

HAYLEY MACDONALD Sustainability Analyst Intern

URBAN EQUATION

Urban Equation (UE) is a boutique consulting firm specializing in sustainable development. UE works with a range of clients, including developers, real estate companies, municipalities, academic institutions and various levels of government, to help streamline sustainable development goals such as carbon neutrality, community energy and zero waste. UE helps their clients by creating realistic sustainability plans and targets to achieve holistic sustainability at all levels.

Story Telling & Sustainability

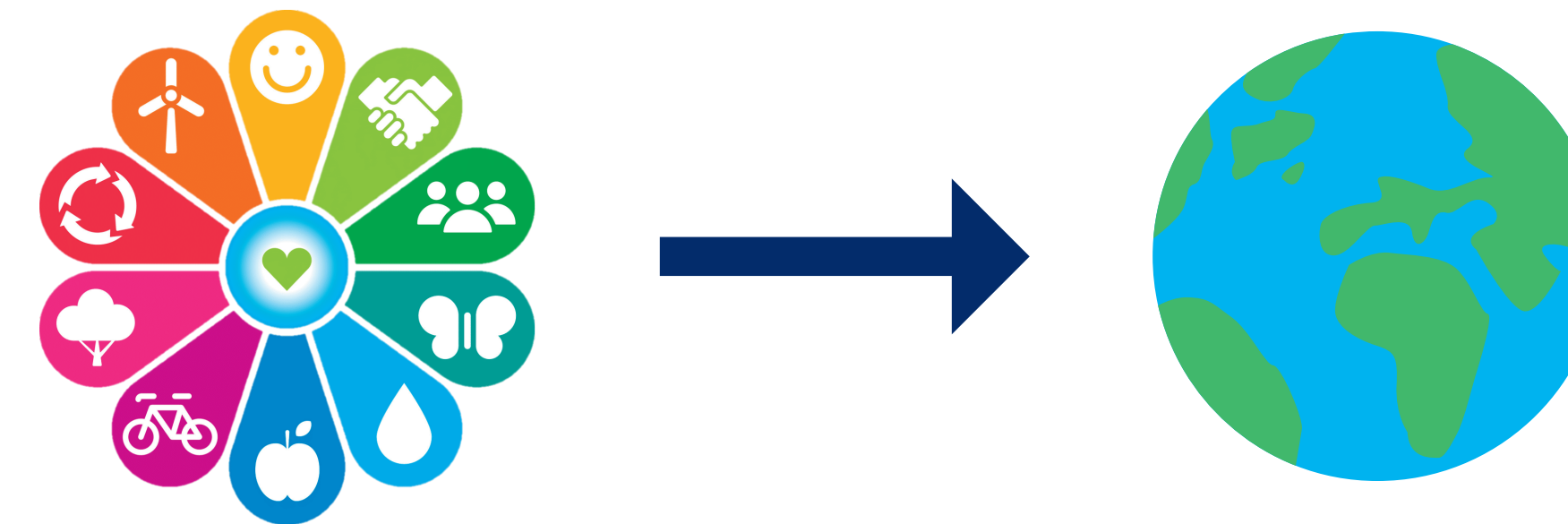
The most valuable lesson I learned at UE is how storytelling can be used to communicate both sustainability issues and solutions. Successful visual and written storytelling increases the accessibility and understanding of complex sustainability concepts, which helps gain trust and support for sustainable solutions.



One Planet Living



Current statistics show that if everyone lived as we do in North America, it would take five planets' worth of resources to support us. One Planet Living is an organizing framework created by Bioregional; a UK-based charity focused on sustainable development. One Planet Living offers goals and guidance to help cities, companies, and individuals live within one planet's worth of resources.



