Process Report for the Upper Valley Haven

Fostering a Culture of Feedback

Dartmouth Senior Design Challenge

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Background

Our team is tasked with using human centered design principles to identify opportunities for the Upper Valley Haven to better address issues of food insecurity in the Upper Valley region.

Upper Valley Haven

The Upper Valley Haven is a non-profit, private organization that serves people struggling with poverty by providing food, shelter, education, service coordination, and other support. Jennifer Fontaine, the Director of Operations, and Leslie Rimmer, Director of Organizational Development & Learning, are our main contacts for the organization.

Constraints

The Haven has a location-based model, meaning that they can only help people that are able to get to their physical campus. Their effectiveness as a resource is thus limited, especially when transportation is an obstacle. The Haven serves 1,200-1,400 households each month yet reaches capacity at 1,500 households. The Haven's advertising campaign is also limited, so most of its visibility relies on word of mouth.

Our Unique Challenge

In order to effectively address food insecurity in the Upper Valley, we must acknowledge the diversity of user circumstances and help the Haven to better understand the needs of their current and potential users. With this in mind, we are tasked with mapping problems and determining ways the Haven can be more impactful. Ultimately, we want to understand the Haven user's journey so the organization can strategically coordinate to appropriately serve the needs of their users.

The Team

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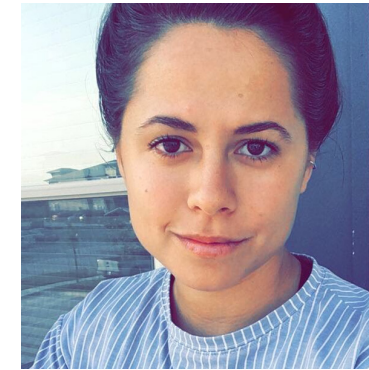
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Methods Overview

Our team used several different research methods in order to get a diverse range of perspectives on the issue of food insecurity and how the Haven currently operates to address it.

Secondary Research

Our team conducted much secondary research in the form of reading relevant articles and books, watching documentaries, analyzing state of the art solutions, and reviewing census data of the Upper Valley.

Analogous Organizations

Other organizations provide similar services to the Upper Valley Haven and address food insecurity in different ways. Our team did extensive research on these organizations to understand their unique practices and how their models could influence potential solutions. Among them are the Greater Boston Food Bank, Vermont and New Hampshire Food Banks, Willing Hands, LISTEN, and Lyme Community Care.

Interviews

Our team conducted over 50 formal and informal interviews with customers, clients, full time staff, volunteers at the Haven, and industry experts. This helped us to get a more holistic understanding of the Haven and allowed us to narrow the scope of the project.

Moments Analysis

Through our observations, data analysis, and interviews, our team has been able to recognize recurring themes which inspire particular questions about the Haven and its operations. We analyzed specific moments that exemplified these key themes with special regard for their implications on food access and security.

The following symbols will be used later in this report to breakdown these moments:

The Moment   The Question   The Insight

Observations

Through participant and direct observation in the form of shadowing opportunities at the food shelf, lunches at the Caruso Café, off campus walks, and visits to social sites, we were able to better understand the operations and relationships at the Haven.

Data Analysis

We analyzed the Food Shelf 2017 Detail Report to illustrate the backgrounds of food shelf clients. This analysis helped us to think more critically about the Haven's data collection needs.

|	Maximum of 5 per category
Canned Vegetables	5
Rice	5
Canned Beans	3
Soups	5
Tuna	5
Peanut Butter	5
Macaroni & Cheese	5
Canned Fruit	5
Shelf-stable Milk	5
Cereal	0
Pasta	5
Canned Tomatoes	5
Pasta Sauce	5

Research Findings

We used our various research methods to understand the scope and to identify the different stakeholders that can provide insights into problems that the Haven community faces.

Secondary Research

Census Data and Maps

We first set out to understand and define a food desert in the context of the Upper Valley. By using census data from Upper Valley towns, a USDA food access tool, and the Upper Valley Transit service map, we developed an better understanding of access to food in the area. We also mapped out food banks and similar resources in the region and determined that they are concentrated near the White River Junction and Lebanon areas, as is public transportation.
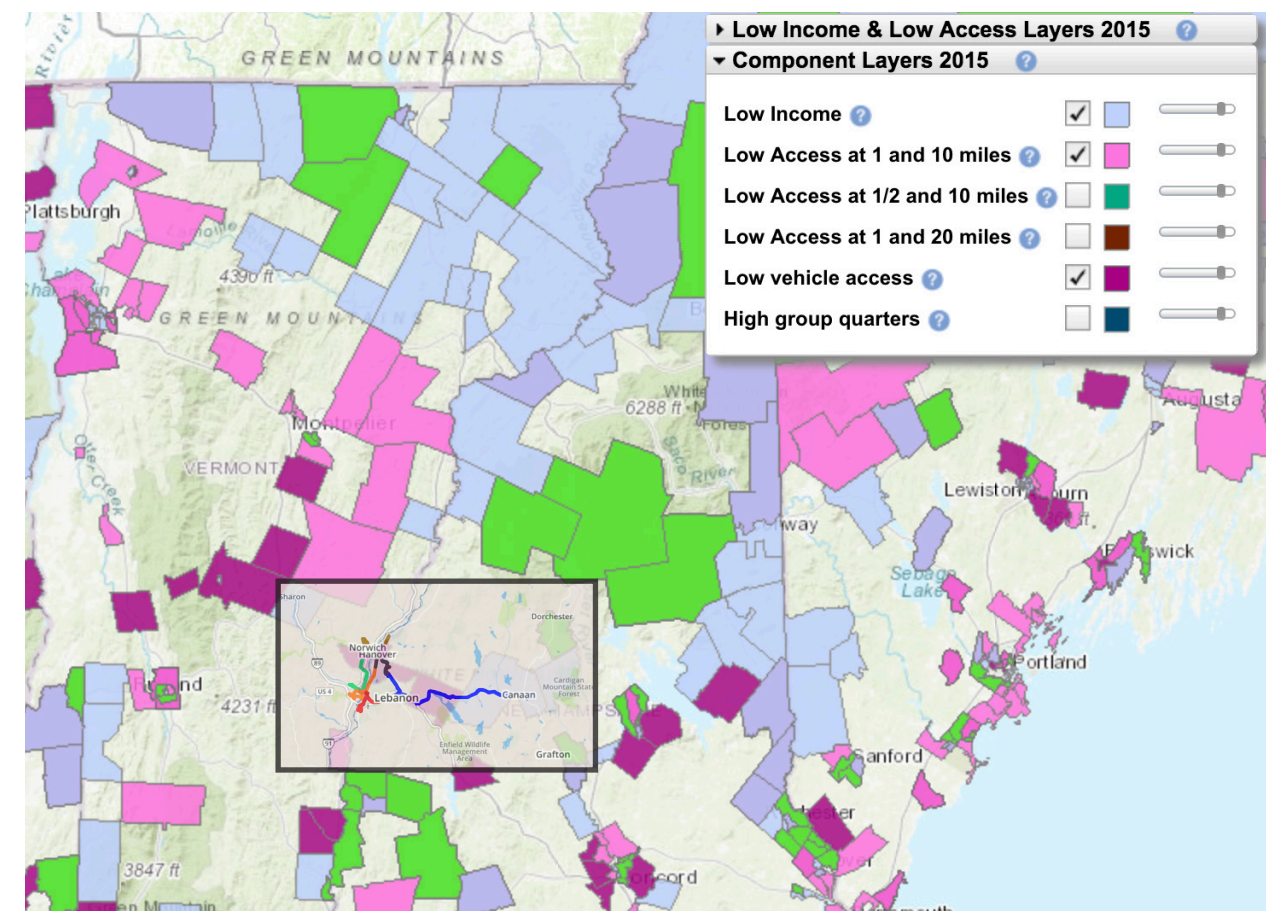
The Upper Valley exhibits symptoms of a food desert due to its high poverty rates and inaccessible public transportation.
Sources: USDA Food Access Research Atlas 2015,
        Upper Valley Transit Service Map (black box)

Social Innovation in Food Systems

We discovered unique solutions and strategies that have been implemented to improve food access and security at different scales in America.

Hunger Free America
This nationwide group works to enact policies and programs to end domestic hunger in America. They gather and disperse volunteers to fight food insecurity through high impact projects.

Greater Boston Food Bank
This organization has 3 impactful solutions: mobile markets to distribute food, patient food-insecurity screenings, and personal toolkits connecting patients with food assistance programs. GBFB also has 3 initiatives which require a high level of coordination between community organizations.

Hunger Solutions
This Minnesota based organization collects census data and food shelves visits from different counties. The statistics of increasing/decreasing visits compared to poverty rates are then put into infographics and used to advocate drive donations and to Congress.

The Open Door Pantry
This organization created a report with standardized surveys to help multiple food shelves assess needs and implement change.

Food Bank Manager
A social tool which records and tracks information about clients for food banks.

