



## Eye Opener Worksheet 3

### Does Your Community Give You A Sense Of Place?

Albuquerque Bernalillo County has many small sections and communities. Some of them have very special character and identity. It is sometimes difficult to pinpoint what makes them unique, but most people are aware of the feeling of these places. This indefinable something is often called a *Sense of Place*.

Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the word community

Check the name of the community in which you live. If it is not listed below, add the name in the blank space at the bottom of the list.

_____ South Valley	_____ North Valley	_____ Martineztown
_____ Barelas	_____ Downtown	_____ West Gate
_____ Huning Highland	_____ Country Club	_____ Los Ranchitos
_____ Paradise Hills	_____ Taylor Ranch	_____ West Mesa
_____ La Mesa	_____ Uptown	_____ Sandia Heights
_____ Kirtland	_____ Tijeras	_____ University Heights
Other _____		

Find out how your community name was derived.

How long has your family lived in your community?

Is your community considered \_\_\_\_\_ urban \_\_\_\_\_ suburban \_\_\_\_\_ rural?

What kind of government does your community have? Has there been any attempt to establish a separate local government?

What are some ways in which your community is like other parts of Bernalillo County?

In what ways is your community special, or different, from other parts of Bernalillo County (natural environment, architectural styles, landscaping, cultural traditions).

Can you walk or bike to any of the places listed below?

_____ park	_____ supermarket	_____ shopping center
_____ place to buy ice cream	_____ bosque river	_____ movies
_____ City Hall	_____ church or synagogue	_____ library
_____ restaurants	_____ post office	_____ ball field

What kinds of houses do most people in your community live in? (Check one or several.)

_____ high rise apartments	_____ private homes	_____ garden apartments
_____ farms	_____ townhouses	

Where do people walk in your community?

Where do people sit outside in your community?

What are the historical sites in your community?

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Do you think your community is an interesting place in which to live?

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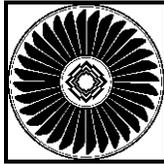
How do the people in your community do things together to improve the place or to have fun?  
(Block parties, festivals, civic improvement associations, etc.)

In what ways would you like to see your community changed?

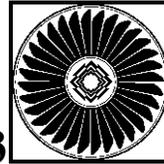
Do you think your community has a Sense of Place?



Write a poem, essay, or letter to a friend describing how it makes you feel.



## Eye Opener Activities 3



### Community History



Research your community's history.

When was it settled?

Who were its early leaders?

How did the community get its name?

Is it considered an established area or a developing area?

Within your community, do you have adequate open space and public facilities?

Are you dependent upon the automobile for transportation, or can you walk, bike, or take a bus to many of the places you want to go?

Does your family shop in a strip shopping center, in a small shopping area within your community, or in a major shopping mall farther from your home?

Has your community become a better place to live now than it was in its earliest days? On what do you base your opinion?



### Cognitive Map

Draw a *cognitive map* of your community. A cognitive map is one which shows an area as you see and remember it. Include all the places which are special to you. Write notations on the map about your feelings for some of these places or your experiences with them

In what ways are the cognitive maps of different students in the class similar? Different?

What, if any, significant differences in scale or perception exist between the your cognitive maps and real map of the community?

Which feature of the community does the class mention with the greatest frequency?

## Early Local Community Landmarks

Using a map of your local community, locate the sites of early landmarks such as:  
the first school

the first church

an original major business

an early home

the first park

Do any of the original landmarks exist on their original sites? If not, what is on the site now?

Does the group that originally used the landmark use a new site somewhere else in the community? Why did they move?

Make acetate overlays for a map of your community. On one overlay, show where the landmarks were originally. On another, show the present locations of schools, churches, public buildings, businesses, and homes. How do you explain the new locations?

## Historic Landmark Discovery Trail

After you have researched your local community landmarks, prepare a Historic Landmark Discovery Trail for your community.

Make a place mat for local restaurants of the landmarks in your community.

Take photos for the place mat of local landmarks.



## Local Economy

Study your local community's economy. Obtain information by interviewing business owners, community leaders, the Chamber of Commerce, and old time residents. Present findings in charts table and graphs. Use a spreadsheet program to help you.

