

COMMUNITY-PREFERRED FLOODING AND AIR QUALITY STRATEGIES



WHY NOW?

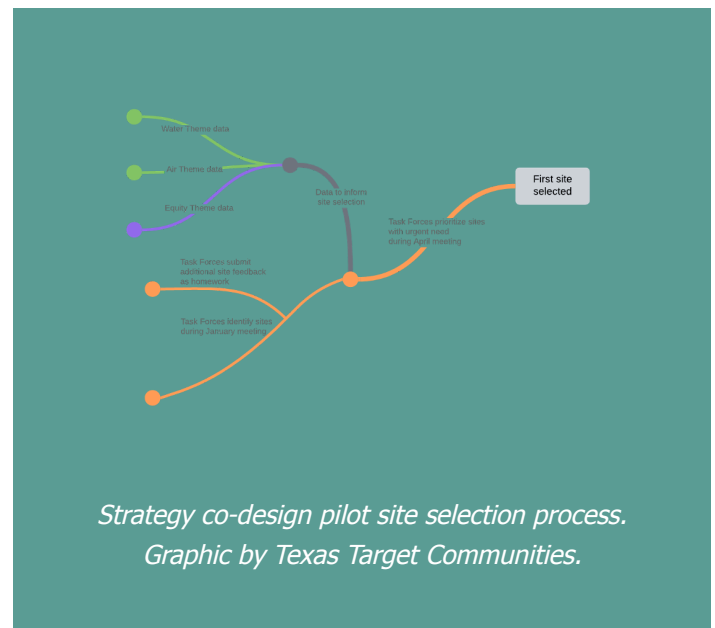
Southeast Texas community members have identified flooding and air quality as two critical challenges, and past research has found that strategies to address risks such as these are more useful and successful if community members have a meaningful role in helping to identify and design strategies. In response, the SETx-UIFL project staff worked with community members to identify areas of high risk from flooding and air pollution and then jointly identified promising strategies to address risks.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

To gather community member input, the research team used a survey and structured activities including opportunities to share input through written, visual, and small and large group discussions. Community members identified a pilot site in Port Arthur and one in Beaumont, along with the entire five county Southeast Texas region. For one of the activities, the research team designed and shared a deck of cards that provided information about 20 different potential strategies. Community members then prioritized these strategies for the two sites and the larger region. Community members also chose the pilot sites for the project by identifying potential locations on a map, sharing their knowledge of the sites in discussion and through a survey, and using technical data (e.g., flood risk, air quality information, information about community risk related to income levels and other demographic information). Community members also identified potential stakeholders for strategy implementation as well as possible obstacles.

WHAT WE DID

The SETx-UIFL research team used a “Task Force” model of community member participation, alongside surveys and activities, to understand residents’ preferences for different strategies to address flooding and air pollution. The Task Force model, facilitated by Texas Target Communities, convenes 8-12 members who represent larger communities from the project area; this size allows for participation from a diversity of groups across a larger region while remaining small enough for discussion, collaboration, and trust-building. A “Technical Task Force” of 8-12 environmental professionals from local government, industry, and the nonprofit sector was created, along with a “Community Organization Leaders Task Force” of 8-12 community-based organization representatives.



vulnerability for this economically and culturally vibrant region. We believe Southeast Texas is a bellwether for the entire Gulf Coast, and an exemplar for strategies that protect people and places. We hope this effort supports your path toward lasting resilience.



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