Non-profit Strategies for Success

Steps to Change Management
This report suggests that a sense of urgency around why change is needed along with an emphasis on the effects of inaction are important for driving nonprofit change. "A shared vision and action plan will help you weather inevitable barriers."

What Makes an Effective Nonprofit
This report outlines the importance of asking the right questions. "At what level do you wish to make change? When considering where to target your dollars and time, do you wish to impact individuals, organizations, networks, policies, or ideas?"

The Nonprofit Sector in a Changing World
This report explores the growing importance of nonprofits being connected with their government systems. "Do a better job of monitoring the performance of state and local governments to make certain they are accountable and effective."

Outlining Client Needs

Ellyn Satter's Hierarchy of Food Needs (right) emphasizes the importance of understanding individual's needs in relation to food management behavior.

Clients of the Haven are likely functioning within the levels of acceptable food and reliable, ongoing access to food. The Haven is working to ensure that their clients at least operate at reliable, ongoing access to food and are working (i.e. through nutritional programs) to satisfy the needs of their clients, as well as working to elevate them to the next higher level of this hierarchy.

Analogous Organizations

This non-exhaustive list identifies certain organizations that address issues related to food access.
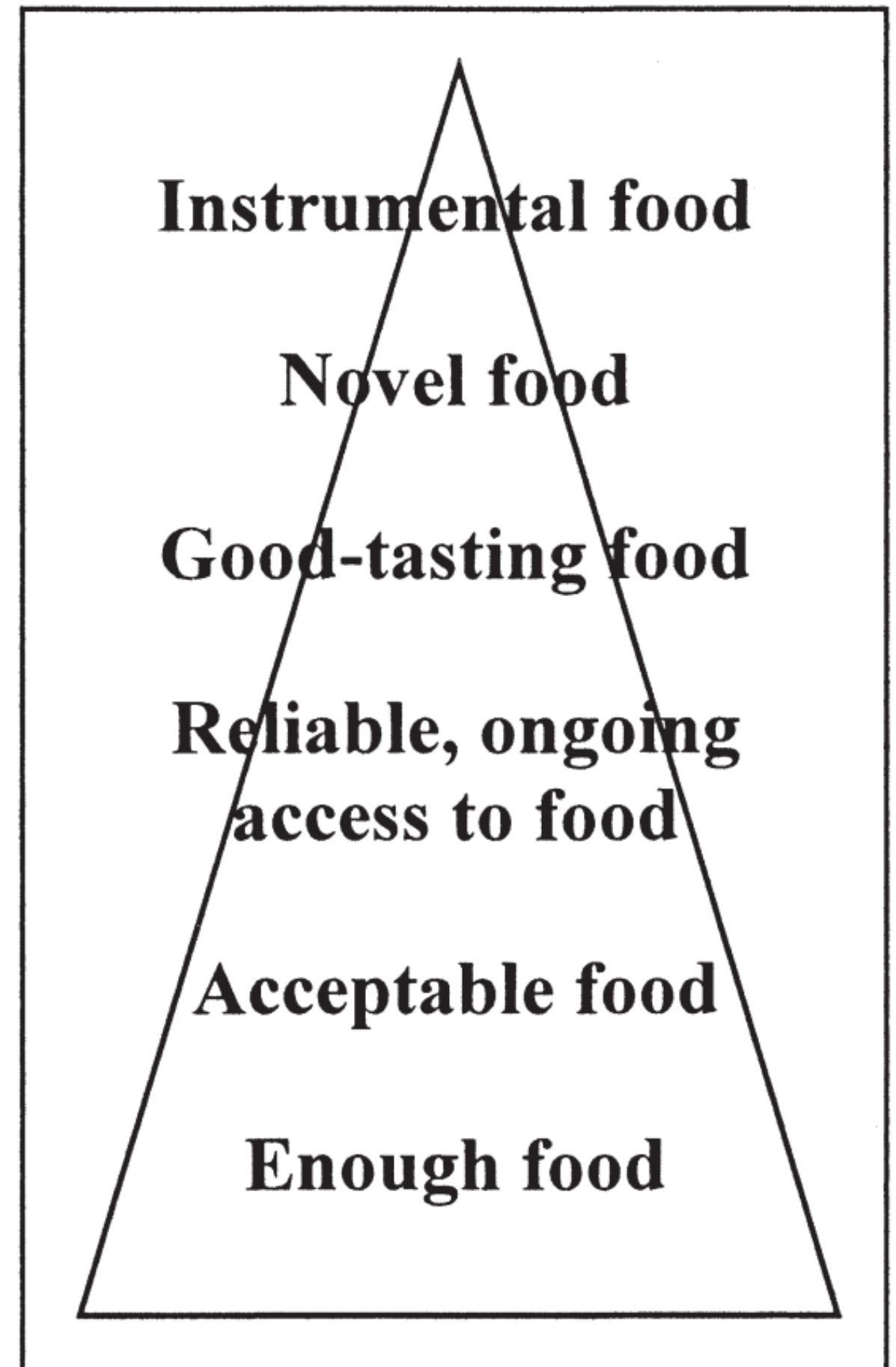
Food Hub

Green Mountain Farm Direct
A regional food hub increasing access to healthy food by delivering from local farms to schools, restaurants, and institutions in Northern Vermont.

Kearsarge Food Hub
Has a mission to reinvigorate their community around a restorative local food system through community outreach, increasing food access, and promoting economic and environmental viability.

Instrumental food

Novel food

Good-tasting food

Reliable, ongoing access to food

Acceptable food

Enough food

Source: Ellyn Satter's Hierarchy of Food Needs

Official Councils

Hunger Free Vermont
White River Council on Aging
Grafton County Senior Citizens Council
Valley Food & Farm
Willing Hands, Inc
Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Community Food Access Programs

BALE- Building a Local Economy
BALE sees itself as a very small part of an emerging global story working for both practical on-the-ground solutions as well as committing to an inside-out approach for fundamental social change.

Sustainable Food Lab
Global network of organizations accelerating progress toward a more sustainable food system.

Transition 5 Villages
T5V works within the "five villages" of Hartford, Vermont to connect a local community and promote local resilience.

Community Harvest of Central Vermont
Central Vermonters who are committed to bringing their community together through gleaning to recover surplus food produced on Central Vermont farms and to utilize this recovered food to feed those who have limited access to healthy, fresh local food.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont
NOFA-VT serves as a key mechanism for engaging Vermonters seeking the opportunity to participate in a just and sustainable food system.

Center for an Agricultural Economy
A collaborative and community-led program which addresses food access and education in the community.

Sustainable Woodstock
Has a mission to inspire, educate and empower everyone to live environmentally, economically and socially responsible lives. They organize action groups and community gardens within the area.

Community Gardens/ Shared Kitchen
Community resources available for public gardening, cooking, and general use. Some gardens charge for plot usage.

Canillas Community Garden
Community Garden at Enfield Shaker Museum
Genuine Local (Shared Kitchen)
White River Junction Community Garden

Interviews

Some of our key interviews include:

Jennifer Fontaine, *Upper Valley Haven*
Leslie Rimmer, *Upper Valley Haven*
Hoyt Alverson, *Anthropologist and Volunteer*
Laleh Talebian, *Research Project Manager*
Jill Vahey, *Grafton Senior Citizens Council*
Elizabeth Carpenter-Song, *Anthropology Professor*
Chris Sneddon, *Geography & ENVS Professor*
Sean Rice, *Tuck Fellow with Haven*
Gabe Zoerheide, *Willing Hands*

Staff and Volunteers

It is essential for our team to understand the mission, priorities, and limits of the Upper Valley Haven's infrastructure. In our discussions with staff and volunteers, we honed in on the diverse goals of the organization.

Big Questions We Heard from Staff and Volunteers

a)   How do people find out about the Haven?
b)   Who is food insecure in the Upper Valley and not coming to the Haven? Why?
c)   Does the mission align with the Haven's goals?
d)   What are the changing demographics of the Haven? Why are they changing?
e)   How can the Haven make predictions to fulfill its duty of serving as an emergency resource?

Experts

We spoke with experts across multiple fields and organizations.

Hoyt Alverson
"Upper Valley Haven doesn't have much infrastructure for large scale housing."
  - People are forced to move from motel to campsite to homeless shelter and back.
  - There is limited opportunity for people to settle and be able to support themselves.
  - The housing issue ties into problems of transportation and the consequent issues of social isolation.
"There is a huge deal about rideshare and social isolation, many people rideshare to the Haven in groups. If a car is broken that week, many people are affected"

Chris Sneddon
"Is it the social network or the physical network that hinders people? How far away are people coming from to reach the Haven?"

Ultimately, the experts that we consulted asserted that food insecurity is not a standalone issue. Access to food is entangled with other security issues, such as transportation and housing. As we contemplate food insecurity and developing a plan to cover the people of the upper valley, we must remember to consider the way different resources can work together to provide a more stable and convenient support system.

Insightful Quotes

Our field research brought up some issues that current users have with accessing the resources available at the Haven.

