

Planning for the Ages

[Activity Book Link](#)

[Award Video](#)



We've all been asked, "What do you do for a living?" and when we start to answer, most people respond, "Explain it to me like I am a child." The Junior City Planner Activity Book does just that! Designed for a 3rd grade curriculum, the activity book explains city planning in a fun and interactive way, by breaking down the basic components through humorous illustrations and follow-up activities.

When Westminster's City Council asked the city's Planning Manager to come up with a way to get the young citizens of the city involved in City Planning, she went to Sean McCartney, Senior Urban Designer, to come up with some ideas. Having been presenting to 3rd grade classes for the past 10 years on the subject of "How a City Grows," McCartney recommended creating a Junior City Planner program similar to the Junior Ranger Program used at



National Parks.

Completion of the 18-page document was all done in-house. Using the knowledge of the Planning staff and McCartney's background as a freelance illustrator, the activity book was drafted, then vetted by local elementary school teachers and curriculum coordinators. Since 3rd grade has a city planning component in their curriculum, the activity book needed to be age-appropriate. The intent of the activity book is not to replace any lessons created, rather it supplements and enforces what the student has already learned.

Inside the activity book the child will find pages that guide them through the planning profession. One of the most helpful pages is the definitions section towards the front of the book because planning tends to get wordy. The following pages touch on a number of subjects planners deal with daily. Each subject then concludes with a fun activity that allows the child to apply what he or she has learned.

Towards the end of the activity book is a section challenging the child help their community by creating a flyer offering to rake leaves, shovel snow or assist a neighbor/family member who might have difficulty completing a task. By instilling a sense of community engagement at a young age, the child will understand what it means to be a good neighbor and a good citizen.

The activity book is also designed to include the child's parents. Once the child has completed the activity book, they present what they have learned to their parents. The parent will then sign the document and the child receives a sticker badge announcing their accomplishment. They also get a signed (frameable) certificate showing they are now a Junior City Planner.

We all can use a little reminder of what we are doing here. City Planning is a fun and exciting career, focused on assisting the community to become the best image of themselves. Not only will this result in a beautiful community, but it will also result in happier people. So why not start at a young age?