

FINAL REPORT

CLIMATE RESILIENCE TEAM

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FALL 2022

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SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This semester was the start of a year-long project with 4 design teams focusing on a common goal of collaborative learning and creating inclusive and equitable solutions for a specific challenge in different sectors.

Each one of our projects focused on participatory learning and solutions and how they can play a role in overall human flourishing, meaning how these solutions help people thrive and address challenges that will improve their livelihoods. This year, the teams are focused on four subareas:

- Climate Resilience
- Entrepreneurship
- Tech for Equity
- Education

Throughout this semester, each of these teams has interviewed many representatives of these communities to understand their lived experiences and personal challenges better to then come up with solutions that will benefit these communities in an equitable and inclusive way.

With the assistance of co-designers and community members, we collaboratively work together through four phases to help find the right solutions that will have the most far-reaching and tangible results.

The four phases of the Open Design process are as follows:

Understand | Empathize + Define

What are the needs, desires, and hopes for the community?

Create | Ideate + Prototype

What are radical ways we can build to share?

Evaluate | Test + Iterate

What are experiments we can run to move forward?

Share | Reflect + Connect

What are we noticing, contributing, and communicating?

OPEN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

ACTIVE INCLUSIVITY

We acknowledge that power inequities and discrimination manifest in intentional and unintentional ways that are destructive and inhumane. We are committed to co-creating solutions with people traditionally underrepresented in design and decision-making processes, and to advancing inclusive and equitable communities.



TRANSPARENCY

We strive for transparency in procedures, strategies, and interpersonal interactions. We recognize that knowledge thrives in the open, and we are committed to access to information and to sharing what we learn and make by developing openly licensed resources for reuse and remix.



COLLABORATION

We actively encourage each other to accomplish our shared and individual goals, and proactively ensure that each member of our design community feels supported and empowered to do inspiring work. We understand that solving complex problems requires empathetic collaboration across sectors, disciplines, and lived experiences.



UNDERSTAND

Empathize and Define

Climate change has become a global issue, impacting communities all across the world. However, each community's experience with climate change and its ability to adapt varies significantly from one another. Most notably, climate change isn't fair, often creating the worst effects for the most disadvantaged and underresourced communities. At the same time, climate resilience challenges often co-exist and are exacerbated by other challenges, including housing, employment, and neighborhood development trends.

Our team has focused on how climate change is impacting Durham neighborhoods and communities, and what solutions are necessary to create a more climate resilient community. We worked with Sustainable Duke and the sustainability departments of both Durham County and the City of Durham, exploring the following question:

What if Durham community members, local organizations, and policymakers collaboratively develop inclusive and actionable climate resiliency solutions that incorporate the community's wants and needs?

WE RESEARCHED...

To inform our understanding of climate resilience within Durham, we conducted an ecosystem analysis and identified three key stakeholder groups relevant to our project question that we wanted to learn more from.

- Environmental NGOs
- Community Orgs
- Local Government

AND LISTENED...

Once we identified key stakeholder groups, we interviewed as many stakeholders as possible. We developed extensive interview guides and asked about each stakeholder's experience with climate change, how they define climate resilience, and what their most pressing priorities are today within their work or community.

17 interviews

UNDERSTAND: SYNTHESIZE & DEFINE THEMES

1

Trust/Community Empowerment

Community members must be included in decision-making because they have first-hand knowledge of climate change effects but they're often not involved in decision-making and solution-building, leading to mistrust within the community.

2

Differences in community understanding & priorities

Community members need to be asked what resilience means to them in the context of their needs, values, and culture to develop effective and equitable climate solutions.

3

Interdependencies + Co-Benefits

Climate resilience can be strengthened in communities by first addressing basic community needs because climate change is a multi-dimensional issue that poses challenges in various aspects of life.

4

Nature-based Solutions

Climate solutions should be built in conjunction with local and natural resources because our natural environments serve the community in climate resilience and other basic needs.