"There's a huge deal about **rideshare and social isolation**." - Hoyt Alverson, *Anthropologist and Volunteer*

"You can't hop on the bus as a **senior citizen**."
- Haven volunteer

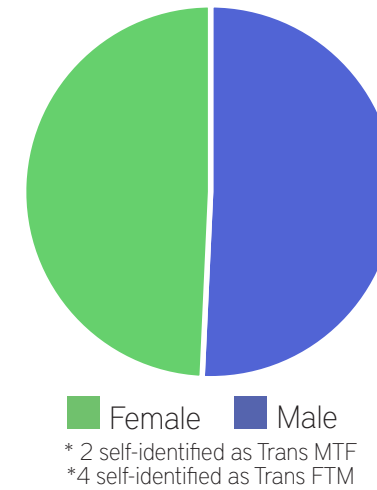"People leave with **more food than they can carry**." - Leslie Rimmer, *Organizational Development & Learning*

"People **don't even know** there's a food pantry." - Jill Vahey, *Upper Valley Senior Center Director*
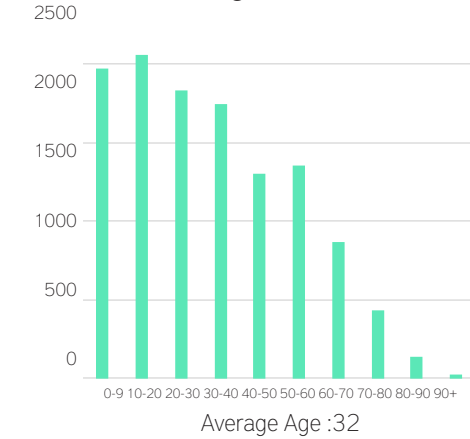
Data Analysis

Using the 2017 Report, we made charts to illustrate certain data sets that we believed would be helpful in understanding the demographics of the Haven's clients. We hoped this data would help us to better understand users and potentially find some unmet needs, however, the data analyses available were not as applicable to addressing user needs as we had hoped.

This demographic data was interesting, but insufficient for need finding. Therefore, we became particularly interested in data and data collection.
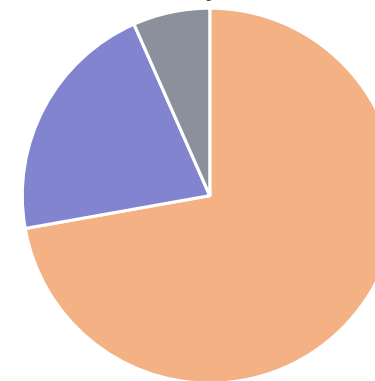
Client Gender Breakdown

Female ■ Male
* 2 self-identified as Trans MTF
*4 self-identified as Trans FTM

Client Age Breakdown

2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0

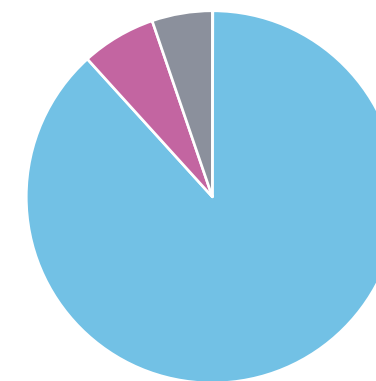0-9 10-20 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70 70-80 80-90 90+
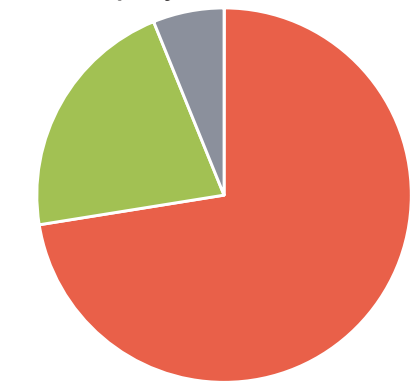Average Age :32

Disability Income

No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

Veteran Status

No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

Employment (Y/N)

No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

Analysis

An analysis of key moments in our field observations.

The Moment   The Question   The Insight

Moments Analysis

We broke down our rich observations of users' experiences into thematic moments that we wanted to unpack and explore. Because we understand the diversity of need and circumstance of the many different people we spoke with, we do not want to create any false generalizations about them. For this reason, we choose to hone in on specific moments and use them to better understand the big picture.

For example, a person who comes to the food shelf only once or twice in a year around the holidays has different needs than someone that uses the food shelf every month, who is different from a displaced person who can't use the food shelf because they have nowhere to store and cook food.

Cliques & Singles

⭐ The first moment that we want to focus on takes place in the Caruso Café. Sitting in the Café, we notice the varied comfort levels of people as they move about the space. A group of five sit together laughing, while a pregnant woman sits alone with her coffee. They are all regulars.

There are people that sit alone and away from others. There are people that confidently comment on the food options on that given day. There are loud conversations, people watching videos on their phone, and some general mulling about the room.
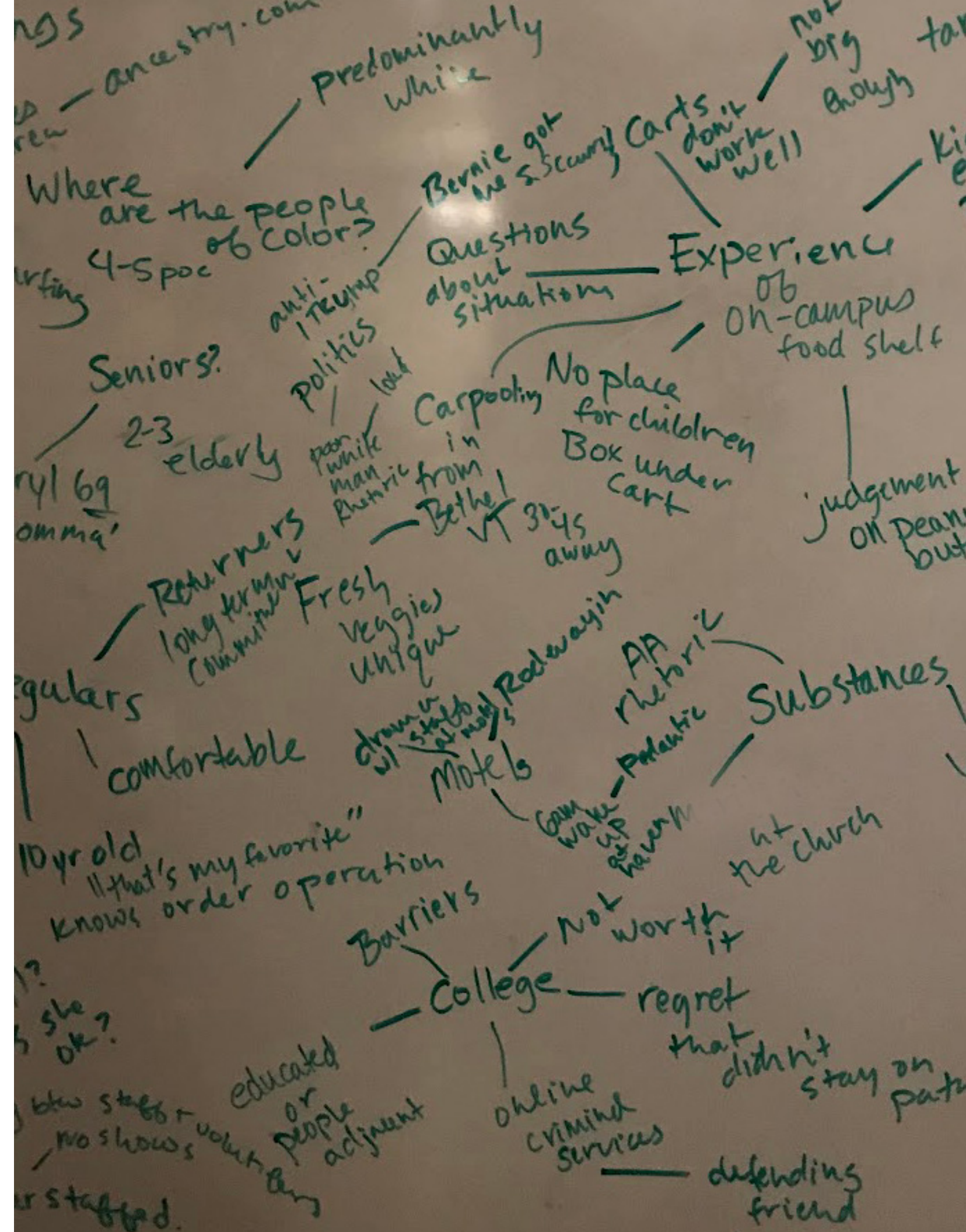
There are many regulars in the Café, however, they each interact with the space in different ways.
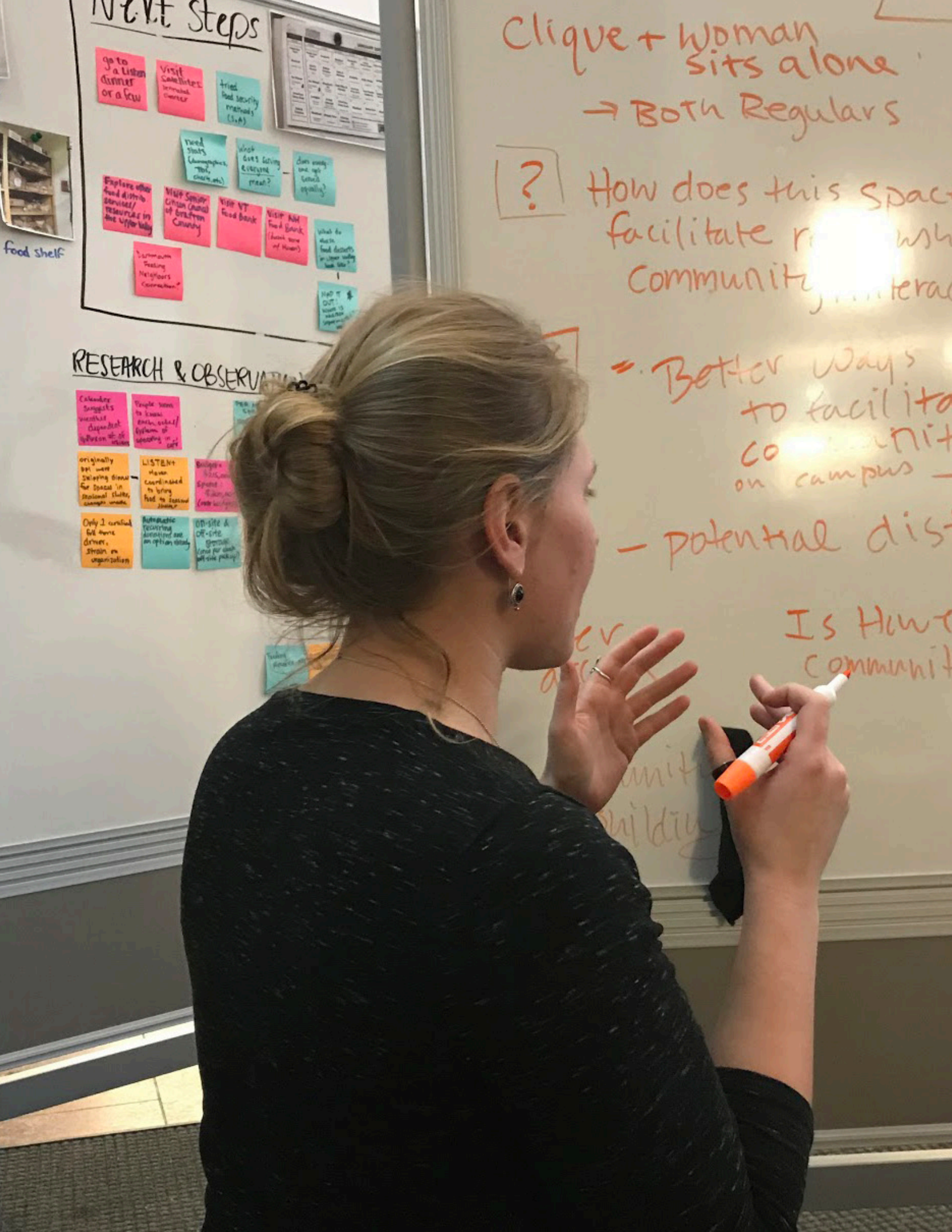
❓ So we asked: **How does the space facilitate interactions, relationships, and community?**

