



[Florida Resource Map]

User Experience Report

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Abstract

This research paper was developed by a team of University of Michigan students studying user-experience (UX) design in partnership with Florida Community Innovation (FCI). Through the University of Michigan's Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program, students collaborate with mission-driven organizations like FCI on short-term, high-impact projects during their spring break. In 2025, the ASB team, composed of three graduate students and one undergraduate student of information science, undertook an evaluation of the UX design and functionality of FCI's flagship project, the Florida Resource Map (FRM), a digital resource directory that aims to improve access to social services in the state of Florida.

From March 3-7, 2025, the team visited Florida to observe how community partners and social workers used the FRM and to identify common challenges. The team conducted in-depth interviews with community leaders, social workers, and nonprofit professionals to assess the platform's usability, focusing especially on navigation, data clarity, and overall functionality. This research report ultimately combines competitive analysis and usability testing to gather insights into the platform's performance to identify best practices related to service offerings, data privacy, accessibility, and community engagement. User interviews helped further delineate the challenges, needs, and expectations of those relying on a resource directory like FRM. These insights provided the foundation for the team's practical recommendations to improve the FRM's accessibility, effectiveness, and ability to serve frontline workers and the communities those workers support.

Introduction

The Florida Community Innovation Foundation

The Florida Community Innovation Foundation (FCI) is a nonprofit dedicated to empowering young innovators to build scalable, human-centered technology for their communities. This involves experiential learning for social impact in partnership with different universities, grounded in community listening. The Florida Resource Map (FRM) is a project dedicated to connecting vulnerable populations with essential resources and information in Florida.

The Florida Resource Map

Since 2020, FCI has been scoping and developing the FRM, a tool designed for use by social and community workers as a means of finding and managing information about food banks, job resources, and more. There are two versions of the FRM—a legacy version at floridaresourcemap.org that showcases resources from community foundations, municipalities, and agencies and a version under development at dev.floridaresourcemap.org being piloted in one neighborhood in Orlando. The development version, dev.floridaresourcemap.org, was used for all tests in this report.

Research

Methodology

In March 2025, a four-person team from the University of Michigan's Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program, Xin Tong, Gennifer Hom, Jess Cummings, and Aditi Athreya, traveled from Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Orlando, Florida to evaluate the FRM's effectiveness in providing resources to local Florida communities and to identify areas for improvement in user experience. The ASB team combined two research methods: **1) semi-structured interviews** with community leaders, social/community workers, and nonprofit leaders and **2) moderated usability testing** of dev.floridaresourcemap.org with a subset of those same participants. Interviews were used to understand how participants currently find, verify, and share community resource information, and where existing tools and directories might fall short. Usability testing was then used to evaluate whether the FRM, as currently built, addresses those needs.

Interview participants were identified in two steps. First, the team drew on guidance from Reach Consulting on which personas would be most valuable to include, based on their

existing understanding of the social service landscape in Florida and the kinds of users the FRM is intended to serve. Second, the team worked with FCI's Executive Director to schedule interviews with organizations and individuals already in FCI's network who fit those persona categories. Because recruitment relied on FCI's existing relationships, the sample reflects organizations already connected to FCI rather than a random or fully representative sample of Florida's social service landscape. In total, 18 individuals participated across 12 interview sessions (several sessions were conducted jointly with two or more participants). Participants were grouped into three persona categories, community leaders, community/social workers, and nonprofit leaders.

Usability testing was subsequently conducted with a subset of interview participants using the FRM's development site. Sessions were conducted primarily in person, with a few completed remotely via Zoom, and were screen-recorded to the cloud after obtaining participant consent. All participants and moderators used a laptop or tablet with screen-recording capabilities. Participants were asked to think aloud while completing structured tasks simulating real-world scenarios from their work, allowing the team to observe points of confusion or inefficiency directly and to collect qualitative feedback on the platform's navigation, data clarity, and overall functionality.

The team reviewed six existing platforms serving similar functions to the FRM to establish what patterns and capabilities already exist in this space, particularly around breadth of service coverage, data privacy practices, multilingual access, mobile availability, and mechanisms for keeping resource information current. These patterns were then used as a frame of reference when evaluating the FRM's design and when interpreting interview findings about what participants needed from a resource directory.

Key questions driving this research include:



How do potential FRM users *currently* search for and access community resources such as food banks or job assistance?



What challenges do users face when interacting with the FRM, and how might these impact their overall experience?



What specific functionalities or information would users like to see in the FRM that would represent a clear improvement over their current methods?

Competitive Analysis Findings and Recommendations

A review of other platforms such as Find Help, Unite Us, One Degree, NYC 311, and 211 shows the breadth of the landscape. The FRM most closely resembles Find Help and One Degree in scope, oriented as it is toward both frontline workers and community members.

