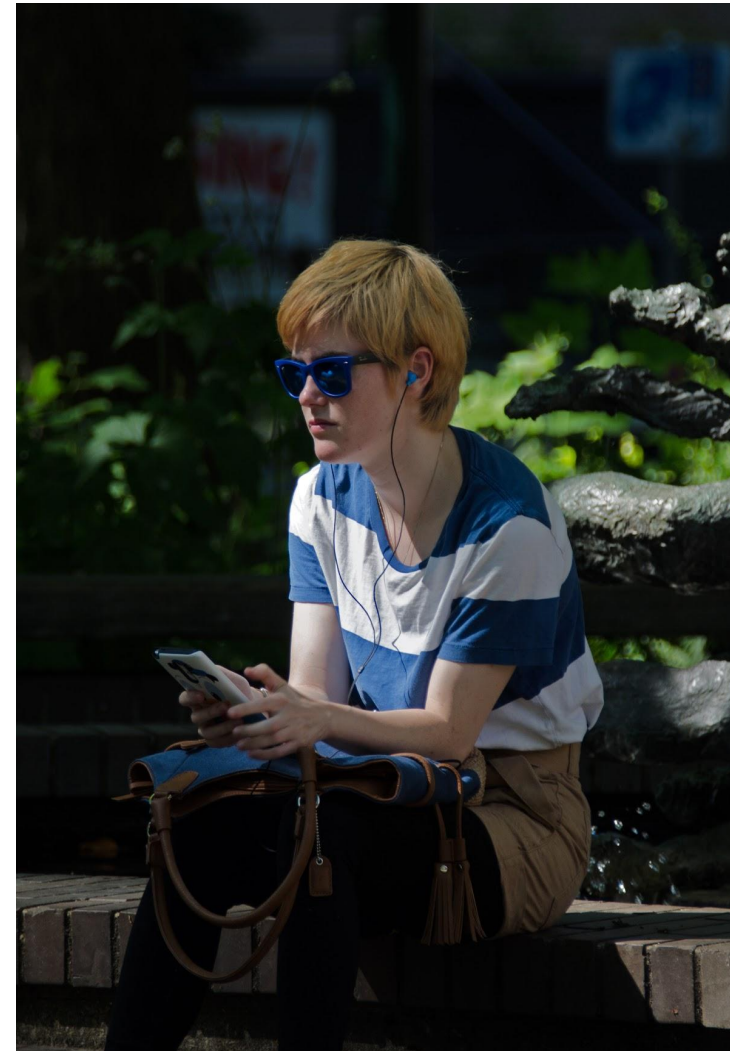


Find Your SPOT: Youth Involvement in Teen-Friendly Spaces

PLACE Program 2015



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability





PLACE Presentation
July 16, 2015

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Executive Summary

We are a group of students working with the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability through a program called PLACE (Planning and Leadership Across City Environments) to further youth involvement in city planning. The United Nations defines youth as 15-24, but for our purposes we will use the ages 13-22, because we wanted to include a younger demographic that is often ignored in policy discussions. Youth ages 13-22 are often excluded from planning and therefore lack public spaces that reflect our needs as an age group. Our goal for this project is to make public spaces in Portland and other cities more youth-friendly. We addressed this problem in two ways; first, we created a document outlining the best practices for engaging youth in planning and creating youth-friendly public spaces to be used by architects, designers and planners. Second, we designed an app for teens to connect with each other and discuss public spaces. Through the implementation of these tools by BPS and partners, we aim to increase youth involvement in the planning of public spaces and their engagement in their local public spaces.





Executive Summary

Methodology:

- **Best Practices**
 - Avenues for youth engagement should include diverse viewpoints, outreach to existing organizations, and give youth power and agency to incentivize their involvement in planning of public spaces.
 - Trends in popular public spaces for youth include free wifi, food options, safety, entertainment, and freedom to be both social and alone in a public space.
- **App/Website**
 - Our research showed the majority of youth have access to internet or a smartphone and internet access daily. We also found that the desire for an app versus a website was equal throughout respondents. With this in mind, we decided that an app and website would be the most successful way to reach the youth population.
 - Based on our surveys, the design of the app should mirror popular social media apps that already exist and include features such as photo sharing, location services, and the ability to connect with friends
 - Finally, our outreach and surveys show that simplicity in design and functionality would be most appealing to users.

Executive Summary

Findings:

- **Best Practices Document**
 - First, we conducted a survey to determine why certain public spaces are more appealing than others to the youth population.
 - Next, we researched case studies to learn what practices have been effective in similar endeavors.
 - We also conducted interviews with experts to hear their opinions on youth involvement in public spaces.
- **App/Website**
 - We surveyed over one hundred youth about their technology use and their need for a digital tool that made it easier to find places to go.
 - We looked at the success of similar apps/websites to understand what was most important in creating a mock app and website.
 - We met with technology experts to learn about app design and attracting youth.
 - we created a mock-up app and website that allows youth to rate and connect over public spaces.

Recommendations:

The goal of our recommendations is to make public spaces more youth-friendly, and for planners to create avenues for youth input.

- **Best practices:** We recommend that architects, designers and planners use our list of best practices to help draw youth into the public sphere by creating a Youth Public Space Commission.
- **Youth Involvement Tool:** We recommend that a digital tool (app and/or website) be created for youth to rate, spark discussion about, and locate public spaces. This will also provide planners with information on the public spaces, and elements of those places, that youth prefer and spend time in.

Who We Are

PLACE (Planning and Leadership Across City Environments) is a high school summer program that engages youth in city planning, comprised of 25 students who represent seven different high schools across the city of Portland and the US. Over the course of four weeks, we studied urban issues including transportation, housing, gentrification, and city planning through a lens of access and equity. The first week of PLACE was geared towards learning about urban studies; we met with Martha Pellegrino at City Council, visited TriMet headquarters, held a discussion with Lew Bowers (formerly of the Portland Developers Commission), and attended a meeting with our client, the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS). For our final project, we were tasked by BPS to evaluate what makes a public space youth-friendly and how to better engage youth in the planning of public spaces. The next two weeks focused on us working together to research and generate final tools that will be presented to BPS.