🔗 Our insight: **The Haven may welcome all who walk through the doors, but some users may feel more comfortable in the space than others.**

45 Minute Drive for Veggies

Wendy has come to the food shelf at the Haven for the past 8 years. She carpools forty-five minutes from Bethel every month or every other month, depending on whether her car is working. There is a food shelf in Bethel, but they don't have fresh produce and vegetables.

There is not enough room in the cart to hold all her groceries comfortably. It's a tight fit in her car as well, as she is also carpooling her neighbor Cindy and all her groceries. "We love veggies, don't we Autumn?" Her two year old granddaughter squeals with excitement.

There are other food resources serving the Upper Valley, but access to fresh produce makes the Haven worth the commute.

So we asked: **Are people within the Haven's reach?**

Insight: **Users go out of their way to access fresh food because local resources do not address their needs.**

No Time to Wait

On a busy day at the Haven food shelf, the hallways begin to get crowded. People must wait longer than usual for their turn to shop the shelf. Heather gets nervous in crowds and doesn't have time to wait for the food shelf. She opts to get food from the Café instead.

Barriers to access and other problems may arise at the Haven, but guests do not always feel comfortable communicating these issues.

So we asked: **How are users communicating their needs with service providers?**

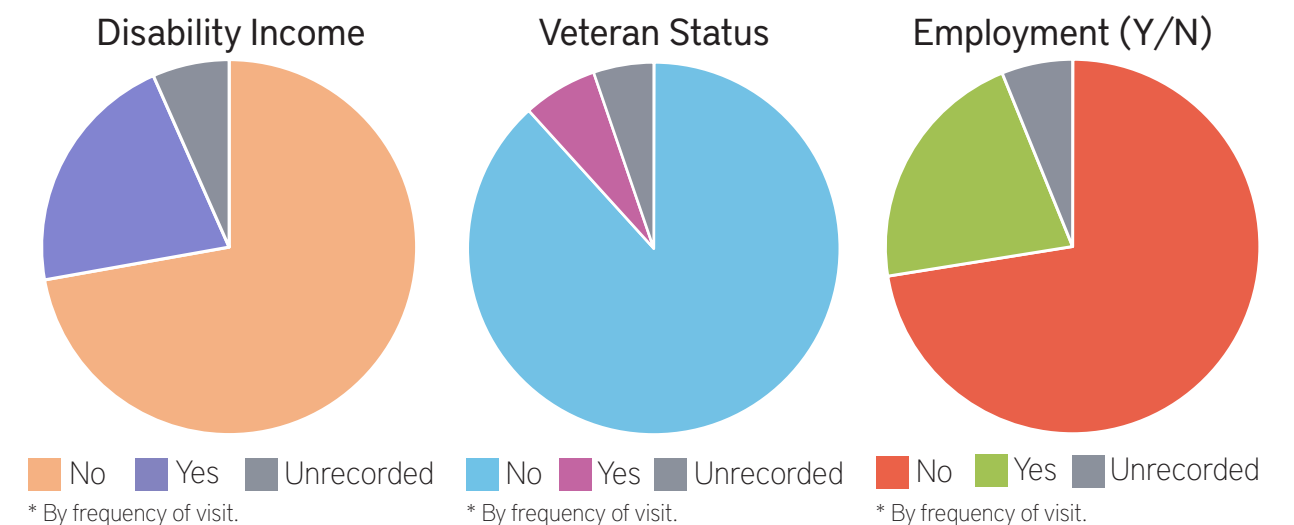Our connection to access... **There is a need for a feedback loop.**

Insights

We used our research and analysis to identify key insights.

Understanding Potential Users

We created a depiction of several different facets of the data from the 2017 detail report for food shelf visits. These visualizations provide an illustration of certain demographics, but this demographic information does not tell us about the needs of the user.

This data does little to help us empathize with the experience of the user in or outside of the Haven.

It poses barriers to fully understanding users' backgrounds and discovering opportunities for improvement. We are left wanting to know more about the ways they access resources, what resources they still need, and how they interact with the Haven as a space and community.

Disability Income

■ No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

Veteran Status

■ No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

Employment (Y/N)

■ No ■ Yes ■ Unrecorded
* By frequency of visit.

We began with the idea that we could identify and locate the unreached user in order to expand the Haven's reach. For example, with more information on clients below the poverty line (derived from employment and food stamp data), we could conduct comparative analysis on poverty rates in specific towns. This would help assess rates by which the Haven is reaching vulnerable communities in specific areas in order to determine what unique circumstances pose as accessibility barriers.

For example:

Poverty Rate Examples in Upper Valley

Town/ City	State	County	Below Poverty	# Affected
West Fairlee	VT	Orange	24.8%	726 | 181
Rockingham	VT	Windham	18.2%	5,282 | 962
Haverhill	NH	Grafton	16.6%	4,697 | 780
Springfield	VT	Windsor	15.9%	9,373 | 1,491
Claremont	NH	Sullivan	15.9%	12,957 | 2,061

Percentage of Clients on Food Stamps by Town*

Town/ City	State	County	Food Stamps	Unreached Pop.
West Fairlee	VT	Orange	26.6%	181 -105= 76
Rockingham	VT	Windham	47.1%	962 - 8= 954
Haverhill	NH	Grafton	49.0%	780 - 72= 708
Springfield	VT	Windsor	31.2%	1491 - 802= 689
Claremont	NH	Sullivan	25.5%	2,061 - 941= 1030

* Inaccurate data. Created for example purposes.

