

# NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM



## CITY BY DESIGN

This lesson was created as a supplement to the *City by Design* program at the National Building Museum. It is designed to be used in your classroom independently, or as an activity before or after a school program at the Museum. For more information about and to register for the National Building Museum's school programs, visit <http://go.nbm.org/schoolvisit>.

The *City by Design* program introduces kindergarten through sixth grade students to city planning. It encourages young people to explore the complexity of cities and helps them understand the impact of people's everyday decisions on the places where they live, work, and play.

### About the National Building Museum

The National Building Museum is America's leading cultural institution dedicated to advancing the quality of the built environment by educating people about its impact on their lives. Through its exhibitions and educational programs, including innovative curricula for students, as well as online content and publications, the Museum tells the stories of the world people design and build.

The Museum is an independent, non-profit institution and is located in a historic landmark structure at 401 F Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001. Connect with the Museum online at [www.nbm.org](http://www.nbm.org), on Twitter at @BuildingMuseum, and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalBuildingMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/NationalBuildingMuseum).

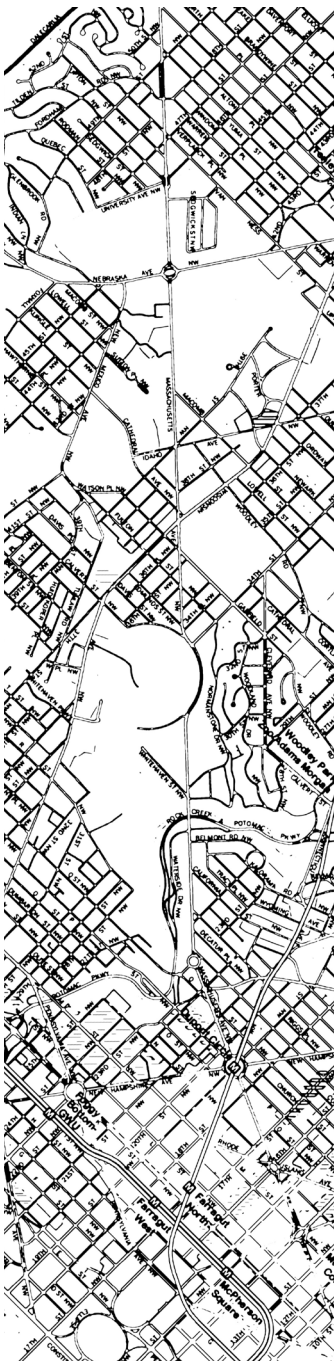
# My Perfect City

National Standards of Learning: Science – F; Social Studies – 1, 2, 4, 7, 10; Tech Lit– 18, 19, 20; Visual Arts – 3

Duration: One to two class periods; one to two hours

## Overview

What makes a good city? What are all the parts of a city? How do city leaders decide what to put in a city? In today's fast-paced world we don't often take the time to slow down and think about what would make the places we live better places. In this lesson students slow down and evaluate their own city, thinking about how it serves their needs. Students are then challenged to come up with a proposal for an ideal city.



## Objectives

Students will:

- Identify functions and places that people need and want in a city;
- Identify issues facing modern cities, such as pollution, traffic, transportation, waste disposal, and urban sprawl; and
- Propose solutions for environmentally-friendly and livable cities.

## Materials

- Student worksheet
- Paper
- Pencils
- Coloring pencils/ markers/ crayons

## Teacher Prep

- Copy student worksheets, one for each group of four. You may also choose to use blank sheets of paper instead.

## Vocabulary

- City services
- Infrastructure
- Ideal
- City planner
- City

# Lesson Plan

## 1. City Services & Infrastructure: Thinking About Necessities

- Explain to students that today they're going to come up with some ideas for the perfect city. But before they do that they need to define the word "city." Ask the students to think about how a city is different from a town or village. Which is bigger in area? In population? A town or village may have the same amount of space but it has fewer people living in that space than in a city. What are some buildings that might be found in a city but not in a town or village? Sports arena, large apartment buildings, colleges or universities, hospital, main subway terminal, train station, etc.
- Ask the students to think about what things in their city they use everyday? What do they need to survive? How does the city provide some of these services? What is absolutely necessary to make a city livable? Many of these things are part of the infrastructure and services that the city government provides or asks private companies to provide. In a town or villages these services are provided through the county government. Explain some of the basic services that cities typically provide: sanitation, water and drinkable water, schools, public transportation, gas, electricity, cable television and phone service (see table at end of lesson plan).

## 2. Your City: Good or Bad?

- Now using the information just discussed, ask students to think about what's good or not so good about the city they live in. Ask students to think about their city (or nearest city). What are some of the positive things about living in it? What are some of the negative things about living in it? Divide students into small groups and have them list the positive and negative aspects of their city on the student worksheet (or on a blank sheet of paper). Then combine their answers to create a class master list.

## 3. What Would Make a Great City?

- Looking at the list of things students don't like about their city, ask students what could be done to improve the city. What would make their city a great, amazing or perfect city? Have students draw a picture, write a story, or create a poster promoting and showing how they changed the city into a perfect city.

## 4. Presentations and Discussion

- Have students present their perfect city to the rest of the class. As a group discuss some of the common themes among the students' ideas of what a perfect city might be. Conclude with explaining that city planners need to think about creating ideal or perfect cities that include what citizens need and what they want. City planners need to consider how each building will be used and how to make the whole city as efficient and effective as possible.

<b>Infrastructure and Services Comparison</b>	
<b>Services</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>
Garbage collection (Solid-waste removal)	Landfill, Recycling plant/center
Telephone/Internet/Cable TV	Phone lines, Telephone company
Clean water	Water treatment plant, Water system, Pipes to access water
Electricity	Power plant, Power lines, Transformer stations
Transportation	Highways, Roads, Bridges, Airports, Bus, Rail, Subway tunnels
Waste-water removal	Sewage system, Sewage treatment plant
Education	Schools, Colleges, Training centers
Health care	Hospitals, Doctor's offices