On what was the community's economy based when it was founded?

What changes occurred in the economy base? When? What were the probably explanations?

What is the condition of the community's economy at present? How does it relate to the rest of Albuquerque Bernalillo County? New Mexico? The country as a whole?

Conduct a survey of people in your community. If each of you survey your parents and two others, your class will have close to 100 people. How many people are employed? What kinds of work do they do? What patterns exist among those who are unemployed (ethnic groups, sex, age, etc.). What assistance is available for unemployed people?



## Surveys

### Weak and Strong Community Points

Develop a survey to assess opinions of community residents concerning strong and weak points of the area. Interview people who have lived in the community for varying lengths of time (35 years, 15 years, 5 years, new residents). Include such questions in the survey as :

What do you know about the history of this community?

Do you have many friends or relatives in this community? Do your children live here?

Do you feel that this community has an identity as a Sense of Place?

Do you feel at home in this community?

Do you like living here? Would you move away if you could?

Which of the following activities are available in this community?

food shopping

other shopping

medical and dental services

church

recreation

walking whether for exercise and pleasure or as a means of transportation

What do you see as the future of your community?

How were the perceptions of the community the same among people who have lived there varying amounts of time, like a short period, all their lives, just moved there? How were they different?

How does knowledge of the community's history compare among the various groups?

How do the visions of the future of the community compare?

### Survey of Ethnic Origins

Conduct a survey in the community to determine the ethnic origins of its residents. Compile the results in a bar or circle graphs. Compare the results of the survey to those of the country as a whole and to other communities. Use a computer spreadsheet to help you.

Can any reasons be listed to explain the ethnic breakdown?

Has the ethnic composition of the neighborhood changed? When did it change? What caused the change? How do the residents feel about the change?



## Newspaper of Community Issues

Write a mock issue of "Trends" or "Parade" containing articles about recent developments in your community. These articles should discuss the ways in which the changing conditions are affecting the neighborhood and what may be in store for the future. Include

\_\_\_\_\_ economic hardships (inflation, unemployment)

\_\_\_\_\_ increased land development

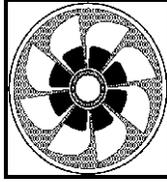
\_\_\_\_\_ crime/gangs/graffiti

\_\_\_\_\_ new buildings or amenities

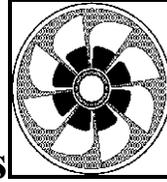
\_\_\_\_\_ environmental destruction

\_\_\_\_\_ pollution

\_\_\_\_\_ historic preservation



## Additional Activities



### Neighborhood Problems

Compile a list of neighborhood problems. Prepare this based on your own observations, on interviews with neighborhood leaders, and on information obtained from newspapers and electronic media.

Which of the problems listed should be given the highest priority?

Are any of these problems currently being addressed? If so, by whom?

What solutions can you suggest for these problems? Who should initiate these solutions?

Select one problem for further study and for student action. After obtaining as much information as possible about the problem, develop your own proposals for solutions. Bring these proposals to the attentions of neighborhood leaders, other members of the community, and, subsequently, to the appropriate agencies.

### Early People in Neighborhood

Research the lives of early pioneer settlers and families in your neighborhood.

Compile the research into short biographical sketches.

Write stories or plays about the lives of these people in early Albuquerque.

Locate and map the community's historical sites associated with the pioneers studied.

Transplant one of the early pioneers to today. Conduct a simulated radio interview with this person. Discuss how he or she might feel about the changes in the neighborhood.

### Sector Plan

Contact the City Planning Department to see if your neighborhood has a sector plan. If it does, obtain a copy and study it.

Identify areas that are poorly planned or poorly zoned.

Replan your neighborhood into the ideal.

Would you change the population density?

Would the environmental quality be improved? How?

Would human services be improved by your planning changes? Explain

Would there be a change in public facilities (e.g., parks, libraries)?

Would there be more or less business activity in the community?

Would the economy of the community be effected? Strengthened? Weakened? how?

### Sentence Completion for Community Overview

Complete the following sentences:

If I could change just one thing in this community it would be...