Potential Points of View

We came up with a couple of potential Points of View (POV) to help hone in on the user experience. A POV helps to provide an understanding of the different types of users' distinct needs and their unique connections with the Haven. It helps us sympathize with users and inspire ideas about how to move forward.

Leandra, who has just arrived at the Haven for work and has 4 scheduled meetings ahead of her, needs to understand where the system of operations breaks down in order to use the available resources efficiently.

Leandra needs:

A method to assess and understand user needs
Strategies to deploy resources effectively in response to these needs and issues

Patrick has recently lost his job in Haverhill and needs to find emergency food in order to provide for his family through the upcoming winter month.

Patrick needs:

Immediate access to resources
Guidance for self-sufficiency and independence
To find new employment opportunities

These POV's are from Leandra, a Haven service provider, and Patrick, a potential user. The potential user has unmet needs and the Haven strives to meet them as best they can, however, they are not in dialogue with each other. The Haven hopes to at some point form part of a more cohesive network of community resources and expand to reach more people experiencing food insecurity. But first, they want to understand the community they are currently serving.

Additionally, we are informed by our key moments analysis that...

1. **The Haven may welcome all who walk through the doors, but some users may feel more comfortable in the space than others.**

2. **Users go out of their way to access fresh food because local resources do not address their needs.**

3. **There is a need for a feedback loop.**

> We conclude that user-centered solutions in the Haven cannot be developed if the Haven does not deeply understand who their user is. Without this understanding, we run the risk of developing solutions that are potentially misguided with respect to the Haven users' needs. Thus, our solution focuses on bridging this gap.
>
> We shift our focus to understanding the current user and addressing the Haven's need to better understand their unmet needs.

Overarching Question

Based on the insights from our research and analysis, we created an overarching question to guide our ideation process:

How might we give people facing food insecurity **more agency** in developing the resources that would help them?

This question highlights the importance of the users and their specific needs. As the Haven experiences executive changes, it is essential that their users' voices are represented and understood. We were led to three preliminary solutions which served to guide us toward our final product.

Preliminary Ideas

We developed 3 solutions to potentially address some of the issues raised in our insights section. These solutions focus on giving users more agency, developing infrastructure for a consistent feedback loop between the Haven and it's users in order to get "real answers."
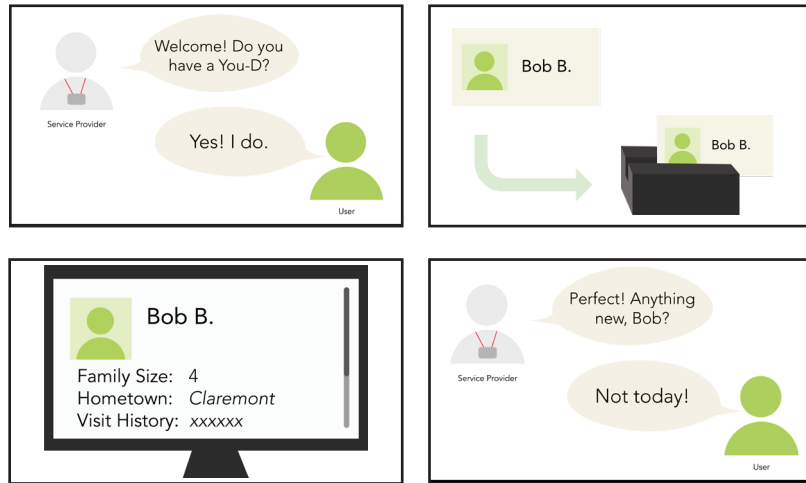
Hitch to Haven

This ride share application connects food shelf users. Users in remote locations could connect with each other over the app to express food shelf preferences and travel dates. One user with a car would then be able to plan a trip to a nearby food shelf using Hitch to Haven.

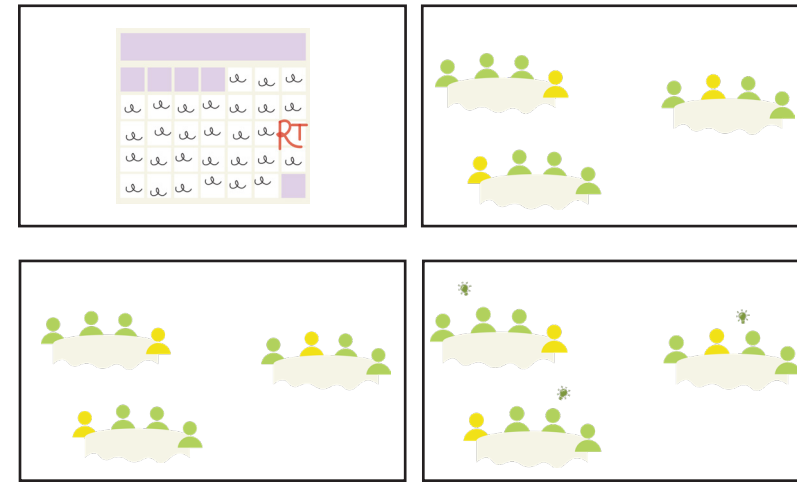| Strengths of Solution	Potential Challenges
The application gives users complete agency in part of their food shelf experience. The app matches users with each other and emphasizes social interaction in their food shelf experience. This application would disrupt the closed transportation system in the Upper Valley.	This system relies on the distribution of people with cars, and doesn't account for travel expenses or other related issues. Some users may not feel comfortable traveling with strangers. It may be more difficult for remote users to secure rides to central resources.

You-D

Each You-D carries data on the user about their demographics and recent location visits. The service provider could update any new information or send the user to the resource. A service provider at any resource location would go through their process of situating a new or returning visitor, then issue or swipe this user's You-D.

Strengths of Solution	Potential Challenges
You-D offers a universal database to collect and share information about user, and it allows for a community-based system. This is an efficient way for users to share their voices and experiences. The user data could be used to inform new processes and help service providers make predictions to improve their own businesses.	This system could create a barrier to access if the You-D is lost. Users may have privacy concerns with the recording and sharing of their information.

Roundtable

Monthly dinners with roundtable discussions to facilitate important conversations. Once a month, dinners would be held to gather users with service providers representing different resource sites. Service providers would be at multiple different tables, talking to users. Each table would be able to come up with unique insights which the service providers are then able to make improvements based on.

Strengths of Solution	Potential Challenges
Roundtable allows for the gathering of user feedback directly from the users in an intimate setting. The rich stories, experiences, and interactions shared at each table during the meal would help to build community.	This system would require highly involved facilitation. Roundtable would also put a lot of pressure on the staff time and personal resources. It may also put staff in an uncomfortable situation face to face with complaints or other personal information.

Prototype

In order to provide the Haven with methods for accessing authentic user voices, we iteratively tested our solutions.

Prototype Overview

As discussed in the Insights section, the Haven highly values the needs of their users. In order to understand these needs, we outlined a few goals that we want our final method to achieve:

1. Easy to implement
2. Effective for garnering actionable feedback
3. Based in user needs
   a) Minimize barriers to access
   b) Respecting privacy
   c) Receptive to unmet needs

First Iteration

To gain a holistic understanding of the user's experience, we conducted face-to-face interviews using three categories of questions: experience at the Haven, experience outside of the Haven, and experience in the community. Here are the questions we asked:

Experience at the Haven

Have you been to the Haven before? If so how often do you come?

What is your favorite thing about the Haven?

After visiting the Haven, What needs do you still have?

Do the Haven's hours work for your schedule?

Experience outside the Haven

How did you find out about the Haven?

Have you recommended the Haven to friends or family?

Have you moved in the last month? If so how many times?

Is there a time of the month or year that you would say is more hard/ challenging than other times?

Experience in the community

What town are you residing in?

Have you used other food services in your area?

Where do you spend most of your days?

What's your primary method of transportation?

First Iteration Results

We were able to hear a variety of stories through our survey prototype.

"I'm not close minded, I **just don't know** about other places to get help."

"I **don't feel like a bum** when I'm here and I am going back to work in March."

"I'm a product of a one night stand— my mother had **no support**."

"I've been **fighting depression** since I got on disability. The man is supposed to win the bread."

First Iteration Results Analysis

In light of the rich stories people were motivated to share with us, we found that the questions we asked felt very clinical and detached. We see talking to people as an opportunity to gain rich insights through stories and personal narratives. Specific questions with a narrow scope limit the conversations we are able to have. We identified through this survey prototype that users are motivated to share their personal experiences and give specific feedback.

Second Iteration

Based on our first iteration, we re-worked our approach and created a three part method. Our solution can help to provide insight for different research questions within the Haven

Example Research Questions

What kinds of journeys are users taking through the Upper Valley's system of resources?
What are the true needs of Haven users?
Who is the Haven not reaching?
How do people find out about the Haven?
What can be improved?
What barriers to access are there?