However, other matters, like data currency, distinguish between the platforms. Find Help, One Degree, and 211 all provide mechanisms for users to flag outdated listings or suggest edits, creating a distributed maintenance model that reduces the burden on any single organization to keep records current. The FRM currently has no equivalent—although adding features such as real-time updates, surveys, and feedback forms would make it easier to improve the site based on what users need. Another matter is mobile access. Four of the six non-FRM platforms reviewed have either a dedicated mobile app or a fully mobile-optimized interface, a boon for users who may not have access to a computer or who are working from phones in the field rather than from a desk. A third matter is multilingual support. Find Help, NYC 311, and 211 all offer multilingual interfaces; the FRM's future development roadmap includes this, but it is not yet implemented. On the other hand, data privacy practices across the competitive landscape are relatively consistent: Most platforms collect data only for service delivery and do not sell user information, with Just Fix a notable outlier, using collected data for targeted marketing without requiring user permission.

FRM	www.dev.floridaresourcemap.org
Services Offered	Comprehensive searchable resource platform including food, housing, health, family, transportation, and unemployment services
Features	Map-based browsing and search; resource filtering by category; mobile-responsive web application
Data Practices	Collects data specifically for service delivery, does not sell user data, and requires permission to send data across providers.
Multilingual Support	—

Find Help	www.findhelp.org
Services Offered	Comprehensive searchable resource platform including food, housing, health, and unemployment services, among others
Features	Allows users to share and suggest resources, provides an electronic referral system, and has a mobile application
Data Practices	Collects data specifically for service delivery, does not sell user data, and requires permission to send data across providers.
Multilingual Support	Yes

Just Fix	www.justfix.org
Services Offered	Focused on housing issues only.
Features	Includes tools like a letter of complaint generator, a list of worst evictors, rent history requests, and a feature to search landlords.
Data Practices	User permission is not required for data distribution; data is used to deliver targeted marketing.
Multilingual Support	—

Unite Us	www.uniteus.com
Services Offered	Comprehensive platform for resources like food, housing, health, and unemployment.
Features	It features a "Get Help" form and community needs map and enables real-time communication between providers.
Data Practices	Collects data specifically for service delivery, does not sell user data, and requires permission for cross-provider data sharing.
Multilingual Support	—

One Degree	www.1degree.org
Services Offered	Comprehensive platform for resources like food, housing, health, and unemployment.
Features	Offers guided searches, an online eligibility screener, options to suggest edits or add programs, and a mobile application
Data Practices	Data collected is specifically for service delivery, and user data is not sold
Multilingual Support	—

NYC 311	www.portal.311.nyc.gov
Services Offered	Local government assistance platform for services like road repair, complaint filings, trash pick-up, and various payments.
Features	Users can report problems, submit service requests, search for resources, and make payments.
Data Practices	Data collected is specifically for service delivery and is prohibited from being sold due to municipal laws
Multilingual Support	Yes

211	www.211.org
Services Offered	Free, confidential referral service connecting residents to food assistance, housing and shelter, healthcare, mental health support, financial aid, childcare, employment services, veteran support, disaster relief, and legal resources. Available 24/7 by phone, text, or online chat.
Features	Users can call, text, or chat online to get referrals for food, housing, healthcare, employment, and other social services. They can also receive crisis support and disaster assistance. No dedicated app, but the website is mobile-friendly.
Data Practices	Personal data is used only to connect users with services and is kept confidential; it is not sold or shared outside of service delivery, in line with privacy policies.
Multilingual Support	Yes

Target Audience Categories

The team identified three distinct categories of FRM users—community leaders, community/social workers, and nonprofit leaders—each of whom the team interviewed separately. The audience profiles below cover who constitutes each category.

18

interviewees

13

interview sessions

Community Leaders — 7 sessions — 9 individuals

Business owners, leaders who run organizations *outside* of nonprofits, university faculty and administration, professionals in leadership or facilitation roles who have been in the industry for over 10 years and/or connect community members to organizations and services, rather than delivering direct casework themselves.

Nonprofit Leaders — 1 session — 3 individuals

Owners/leaders of nonprofit organizations.

Community/Social Workers — 5 sessions — 6 individuals

Social workers, school workers, community assistants, professionals in the field of social work for ≥10 years.

Interviews Summary

Through interviews with **community leaders**, **nonprofit leaders**, and **social workers**, several key themes emerged regarding challenges in accessing social services, resource awareness, fundraising, and the role of technology in improving service coordination. Many people have trouble navigating fragmented systems, relying on word-of-mouth due to outdated or incomplete service directories.