Introduction

In our project, we aimed to get a better picture of how youth engage with public spaces. As defined by The American Planning Association a public space is “A gathering spot or part of a neighborhood, downtown, special district, waterfront or other area that helps promote social interaction and a sense of community.”

We set out to determine what makes a public space youth-friendly to make policy recommendations to the City of Portland about how to engage youth in the planning and use of public spaces. This project came to fruition due to the current lack of emphasis on engaging youth in the creation of public spaces. We developed two lists of best practices: one for engaging youth in the planning of public spaces, and one for highlighting what youth want to see in public spaces. Aspects of youth engagement, planning and use of spaces were integral to our project.

These aspects laid the foundation for the creation of a digital youth involvement tool that will allow youth to give feedback on the youth-friendliness of the public spaces they use. Through the feedback that youth provide with this tool, we hope that youth will become more involved in the process of revamping public spaces to make them more youth-friendly. In addition, planners can use the feedback data to understand the spaces and amenities that youth prefer. The responses to our community outreach surveys spurred the development of a real-time feedback tool. With our lists of best practices and the development plan for a youth tool, we hope that youth will feel motivated to be involved in public spaces and that city planners will value their contributions.

Purpose

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability is looking for ways youth can play a role in the planning of public spaces, in hopes that they will become more likely to use these spaces. Though public policy affects youth just as much as it affects adults, youth involvement in the process of planning public spaces is seldom, and therefore lack spaces that cater to their needs. Lizzie Medford, former PLACEr and student at Scripps College, noted in a study on Youth Participation in Planning that 92% of survey respondents spend their free time at home rather than at public spaces. The issue of youth exclusion from the community is not unique to Portland; it affects youth across the world. All around the world, youth are excluded from policy because of the stigma they carry and the belief that youth are irresponsible members of society. This project aims to highlight the benefits of involving youth in policy through the creation of tools for use by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, while acknowledging that we as a group cannot, and do not, speak for all youth in the Portland area.



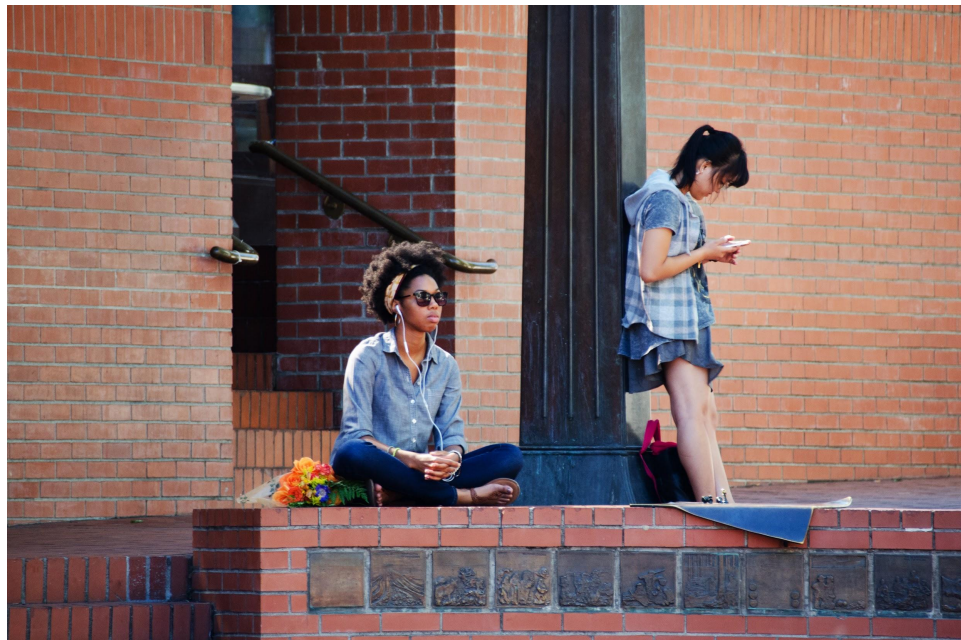
Project Context

Lizzie's Tool is a survey used to examine the youth-friendliness of a public space. The tool ranked the youth-friendliness of each space using a point system; a list of different amenities and features, such as free wifi, were provided and for every feature the space had, a point was given. Additionally, the survey inquired how many youth, non-youth, and youth employees were at the location. We used Lizzie's tool to evaluate five public spaces in the downtown Portland area. We noticed that certain questions were vague, confusing, and irrelevant to the study and were omitted from the survey. We also noticed that some questions were opinion-based, but we ultimately decided to keep them. While the spaces we evaluated rated fairly well on the survey, we noticed a lack of youth present in these spaces, especially in the spaces with many young children. This led us to the conclusion that while theoretically there are many "youth-friendly" spaces, in reality not many youth are found at these spaces. Therefore, youth look for more criteria in public spaces than may be represented in the tool. The space we evaluated with the most youth was Powell's Books, which suggests that free wifi, inexpensive food options, and being surrounded by entertainment options are important to youth, among other things. These findings were confirmed with our survey responses from actual youth.



Methodology Overview

To produce well-informed recommendations on how to better engage youth in public spaces and planning, we conducted four subgroups of research: case studies, expert interviews, literary and data analysis, and community outreach. We worked within our groups but provided daily updates to our team in order to share information and prevent overlapping in research. These methods helped us to determine how to actively involve youth in planning public spaces as well as what youth look for in a public space.



“Socially engaged young people have the knowledge that their actions can effect positive change. They possess an awareness and motivation about the need for positive change in their world that is based on knowledge. They have the skills and capacity to make a contribution.”