The single greatest problem this community has is...

If I had \$10 million to spend on this community, I would...

The single best thing in this community is...

The people in this community make me proud because...

In the future, this community...

## Historic Timeline

Develop a historic timeline for your neighborhood. Compare major events in your neighborhood to those happening in the United States and the world. Use the computer program Timeliner for this project.

Did any national events have any direct or indirect effects on the development of your neighborhood?



## Block Study

Choose one block in an older section of your neighborhood for study. Through interviews and research of city records, determine what occupied each site on the block, 10, 20 and 30 years ago.

Do any of the original houses or businesses still occupy their original sites?

What caused the original structure to be replaced? Were there zoning changes? Did some businesses fail or move to new, more profitable sites?

Are there any open spaces left on the block? Are there any plans for these spaces?

How has the value of the property changed?

## Rate your Community

Working in groups, rate your community on each of the following:

Degree to which the community's development has adhered to Albuquerque's Comprehensive Plan

Adequate open space in the community

Adequate parks

Traffic congestion

Commercial areas separate from residential areas

Population density

Water quality

Degree of citizens' involvement in community affairs

Responsiveness of elected officials to citizens

Friendliness of residents to each other

Quality of community shared activities

Relationship between the elderly and the younger generation

Amount of space allowed young people

The schools

Crime

Develop plans to improve those areas you feel could be better and could give more Sense of Place to your community.

## **A New Community**

Design a new community in the Albuquerque.

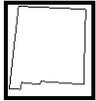
What location (undeveloped land) would you choose? Why?

What environmental factors must be considered? What impact will the new community have on the natural environment and all the services needed to maintain the new community?

What population factors need to be considered? Will this community have school age children? Where will schools be located? What facilities for the elderly will it have?

Construct a model of the community.

Read about Mesa del Sol; compare your community to it. What are its strengths? Its weaknesses?



## **Own Community Map**

Map your own community, either graphically or verbally. Consider such points:

How do you determine the boundaries of your neighborhood?

What public or private facilities help to give a sense of neighborhood?

What, if any, physical features help to define the neighborhood?

What commonalities are found in the architecture?

What similarities exist among people of the community?

What subjective factors contribute to a feeling of community? To an absence of such a feeling?

Is there a neighborhood association? If there is, what is its focus?

How do you feel about your neighborhood?

## **Architectural Bus Trip**

Take a trip on a public bus to Old Town, Martineztown, Huning Highland, or the Country club area to note how architecture helps to define these neighborhoods. Sketch architectural details which are part of our Southwestern heritage or of the Victorian period which characterized houses in Huning Highlands. Work in committees to learn more about the architecture in these sections of town.

Why were Pueblo and Territorial styles used?

Why is the architecture in Huning highland so different from Old Town and Martineztown?

To what extent has the Pueblo or Territorial style influenced architecture in other parts of the city?

## **Diversity of Albuquerque**

Read this statement from the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan.

"The goal is to create a quality built environment which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work area and lifestyle whole creating a visually pleasing built environment."

Discuss the types of diversity which exist in Albuquerque Bernalillo County.

Does diversity enrich a community? If so, how does it compare to the importance of diversity in a natural community? How can a growing community contribute to increased diversity?

What conditions in our rapidly growing city and county might lead toward increased homogeneity? (Look alike housing, look alike shopping centers, expedient commercial buildings, etc.). What are the economic or social reasons for this look alike syndrome?

## Neighborhood Associations

Conduct a panel discussion on neighborhoods and neighborhood associations. Panelists might either be adults who represent government agencies and citizen groups or students. Discussion might include the following:

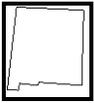
Should neighborhoods be defined by self organization, or should the city serve as a catalyst in determining how many there should be and where they should be located?

When neighborhood identity is not clearly established through tradition or because a feeling of community has developed for other reasons, how can neighbors be defined?

What role should the private sector and the Albuquerque Board of Realtors play in neighborhood revitalization?

What guidelines will be necessary to ensure that neighborhoods, in determining their own specific goals, select projects which are compatible with citywide needs and objectives?

What are the ways for neighborhood associations to provide community input?



