



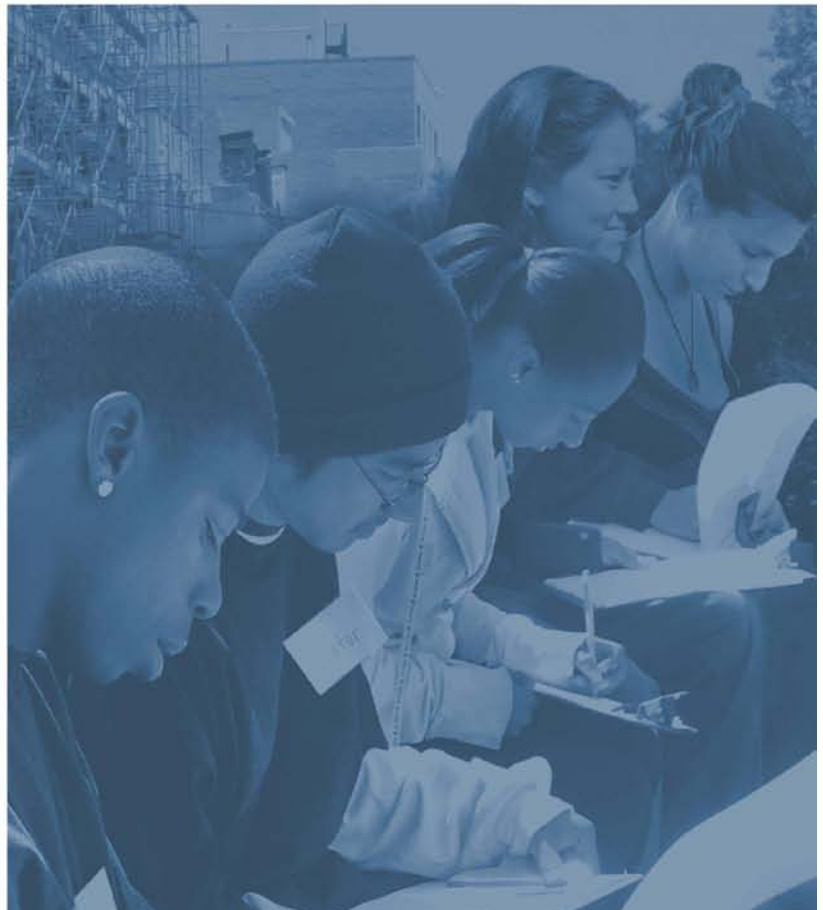
CENTER FOR  
CITIES & SCHOOLS  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



# OVERVIEW

## Learning to Plan, *Planning to Learn*

*Y-PLAN engages young people in urban planning and social change to create healthy, equitable and sustainable communities for all.*

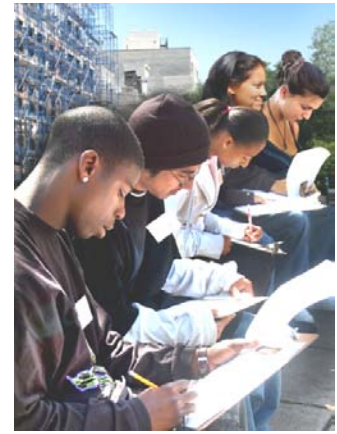




## Y-PLAN Overview

### Engaging Young People and Schools in Urban Planning and Social Change: The First Step to Building Equitable, Healthy and Sustainable Communities for All

Over the past decade, **Y-PLAN (Youth—Plan, Learn, Act, Now!)** has proven to be a successful model for youth civic engagement in city planning and policy-making that uses the transformation of public spaces as a catalyst for community revitalization and education reform. Building on a tradition of UC Berkeley students reaching out to local schools, Dr. Deborah McKoy created Y-PLAN 1999. This initiative continues to evolve as the “heartbeat” of the Center for Cities & Schools (CC&S). As an action-oriented think tank, CC&S is engaged in ongoing research and development of the Y-PLAN methodology and supporting materials.



CC&S is proud to present Y-PLAN to prospective partners including teachers and school officials, elected officials and professional planners, community leaders and social activists. CC&S is dedicated to helping others harness the power of Y-PLAN to improve educational equality and build healthy, equitable and sustainable communities for all. This document provides an overview of the Y-PLAN methodology and invites others to join CC&S in using Y-PLAN to affect positive social change.

### ***History & Background***

Y-PLAN is a form of Social Enterprise for Learning (SEfL) project methodology developed by Deborah McKoy and David Stern at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education. SEfLs are school-based, civic-driven enterprises in which young people identify a need in the community and develop a product or specific service to address that need. A Y-PLAN SEfL project brings together university graduate and undergraduate student mentors, high school students, teachers and school leadership, elected officials and other government staff, private interests, and other community members to work together on a real-world planning or community development problem. CC&S provides educators, civic partners, and other interested participants with resources to develop and implement Y-PLAN initiatives. Building on a long tradition of UC Berkeley students and faculty reaching outside the University walls to engage young people in their schools and communities, Y-PLAN officially began in 1999 as an interdisciplinary course offered by the Department of City and Regional Planning and the Graduate School of Education. Today, CC&S supports Y-PLAN implementation in a number of ways – through the university course, in partnership with non-profit youth program providers, and through professional development initiatives in school districts.

## **Why Urban Planning?**

The field of urban planning is large and diverse. Urban planning covers issues of transportation, housing development, community and social service delivery, environmental sustainability – essentially all of the diverse components that make cities and neighborhoods desirable, exciting, and opportunity-rich places to live, work, and play. The Y-PLAN situates itself in the urban planning field for several unique reasons:

- Planning projects are authentic, inquiry-based learning opportunities that require community engagement and input from diverse users of cities, especially young people.
- Planning initiatives provide important professional contexts and because of the broad and interdisciplinary nature of the field, offer diverse professional trajectories to high school young people.
- Planning offers unique strategies and opportunities to connect cities, schools, and communities.