UNDERSTAND: SYNTHESIZE & DEFINE THEMES

Key Insights we Learned

"We can either do bad things better or good things well"

"If we are going to ask we need to take time listen and take the thoughts that are shared with us seriously and genuinely"

"When I think of resilience, I think of how our organization has survived. It is the capacity to not only live through or withstand climate crises you're suffering, it gives you the creativity/bandwidth/capacity to find solutions. We can't be resilient without thinking ahead and without thinking of solutions."

Insight Statements

Community members **must** be included in decision-making **because** they have first hand knowledge of climate change effects **but** they're often not involved in decision-making and solution building, leading to mistrust within the community.

Climate resilience **can be strengthened** in communities **by** first addressing basic community needs **because** climate change is a multi-dimensional issue **that** poses challenges in various aspects of life.

Community members **need to be asked** what resilience means to them in the context of their needs, values, and culture **to** develop effective and equitable climate solutions.

Climate solutions **should** be built **in conjunction** with local and natural resources **because** our natural environments serve the community in climate resilience and other basic needs.

Validating our Guiding Question

What if Durham community members, local organizations, and policymakers collaboratively develop inclusive and actionable climate resiliency solutions that incorporate the community's wants and needs?

CREATE CONCEPT PITCHES

During the Create phase we developed 3 concepts including the following components:

- Participants
- Approach
- Benefits & Experience
- Challenges

The concept pitches were developed after our themes were identified. At the core of our project, we want communities to be at the center of identifying climate issues that are important to them.

During this stage, we realized our project would only be the start of incremental change.

PROJECTS	DETAILS	OUTCOME
Climate Resilience Neighborhood Guides	Intended to empower neighborhoods and community members to address and bolster climate resilience within their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed prototype out of concept• Work on case study to develop guides
Community and Government Action Committee	The committee will address the lack of community involvement in decision making for addressing climate and community issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenge of funding a time.• Who and where would the committee be hosted.
Durham Climate Resilience Event	Forming connections between groups tackling and/or being affected by Climate Change in Durham to create a united front against key environmental issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Couldn't identify how the event would serve the community, organizations, and government.

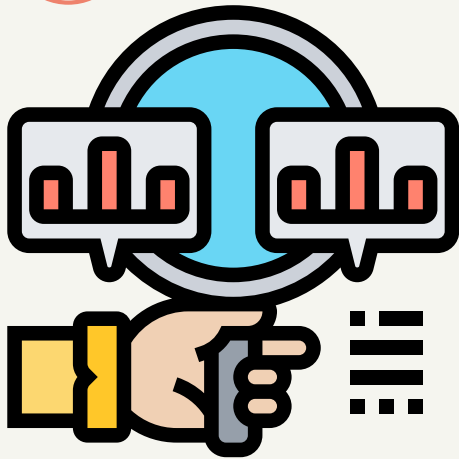
CREATE PROTOTYPE

Based on our Climate Resilience Neighborhood Guide solution, we came up with our prototype to evaluate if this solution would fit. We are doing this by:

- Benchmarking with Neighborhood Improvement Services and Engage Durham to evaluate the data collected during their processes of working with communities
- Hosting a community engagement focus group to delve deeper into lived experiences regarding climate change
- Forming neighborhood guides based on the conversations in the focus group with actionable steps to improve specific challenges

The Prototype was developed once we honed in on one specific solution from our original proposed three that we were looking into more closely.