“Youth Acts, Community Impacts”
Forum for Youth Investment

Methodology: Case Studies

We researched multiple case studies on methods for engaging youth in planning, and communication with youth through technology, to determine our list of best practices and design our youth involvement tool.

When researching examples of public spaces that work well for youth and programs that engage youth in planning public spaces, our most useful sources came from the Project for Public Space and the Multnomah Youth Commission. We evaluated common themes in the popular programs and looked at different ways to get youth engaged in urban planning, pulling inspiration from the League of Oregon City's Youth Advisory Council, MYC, and youth civic engagement in Hampton, Virginia.

We examined both the practical application of communicating with youth through technology as well as examples of different government agencies interfacing with youth through technology. We studied patterns of use and successful engagement of youth using apps with an emphasis on rating apps including Yelp and Rotten Tomatoes. From these main case studies and a few supplementary studies of youth targeted applications, we drew up necessary components of the app: wide accessibility, visually pleasing aesthetics, and an element of social interaction. We had difficulty unearthing a wide range of practical examples of technology-based government interaction with youth, and thus focused our attention on an app designed by youth in Georgia intended to rate police officers. The app, Five-0, incorporates an effective rating system targeted at youth and provided the basis of our further research. In an effort to broaden our research, we studied the challenges of multiple mapping and rating apps including the Portland Map App, Citysearch, and Yahoo Local.

When creating our survey questions we dissected Lizzie Medford's proto-tool along with the Toronto Friendly City survey. We compared the two and refined the main target ideas to meet the needs of the youth population. Our assessment of the surveys gave us a base point for establishing the contents of our rating questionnaire.



Methodology: Interviews



Interviewing professionals in the fields of youth involvement and urban planning was a crucial step in gathering data for how to get youth involved in the planning of public spaces. Many of the interviewees we selected worked with youth in planning endeavors or worked for the city of Portland. Our responses came from several experts including Marc Fernandes, the leader of the Multnomah Youth Commission, and Pam Phan, the leader of the disbanded youth program within BPS. We also spoke with George Zaninovich, our mentor for PLACE, and Deborah Stein, a principal planner at the BPS.

Additionally, we talked with several App and web developers to get a better sense of how to create a widely used app, and how to implement our app into the real world. We interviewed Jon Lebkowsky who is the CEO of Polycot Associates; a digital media consulting firm based in Austin, Texas. In addition to Mr. Lebkowsky we interviewed Ted Slupesky, a co-owner, and developer at plasq, an international software company that specializes in comic creation software, and finally we interviewed Rick Turoczy the founder of PIE, the Portland Incubator Experiment, an early stage startup accelerator that provides capital, space, creative services, and intensive mentoring to help accelerate their client's startups.

We also interviewed experts about their knowledge and background in app design, customer success, creating products, and other similar topics. Within our group, we each worked to find multiple sources who could be helpful for accomplishing our final task. We strived to provide everyone with the best information possible when it came to how to create a successful app. While we struggled to reach experts through email, we quickly discovered the many different ways to contact various professionals through Yelp messages, LinkedIn messages, Twitter, and Facebook. Because we had a limited time range, we quickly discovered that the most reliable method was calling companies.

Methodology: Community Outreach

Our community outreach methodology consisted of online surveys that we used to collect data from students around Portland and the world. The purpose of the surveys was to get a better picture of how youth engage with public spaces and online media, in order to determine our recommendations. We were able to gain access to these youth through the social networks of some of the PLACE students who attend a variety of schools; this provided an interesting comparison between local and global youth through their descriptions of the public spaces they engage with.

Our first survey was to determine why certain public spaces are more appealing to youth than others. To do this, we examined Medford's tool and incorporated our case study research. We received 182 responses to the survey within 48 hours, which all helped in determining what the most popular things that youth look for in successful public spaces are.

Our second set of surveys sought to collect data on how youth choose where to hang out, where they obtain information about trending places, and how they use social media. This allowed us to get a sense of whether or not a digital involvement tool would be desired and used by youth. We followed up an open-ended survey with one containing more specific questions (multiple choice, rating scale, and open-ended). We sent the second survey out to friends on social media, various youth groups, and school groups via email and received 139 responses in less than 48 hours. We used this survey to determine how to make our final product appealing to the target audience.



