

## **Notes for the Teacher on doing the Developing Land Use Policy Project**

Educational Technology, Social Studies and Science Consultants from Macomb ISD and Oakland Schools as well as Land Use planners from Oakland County Government developed this project. The project had successfully been used in Oakland County from 2005 to 2010.

The project is written in a format very similar to a WebQuest. The students' task is to write good land use proposals, which will increase the quality of life in their community and encourage young people to stay there as an adult. As students complete this task they do the following:

- Conduct research,
- Develop persuasive arguments,
- Learn how local units of government address land use issues,
- Develop surveys and interpret their results,
- Developing good presentations skills,
- Conduct interviews,
- Work cooperatively and
- Gain an understanding of the issues involved in developing or implementing land use policies.

This 3 to 5 week online hybrid unit contains most of the support materials the teacher and students will need. The teacher will need to work with their county and local units of government to seek "experts" that will serve as guides to the students as they pursue their tasks.

The unit was developed for upper elementary school students, however middle school students also participated in the project and found it challenging and highly engaging. Teachers have used this unit to accompany their Social Studies Government, Science and English Language Arts classes. The unit is very project oriented and teachers reported that once they got their students started in the project they began to be very much a guide for the students.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt this project for their own use. As the project is outlined in Moodle there are a couple of references to using videoconferencing for student presentations. Videoconferencing (in many forms) was used because the Oakland County land use planners could review the student presentations live and not have to go to each of the schools that participated.

Some of the technologies used were:

- Google presentation,
- Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint,
- Skype,
- Videoconferencing equipment,
- Digital Cameras,
- GIS Mapping tools,
- Google Earth, and
- Moodle Forum, Wiki and Chat.