as related to each “element” your group prioritized – especially housing. You want to know “what’s really going on:” things such as strengths, weaknesses, and serious needs. This blank table provides space to record the most essential points.

**Neighborhood Elements Analysis:** with a focus on housing issues and needs.

Community Elements	Strengths: What's Working?	Issues / Needs: What's Not Working?
Housing:		



## Step 4...

**Survey** an informed resident on gentrification / displacement and find out if these are occurring locally

**Note:** Follow the instructions on these surveying activities. Combine these results with those from *Step 3: Neighborhood Analysis* to obtain a greater understanding of local issues around housing, displacement and potential gentrification.

## Step 5...

**Apply historical analysis** to better understand today's realities (connect learning from the reading & activities)

**Objective:** Use the main text, URUR, and various learning activities already completed in this Journal to conduct an historical analysis of the community you're studying.

**Essential Questions:** What does the history say in regards to better understanding either your community or areas close by? What might be the root causes to the current community conditions you documented in the *Neighborhood Analysis*? What evidence best supports your conclusions?

**Steps to Create Your Historical Analysis:** Look back at all the activities you've accomplished leading up to this point and highlight or summarize key findings that provide insights into our essential questions. Refer back to the main reading, Urban Renewal or Urban Removal?, as well as the Community Appendix to obtain relevant information on Chicago as a whole – as well as your area of the city. Record these thoughts on a separate sheet of paper – then typing it up and saving it is preferable since you'd want to include this information in your *Summary of Findings* and the *Young Peoples' Community Plan*.

## Step 6...

**Prepare a "State of the Community" summary** and present to a larger audience to obtain feedback

**Objective:** Prepare and present a summary of community findings based on everything learned and documented thus far. Host a State of the Community event where you invite students, families, and neighbors. Present your prioritized findings, seek input, and document everything. This will prepare you for what's next – the YPCP

**What to Include:** The following list offers a glimpse of possible items to include. Feel free to add other items.

Personal Accounts	Surveys Results of Residents	Graphic Organizer Information
Neighborhood Elements	Historical Analysis Summary	Other Documents You Found
Neighborhood Analysis	Journal Entries & Writings	Arts and Media Creations

# Step 7...

## Make the Young Peoples' Community Plan model: an urban plan based on supporting major community elements (responding to local issues, needs and wants)

**Objective:** Create a visual representation showing where all your “community elements” (e.g. institutions, housing, services, etc.) will be placed. how your community will look, and how your urban planning will improve the quality of life for everyone.

**Plan of Action:** Follow these steps to create the YPCP model.

- A. Create a blank map of the neighborhood (e.g. Englewood) showing boundaries and cross streets within those boundaries.
  - a. Supplies:
    - i. Large butcher block paper or large canvass (3 ft x 3 ft – match dimensions to community dimensions (long and narrow, box shaped, or ?)
    - ii. Pencils
    - iii. Yard sticks
    - iv. Charcoal, chalk
    - v. Tape, glue
    - vi. Yarn (used for railroad tracks, neighborhood boundaries, etc.)
    - vii. Construction paper (different colors used to represent different symbols on the legend)
  - b. Draw boundaries of neighborhood on map detailing streets within the boundaries.
- B. Divide map into quadrants and assign a quadrant to a group (four groups per class).
- C. Create a legend of symbols that will be used on the map for everyone to follow. Think of symbols for all critical needs – but not minor details such as traffic lights (unless one is always broken).
- D. Figure out the focus of each quadrant and/or how each group will compliment, not contradict or repeat work from the other groups. To do this, review the key community “elements,” institutions, and services desired. Refer to the Neighborhood Elements, Neighborhood Analysis, Resident Survey, and the State of the Community feedback for guidance.
- E. Complete mental and practice maps (using scrap paper) and discuss within groups what everyone needs and wants in the neighborhood. Make a list with locations. Put these temporarily on the community map (model). Evaluate for practicability, sustainability, justice and affordability.
- F. Evaluate the map. The facilitator and students should create an evaluation sheet together. Evaluation categories may include the following:
  - Comprehensive vision with necessary “elements” – as outlined in prior notes
  - Well planned and logical arrangement of development
  - Map legend is consistent, comprehensive, neat, and easy to follow
  - Group worked well together and contributed equally
  - Evidence of correcting historical injustices is evident
- G. Complete the culminating map by permanently placing all items on the map. Your items may include visuals, physical structures (popsicle sticks or recyclables or...), student drawings, etc.



