



For immediate release
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KIDS USE GIS TO DECIDE WHERE TO GROW

Interactive Digital Event Draws 500 Future Planners

Portland, Oregon celebrated Community Planning Day on November 13, 2004 with a GIS-based charette for children and young adults staged at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. The kids were given a chance to learn about community plans and how to put them together to secure a sustainable future. Nearly 500 youngsters, ages 6 to 16, spent the day using GIS tools to learn about urban design, transportation, and environmental issues. Portland's event was part of the international World Town Planning Day sponsored in the U.S. by the American Planning Association (<http://www.planning.org/worldtown/index.htm>).

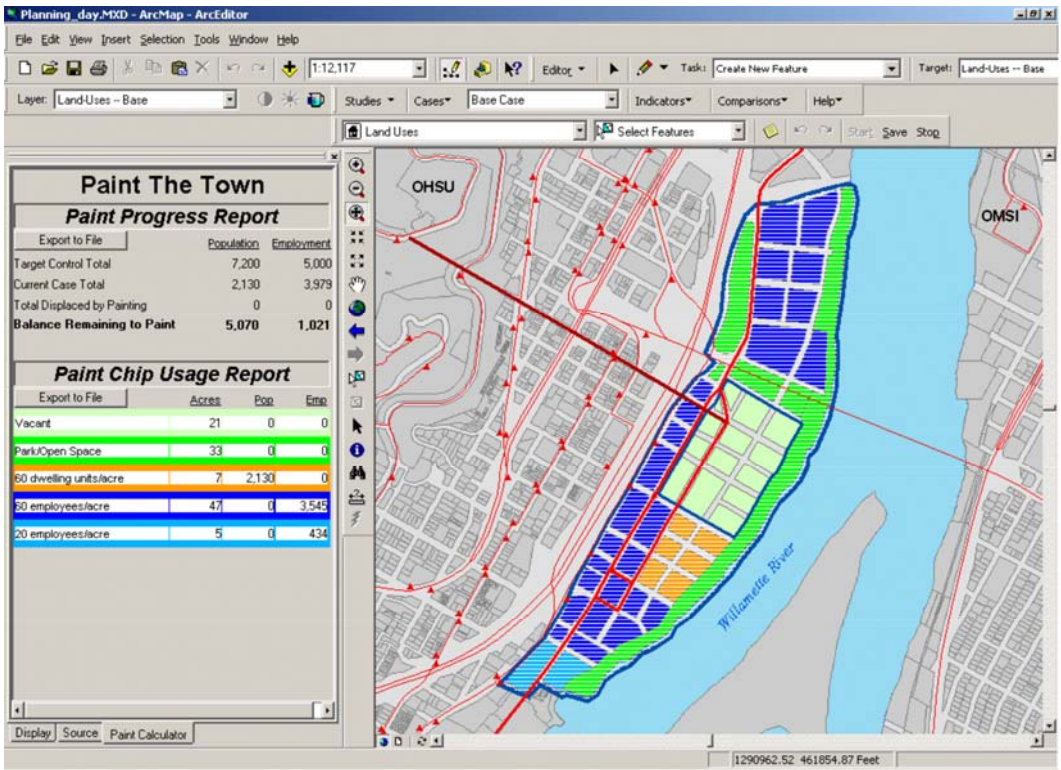
A central feature of the Portland event was an exercise using ESRI's ArcGIS and Criterion's INDEX software that allowed the youngsters to design a neighborhood. Using Portland's South Waterfront as a canvas, the kids applied INDEX Paint the Town software to design a 14-block neighborhood. Each youngster digitally "painted" housing, stores, offices, and parks according to their vision of what a livable neighborhood should be. As they worked, the computer told them how many dwellings and jobs were still needed to reach the area's goals.

According to Professor Chet Orloff, who supervised the charette for Portland State University, "The kids not only learned about their city, but more importantly, how to envision what its future ought to be. And because of their computer literacy, they were able to quickly use the software to grasp choices and results." Organizers hope to make the session an annual event, and to expand outreach to local schools.

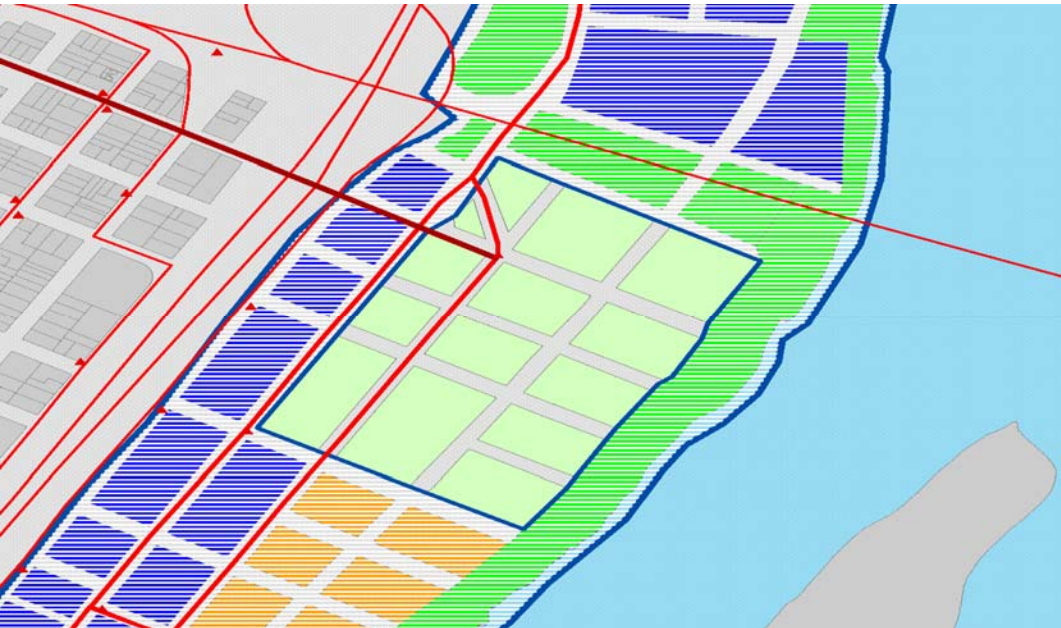
INDEX Paint the Town was provided by Criterion Planners as one of a dozen organizations volunteering for the event. For additional information contact Eliot Allen, Criterion Planners, (503) 224-8606, or eliot@crit.com.



Kids learned about the housing and employment impacts of different land-use arrangements.



INDEX Paint the Town software offered a simple interface for teaching children about the geography of planning, and how communities measure the plans they make.



Youngsters “painted” their neighborhood designs on a 14-block segment of Portland’s South Waterfront redevelopment area next to the Willamette River.

For additional Information, Please Contact: Criterion Planners at <http://www.crit.com>