## Bernalillo County Map Study

Trace a large outline map of Bernalillo County. Using colored pens or construction paper, mark the major sub areas in the county ( South Valley, Los Ranchos, North Valley, Paradise Hills, Taylor Ranch, Downtown, Westgate, Sandia Heights, etc.). Indicate which of these areas are city, county or independent municipalities.

Why has Albuquerque followed a course of annexation of surrounding land?

What are the pros and cons of annexation?

What is the current status of the city county consolidation concept?

Which sub areas of the county were settled first? Which were most recently developed? Which are growing most rapidly?

## Population Pie Graph

Obtain 1990 census figures from the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Planning Department. Construct a pie graph showing the percentage of people in the major sub areas of the county (South Valley, North Valley, Paradise Hills, Taylor Ranch, Marineztown, South Broadway section, Country Club section, Old Town, Downtown, Near Heights, Northeast Heights, Westgate, etc.). Use a computer spreadsheet to help you.

Which areas of the city and county have the highest population?

Which areas have the greatest potential for growth?

Using a map or Planning Department figures to determine geographical size, which area is the most densely populated? Which is the least dense?

## Population Chart

Prepare a chart like the one below. Fill in the population figures. Obtain the information to complete it by contacting the City Planning Department.

Population of Major Sub Areas 1920 to 1990					
Sub Areas	Date				
	1920	1940	1960	1980	1990
North Valley					
South Valley					
Old Town					
Downtown					
Barelas					
Martineztown					
University Heights					
Uptown					
Huning Highlands					
Far NE Heights					
Westgate					
Northwest Mesa					

Under what circumstances was each of these areas settled and developed?

Rank order the population of each of these areas in 1920, 1940, 1960, 1980 and 1990. Which areas grew more rapidly between 1960 and 1990? Why?

## Activities for the Senses and Sensibilities

### Favorite Places

Discuss your favorite places in the community (the park, the mountains, the shopping center, an amusement park, the bosque). Draw pictures of these places. These drawings can be used in several ways.

Transfer the drawing from paper to cloth. Sew the pictures together to make a quilt or a wall hanging.

Make a collage and exhibit it on the bulletin board.

Copy the drawing onto a large mural which can be painted on a classroom or corridor wall.

## Living History

Initiate a local living history program.

Identify, among your friends or relatives, older people who have lived in the community since their youth.

Arrange to interview them either at their homes or at the school.

Use a tape recording to preserve their anecdotes and comments.

Prepare a list of questions in advance to guide the discussion.

## Positive Feelings

Brainstorm a list of words or phrases which summarize your positive feelings about your community. Using these words, create an advertising campaign to publicize the desirable aspects of the area.



### Pen Pals

Establish pen pals, email or regular, with a school in another community in the area. Correspond on a regular basis. Write about things you like to do in your community, where you go to do these things, ways in which you would like to see your community improved, what you are doing to bring this improvement about.

## Biological and Human Community

Define the word community both in its biological and human sense.

In what ways are natural, biological communities similar to human, social ones? In what ways are they dissimilar?

What are some of the communities you belong to? To show these, use concentric circles (home, school, block, neighborhood, etc.)

What are some of the ways in which the people in each of these communities interact with each other?



Write essays about the importance of community to most human beings. What are some of the causes of feelings of alienation and loneliness?

## Other Community Visits

Make a list of areas and communities in Albuquerque Bernalillo County other than the one in which you live. How often do you leave your own community and go to another? To which other sections do you go most often? Which do you never visit?

Under what circumstances do you leave your own community: shopping, visiting relatives, cultural events, etc.?

Do you identify with Albuquerque Bernalillo County as a whole or with your own community?

What stereotypes do you have, both positive and negative, about other areas in Albuquerque Bernalillo County?

What does the word provincial mean? Do you feel that you are provincial in your social behavior?

What ways can be found to build better understanding of the problems and viewpoints of people in different parts of the city?

What are the activities, concerns, expectations, hopes which are common to young people on all parts of the city, and which can bind them together? What are the forces which isolate or alienate them?

Could you start an inter-school organization which can help build better rapport?