# Step 8...

## Synthesize everything into a **Young Peoples' Community Plan**

(combine prior activities, writings, images, your ideas, and more)

**Culminating Work:** Now it's time to gather everything you've worked on during the URUR unit of study that may be helpful for this plan. To assist this gathering, the following checklist is here for you. Individually and/or in groups, place checkmarks next to pieces you have and circle or highlight things you still might need or want.

Make any notes here:

Personal Accounts	Historical Analyses
Neighborhood Elements	Summary of Findings
Neighborhood Analyses	Model of Young Peoples' Plan
Displacement Surveys	Journal Entries / Writings
Graphic Organizer Results	Arts and Media Creations
Other Documents Found	All other contributions

**Then, determine the following (use this as a checklist and notes):**

\_\_\_ Target audience? (local officials or entities with housing, development & land-use power)

\_\_\_ What essential contents will you provide to the group for review?

\_\_\_ What is an initial order of content? (create an outline of content)

\_\_\_ What's the presentation format? (refer to Learning Appendix for ideas)

\_\_\_ Who's taking on which aspects of the YPCP proposal?

\_\_\_ What are the immediate needs to get started?

**Next steps in the process:**

I will prioritize \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Step 9...

## A. Present your findings, model, and proposal to a larger audience; B. kick off ways to implement part or all of the plan

**Objective:** Organize (plan and mobilize) a more formal public event – with targeted officials invited – where you: 1) present the Young Peoples' Community Plan; and 2) initiate the next logical steps.

**Action Steps:** During the event, your group will initiate actions that were agreed upon ahead of time based on the following brainstorm process and any other steps you include. This is an initial checklist.

- Know and believe in your purpose and goals (based on the YPCP)
- Re-evaluate these goals for relevance and capacity:
- Confirm the target audience(s) for your public event
- Determine the desired outcomes of the public event
- Establish any needed committees
- Confirm the desired setting, date, and location
- Decide on an agenda that both interests / moves people and accomplishes goals
- Make your mobilization plan to get the desired # of people (and key people)
- Prepare outreach materials: flyers, posters, internet postings,
- Review your YPCP and improve any areas for the presentation and handouts
- Confirm invites and make a list: "confirmed," "maybe," or "no"
- Finalize all materials, resources, speakers, and loose ends
- Confirm specific assignments for the event
- Host the event and present your amazing plan of action!!

# Step 10...

## Take further action to accomplish the plan, including writing a letter to the alderman or other local officials

**Objective:** Figure out together, based on everything that has transpired and everything you want to accomplish, what the next steps will be. Create your plan of action and take the first steps.

**Next Steps:** Brainstorm your next actions together. Start in small groups by making a list of possible actions on scrap paper. Through discussion, prioritize and list your top five potential actions below (1 – 5). For some ideas, look at numbers 6 – 10 below.

10 Most Relevant Actions	Action Details and Ideas for Moving Forward	3 Actions Prioritized
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6. Write the letter or conduct follow-up with elected officials		
7. Create a community pamphlet or brochure (paper and digital)		
8. Conduct inquiries into other community happenings & document		
9. Present your plans to friendly people and local institutions for support		
10. 10. Initiate online and in-person workshops and actions for the YPCP		

## My Top Proposed Solution & Action

After discussion, I say lets focus on / because \_\_\_\_\_

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I feel strongly about this (out of 10 – with 1 the lowest)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Main Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Target: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible First Action \_\_\_\_\_

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Our Potential to Make the Change (out of 10)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

## My Top Proposed Solution & Action

After discussion, I say lets focus on / because \_\_\_\_\_

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I feel strongly about this (out of 10 – with 1 the lowest)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Main Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Target: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible First Action \_\_\_\_\_

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Our Potential to Make the Change (out of 10)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

## My Top Four Proposed Solutions & Actions

After discussion, I say lets focus on / because \_\_\_\_\_

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I feel strongly about this (out of 10 – with 1 the lowest)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Main Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Target: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible First Action \_\_\_\_\_

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Our Potential to Make the Change (out of 10)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

## My Top Proposed Solutions & Actions

After discussion, I say lets focus on / because \_\_\_\_\_

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I feel strongly about this (out of 10 – with 1 the lowest)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Main Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Target: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible First Action \_\_\_\_\_

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Our Potential to Make the Change (out of 10)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1