

Driving Question : How can we make our community more resilient to wildfire?

Empathize

1 Interview

Interview an expert or community member. Create your questions before the interview. During the interview, take detailed notes from each question beneath it.

Interviewee Name/Position: Local Fire Department Chief

Question 1: What are some neighborhoods that are especially vulnerable to wildfire in our community?

Answer:

I am concerned about the Quaker Heights neighborhood, it borders national forest, and the forest is dense with underbrush and lots of dead trees that would be fuel for a wildfire.

Question 2: What efforts are currently being done to mitigate wildfire risk in our community?

Answer:

We are in the process of planning several prescribed fires in forests surrounding town to cut down on the fuel load in our forests. Also, we offer a free program for homeowners to get their property assessed for wildfire risk, where we come out to residents' homes, do an assessment, and make suggestions of what they can do to mitigate fire risk on their property. No one really knows about the program, so it is underutilized.

Question 3: When it comes to wildfire risk in our community, what are you worried about?

Answer:

Our community is surrounded by forests that are dense, full of dead trees (beetle-kill), and many people have started building their homes in the forest, increasing the amount of homes in the wildland-urban interface. We have had some really bad fires in Colorado recently, and I know that if a fire occurs near us, many homes will be at risk. We don't have the funding or the time to do adequate fuel mitigation, because there is just so much work to do. Also, the climate is getting hotter and drier, which increases wildfire risk and makes it harder to put fires out quickly.

Follow Up Questions & Answers: What can homeowners do if they live in the wildland-urban interface?

Firewise has excellent guidelines and resources for homeowners to use to protect their homes and property.

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Define

2 Capture Findings

Goals and Wishes: What does the interviewee think would be important to do to improve community resilience to wildfire ?
natural hazard

It seems like the Fire Chief is really worried about homes in the wildland-urban interface, especially in the Quaker Heights neighborhood. She thinks that homeowners need to take action to make their homes more Firewise, because I think she doesn't believe she can get a major wildfire under control quickly because there is so much fuel in nearby forests, and recent dry conditions might make fire conditions worse. They have a program to help homeowners become Firewise but no one knows about it.

3 Take a Stand with a Point-of-View

The Fire Chief

interviewee's name

needs a way to get the word out about the wildfire fuel mitigation service

interviewee's need

because (or "but....") wildfire risk is high in our area, and
(circle one)

there are a lot of homes in the wildland-urban interface that need to become more firewise.

insight

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Ideate

4 Sketch at least 5 radical ways to meet the community's needs.

The Fire Chief needs a way to get the word out about the wildfire fuel mitigation service because wildfire risk is high in our area and we have a lot of homes in the wildland-urban interface that need to become more firewise.

write your Point-of-View statement (from step 3) above



Pay homeowners to participate in the program.

Start a competition to see how many homes in different neighborhoods in town can get Firewise approved (is that even a thing?)



Host a booth at the County Fair about wildfire risk and Firewise resources



Create a social media campaign to promote the fire mitigation consultation service



Host an ice cream social in the Quaker Heights neighborhood to share Firewise information and get the word out

5 Share your solutions & capture feedback.

Notes

Feedback : The Fire Chief really liked the idea about social media, because they don't have any expertise in social media, and that's something that us students could be really good at. She said she didn't have funding to pay homeowners to participate in the program, or to pay for ice cream at a ice cream socia. She also liked the competition idea - and thought that maybe we could combine that idea with the social media, and highlight projects different homeowners are doing in the neighborhoods to promote the competition.

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Focus

6 Reflect & Develop the Best Solution

Based on the feedback you've been given, choose one of the five radical solutions to focus on. Sketch your big idea and note details if necessary!

We are going to start a competition between HOAs in the Quaker Heights neighborhood to see which HOA can get the most homeowners to sign up for the fire mitigation consultation, and take actions to make their home firewise. We will advertise the campaign using social media (the NextDoor app, Instagram, and Facebook), and highlight different efforts that homeowners are doing to make their homes firewise. The winning HOA will be announced on the marquis at the Fire Station.

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Prototype & Test

7 Build your solution.

Make something your classmates can interact with! It can be a model of a life size creation, a sketch of a website or app, a skit or a video....the sky is the limit.

(We created a mockup of the competition announcement video that we would post on social media)

[not here]

8 Share your solution and get feedback.

+ What worked...

The competition is really engaging and the Fire Chief likes the idea of highlighting different projects, so homeowners can get ideas and "keep up with the Joneses"

- What could be improved...

There are only 2 HOAs in the Quaker Heights neighborhood, most homes are not part of an HOA. Would there be another way to make "teams"?

? Questions...

When does the competition start? How does scoring work?

! Ideas...

Could you make a map of different sections of the neighborhood to use, instead of HOAs?

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Iterate

9 Reflect & Generate an Improved Solution

Based on the feedback you've been given, create the best idea that you can. Consider why type of format you'd like to use to present your idea, and get reach to launch.

We are going to start a competition between streets on the Quaker Heights neighborhood to see which street can get the most homeowners to sign up for the fire mitigation consultation, and take actions to make their home firewise. We will advertise the campaign using social media (the NextDoor app, Instagram, and Facebook), and highlight different efforts that homeowners are doing to make their homes firewise. The winning street will be announced on the marquis at the Fire Station.

The competition will start on March 1st, and end on June 1st. We will create social media posts weekly to share about different projects homeowners are doing (with their permission). We will also create a rubric to show how many points different projects get to score in the competition. For example, a consultation is worth 1 point. If a home gets rid of fuel/brush close to the home, that's worth 2 points, etc.