Feedback Box

This is a feedback box we placed outside of the food shelf with the intention of giving users a method of communicating feedback through a short survey. We are testing the location of the box, the flow of filling out the survey after picking up groceries, and the effectiveness of the survey questions.
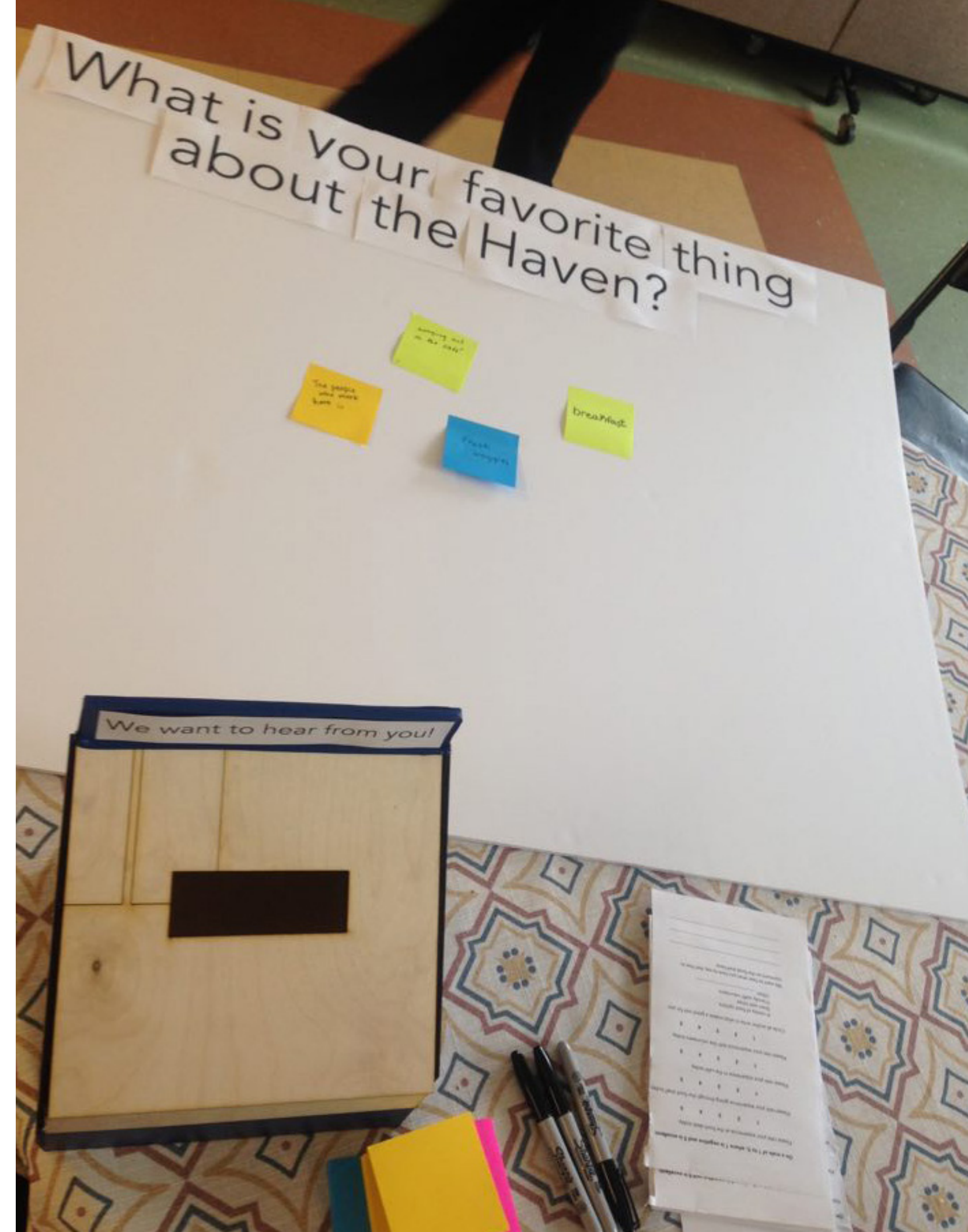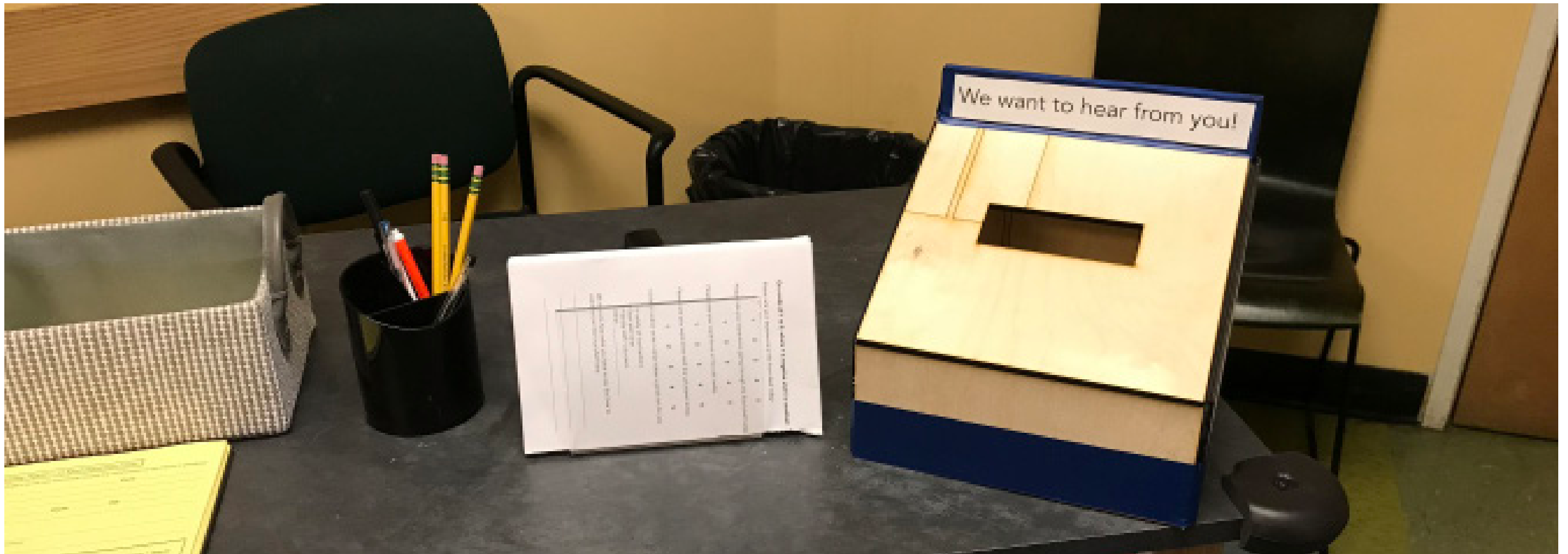
Results

We gather that the box is well situated, since 71 surveys were submitted within the span of 3 days, at which point the box was nearly full. This indicates that the box is big enough to hold 3-4 days worth of surveys and encourages the Haven to regularly gather, record, and analyze the data.

In the next iteration, we want to pay close attention to the procedure with which these surveys are collected. We want to ensure that users receive instruction from volunteers that is as conducive to honest and actionable feedback as possible.

The language used in administering the survey should be as intentional as the Haven's volunteer language in the food shelf. This language should emphasize that the survey is voluntary and make clear that the Haven wants to hear about user experiences to inform future decisions. This procedure should prioritize user privacy in order to protect the integrity of the data collected.

An important insight for this iteration is that the feedback is location-specific yet asks users to recall their experience at previous stages of their visit to the Haven. Our next iteration aims to yield more useful data with targeted questions and multiple boxes.

What is your favorite thing about the Haven?

THANK YOU FOR Letting US have mtgs here!!

Having a warm place to lay your head/shower

An atmosphere of people who volunteer and have a higher level of integrity and kindness than anyone else. Helpful, selfless and respectful staff ☺

The people and programs dedicated to helping others

Coordinators

Comfy cots!

THAT PEOPLE REALLY WANT to help even though they can't. (tell thru) JESSA

Love the People!