While technology has the potential to improve resource access and coordination, adoption barriers persist, including limited accessibility and siloed, disconnected systems across organizations. Nonprofits, for instance, face difficulties in securing sustainable funding and

engaging donors, particularly for underfunded causes, and social workers emphasized the need for real-time, accurate resource directories to better serve their clients.

Overall, there is a strong need for improved information sharing, better funding structures, and more integrated technology solutions to enhance service delivery and support.

Community Leaders

From the interviews conducted with **community leaders**, we put together a few key insights that emerged regarding access to social services and the role of resource directories like the FRM.

Challenges in Accessing Services

A majority of the community leaders emphasized that many people seeking social services often face significant challenges in finding and accessing resources, including confusion about where to find resources, reliance on word-of-mouth, and the difficulty of navigating a fragmented system. People frequently cycle between *temporary* solutions like shelters or mental health facilities without achieving long-term stability, especially when it comes to housing and employment.

“The biggest challenge is that people don’t know where to go. Even when services exist, they’re not always **accessible or easy to find**.”

“People **fall into a cycle**—wandering the streets, getting picked up by the police, taken to a mental health facility, given meds, and then back on the street again. It’s chaotic.”

“There’s **nothing locally to give people a list of resources**. No homeless shelters, just The Haven or Anthony House—one or the other.”

“People without education, finances, and underserved populations face the most **difficulties accessing services**.”

“We’re **always at capacity**—technically, we can take 30 people, but we push it to 35. Sometimes, people sleep on the floor.”

Resource Awareness & Information Sharing

Many community leaders use a variety of strategies to stay informed about available resources, including word-of-mouth, personal connections with organizations, and, occasionally, tech-driven solutions like websites or apps. They noted that many community members are **unaware of all the resources available to them** and often rely on more traditional methods—such as flyers, word-of-mouth, libraries, or local community centers—to learn about

these resources.

"Access to services isn't just about availability; it's about **awareness**. Many people don't know where to turn, and that creates an even bigger barrier."

"There is a gap in the market, and people aren't able to access **real-time information**."

"Most of the information we get is from what we see in person—like a church that hands out food. There's **no formal directory**."

"We **expose people to different community services**—food banks, furniture programs, volunteer opportunities. It's about building relationships."

"If we had the right resources, we could share them with others. But if **no one tells us**, we can't help."

Limitations on Existing Resource Directories

One of the major challenges is that many current resource directories lack accuracy, including a lack of up-to-date information and inconsistent coverage. Leaders pointed out that organizations operating in silos might make service coordination efforts inefficient at times, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities to help those in need. Some felt that directories did not take into consideration the unique requirements of some vulnerable groups, like people with mental health disorders or those who are homeless on a long-term basis.

"Resource directories **aren't really accurate**. I'd rate them a 1 out of 5."

"The county website is **outdated**—I'd give it a 2 out of 5 for accuracy."

"We have an Excel sheet where we add things based on what we know, but it's a work in progress. We **don't really share it**."

"On a scale of 1-5, we would give a 4. Most nonprofits do a good job updating resource information, but staffing shortages can create **inefficiencies**."

"With the CFF directory, there are **usability issues**—it's not up to tech standards because going online and finding stuff is hard."

Community Collaboration & Technology

Leaders noticed the potential for community collaboration to improve access to services. They

suggested that more partnerships between social service organizations, local governments, and tech companies could streamline processes and make it easier for individuals to navigate the system. Although several interviewees noted that many individuals still encounter challenges with technology access, leaders overall found technology-driven solutions like telemedicine and online directories beneficial.

“**Telehealth is important**, but access is an issue. We've purchased tablets, but we need more funding to reach more people.”

“We had 30 nonprofits come together for Giving Week and raised a lot of funds. It would be great if we could meet four times a year and **actually share data and resources**.”

“A good leader knows how to do everybody's job. That's why we train staff, find good mentors, and make sure everyone knows how to **support each other**.”

“We're in a retirement-heavy community, with an average age in the 40s or 50s. Tech isn't really the way to reach people here—we need to make things **easy and accessible**.”

Opportunities for Improvement

A recurring pattern in suggestions for improvement was the need for better coordination and integration of services. Leaders emphasized how crucial it is to have current and accurate resource information. Many also suggested that organizations might serve more people and increase their capacity to fulfill demand if they received greater funding and assistance.

“If I could change one thing, I'd create an app that provides **real-time access** to all services—whether you need food, medication, or aftercare support.”

“The dream would be a **tech system where we can track everything** in real time—who needs what, where the gaps are, and how to connect people faster.”

“**More funding** means we could serve more people. It's that simple.”