Methodology: Community Outreach Limitations

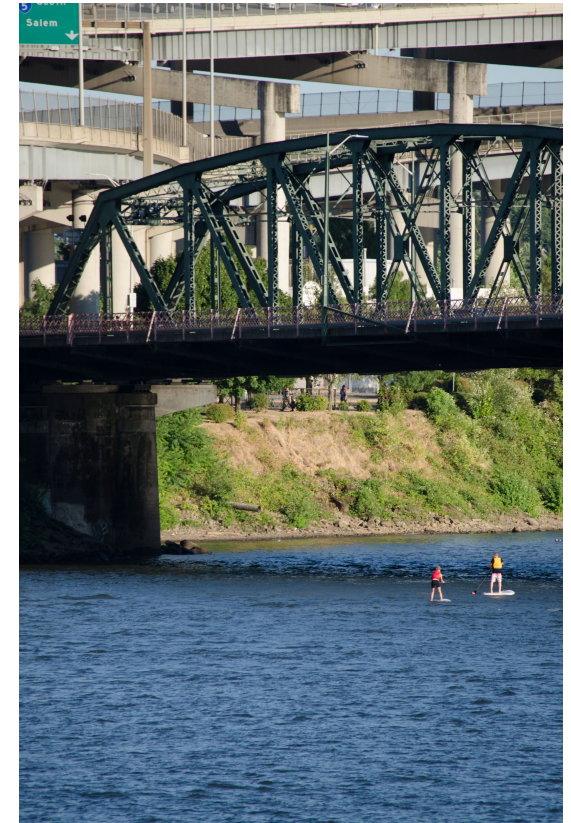
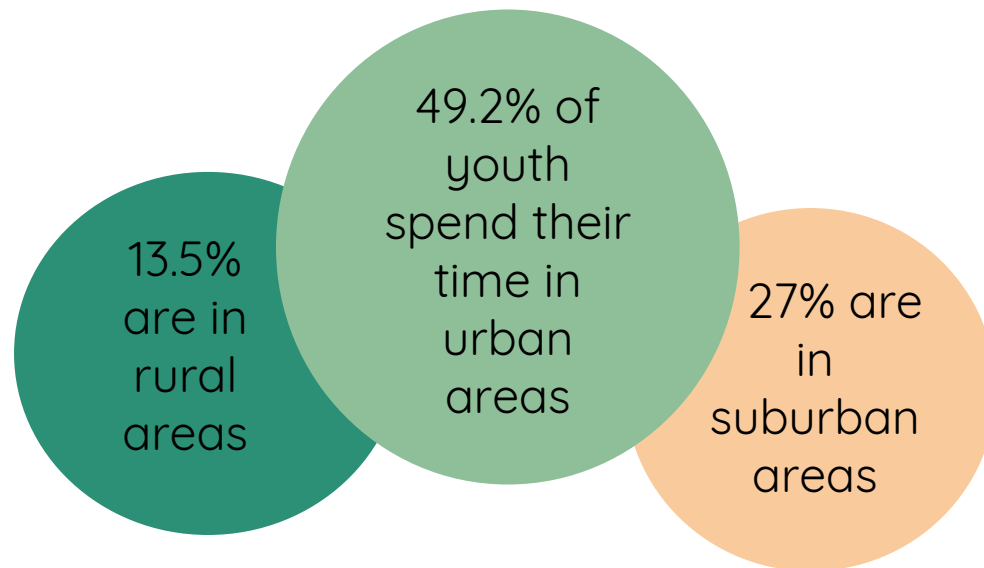
Our surveys had some limitations: if we were to send out this survey again, we would add a question asking about ethnicity and zip code to better incorporate the interests of a diverse sample of youth. Though we received responses from over five different countries, this would have been helpful in determining trends specific to Portland. While we did go back and add demographic questions about zip code, gender, and age to later surveys to analyze the data more thoroughly, because these questions were not uniform across all surveys, best practices dictated that we had to eliminate this from our final data analysis.



We also did not gather information on the specific location in Portland that youth choose to spend time in, which would have allowed us to further research the most popular youth places. In addition, after making additions and edits to one of our second-wave surveys, after reviewing the data for these adjustments we lost the login information so we no longer have access to the initial document. Given our limited time frame and access to students during the summer, online surveys made the most sense for communicating with youth. However, given more time, we could have collected more in-depth information through in-person interviews with community members.

Methodology: Literary Data Analysis

In order to find trends and analyze the data that we collected from the surveys, we first gathered data from Google Scholar and the JSTOR database to find studies on youth involvement online and using apps. These sites provided reliable studies and statistics on the internet usage of youth. We searched through articles, graphs, and reports concerning youth and the internet to generate a wide range of sources. Looking at internet trends we noticed the growing influence of social media in teenage lives. With the popularity of social media in mind, we researched successful and unsuccessful apps and designs in order to find what qualities are necessary for our tool.



Findings Overview

Our research from the case studies, expert interviews, literary and data analysis, and community outreach built the platform for our recommendations. We discovered the most popular ways that youth engage with public spaces, and what youth like in public spaces and how to get youth to communicate their preferences using online media. From this information, we consolidated our findings into best practices and a youth involvement tool, respectively.

“Civic engagement should be taught in schools to empower and teach youth what power is and how to be involved in the process of policy.”

*Qiddist Hammerly,
Northwestern University
Student, Teacher and
PLACE Co-Teacher*

55.9% of youth spend time in public spaces every day

26.9% go to parks

65.1% of youth spend their free time in public spaces

92.5% say there are food options near the space

Findings: Best Practices for Engaging Youth in Planning

Case Studies:

We compiled several case studies that would shed light on the best ways to involve youth in planning and design of public spaces. These studies highlighted several commonalities in good design process: collaboration with others, diversity in viewpoints and options, and a focus on the needs of youth.

Key factors in youth planning involvement:

- Diversity in youth planning is important and allows the voices of people with different backgrounds and viewpoints to be heard. -Advocates for Youth
- Visibility of youth programs and community outreach may help incentivize youth to become involved in planning.
- Collaboration with existing organizations that target youth, like churches or schools, bolsters credibility.
- Youth need to hold power and agency within the organization, and have the ability to create change.

Based on information from Advocates for Youth, the Forum for Youth Investment, Youth Studies Australia, and the Multnomah Youth Commission Youth Manual, as well as examples from Hampton, Virginia, the Seattle Mayor's Council, and the North Carolina Youth Council.

“Youth are most valuable in policy and planning because they happen to be users of the majority of our infrastructure and social services even though they have no voice in the process of these civic benefits.”
Pam Phan, Former Director of the Youth Planning Program

Findings: Best Practices for Engaging Youth in Planning

Interviews:

Throughout our time contacting and interviewing experts in the fields of youth involvement and planning, we compiled information on the best ways to get youth involved.. Although we asked questions based on the person's specific expertise, there were common themes that emerged, including the need for youth to have agency in their work, for there to be increased access to involvement programs, and for planners to intentionally recruit a diverse group of youth. A common question that we asked each of our interviewees was: "How do you involve/recruit/incentivize youth in planning?" According to our interviews, successful youth involvement programs should:

- Engage with the different communities of youth based on their geographical area of Portland.

Deborah Stein, Principal Planner of The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

- Give youth full control over what they do, a secure place where their voices are heard and food always helps.

