

# UrbanPlan

## UrbanPlan in Your Classroom

Engaging Students in Neighborhood Development through Project-Based Learning

Now more than ever, teachers are looking for engaging new content that works in person and online to capture students' undivided attention. With UrbanPlan, students learn how neighborhoods get built and see inside the complex considerations that go into every street corner. Then, they put that knowledge into action, working side-by-side to reshape a neighborhood!

**Tap into your students' curiosity and help students build new skills with UrbanPlan.**



[urbanplan@uli.org](mailto:urbanplan@uli.org) | [uli.org/up](http://uli.org/up) | [#urbanplan](https://twitter.com/urbanplan)

## What is UrbanPlan?

UrbanPlan harnesses the power of project-based learning to help high school students learn about the complex nature of land use decisions and the role each of us plays in creating better communities. Along the way, students enrich their academics, think critically, and gain practical and professional skills to take with them to their university, the workplace, and beyond.

## How Does UrbanPlan Work?

Through the 15-class-hour curriculum, students engage with all aspects of land use decisions, including design, economic, and social considerations. Here's how it works:

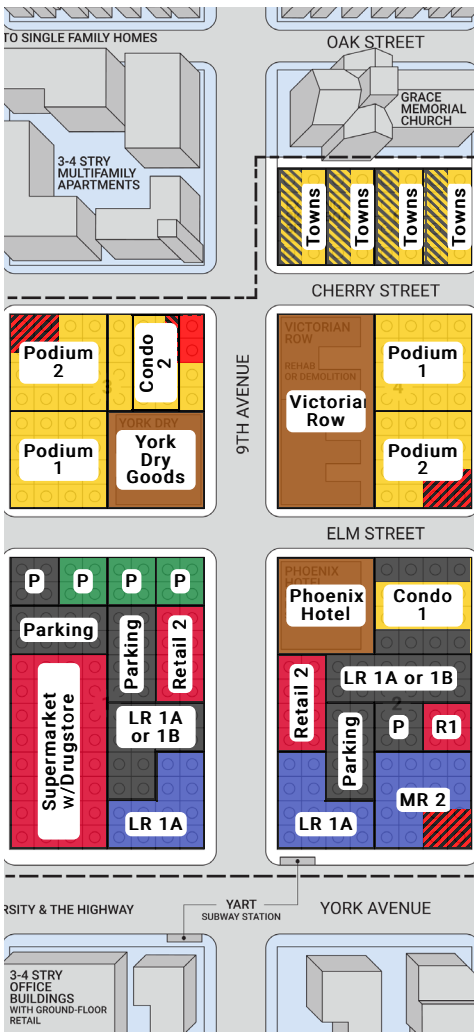
- Student teams form "development firms" and are tasked with responding to a request for proposals for the development of a disinvested neighborhood in a fictional city. Each member of the team is assigned a role: financial analyst, marketing director, environment and equity director, neighborhood liaison, or site planner.
- Each team collaborates on the proposal, working through challenging financial, social, political, and design issues; developing a pro forma; and building real models to bring a redevelopment vision to life.
- Students are visited twice by industry professionals who serve as facilitators to guide students in the critical assessment of their vision, site plans, and financials.
- The teams use their final site plan and pro forma to pitch to a "City Council" of volunteer industry professionals, and one team wins the contract!

## Incorporating UrbanPlan into Your Curriculum

As a teacher, you have a lot to teach and a limited time to teach it. We get it. That's why this program packs so much information and skills building into just 15 classroom hours or a 1-2 day workshop while making it flexible to fit your school's unique needs. Your ULI District Council liaison will help seamlessly integrate UrbanPlan into your lesson plans.

## Learn More about UrbanPlan

For more information about the program and how to enhance your curriculum with UrbanPlan, visit [www.urbanplan.org](http://www.urbanplan.org) or contact [urbanplan@uli.org](mailto:urbanplan@uli.org).



# UrbanPlan at a Glance

## Subject Alignment

UrbanPlan aligns best with standards in economics, government, geography, and business studies, as well as design- or public policy focused academic programs.

## Duration

The program is built as a 15-hour study unit or a 1-2 day workshop with the City Council typically an additional 2-3 hour event.

## Cost

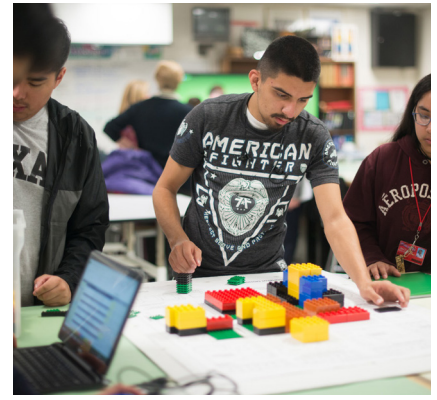
There are no costs to the school to bring UrbanPlan to your classroom.

## Scheduling

UrbanPlan is a flexible program that can be tailored to your class schedule and the standardized testing schedule.

## Preparation

Teachers and volunteers receive training to prepare for delivering UrbanPlan, including the program materials and tools, and additional resources if delivery will be partially or entirely remote.



## Volunteers Make UrbanPlan Possible

**Trained volunteers serve in the classroom as facilitators or as members of a mock City Council for final student presentations.** They are tasked with challenging students to think more critically about the UrbanPlan issues and the specific responsibilities of their roles. Volunteers also get to enjoy professional development and knowledge sharing while interacting with other mission-oriented professionals and making a positive impact on the next generation of citizens.

### Facilitators

The role with the greatest impact, most responsibility, and least time commitment is of facilitator. Facilitators meet twice with student teams during the project. They challenge students to think more critically about UrbanPlan issues and the specific responsibilities of their respective roles. Facilitators draw deeply on professional experience and are rewarded by creating excitement and inspiration in students for the urban development process.

### City Council

Being on the mock City Council is a fun volunteer opportunity, particularly for those who have sat on the other side of the table. Effective City Council members have development project experience, previously presented RFPs to city councils or planning boards, and have the time and willingness to learn the details of the UrbanPlan project case.

## What teachers and students are saying about UrbanPlan

### Students are saying . . .

*"I came into this class expecting nothing more than a ton of worksheets and a small, short speech at the end. I was wrong. UrbanPlan is a well-put-together process to work as a team and develop a wonderful project. **This was the greatest experience of my high school career.**"*

*"I now appreciate how much effort and discussion is put into every square block."*

*"I learned a lot about all the different voices that go into making or designing a neighborhood or district, and I learned about the importance of compromise."*

### Teachers are saying . . .

***"The benefits of UrbanPlan are endless.** Kids get to participate in a truly unique learning experience that is the best group-oriented lesson I have ever seen. I can honestly say I have never seen kids get so pumped up about doing something."*

—Shannon Corcoran, economics teacher, Desert Vista HS, Phoenix, AZ

***"UrbanPlan is an invaluable tool in the classroom.** It is common core standards in action as students are required to read and absorb a large amount of material, develop their critical thinking skills, and collaborate to develop a viable plan to present to City Council. My students often comment that UrbanPlan is one of the most worthwhile experiences they have had in school."*

—Virginia Meller, business teacher, St. Raymond School for Boys, Bronx, NY

*"Students not only had hands-on experiences with the content, but they also practiced other critical skills such as cooperative work production, articulating reasoning behind decisions, and public speaking. **Students were so engaged with the project that they didn't realize how much they were learning.**"*

—Amanda Geiger, economics teacher, Leon HS, Tallahassee, FL

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