Nonprofit Leaders

Through our interviews with **nonprofit leaders**, we observed a lot of common themes emerge regarding the challenges nonprofits face in fundraising, their experiences with existing platforms, and their hopes for improved technology-driven solutions.

Persistent Barriers to Fundraising

Nonprofit leaders consistently highlighted the difficulty of securing funding, especially for causes that fall outside traditional philanthropic priorities. Programs addressing men's mental health, community health, and systemic health equity often struggle to fit into existing grant structures. Many funders prioritize well-established causes, leaving certain communities underfunded and requiring nonprofits to work harder to justify their impact.

"It's hard to change the **narrative** of why [client group] needs this."

"There's really nothing that exists for this community. **Placing resources financially is difficult.**"

"In terms of funding, **mission creep** is a common problem many nonprofits encounter."

Difficulty in Accessing and Retaining Donors

Nonprofits continue to struggle with donor engagement and retention after obtaining initial financing. Many lack the tools to effectively communicate their long-term impact or personalize outreach efforts. Organizations find it difficult to establish long-lasting relationships with their supporters if they do not have access to useful donor insights.

"They think buying fair trade is the same as **donating** to a foundation."

[On generational trust barriers to online donations], "your generation gives away **data and privacy.**"

"Individual donations have **dropped 70%** over the course of 50 years."

Community/Social Workers

Across all interviews, social/community workers consistently highlighted several common challenges they face when navigating, sharing, and managing community resource information. A significant pain point is the difficulty in finding accurate and up-to-date resource information. Many workers rely on databases and resource directories, but they often encounter outdated details, unresponsive service providers, and a lack of clarity about when resources are updated. This creates challenges not only in verifying the information but also in communicating it effectively to those they serve.

In addition to this, the workers also expressed the need for more user-friendly, accessible tools. Current directories are often hard to navigate or lack essential categories.

Social/community workers prefer platforms with advanced search filters, better categorization, and a mobile-friendly interface.

It is more difficult to determine whether shared resources are still useful or valid when feedback loops are absent. In order to efficiently organize and distribute information, social workers emphasized the significance of real-time updates, resource ratings, and more precise, trustworthy technologies.

Usability & Technology Barriers

Social workers pointed frequently toward a gap between what might be “easy to use” for a general audience and what “easy to use” might mean for a person doing resource coordination work full-time: A platform might be serviceable for casual, unhurried, or infrequent use but not for high-volume or high-speed work.

“For everyday folks who aren’t well with technology, this isn’t bad. For social workers, **I need more.**”

“The community itself is **overwhelmed with technology**. People get uncomfortable with technology and it would be nice if there was [a] mobile-friendly [option] since most people have a phone.”

“It would be nice to have **more advanced search filters** and categories.”

“Is [there] a rating system? For social workers? Even if it’s a thumbs-up/down rating, it is crucial to help... would like to know if there is a way to see when it is **updated with reviews.**”

Accuracy & Currency of Resource Info

Not unlike community leaders, social workers flagged the problem of outdated and/or unverified information. Several described a cycle of sending clients out to resources which turned out to be expired, discontinued, or misaligned with directories’ outputs. Bridging that gap themselves requires workers to rely on generic search engines or time-consuming manual follow-up calls rather than a more dependable, centralized source.

“There is no solid way to centralize a way to **keep updates** of changed services for the community.”

“Giving resources that are **already expired and continuously sending them out**... I need to follow up and call to know, sometimes it’s difficult.”

“I usually use Google, but it is **outdated and not detailed enough.**”

"It would be helpful to **get feedback** so I know the information is outdated."

Capacity & Systemic Barriers

Beyond the use of the FRM itself, workers described structural constraints on how frequently they might even be able to find the directory useful, naming their bulging caseloads, capacity limits, and systems not designed with linguistic diversity in mind. These issues weren't FRM-specific necessarily, but do establish a good baseline to have in mind—if a resource directory doesn't account for these realities, it may underperform for the population it's meant to serve.

"We are time-limited, reach capacity quickly, and often **can't provide assistance**."

"It's not that people did anything wrong; it's the **broken system** that makes accessing services so difficult."

"**Language access** needs improvement: Resources should be available in Spanish, Creole, and other languages beyond English."

Usability Testing

To better align with FCI's needs and our early research findings, the team's goal for the usability testing was focused on evaluating the following three areas:

- 1** The ease of use of FRM for new users/current users
- 2** The accessibility for all types of users (social workers, community leaders, and nonprofit leaders)
- 3** Efficiency of presentation of resource information

Live Tests and Participants

The testing sessions were conducted mostly in-person, with a few held remotely via Zoom and recorded. Prior to testing, participants provided consent for the sessions to be recorded and stored securely in the cloud for later analysis. All participants and moderators used either a

laptop or tablet equipped with screen-recording capabilities in order for us to capture real-time interactions and feedback.