Key Contributions



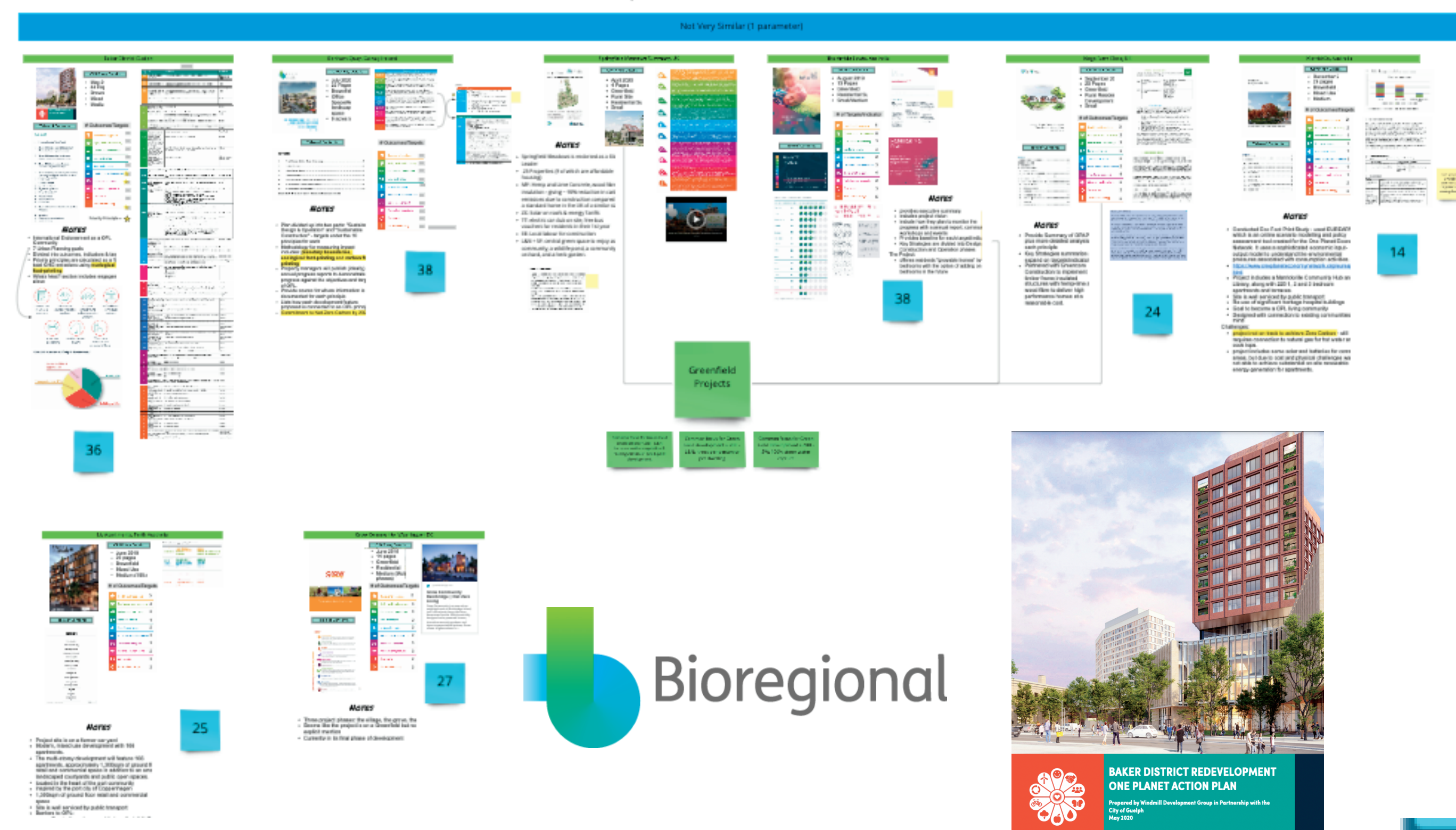
- Applied my knowledge of green building certifications such as LEED to development projects in Ottawa and Toronto.
- Worked on an internal visual storytelling strategy for communicating sustainability topics and concepts.
- Conducted research on sustainable high schools and universities to help inform a client project.



OPAP Research

A large part of my internship was researching endorsed One Planet Living Action Plans (OPAPs) to help inform best practice strategies for existing and future projects. OPAPs are sustainability plans organized by the ten OPL principles:

- Health and Happiness
- Equity and Local Economy
- Community & Culture
- Materials & Products
- Zero Waste
- Land & Nature
- Sustainable Water
- Local & Sustainable Food
- Travel & Transport
- Zero Carbon Energy



70% of the global population will live in cities by **2050** - *World Cities Report 2022*

Industry Challenges

- Collaboration is integral to making any project truly sustainable but can be time-consuming.
- Sustainability consulting is a multi-step process as you educate and, in some cases, convince clients of what is required to be genuinely sustainable.
- Implementing sustainable features at the site level can be difficult, especially if there is a disconnect between the construction team and the overall strategy.
- Social goals like health and happiness can be challenging to measure, especially in the design & construction phases.

Key Takeaways

- The real estate development industry is exciting because how we design, plan and execute our cities tremendously impacts achieving our climate goals.
- Project management requires close attention to detail, excellent time management, and clear and concise communication skills.