Marc Fernandes, Director of The Multnomah Youth Commission

- Create avenues for youth agency, allowing them to understand the importance of their voices and involvement in civic engagement.

Qiddist Hammerly, Northwestern University Student, Teacher and PLACE Co-Teacher

- Have paid pathways, so that youth can have the opportunity to participate in what's happening in cities and not expect to volunteer their time but be paid. Equity comes into play with this too because not all youth have the time to do such based their socio-economic situation.

George Zaninovich, Teacher and PLACE Founder/Director

"We need to put more effort to those [age, race, gender, religion, renters] who are not able to be represented in planning due to access of power."
Deborah Stein

Findings: Youth Involvement Tool

From our research, we used the data to create a digital tool that allows teens to easily find public spaces that meet their desires and to easily rate their experiences in public spaces (see appendix for survey results). Based on our surveys, case studies, and literature review, we found that there is considerable youth interest and potential success in creating a tool (a website and/or app) to improve youth involvement in public spaces.

According to The Pew Research Center: 92% of teens go online daily and nearly three-quarters have access to a smartphone. From our surveys, 50% of youth express that they would be most likely to use a website to rate public spaces, while the other 50% would prefer an app. Our survey also reveals that 84% of youth use a smartphone to access the internet, while 76% use computers. Based on these statistics, we decided to create a tool on both app and website platforms.

Of the 139 youth surveyed, the following were the most desirable features for the digital tool:

- Photo sharing (65.6%)
- Updated newsfeed (64%)
- Ability to connect with friends (72%)



Findings: Youth Involvement Tool



After researching case studies that include apps such as Yelp and Instagram, and interviewing an expert from Yelp, we learned that social image holds great importance for teens using apps. It serves as an incentive for youth to use apps and websites. Survey results also revealed that 94% of youth discover places to hang out by consulting friends. These survey results stress the importance of having a social feature that allows youth to connect on the app.

From analyzing apps and websites like Yelp, Rotten Tomatoes, AirBnB, and Instagram as case studies, we found that apps with user-friendly features like toolbars and search bars are generally more successful. More specifically, we found that among apps that include a rating/reviewing feature, the most successful ones use a short and simple questionnaire. Yelp and AirBnB both use five star rating systems, making it easier for the reviewer to rate a location, and for other users to see the rating of a location. We examined Lizzie Medford's research, "Youth Friendly Public Spaces", and analyzed her survey questions used to determine the youth-friendliness of an space. From there we organized her questions into four principal criteria: access, entertainment, location, and safety. These four criteria were more general topics that covered important aspects found in Lizzie's questions regarding public spaces for youth, such as wi-fi, sports areas, music events, nearby food, bike racks and options for public transportation, identifiable security measures, and accessible bathrooms.



Findings: Best Practices for What Youth Like

Elements that youth most value in public space include:

- Food options
- Free wifi
- Safety
- Entertainment options
- Freedom to be both social and secluded

Based on our surveys, Lizzie's research, and case studies from Madrid, Spain and Western Australia.



Factoria Joven ("Youth Factory") in Madrid, Spain.



Recommendations Overview

Based on our findings from surveys, interviews, and interactions with the community, we have created the following recommendations about how to involve youth in public spaces. Our recommendations fall into two categories: Best practices for youth involvement in planning, and a digital tool for youth to rate and interact with public spaces.



“...We should be planning for and involving [youth] at the table, but we don’t necessarily know how to talk to them.”

Deborah Stein

Recommendations: Best Practices

After analyzing survey responses from 180 youth* around the country, conducting interviews with experts in youth engagement, and researching multiple case studies, we have come up with two lists: one that provides suggestions to encourage youth engagement in planning public spaces and another that outlines the most important design and programming aspects that youth look for in public spaces. While reviewing our recommendations, consider that these are plans for the BPS, and that our Youth Public Space Commission is structured as a council rather than an internship program.

1. Create a Youth Public Space Commission to determine issues with public spaces for youth and recommend action.
 - a. Structure the Commission differently from YPP, as a voting and youth plan-making board that will vote and work on projects that BPS assigns them, with the goal of making public spaces more youth-friendly using planning practices the participants garner from planners within BPS (comparable to the way that Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC) works).
 - b. Fund and support the Commission through BPS.
 - c. Aim to create a space for youth to have control and leadership over all projects and ideas that the Commission takes on.
 - d. Make it a priority of the Commission to help reverse the stigma against youth that they are unreliable and irresponsible members of their communities.

Based on information from youth Civic Engagement in Hampton, Virginia, the Multnomah Youth Commission Youth Manual, Marc Fernandes of MYC, and Pam Phan of the old YPP.

Recommendations: Best Practices

2. Follow practices that promote youth involvement in the Commission.
 - a. Hold regular meetings at convenient times that do not overlap with school.
 - b. Provide food and a comfortable working space.
 - c. Allow adults and youth to work together by employing adult staff experts in planning, community involvement and youth development.
 - d. Allow youth to have control over the direction of the Commission, with adults as mentors, educators, and consultants rather than decision makers and officials.
 - e. Solicit youth feedback on the way the Commission operates.
 - f. Include between 15 and 20 youth members that serve 2-year terms.
 - g. Consider staggered terms to ensure there are sufficient numbers of youth from one year to the next.

Based on information from the Multnomah Youth Commission Youth Manual and "Building Effective Youth Councils" by the Forum for Youth Investment and Advocates for Youth.

3. Incentivize youth to join the Commission through community outreach.
 - a. Hold events, activities, and workshops in public spaces that attract youth.
 - b. Utilize social media and technology to reach youth.
 - c. Further incentivize youth with the promise of control, leadership, and direction over the projects they receive from BPS.

Based on "Building Effective Youth Councils" by the Forum for Youth Investment, Advocates for Youth, and Youth Studies Australia.