Participants included community workers, social workers, and local leaders actively engaged in serving Florida communities. We interviewed individuals based on their direct experience with navigating and assisting others in accessing social services, ensuring valuable insights into the usability, functionality, and effectiveness of the resource directory being tested.

Participants' diverse roles and expertise made it possible to conduct comprehensive evaluations and uncover pain points, accessibility concerns, and opportunities for improvement within the platform. We had participants go through structured tasks designed to simulate real-world scenarios they frequently encounter in their work. We observed their interactions, noted areas of confusion or inefficiency, and collected qualitative feedback on their overall experience. Key observations from these sessions played a crucial role in identifying gaps and in making recommendations for refining the user experience and further platform improvement.

Findings and Recommendations

We identified key issues related to **navigation, accessibility, information accuracy, and trust** in the platform. Users had problems with navigation, poor search functionality, and accessibility barriers. Users also felt that inaccurate and outdated information made them skeptical about accessing the platform. Additionally, users preferred personal networks over the online directory due to trust concerns.

To address these challenges, recommended improvements include enhancing navigation with clearer categories and guided search, implementing accessibility features (e.g., mobile optimization, though a strong mobile-responsive website, as 211 demonstrates, may be a lower-investment first step before a dedicated app), ensuring information accuracy through verification systems, and gaining trust via user feedback and community engagement features. These changes will create a more user-friendly, reliable, and widely adopted platform.

Interaction Issues

A

INTERACTION ISSUE: The search bar is not obvious to users.



RECOMMENDATION: Lighten the placeholder text inside the search bar so it shows more clearly as a suggested-keyword prompt rather than an active entry.

B

INTERACTION ISSUE: The change text size button is not obvious, and the preset font size for first-time users is too small.

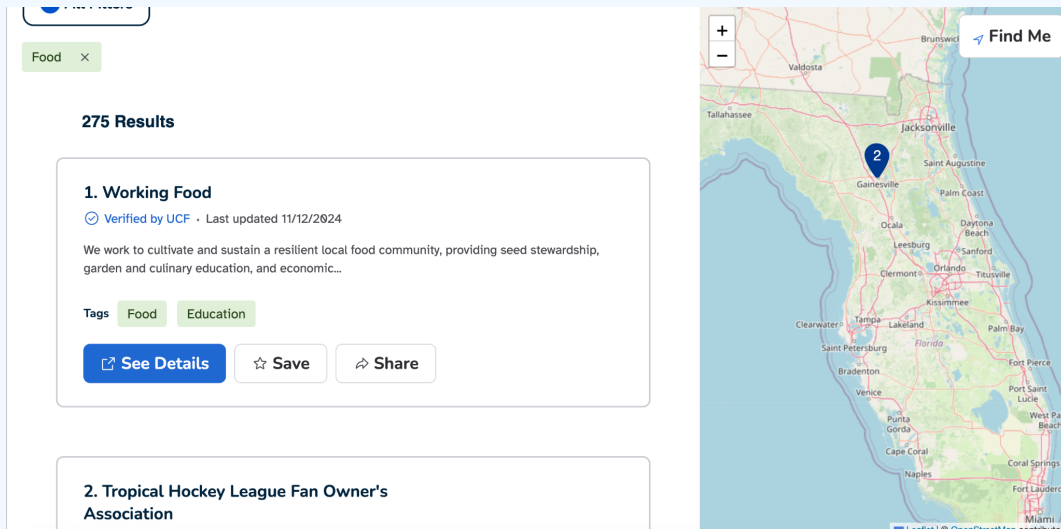


RECOMMENDATION: Add a pop-up letting users choose a font size (large to small) before they access the site, or raise the default pre-set size for accessibility.

C

INTERACTION ISSUE: The map locator does not have interactions as the user expected, and there are several minor inconveniences that make the map inefficient. Results appear in a split-screen layout, with a numbered list on the left and a map with numbered pins on the right. Several issues make this inefficient:

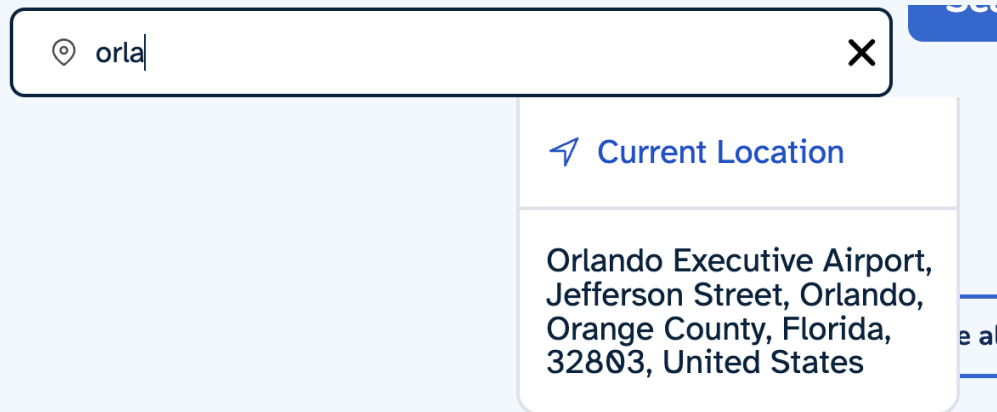
- Pin numbers don't match the list order, and don't reflect distance from the user either, so the numbers superficially look meaningful but aren't usable for ranking or cross-referencing listings.
- Users don't understand the purpose of seeing the map.
- Zoom feature doesn't always align with standard scrolling (e.g., scroll down = zoom in, scroll up = zoom out), and text boxes interfere with scrolling
- While the tab key works to see the text box, there is no list-navigation feature present



RECOMMENDATION: Sync pin numbers to match the list order or else to distance from the user, whichever is more useful for the task, and add keyboard list-navigation alongside the existing tab-to-textbox behavior. A follow-up moderated test focused specifically on map/list correspondence is recommended before implementing a fix.

D

INTERACTION ISSUE: The search box isn't well-aligned, with its contents aligned right, not aligned left, underneath the search bar, and the search box also takes a moment to load, so users will hit the Enter key before it appears and the search seems to silently fail.

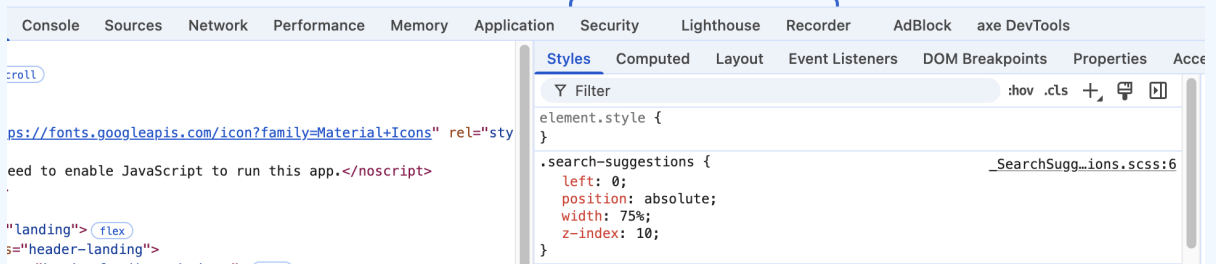


RECOMMENDATION: Anchor the dropdown to the search bar itself (testing showed that width: 75% and left: 0 holds up correctly across mobile, tablet, and desktop interfaces for screen responsiveness), rather than using fixed percentages. This allows search results to not fully cover the width of the text box but still be at an appropriate placement.

```

1  .search {
2    &-suggestions {
3      position: absolute;
4      // width: 100%;
5      width: 40%;
6      left: 46%;
7      // padding-right: 13.1rem;
8      z-index: 10;
9      @media only screen and (max-width: 1024px) {
10       left: 40%;
11     }
12   }
13 }

```



The **next recommendation** is to either disable the enter key from searching or upload the search results as you are typing. The current method is too slow for users to react in time.

Accessibility & Clarity Issues

A

ACCESSIBILITY & CLARITY ISSUE: Users need offline map access and the option to skip account creation.

Welcome to the FRM! There's no need to create a separate account. Please sign in with your company/org-provided account. An FRM profile will be established for you after initial sign in.

RECOMMENDATION: Saved lists could help people who do not have reliable internet—whether that means no WiFi or a limited phone charge—access resource information offline.

B ACCESSIBILITY & CLARITY ISSUE: Users have questions about the “Trusted by [Organization]”/“Verification by [Organization]” tag; they wondered about the process and reason for verification.

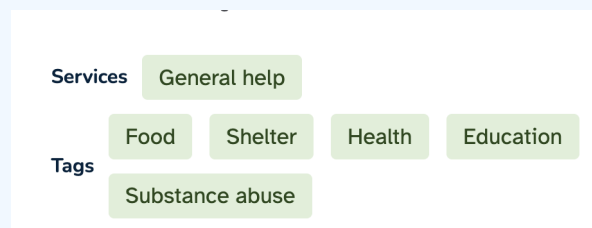


RECOMMENDATION: Add an information icon (i) next to the verification label explaining who verifies listings and what the verification actually covers.

