

Project Name

Part 1: Critique of Existing Project

Project Overview

This section should contain a description of the project in narrative form, not exceeding 250 words. Begin with a high-level overview of the project, describing its stated objectives and outcomes. This section is not a critique: just describe the project as it is in the reference material you are using (it could be an article in a magazine or website or it might be a formal case study or even an interview). The ‘tone’ of the writing for this case study should be objective/journalistic and begin at a high level then progress to the details of the project. Try to outline the basic parameters that the project team or organization was working within. These ‘limits’ might be financial, cultural, place-based, temporal or material. Understanding how the project was framed is crucial to the critique. Do not speculate on how the project could /should have been done differently. This paragraph should simply be an abbreviated report on what you have found and should be free of speculation on your part. Note that the project profile in the far right column provides additional details about the project from a transition design point of view. Attach the original case study or article about the project to your final document.

Vision & Lifestyle

Taking a transition design perspective, begin the critique by discussing whether this project is connected to a mid or long-term vision of sustainable futures. This vision might be explicitly stated, it might be implicit or it might not be present at all. An important aspect of transition design is to develop visions of sustainable lifestyles: Was the project framed within the context of lifestyle or everyday life either explicitly or implicitly? Did the designers ‘back-cast’ from a future vision to inform the project or were there near-term visions that informed it? Was temporal scale mentioned in the article or case study? Were the designers and implementers concerned about how long the project would or should live? Was it conceived as a ‘step’ in a longer evolution to something else, or did the designers discuss how the project might change and evolve over time? Is there evidence of ‘cosmopolitan localism’ in the solution? In this section, answer these questions in narrative form. Your critique should also include what the project did well. **Do NOT begin to conceptualize here about what the project could be.** Do not exceed a word count of 250 for this section or the template will ‘fall’ out of format. This applies to any section in this template; sub sections should not run onto following pages.

School of Design Team Members:

List team member names here

Organizations Involved in the Project: List the companies, organizations or individuals involved in creating/sponsoring the project.

Region of the World: List the country/city/region where the project is based.

Project Profile

Briefly state the problem this project attempted to solve (3-4 sentences)

Project Sector

List broad category: transport, food systems, policy/leadership, energy, manufacturing, shared amenities, economics/development, ecological restoration, housing (pick one or two)

Area of Initial Design Focus

List the area of original design focus: product, communication, interaction, service, social innovation design etc. (just list one or two)

Level(s) of Spatial Scale

Identify the levels of scale at which the project is situated (household, neighborhood, city, region, planet)

Temporal Scale

Identify the temporal parameters of the project. How far into the future was it intended to exist? Is it within a fixed timeline? Did the people involved in the project think about its future trajectory? (no more than 3-5 sentences)

Transition Design Potential

State whether the project has potential to become a transition design solution; through ‘connecting’, ‘reconception’, ‘scaling’, ‘amplifying’ ‘protecting/restoring’ etc.

Theories of Change

Understanding the theories of change that underpin existing projects and leveraging theories of change to inform new ones is an important skill of the transition designer. Analyze the project to try and understand what ‘theory of change’ informed its design. The theory of change that the project was based upon might not be one of those discussed in the seminar. There was either an *implicit* or *explicit* hypothesis the designers held about how to create change and what the outcome would be. Do your best to analyze the project and speculate on what the theory of change was. It would be helpful to review the theory of change readings in the coursework, especially Eguren, “Theory of Change” which provides a description of what a theory of change is and how it is used. It also gives several examples. Do not exceed 200-250 words.

Mindset & Posture

As part of critiquing the project, try to characterize the mindset and posture that informed the design of the project. Is it embedded within the dominant socio-economic paradigms? If so, elaborate on how/why. Is there evidence that the project was conceived and implemented within the dominant worldview and mindset (mechanistic) and value system or, was it conceived within a more ecological/holistic mindset and posture? Are collaborative ‘postures’ an inherent part of the design solution? Referring back to the Jungian Mandala and “different ways of knowing/being”, speculate on what approach dominated in the design of the project...is it apparent? Do not exceed 100 words.