Recommendations: Best Practices

4. Recruit a diverse group of students and staff to bring different backgrounds and viewpoints to the Commission.
 - a. Recognize that planning and policy affects underrepresented and minority groups.
 - b. Recruit intentionally from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to diverse racial, ethnic, religious, gender, socio-economic, sexual orientation, political orientation, geography, homeless, immigrant, and English language learning populations.
 - c. Collaborate with organizations that represent communities of color to recruit youth of color.
 - d. Recognize that staff should be as diverse as the people they work with and just as, not if more, invested in the work the commission will do.

Based on information provided by Qiddist Hammerly of PLACE, Marc Fernandes of MYC, Pam Phan of the former YPP and Deborah Stein of BPS, "Building Effective Youth Councils" by the Forum for Youth Investment, the Seattle Mayor's Council (which reserves two spaces for homeless youth on their 38-person council), and the North Carolina State Youth Council (which collaborates with the NAACP and Hispanic groups to recruit youth of color).



Recommendations: Best Practices

5. Collaborate with non-profits, schools, churches, and other groups to recruit youth by educating them about civic engagement through the practice of planning.

- a. Collaborate with schools by creating a community outreach program that educates students from all areas of Portland on planning practices, history, and development. (Schools may also serve as a means through which to recruit Youth Public Space Commission members).
- b. Collaborate with MYC and policy-making entities to implement practices of policy education to help make the connection that policy and planning directly correlate, so that as a result said youth can better work in the democratic process in the future.
- c. Create a youth focus group/consultants for parks (evaluate parks in area- possibly app or website).
- d. Create a youth-focused department inside the City of Portland's Office of Equity to ensure youth are not ignored in city planning and government.

Based on information provided by Deborah Stein of BPS, Pam Phan of YPP and Qiddist Hammerly of PLACE and Marc Fernandes of MYC.

6. Practice developing the social identity of youth and stigmas around youth involvement.

- a. Allow youth to form healthy identities, in a way that gives youth of different backgrounds and environments the opportunity to work in the most effective way.
- b. Cater to different styles of learning, understanding, and working for the diverse group of youth Portland serves.
- c. Change and challenge the ideas and practices of the "one size fits all" paradigm that dictates that one style of planning works for all kinds of people, through diversifying the staff and youth involved.
- d. Encourage adult planners to be open to youth involvement and collaboration.

Based on information from Marc Fernandes of MYC and Pam Phan of YPP.

Recommendations: Best Practices

Elements to Consider When Building a Public Space for Youth:

All of the information that is provided for in this section is mainly garnered from surveys that we conducted ourselves, along with case studies that are provided under each bolded recommendation.

- Food options in close proximity to public space
 - When examining the survey information, 92.4% of respondents answered yes, when asked if their choice of public space had food nearby.

Based on information from the survey we conducted as well as Lizzie's document.

- Free wifi
 - 67.5% of the youth who took the survey noted that their was free wifi in their favorite public space.
 - Use BigBelly garbage bins to simultaneously keep public spaces cleaner and provide free wifi hotspots. This setup is already being tested in New York city and would not be hard to institute.

Based on information provided from our survey and a New York City waste management initiative. (<http://www.popsci.com/garbage-cans-are-new-wi-fi-hotspot>)



Recommendations: Best Practices

- Well-maintained
 - It is important to youth that the space is aesthetically pleasing. This can be in the form of art, decoration, and cleanliness.
 - Collaboration between local artists and young people on art projects for public spaces can increase energy and community involvement in public spaces.

Based on information provided from our survey and STEPS for ARTivism in Toronto, Canada

- Feels Safe (Perceived Safety)
 - Good light in public spaces would encourage more use of the space during periods of low light, as well as increase the perceived safety of the area.
 - Keeping the space open would allow for Eyes on the street (pedestrian foot traffic and transparency) which would increase the sites perceived and actual safety.
 - Emergency blue lights would be a good investment for the site if it has any areas that are isolated, not open to street/sidewalk flow, or are inclosed.
 - Investing time and resources in working with law enforcement to minimize racial or youth profiling in the area surrounding the public space would increase the safety of both youth and public safety officers.

Based on information from Pam Phan of the former YPP, survey results, and the Growing Up in Cities project

Recommendations: Best Practices

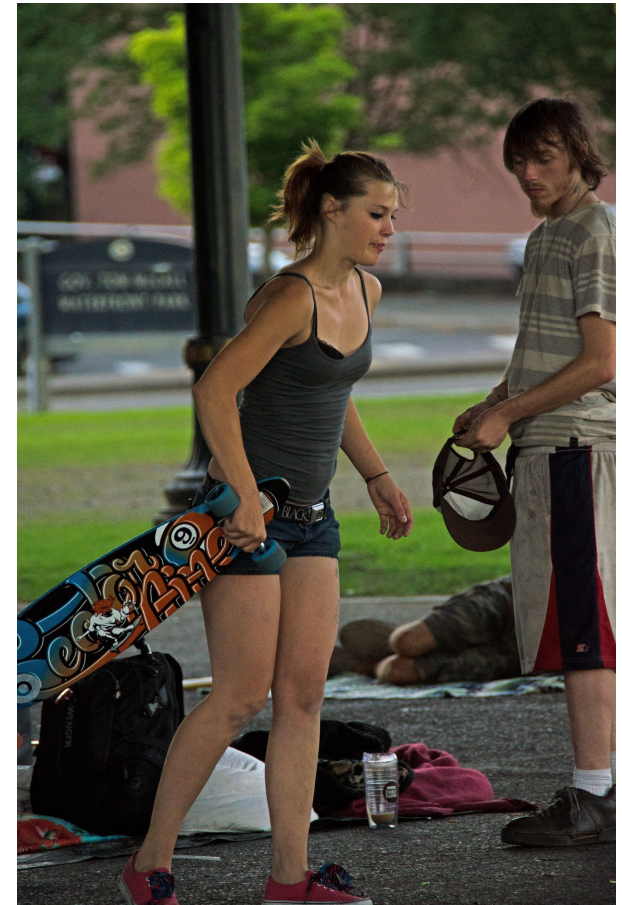
- Entertainment
 - Combining outdoor park space with indoor amenities
 - Stage for events and live performances
 - Basketball courts
 - Exercise equipment

Based on information from survey, Factoria Joven in Madrid Spain, and Fremantle Esplanade in Western Australia.