C ACCESSIBILITY & CLARITY ISSUE: Tags and filters are too vague.

Services and availability

☐ Open Now	☐ LGBTQIA+
☐ Food	☐ Basic Needs
☐ Health	☐ Legal
☐ Shelter	☐ Transportation
☐ Education	☐ Mental Health
☐ Financial Help	☐ Substance Abuse
☐ Jobs	☐ Technology
☐ Family Support	☐ Online



RECOMMENDATION: Revisit why tags and filters are different. Provide an in-depth investigation of what users look up. It would be great to see website insights and generate a list of the most searched items.

For instance, “Food” isn’t descriptive enough when I am seeking food *stamps*. What we recommend is to provide tags that align with filters. Since there can be many, generate tags “after” the search. So if I search “food,” I should see under the filters...

- Food stamps
- Food pantry
- Food and Shelter
- Community Kitchen
- etc.

Generating this would eliminate redundant information and improve efficiency in locating resources.

Information Presentation Issues

A

INFORMATION PRESENTATION ISSUE: Hours and location information for listings isn't especially clear.

Hours and Location

 219 NW 10th Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32601

 **Get Directions**

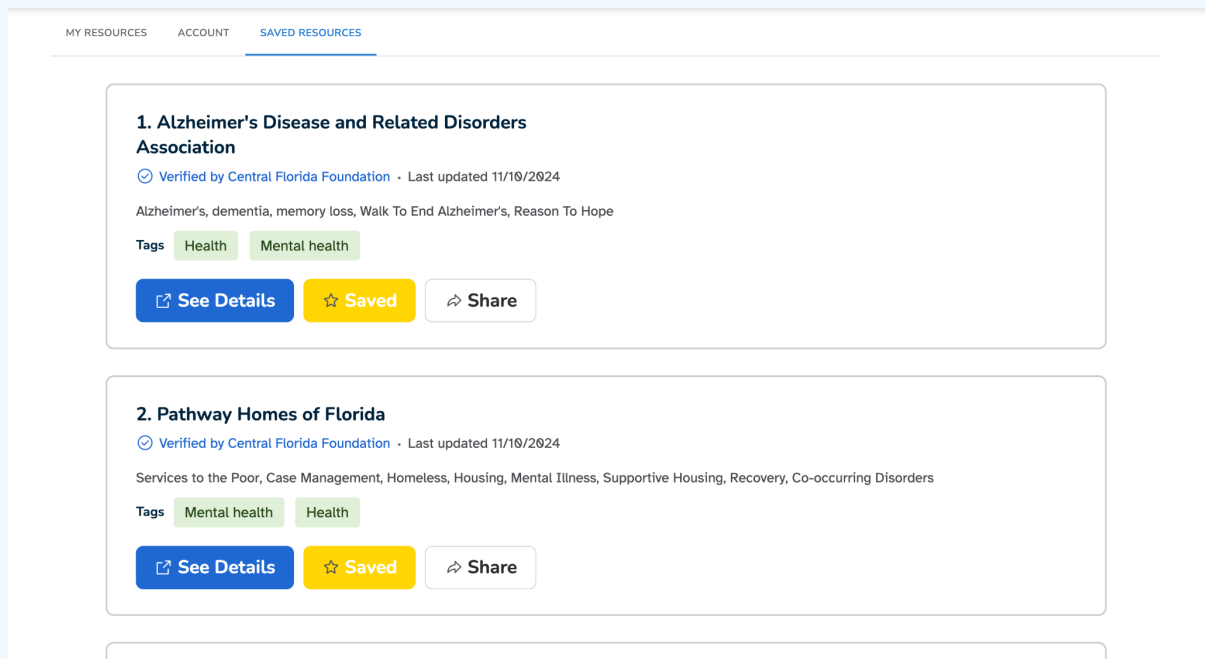
RECOMMENDATION: Separate hours and location into distinct, clearly labeled fields. Testers who saw this separated version responded more positively; some current listings show numbers that don't clearly resolve into an address or set of hours.

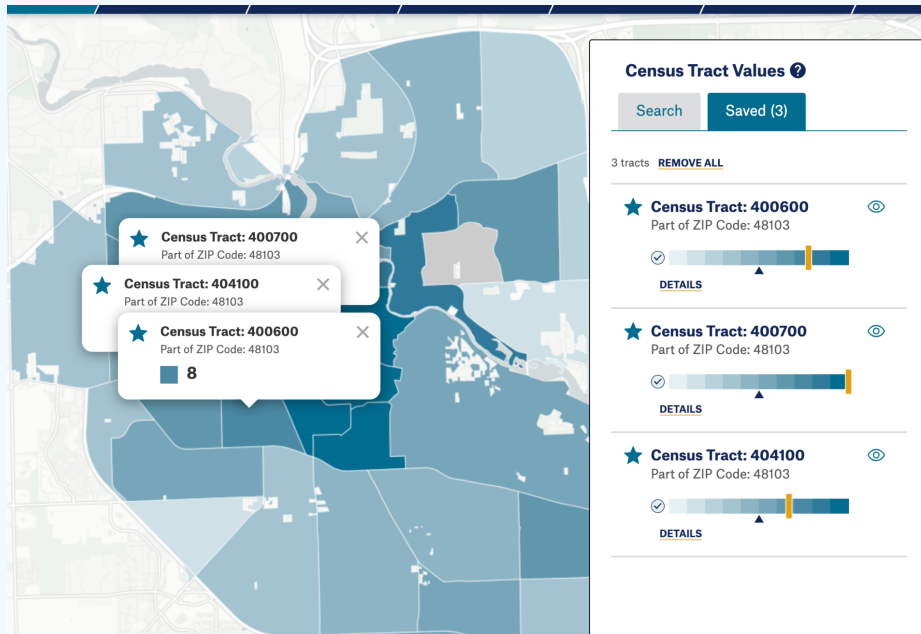
B **INFORMATION PRESENTATION ISSUE:** There isn't an employment/jobs category button on the front page.



RECOMMENDATION: Many social workers encounter people looking for jobs; adding an easily accessible, dedicated employment category with accessible resources would meet an existing, recurring need.

C **INFORMATION PRESENTATION ISSUE:** There isn't a select-and-export/print feature that would let users choose multiple nearby locations and print the important information in one pass.





RECOMMENDATION: While retrieving information from a saved list is useful, social workers specifically need to print a list of key details (in black and white) for clients. A quick print button in a page's bottom corner, generating a temporary list, would meet this need without requiring a full account system.

Discussion

Results

The three research methods' conclusions, in some sense, converge. The competitive analysis hinted at a rising tide among resource-directory platforms: the adoption of real-time data updates, mobile accessibility, multilingual support, and mechanisms for users to suggest resource updates. The interviews across three categories of FRM user verified that these features really do matter, with frontline social workers and community workers—indeed, the FRM's true target audience—recounting reliance on personal notes, phone calls, and informal professional networks because they cannot depend on existing directory information to be accurate and up-to-date. Usability testing reinforced other findings from the competitive analysis, showing that participants ran into friction determining whether information on the directory could actually be trusted.

Shortcomings

Limited Participant Diversity

Although we interviewed social workers, community leaders, and nonprofit professionals, we were unable to include end-users who rely on these resources. This represents a missed opportunity to understand the lived experiences and needs of the individuals who directly use the FRM.

Sample Size Constraints

Due to time and logistical limitations, our interview sample size was relatively small. This may limit the generalizability of our findings across Florida's diverse communities.

Platform Limitations

The usability tests were conducted only on the development version of the FRM, which may not fully represent future iterations or live functionalities. As a result, our recommendations might need reevaluation based on platform updates.

Researcher Bias

Despite our efforts to remain objective, interviewer interpretations and the framing of usability tasks may have introduced some bias into the analysis and recommendation process.

Conclusion

The FRM has significant potential to improve access to community resources across Florida. Through comparative analysis, interviews, and usability testing, we identified key challenges users face—particularly in navigation, information accuracy, accessibility, and trust in the platform.

Addressing these issues through clearer categorization, accessibility enhancements, real-time updates, and user feedback systems can make FRM a more inclusive and dependable tool. The FRM can evolve into a collaborative platform that meets the dynamic needs of both service providers and users.

Continued investment in user-centered design, inclusive testing, and cross-agency collaboration will be critical to the platform's long-term success and impact.

Next Steps

The usability testing study has provided a wealth of information and recommendations for enhancing the FRM's user experience. The next critical step is to translate these findings into actionable design improvements—like making the search bar findable, increasing default font size, fixing map interaction patterns, and separating hours and location in resource listings—and then into more substantive changes, like multi-language availability, to make sure the FRM can become a system for all.

Appendix

Interview Protocols

- ☰ Social/Community Workers_Interview Protocol
- ☰ Community Leaders_Interview Protocol
- ☰ Nonprofit Leaders_Interview Protocol

Spreadsheet Analysis

- ✚ Social Worker Qualitative Analysis
- ✚ Community Leaders_Qualitative Analysis
- ✚ Non-profit Leaders Qualitative Analysis