Sleeping And Having A Bathroom

hanging out in the café!

breakfast

The people who work here ☺

Fresh veggies

♡ the Nice greetings Nice People ♡

Friendly faces! ☺

Free Psychiatric Unit

The PURE of heart people that treat you as humans♡

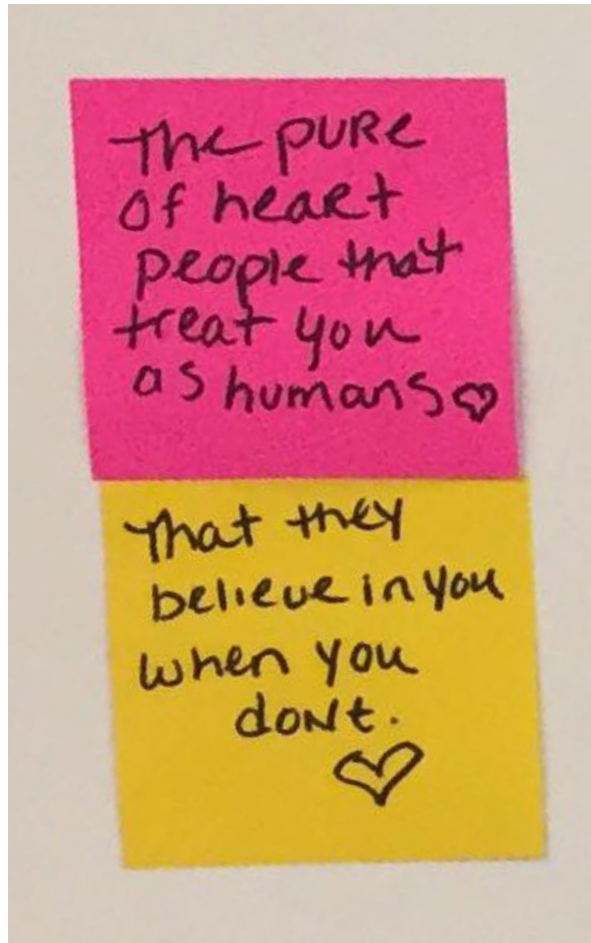That they believe in you when you don't. ♡

People that Don't help them selfs get all the HELP

THE People THAT really need it Dont get it

NOT A HAND-out! It's Good People LENDING A HAND. GOD BLESS THE HAVEN

Interactive Display

The interactive display serves to engage users on-site in a culture of feedback and to collect qualitative data. It will have one question, which changes periodically (weekly or bi-weekly) and visitors can leave a personal publicly displayed response. Since these are not private responses, the questions will be broad and allow for open ended answers. The first iteration of the display was placed in Caruso Café.
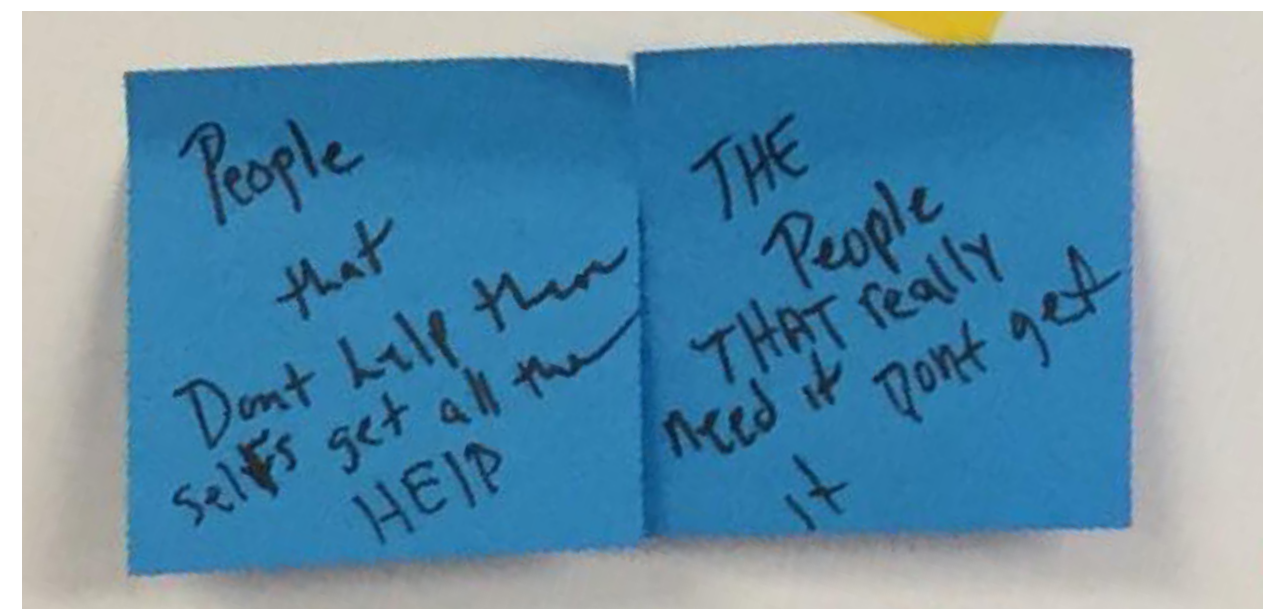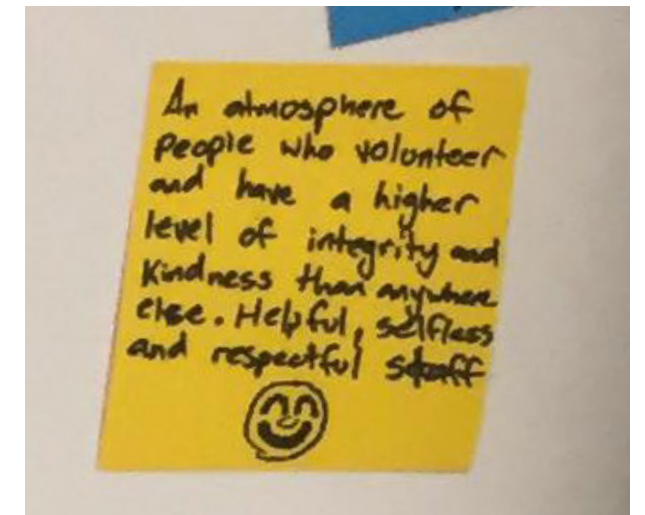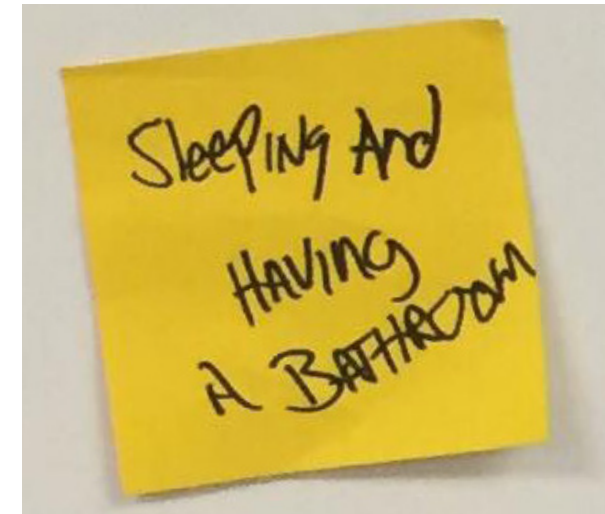
Results

The responses on the board suggested that Café users are both appreciative of the Haven's services and eager to express concerns in the Café. This is similar to the responses from the feedback box and confirms that we should try placing Café-specific surveys in that space. The open endedness of the question worked well to facilitate this broad range of responses and allow people to exercise their unique authentic voice. Moving forward, it is essential to think about the question that is being asked. It should not be leading, to ensure users feel free to express themselves openly. Moving forward, we want to continue to produce questions that are not leading and make sure that users feel free to express themselves openly.

Roundtable

Roundtable serves to gather more rich and nuanced feedback from users and non-users alike, at multiple off-site locations. These do not occur on the Haven's campus to avoid making users feel as though their access to resources may be in jeopardy as a result of their responses. Gathering candid critical feedback from users past and present, understanding potential users, hearing outside perspectives of the Haven, and understanding user journeys through community resources is essential to the Haven's success in addressing food insecurity.

Results

At Roundtable, we heard that users are satisfied with the good fresh bread and fresh produce at the Haven. We heard that interpersonal interactions are most important to users' experience at the Haven.

We also heard about some barriers to access that users experience. Users identify embarrassment as a barrier to using the Haven and other resources. One user said, "You have to share all of your information and say that you actually need help. It's difficult to admit that you're in this position. It's like you're asking for handouts, but if you've always worked and were raised to be responsible, then that's hard." Another spoke about cycles of poverty and the difficulty that new generations have with accessing aid and escaping the cycle. They said, "If a family has been in the same place for a long time, it's even harder to go to these resources."

We heard that users wish there were more transportation options to get to the Haven. Users identify the Haven's limited capacity as a barrier to access as well. Users say there is "lots of paperwork" and a long process to receive service at the Haven. Users want to see less dessert and more options at the Haven that align with a healthy diet.

Other Organizations We Heard About at Roundtable:
- Belknap Merrimack Commodity Surplus Food Program
- Take A Bite Out of Hunger
- Hypertherm

Results (cont.)

The conversations during Roundtable at a Listen dinner and a senior center gave us access to roughly 50 different experiences. Our interview guide attempted to get people talking about the food resources they use and their impressions of the Haven. However, the interview guide was limited in its ability to foster discussion. We will refine the guide for the next iteration by asking questions that promote the discussion of need.

Since we were conducting this in small group settings, it was difficult to engage everyone, but it was clear that people were willing and wanting a method for giving feedback. The most successful group conversations were conducted with groups that already knew each other, as there was a level of comfort that allowed people to build off each other. We must be sensitive to individual situations and dynamics at each table, in order to be mindful and respectful of the users we hope to access. Involving site-specific staff in the Roundtable discussions will not be very feasible, since they already have so much responsibility to facilitate other aspects of the space. Additionally, using Haven staff to facilitate would not be conducive to gathering honest and useful feedback. In our next iteration, we hope to involve Dartmouth students from Geography and Anthropology research classes as a permanent substitute for Haven staff.