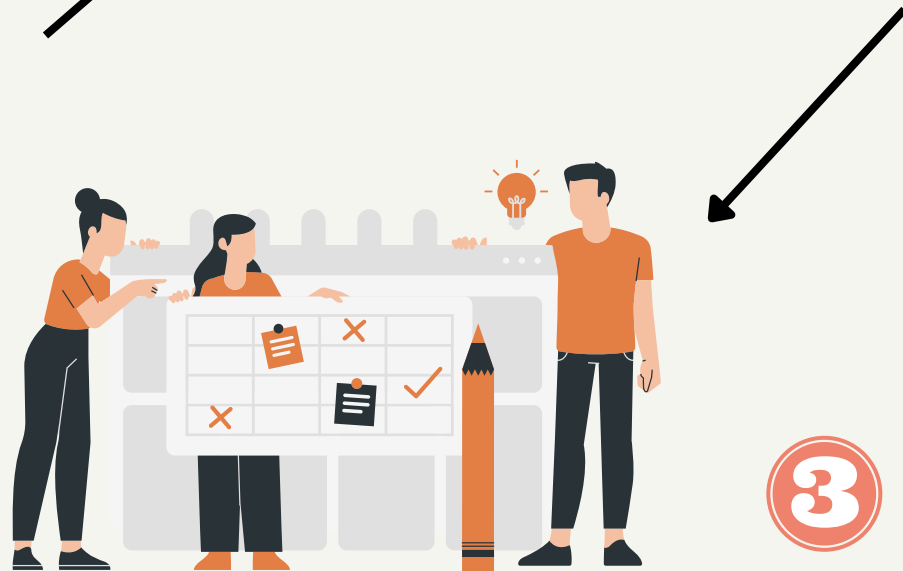
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EVALUATE & SHARE

TEST PLAN

Taking a further look at our prototype we came up with our Test Plan for the focus group. The goal of this focus group is:

- To connect directly with community members
- Identify community challenges and where they intersect with climate change as well as climate resilience



Steps and Logistics of the Focus Group:

Before:

Accumulate past research and data regarding community views on climate change in Durham

A pre-focus group survey sent to participants to guide conversations

During:

Focus group to be hosted in early 2023

Group Size: 15-20

Session Time: 1.5-2 hours

After:

Action steps and deliverables are given to participants following the focus group

EVALUATE & SHARE

INSIGHTS

Throughout the semester, we have become more insightful about human flourishing and about ourselves.

The following are some of the insights we gained about human flourishing:

- Issues are interdependent
- Everyone has a different story to tell
- Lived experiences are more valuable than simple facts
- Everyone has a different definition of human flourishing
- There must be a greater emphasis on communication to effectively combat community challenges

The following are some of the insights we gained about ourselves throughout the semester:

- The importance of listening to other people's ideas and opinions makes for stronger solutions
- The challenge of not immediately coming up with solutions
- Gaining respect for the diversity and interconnectedness of the Durham community
- Recognizing the challenges of working and engaging with communities
- Understanding that we come from a place of privilege and should use that to help people who need it most
- Accepting that we can't fix all of the problems and can only be a small part of the overall solution



NEXT STEPS

A LOOK INTO NEXT SEMESTER

After this semester, our group is looking forward to all the work we plan to accomplish next semester. With our test plan in place, we now plan to pick one specific community that we have been focusing on in Durham for the focus group. With this community, we hope to elect a leader who will not only represent the community members, not in the focus group, but will also bring the actionable steps and solutions back to their community to hopefully implement successfully while collaborating with local governments and other community organizations.

Revisiting our initial "What if..." statement:

"What if Durham community members, local organizations, and policymakers collaboratively develop inclusive and actionable climate resiliency solutions that incorporate the community's wants and needs?"

We hope that these climate resiliency guides will address both climate change as well as other challenges within these communities and that we are able to recognize and form stronger and lasting partnerships for the future with equity and inclusivity in mind.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would not be in the place we are today without the help of our wonderful interviewees, co-designers, and teammates. We are so thankful for the time spent talking to our group about various priorities and challenges communities, governments, and local organizations are facing in Durham. All of the conversations have informed our solutions. We appreciate the help from the following groups:

The City of Durham
Durham County
Sustainable Duke
The Museum of Life and Science
Eno River Association
Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association
Keep Durham Beautiful
NC Central University
Hayti Heritage Center
Nicholas School of the Environment
Duke Children's
Duke Office of Durham and Community Affairs
Triangle Land Conservancy
Trees Durham
Merrick-Moore Community



THANK YOU