



## **Environmental Justice 101 Animation Video - Narrative**

### Key Points:

1. Environmental (in)justice is intentional not accidental
2. We are reclaiming real solutions that come from our communities
3. Grounded in the right to healthy communities that we all inherently have

Intention: The intent is that this is the intro 3 minute animation explaining EJ 101 and leads to initiative discussion by viewers to ask “what’s in my community” and “how can we change it”? Get people thinking and talking about their communities.

### Part 1: Introduce landscapes

Start with the big picture- world, zooming into the U.S. Zoom into the general area of the Twin Cities (but could be any city – video has a national audience).

There is a child playing in her urban backyard. There are natural elements present: squirrels, dandelions, clover and grass in the lawn, a bee buzzing around. She is blowing bubbles and the bubbles travel (or the bee?).

Then she is coughing and it pans out to some of the challenging realities of urban living. Cars honking, sirens, maybe someone arguing on the street, empty lots with trash, industrial buildings billowing smoke, garbage not collected (maybe some mattresses laying on the corner), with brown & black faces walking, on the bus, at the corner store, biking on the streets (that don’t have safe bike lanes so maybe also on the sidewalks). Trucks are rumbling by in this neighborhood and more people are coughing. But there is also music (hip hop, ranchera, cumbia, and maybe some old school soul) and laughing. (It’s not all sad in the hood even if it’s not all good in the hood).

There is a highway nearby with vehicles zooming by and we follow one to another nearby neighborhood. In this neighborhood there are lots of parks and trees and even more flowers and bees and quieter streets and lots of people walking their dogs and kids in big fancy strollers and baby carriers. They have a farmers market and designated bike lanes, people eating on sidewalk restaurant tables. But the faces here are mostly white. You first see the “bureaucrat” character here. (play with imagery of this representation, Cecilia brought up fox image she saw in another video, maybe larger than others)

### Part 2: Interaction/Relationship

For transition from neighborhood to neighborhood: A waste truck going through wealthier neighborhood is picking up trash and taking it to the waste incinerator in “Maya’s” neighborhood. An image of how close the neighborhoods really are (for example: Kenwood and Sumner in North Mpls – though don’t use those specifically, just talking about spatially, not too long on the highway), since the vehicle can travel from one with their trash to the incinerator in the other.

The smoke from the incinerator puffs up to a window at City Hall in downtown, through the haze of the puff, we get clarity, and zoom in through the window, where the same “bureaucrat” character is. He is at a planning meeting, with a map on the table in front of him.

Juxtapose “Maya” (the little girl) playing a board game in her backyard, similar to the bureaucrat’s map – he is also “at play”, but he is “playing” with the development of POC/low income neighborhoods and well-being through land use decision making and siting of toxic sites and industries in those neighborhoods. In City Hall he is in a meeting with some suits planning to site their toxic industry in Maya’s neighborhood. Perhaps there are brown people in the City Hall room, but they are suits too, dull in color and not saying anything.

Maya tries to put a green garden on her play board, which appears in the City Hall board game. The bureaucrat pushes it out. Through the split screen, they push back and forth, the bureaucrat overpowers Maya’s garden “play piece” with the toxic facility “play piece”. You see the toxic facility suddenly appear in her neighborhood behind her on a large scale.

### Part 3: Community Power

Community members from the neighborhood come to help Maya up, they sit around and start talking about solutions (images of their community with solar panels, more green space, less garbage, no toxic facilities – images in bubbles as they are talking while looking at Maya’s game board). As they are talking together, being together, they become more visible, brighter, solid. (The music also becomes more pronounced as well).

Community members are coming together to discuss the challenges and organize to fight injustice and create their own solutions and alternatives. Community members are already working on solutions, (perhaps the clothing of the community members in the circle identify them as “makers”, i.e. gardeners, small business owners or in the hood in the background we can start to see the small pockets of gardens, we can see people questioning what is going on and talking to their neighbors, organizing). Community members in the circle together help Maya push through the game board pieces they want to see, and this time, they appear on the bureaucrat game board (perhaps more community people are now inside the City Hall room too? Not sure), and this time he can’t get rid of the community game board pieces on his land use planning map.

Flash back out from Maya’s backyard up to the U.S. through related connected stories of many communities who are working on different environmental justice issues. A common struggle that takes many forms.

---

How we win is left open, but suggestions are made towards unity, working together, cross cultural and intersectional community-centered organizing.