- Comfortable places to study and socialize
 - Seating/tables

Based on information from survey and Lizzie's tool

- Accessibility
 - Open 24/7
 - Near school zone/close to school
 - Near public transportation



Recommendations: Youth Involvement Tool

We recommend that BPS follows our detailed guidelines below to create the app 'Spot' that allows teens to easily find public spaces that meet their needs based on descriptions and reviews, and to rate their experiences in public spaces. We also recommend that a website be created because of almost equal interest in a website and an app. When youth rate and review spaces, other users and urban planners would be able to see what public spaces are trending. Based on our criteria, urban planners would see where a space meets youth needs, and in what areas in may be lacking.

Our app, SPOT, should have four main features that are displayed in a toolbar on the bottom of the screen. The four functions, featured in symbols, in order from left to right, are:

1. A trending page, where a user can see their friends and top reviewers' activity on Spot.
2. A search symbol, where a Spotter can find and search for spots.
3. A star symbol, where a Spotter goes to rate a spot.
4. A head shot symbol, where a Spotter can see their profile, which is visible to anyone on Spot.

When using SPOT, we recommend that it should not be necessary to have an account in order to find or search a public space. However, in order to rate a place and connect with other users, you have to create an account. For more detailed guidelines on how to create an account, go to Appendix: Tool Recommendation.

Implementation: Youth Involvement Tool

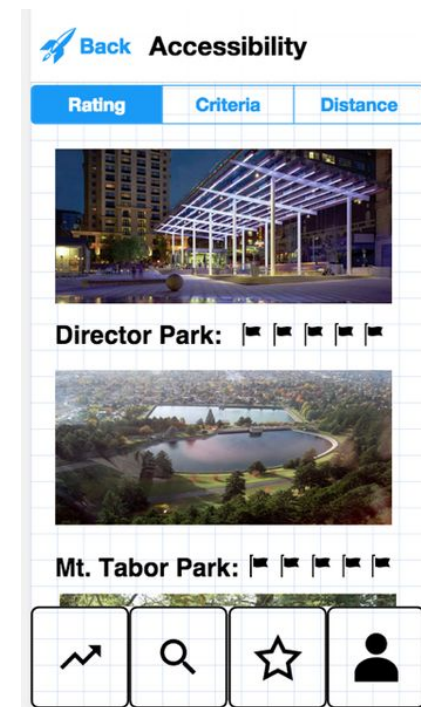
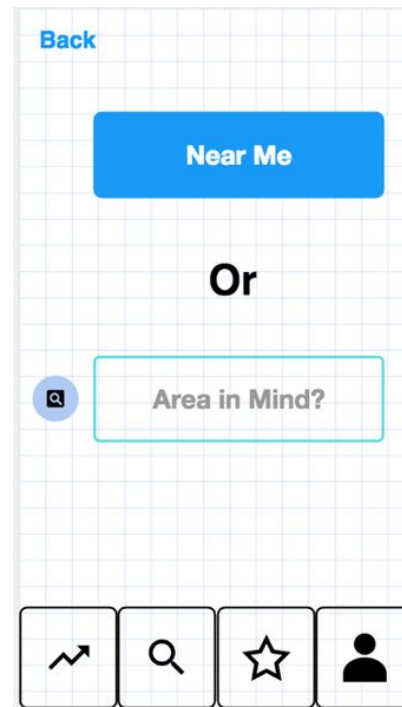
This project aims to produce a design for a digital tool to culminate these best practices. The implementation of this tool will give youth a platform to share their opinions on their favorite hotpots, and a source to find the best youth-friendly spaces in their area. As this tool will take the form of an app and/or a website, the city of Portland will need to decide which of these two platform they will want to use, once the platform has been decided there are two directions the city can go.

The first option the city can take is to pitch this project to coders in the community and organize a Hackathon. The main advantages for picking this option is there will be fresh eyes on the project, who can bring new ideas to the app, and organizing a hackathon will be cheaper, saving the city money. A disadvantage is the quality of design and development of the app is random, based on who shows up for the hackathon. Incentivizing this project as publicity for coders will be important.

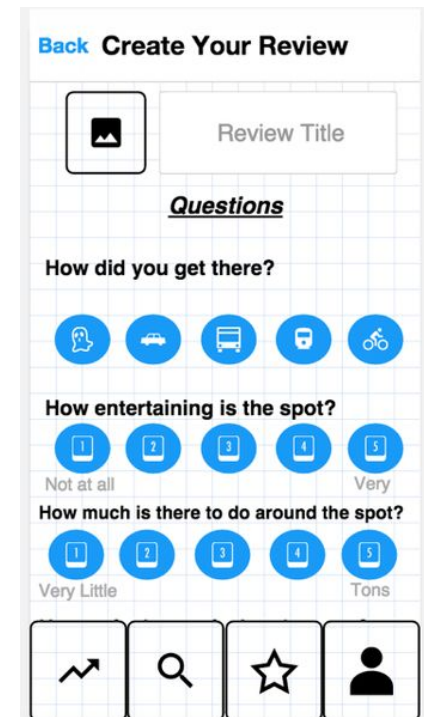
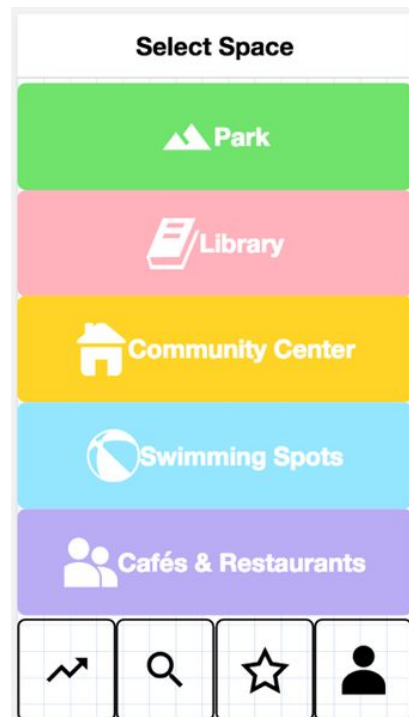
The second option is to pitch to app development firms. The advantages of this are the city will have more control on quality, the coding agency will submit apps, and be able to make edits, and finally you will have more coherence in development and support than you would if you used multiple volunteers to build the site, with a hackathon. The disadvantages are it's more costly, depending on the sophistication of the technology, especially visual design and user experience.