New Ways of Designing

Analyze whether the project has emerged out of new, more holistic/ecological ways of designing. Is it possible to ascertain what skillsets the designers used to conceive and implement the solution? Is it possible, in reading about the project, to understand something about the design process itself—how was the problem framed? How was the design process undertaken? What were the stated metrics for success? Did the designers incorporate both social and environmental concerns into the project brief and were social and environmental impacts mentioned as objectives or results? (the answers to many of these questions might be ‘no’). Did the project ‘solve for pattern’ (Wendell Berry)? Does the project acknowledge or leverage interconnections and interdependencies? Has it been designed with a deep understanding of systems and systems levels? If so, explain. Designing for place is central to transition design. Discuss in what ways this project is or is not ‘designed for place’. Does the design take into account the unique cultural/social/ecological characteristics and limits unique to this place and era? Does it reference traditional, place-based solutions from pre-industrial society and/or represent a 21st century variation on them? Has the solution been ‘designed for relationship’? Does it improve the relationships between people, nature and the designed/built world (the relationship triad)? In your critique be sure to discuss what works, as well as what does not work. Do not exceed 250 words (keep these 3 sub sections on this page).



It is possible to place photos or diagrams of the project within the far right margin and put captions under them. You may also place visuals of this kind in the wide margin if desired. Just take care not to change the format of the layout.

Connection to Wicked Problems

Almost any problem and solution can be traced up through systems levels until its connection to large, global wicked problems is revealed. Even well intentioned, seemingly ‘ecological’ or socially innovative design solutions are often embedded within wicked problems and even exacerbate them. Part of the work of the transition designer is to see these connections and either acknowledge them (in some cases a single solution cannot make much of a difference) or attempt to create solutions that contribute to/ameliorate them. In this section discuss how this project is connected to a wicked problem(s) in not more than 150 words. Write a brief description that takes into consideration both social and environmental ramifications. Speculate on the impact your newly conceived solution might have; will it solve for multiple systems levels? Over what horizons of time? Create a diagram that maps the primary connections between this project and wicked problems. Format the diagram to fit vertically below.

*Place diagram of project and its
connection to wicked problems here.*

Use this text to further explain the diagram of the wicked problem at left.

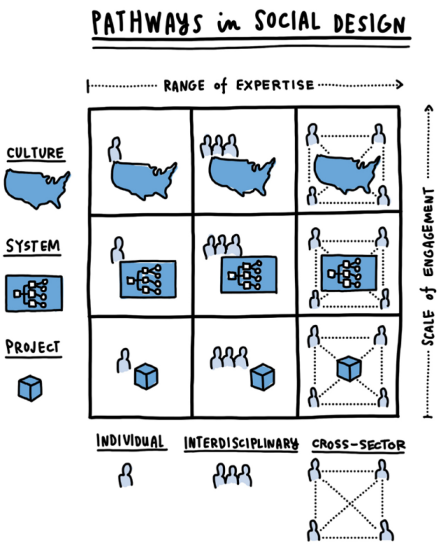
Needs & Satisfiers

The transition design seminar referenced economist Manfred Max-Neefs theory of needs and satisfiers as a way to analyze, critique and conceive more appropriate and responsible design solutions. Analyze the project to determine what needs and satisfiers are associated with it. Does it satisfy genuine needs from a Max-Neefian point of view? If so, are they ‘single’ or ‘integrated’ satisfiers? Or, is the solution more connected to ‘pseudo’ or ‘counterfeit’ satisfiers and does it fuel ‘wants and desires’? Do not speculate on how the solution might be changed to integrate more genuine needs satisfiers; that is part of the second section of this case study. Do not exceed 200 words.

Understanding the Scope of the Project

Situate the existing project within the Winterhouse Social Pathways Matrix below. This matrix is a good way to understand the scope and potential impact for any project. Write a brief description of why you situated it where you did and use the caption at right to further clarify it. This description and the matrix should *not* run onto the following page. You may want to redraw the matrix and add text and place a new image below. Do not exceed 200 words.

RANGE OF EXPERTISE brought to bear on the project			SCALE OF (designer's or project's) ENGAGEMENT
Cultural (Transformation) Changing the attitudes and behaviors of a community or organization.			
System (Innovation) Altering an existing system, or creating a new one, to deliver a better solution.			
Stand-Alone (Intervention) The introduction of a discrete product or service			
	Individual (Designer) A lone person or discipline.	Interdisciplinary (Team) A team made up of the necessary expertise.	Cross-Sector (Group) Requires cross sector participation for ideation and execution.



The Winterhouse Pathways in Social Design matrix (above) maps the scope and potential reach of a project. The vertical axis maps the scale of engagement from the level of a single project to a systems level and all the way to a level of impact that affects culture. The horizontal axis maps the range of expertise from the level of a single individual through interdisciplinary teams up to type of cross-sector collaboration that is necessary to address complex problems. Use this text block to further explain the diagram at left if needed, otherwise you may delete it.