Final Iteration

Feedback Box

After our second iteration, we realized that in order to get the most actionable feedback we would have to place a box in a location connected to a specific service. We decided that if we asked more specific questions in the food shelf, Café, and front desk we would avoid general service ratings. We found that the Café and food shelf best targeted the diverse populations of the Haven, with the Café catering to regulars and the food shelf to once a month users. With the location-specific surveys and boxes, we avoid asking users to recall their experience at previous stages of the process.

We also transitioned to more fill-in questions with room for users to write in answers, since we found that these allow for more specificity.

location 1: Caruso Café
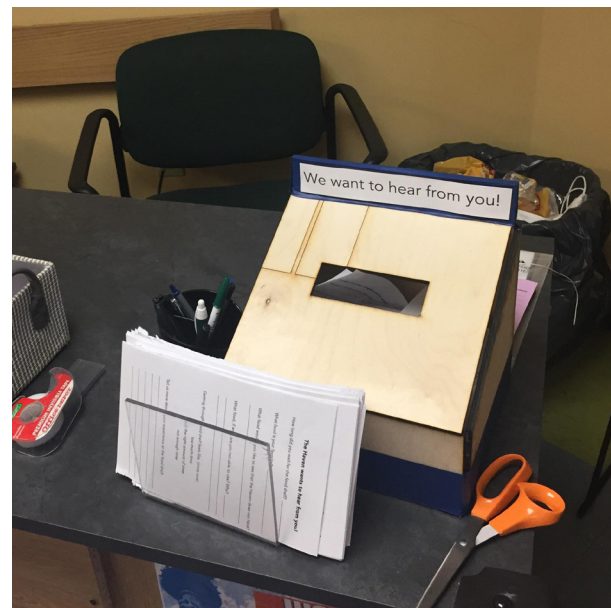
location 2: Food shelf

The Haven wants to hear from you!

How long did you wait for the food shelf? _____

What food is your favorite? _____

What food would you like to see that the Haven does not have?
_____

What food, if any, are you not able to use? Why? _____
_____
_____

Getting through food shelf feels like, (circle one)
too much time
just the right amount of time
not enough time

Tell us more about your experience at the food shelf
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

survey example 1

The Haven wants to hear from you!

How long did you spend in the cafe today? _____
What foods did you enjoy in the cafe today? _____
What foods do you want in the cafe? _____

Rate your experience with volunteers
Excellent!   Good   OK   Not so good   Bad

Please explain:
_____
_____

Did you get what you came for?   Yes   /   No

If no, please explain:
_____
_____
_____

Tell us more about your experience at the cafe
_____
_____
_____

survey example 2

We found that the feedback boxes were remarkably successful and decided to make two permanent handmade cherry boxes. We placed them in the Café and the food shelf, and have templates for the survey. Each locations is equipped with a set of instructions for volunteers and staff on best practices for encouraging feedback in order to give users the privacy they need to give honest feedback. We included this set of instructions because we observed volunteers watching the users fill out the survey which puts pressure on the user and could skew the data.
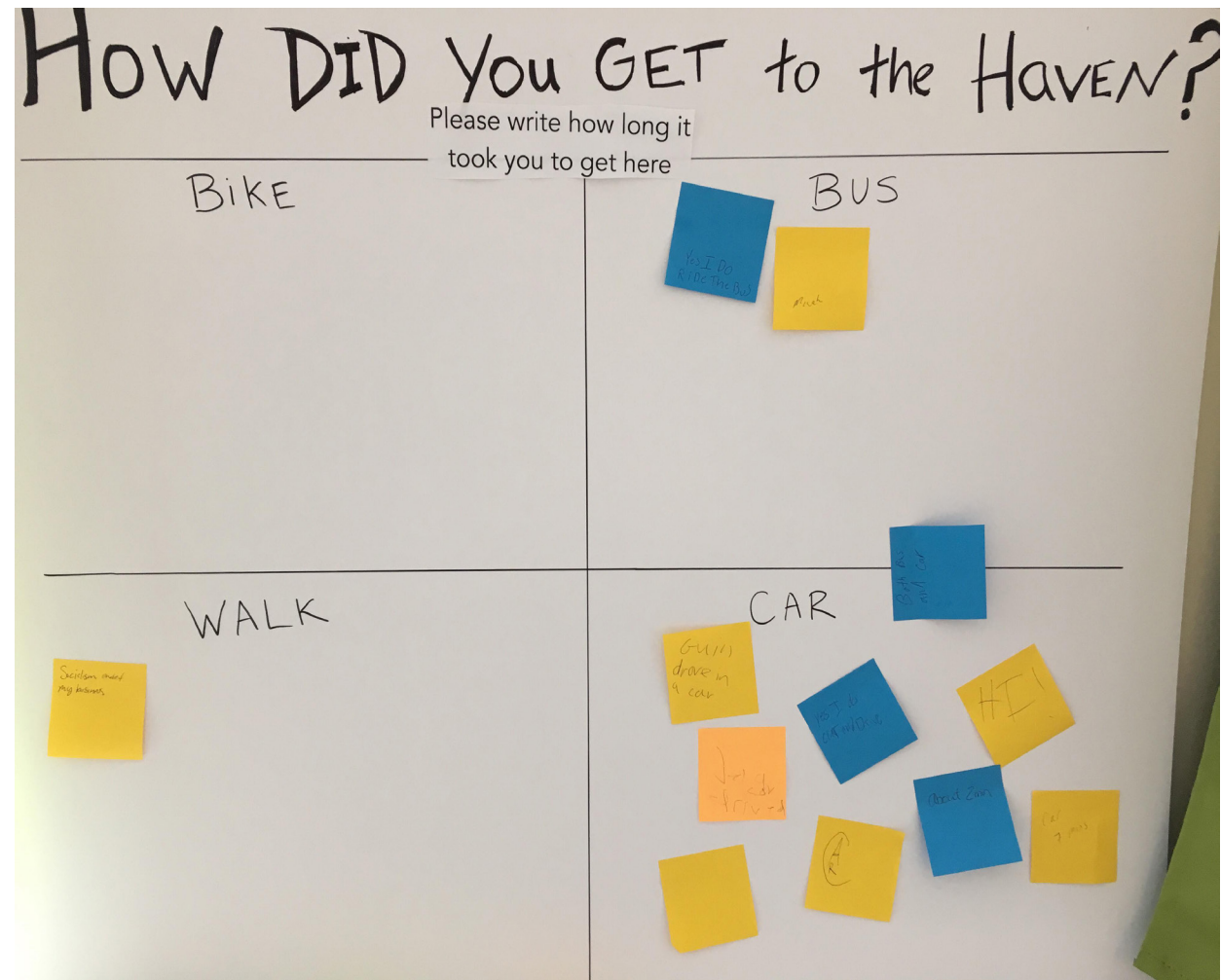
Interactive Display > Caruso Canvas

In our previous prototype, we did not receive the volume of participation we were hoping for. We hoped that a colorful art installation would generate a lot of excitement and participation from the Café population. We decided to move to a more structured question that would make participation more accessible effort-wise. However, we still did not get the participation we were looking for, and realized that the installation wasn't integrated into the space. So we brought the installation from the wall to tables where people congregate and socialize. We put down butcher paper, crayons and a message on the paper to encouraged people to leave a message or draw. We experienced an overwhelming volume of participation.

We named the art installation, Caruso Canvas because it provides an unstructured way for people to interact within their space. These blank spaces became the canvases for the words and creativity of the users of the Haven.

We played with the idea of making the Caruso Canvases dry erase for easier clean up, however we decided that the butcher paper had a better feel. The paper also allows for people to take home or post their art work. We are providing the haven with rolls of butcher paper and dispenser for easier set up and encouraging the Haven to document the art in a gallery for posterity sake.

Final Product

We have developed a two-pronged solution that captures qualitative and quantitative feedback. Our final product drives empathic decision making at the Haven by giving the Haven tools to connect with their users and enable users to play an active role in improving the resource to meet their ongoing needs.

Our Solution

The first part of our project, *Caruso Canvas*, aims to inspire a community of feedback within the Haven. We tested different versions of *Caruso Canvas* to integrate it into the space and make it manageable for Haven staff to upkeep.

The second part of the project is a Cherry feedback box, which allows for the collection of actionable feedback. We prototyped at the Haven to understand the type of questions that get at the "real answers" that are most valuable to the Haven in improving their resource.

Along with this Process Report, we are giving the Haven an Implementation Plan, which includes things like procedural infographics, logistical instructions, and a database of survey templates and research questions. In addition, this plan gives the Haven options for adjusting our solutions to future needs and learnings that might inform possible adjustments.

Caruso Canvas

Feedback Box