## ***Goal, Theory of Change & Core Principles***

### **The Goal of Y-PLAN**

The goal of the Y-PLAN is not only to engage schools and young people in planning projects, but also to foster learning experiences for all participants. The name Y-PLAN is a play on words: Why plan? Why planning? Why include youth in planning? The Y-PLAN experience shows that youth can effectively participate in the development of their communities and the physical and social spaces where they live and learn. Unencumbered by previous models or traditional views of “how things are done,” young people use their intimate understanding and unique perspective of the situation to provide innovative and positive suggestions. The Y-PLAN also challenges professionals to explain what they do in terms youth will understand. Uniting young people with local elected officials, private and nonprofit housing developers, city and regional planners, and others seeking to improve their communities forms what Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger call a “community of practice” (*Situated Learning*, 1991).

### **Theory of Change**

Y-PLAN rests on three central conditions that lead to successful youth participation in community planning projects:

1. Authentic problems engage diverse stakeholders and foster a “community of practice” that includes local elected officials, government agencies, planners, neighborhood residents, teachers, and young people;
2. Adults share decision making with young people, valuing their input and giving them a noticeable role in outcomes; and
3. Projects build individual and institutional success that together creates equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities.

Together these three conditions constitute a framework and theory of change for involving young people and adult allies in community transformation that simultaneously provides powerful, rigorous and relevant educational experiences for all.

## 5 Core Principles of Y-PLAN

The fields of urban planning and education cover a wide range of theories and foundational principles. Y-PLAN builds on both of these disciplines while focusing on *five core principles* that together serve as a conceptual framework for Y-PLAN lessons and projects.

### 1. Community of Practice

Everyone involved in Y-PLAN become participants in community planning and social change projects. In a “community of practice” participants learn from each other and see how their perspectives differ while recognizing that everyone contributes something of importance and value to the process. Y-PLAN projects are structured to bring out the “expertise” in everyone, from developer to city official to high school youth to teachers to principals. The participants contribute a variety of expertises to enhance understanding of the issues, and engage this individual and collective knowledge for the community benefit.

### 2. Eyes on the Street

Jane Jacobs coined this term in her famous book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961). “Eyes on the street” refers to the need for hustle and bustle in public spaces to ensure safety made possible by “the natural proprietors of the street.” A vibrant space will attract people to it, and active places are safer and more welcoming for people of all ages.

### 3. Connectivity

Cities and neighborhoods thrive when they foster positive social relationships between people. The physical buildings and public spaces in a neighborhood can encourage or discourage these kinds of relationships. In a Y-PLAN project, participants uncover and analyze the ways that people can connect with each other and the critical ways that the physical surroundings support these relationships.

### 4. People vs. Place

Once we understand the importance of connectivity of people and places, our visions and proposals for change can examine both the people that use these spaces, as well as the design of these places. While city planning often focuses on the “bricks and mortar” construction of houses, streets, and parks, we must balance that with investments in social infrastructure-- such as community programs, education, and jobs. Y-PLAN projects emphasize the striking of a balance between investments in physical places and social relationships is critical when the ultimate goal is to create vibrant cities and quality schools.

### 5. Place Memory

The concept of place memory reveals the reciprocal effects of place and identity. Developed by Dolores Hayden, this concept tells us that people’s identity is deeply rooted in places in which we live, work, study and play. Thus, places hold “memory” of their inhabitants. Yet, rarely are individual and community identities and connections to place made explicit and seen as a resource when in planning for the transformation of public places. Y-PLAN projects make explicit the place memory of each participant and honors personal and collective experiences as key “data” in developing plans for the future.

## ***“Mapping into Action” – The Y-PLAN Methodology at a Glance***

Y-PLAN’s portfolio of activities is divided into *five modules* that guide participants through their projects and ensure that students understand what they have done and how it relates to both their education and the community. When working with new partners, CC&S customizes its activities depending on existing resources, local context, and perceived needs.

### **Module 1: Start up**

- Introductions
- Agreements
- Y-PLAN Framework
- Creating a Timeline

### **Module 2: Making Sense of the City**

- Introduction to Urban Planning
- Mapping People, Places and Power
- Preparing to Make the Case
- Making the Case

### **Module 3: Into Action—Re-visioning Our Future**

- Sources of Inspiration
- Visioning
- Understanding Physical, Fiscal, and Political Constraints
- Making a Plan

### **Module 4: Going Public!**

- Crafting a Proposal
- Public Presentation
- Proposing Next Steps for Shared Accountability

### **Module 5: Looking Forward, Looking Back**

- Assessment and Evaluation
- Short- and Long-Term Next Steps

1



Identify strengths



Frame questions

### Start Up

What are the challenges we seek to address?



Connect cities and schools



Create roadmap



Identify adult allies



## Y-PLAN Roadmap

...creating equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities for all.

2



Health



Transportation

### A. Investigate Neighborhood



Walk



Observe



Interview

### B. Collect Data



Challenge assumptions



Look beyond boundaries

### C. Analyze Data

## Making Sense of the City

Tools to map people, places, power

5



Learn from each other



Increase scale of influence

### Looking Forward & Back

Reflect on successes and challenges



Repeat process over time



Generate new questions



Go public with what you've learned



Communicate with the community

### Going Public

Take work to a larger scale of influence



Spotlight success



Take it to the top

4



Build relationships



Knowledge into action

### Into Action

Use mapping tools to move work forward



Share resources



Share vision



Maintain flexibility

3