

Research Hints

- Think about which of the resources listed below might be helpful for your team. You'll also find more specific suggestions on each "Team" page.
 - Libraries (town or city, school, or university)
 - Local historical society
 - Historic preservation team
 - Town or city planning department or engineering services offices
 - Local or regional planning committee or planning district commission
 - Other government offices, especially land management offices (Check your local phone book for ideas.)
 - U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov)
 - Internet (You're more likely to find recent resources online.)
 - Community residents, town officials, and professionals
 - Museums
 - Environmental organizations
 - Land trust
 - Fire insurance atlases
 - American Planning Association (www.planning.org)
 - Planning department at the state university
- Explore your community and see what you can discover. For example, can you find old rail tracks? Homes under construction or abandoned buildings? Do civic buildings have plaques with dates? Are there overgrown areas that once thrived? Old tree stumps?
- Whom might you interview? Town or county employees, neighbors, professionals, and elders might have insight into your topic. Elders in your community can be a great source of historical information. Try contacting a local retirement center or the Rotary or Elks club. Call and ask to interview a "local," someone who grew up in the area. When you make a call as part of your research, first introduce yourself and the project, and then ask if someone might be able to help you learn more. If possible, schedule a meeting

with your contact and explain your project in more detail. Come to the meeting with questions already prepared. Perhaps you might even want to send your questions to the interviewee. Listen carefully and take notes or use a recorder (ask first). Some people will be very uncomfortable with a recorder running—weigh the advantages. Send a thank you card or a copy of the project as a follow-up.

- Try to find information as close to your assigned time period as possible. However, you may need to be flexible to accommodate the resources you can find.
- Some information may be available in ready-made map format. In other cases, you might need to study data and tables or to read text to learn more.

Tips for Drawing Maps

- Remember to refer to the base map when you draw your maps! All maps need to be drawn using the same coordinates and scale, and they should line up when placed on top of each other.
- Draw only the elements directly related to your topic. For example, the Green Infrastructure Team should only draw vegetation. The Zoning and Regulations Team will provide the buildings necessary to see how green space has changed.
- Create a rough draft of your map first.

