

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT WINDSHIELD SURVEY

Directions:

As you “drive” through Sentinel City, write about your impressions of the community. Take notes about the community using the following questions as a guide. You may discover other areas that you want to note. Include your findings in the community description section of your paper.

ELEMENT DESCRIPTION:

Housing and Commercial Buildings:

- How old are the houses and buildings in the community?
- What materials are the homes and buildings constructed from?
- Are all the houses similar in age and architecture?
- How would you characterize their differences?
- Are the houses detached or connected to each other?
- Are there solar panels? Windmills?
- Do the houses have space in front or behind them?
- What is the general condition of the houses and buildings?
- Are there signs of disrepair (e.g., broken doors or windows, leaks, missing locks)?
- Are there signs of neighborhood pride, such as well-tended yards?
- Is there central heating, modern plumbing, air conditioning?

Open space:

- Is the county primarily rural, suburban, urban, or a mix? How much open space is there?
- What is the quality of the space (i.e., lush green parks or rubble-filled lots)?
- What is the lot size of the houses, lawns, and flower boxes?
- Do you see trees on the streets or a green island in the center of the streets?
- Is the open space public or private? Who uses this space?

Boundaries:

- What signs are there of where neighborhoods begin and end?
- Are the boundaries natural (a river, a different terrain); physical (a highway, a railroad); or economic (differences in real estate or presence of industrial or commercial units along with residential)?
- Do the neighborhoods have an identity or a name? Do you see them displayed? Are there unofficial names?

“Commons”:

- What are the neighborhood hangouts (e.g., schoolyard, convenience store, bar, restaurant, park, 24-hour drugstore)?
- What groups of people tend to gather at these hangouts?
- At what time do they typically meet?
- Does the commons area have a sense of territoriality, or is it open to everyone?

Transportation:

- How do people get in and out of the neighborhoods (e.g., car, bus, bike, walking)?
- Are the streets and roads conducive to good transportation and bicycle use and also to community life?
- Are there major highways running through the county? Who do these highways

serve?

- How frequently is public transportation available?
- Are gas stations available?
- Are there train stations or light rail stations?

Service centers:

- Do you see social agencies, clients, recreation centers, signs of activity at the schools?
- Are there offices of doctors, dentists, and other such services?
- Are there parks? Are these parks in use?

Stores:

- Where do residents shop (e.g., shopping centers, neighborhood stores, outdoor markets)? ****Note: The Bodega is currently the only building that you can go into in Sentinel City****
- How do they travel?

People out and about:

- If you are traveling during the day, who do you see on the street (e.g., an occasional passerby, a father with a baby)?
- Do you see anyone you would not expect?
- Can you spot the purpose of those that you see, such as a door-to-door salesperson or a postal worker?
- Is the dress of those you see representative or unexpected?
- What animals do you see (e.g., stray cats, pedigreed pets, watchdogs, birds, wildlife)?

Signs of community vibrancy:

- Is the community alive?
- How would you decide?
- Are there signs of arts and cultural expression?
- Do you see any of the following: street vendors, trash, abandoned cars, political posters, neighborhood-meeting posters, real estate signs, abandoned houses, mixed zoning usage, people tending their yards, sidewalks in good repair, historical places?

Race:

- Are the residents primarily Caucasian, African-American, Asian, of another group, or is the area integrated?

Ethnicity:

- Are there indications of ethnicity—food stores, churches, private schools, information or signs in a language other than English?

Religion:

- Of what religion are the residents?
- Do you see evidence of heterogeneity or homogeneity?
- What denominations are the churches, temples, and mosques?
- Do you see evidence of these religious facilities being used other than on days of worship?

Health:

- Do you see evidence of acute or of chronic diseases or conditions?
- Do you see evidence of accidents, communicable morbidity diseases, alcoholism,
- drug addiction, mental illness, etc.?
- How far it is to the nearest hospital? To the nearest clinic?

Politics:

- Do you see any political campaign posters?
- Is there a headquarters present?
- Do you see evidence of a predominant party affiliation?

Media:

- Do you see indications of television use such as satellite dishes?
- What magazines and newspapers do residents read?
- What media do you see being sold in the stores?
- What form of media seems most important to the residents (e.g., radio, television,
- print, online)?
- What languages are represented in the various forms of media?

Physical environment:

- Are there indications of an excess of certain types of activities, such as stores that
- sell alcohol or fast food restaurants?
- What sorts of billboards are displayed and what do they indicate?
- Are there many cell phone towers or is cell phone access limited?

Adapted from Anderson ET, McFarlane J: *Community as client: Application of the nursing process*. Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott.