We Can Work It Out:
A Community Planning Investigation

Part A: *Read the following background information.*

Land is precious commodity in every community. Land use decisions affect people in many ways, including where they live, what kind of work they do, what kinds of transportation systems they have available, and what kind of environment they live in. Land-use planning is the process of figuring out how to use a community's land for various purposes. Planning involves relating the resources and characteristics of the land to the community's present and future needs. Planners try to predict how to use land to accommodate the community's long-term needs, future development, and population growth.

Most communities have a planning process that includes plan formation, zoning regulations, and city/town ordnances. A city/town plan describes the community's goals, objectives, and policies regarding growth and development. Zoning regulations outline the community's decisions about location, intensity, and development of public facilities, and of private land use in other areas. For example, zoning may regulate where parks and businesses can be located or where housing developments can be built. The community might have ordnances that permit or prohibit certain kinds of activities in specific areas of the community. These varied elements of the land-use planning work together as a system to help private citizens and public decision makers address development and growth issues in a consistence manner.

However, deciding land-use issues can be a difficult and controversial endeavor. Communities usually set up and follow guidelines for making decisions and resolving conflicts about land use. Three different decision-making models may be used in a community: the consensus model, the legislative model, and the authority model. The models differ in how much citizen involvement is encouraged, who makes the decision, and how the decision is made.

In the consensus model, a group of people becomes aware of a problem and encourages alternative solutions from group members. After comparing alternatives and consequences, the group determines whether there is unanimous agreement on the major points of a solution. The group then makes a group decision about which action to take. In the legislative model, lawmakers became aware of a problem and encourage citizens and government agencies to become involved and submit solutions. The lawmakers the listen to public testimony about alternatives and consequences. When the decision-making group is ready to vote, the majority vote determines the decision, which then becomes law or policy.

In the authority model, the authority becomes aware of a problem and, often with little public involvement, considers several solutions. The authority gathers information on alternative solutions and consequences. The authority then reaches and implements a decision.

Part B: *The Heritage Oak*

1. Read the scenario about the Heritage Oak Dilemma.

2. Who are the four parties involved and what does each want?

3. What are some points of conflict among the four parties?

4. What are some alternatives you can develop that would satisfy one of the points of conflict?

5. What is the best way to allow each party to be hear and apart of the decision process?

6. What do you think would be the best way to resolve each issue?

Part C: *Your Community*

1. Every city/town/county has what is called a comprehensive plan. Watch the following video for an explanation of what this plan includes. https://vimeo.com/233692196

2. Isle of Wight County is currently updating the comprehensive plan to reflect community and citizen needs and goals over the next 30 years. Answer each of the following questions based on what you would like to see in the future, as you are apart of the next generation living in Isle of Wight.

   a) Would you like to see more neighborhoods developed, increasing the population and traffic of the county?

       a. If yes, where in the county do you feel the growth needs to occur?

   b) What types of shopping need to be developed in the county to generate revenue?

   c) What kind of environment (city, suburban, rural, etc.) do we want the county to become? Or should we protect the rural atmosphere that it is today?

   d) What improvements do you think need to be developed in the county for the future?

   e) Rank each of the following with 1 being the most important to you and your future and 10 the least.

   ____ fish/wildlife habitats   ____ park and recreational areas

   ____ roads for transportation   ____ new school buildings

   ____ agricultural lands   ____ forest lands

   ____ water and sewer facilities   ____ national chain stores for shopping

   ____ greater variety of housing types   ____ greater employment choices