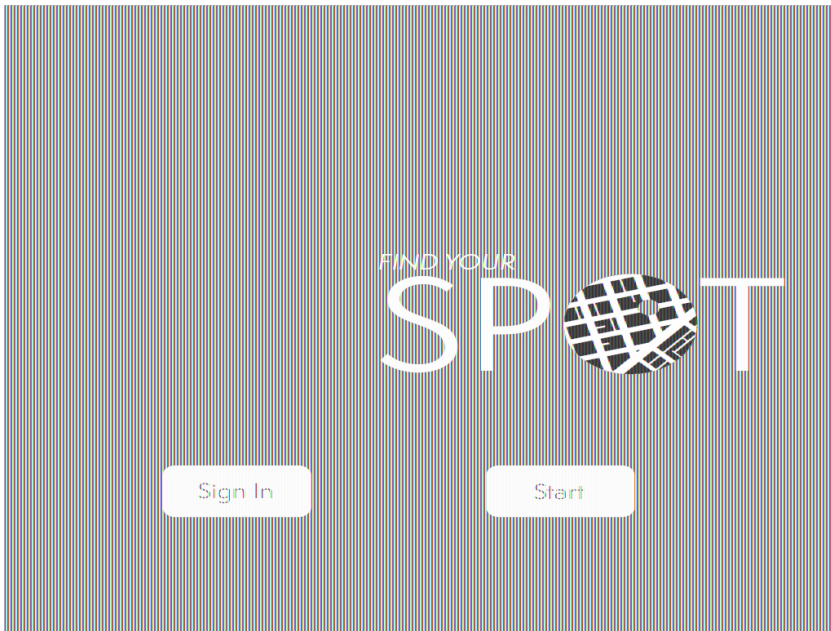
Implementation: Mockups: App



Implementation: Mockups: App



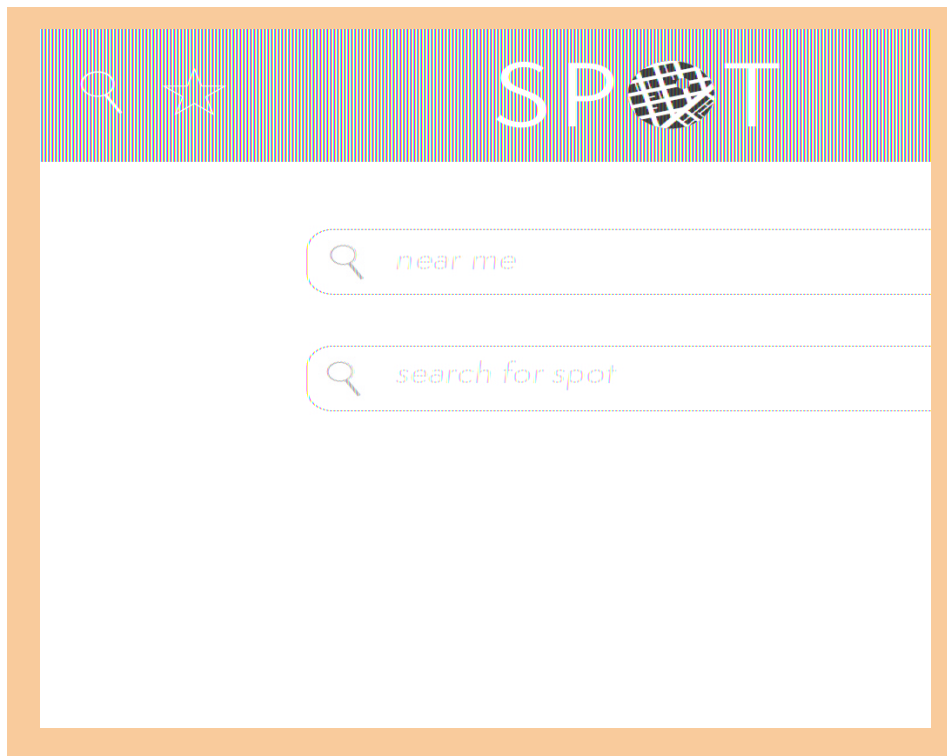
Implementation: Mockups: Website



Homepage

Our website should have all of the same features as the app so youth who do not have smartphones can access the tool as well. The only added feature on the website would be a Fix It section that serves as a platform for youth to give specific feedback on elements of a public space that could be improved. This differs from the ratings section because youth are not only identifying problems within spaces but also coming up with solutions. The feedback collected could either be used to fix the specific spaces or to influence future plans.

Implementation: Mockups: Website



35



This is part of the "Find" section of the website version of the gadget. It is very similar to the design of the app.

Implementation: Mockups: Website

SEARCH ☆ SPOT

FIX A SPOT - FEEDBACK

What do you like about the space?

Which aspects of the space could be improved?

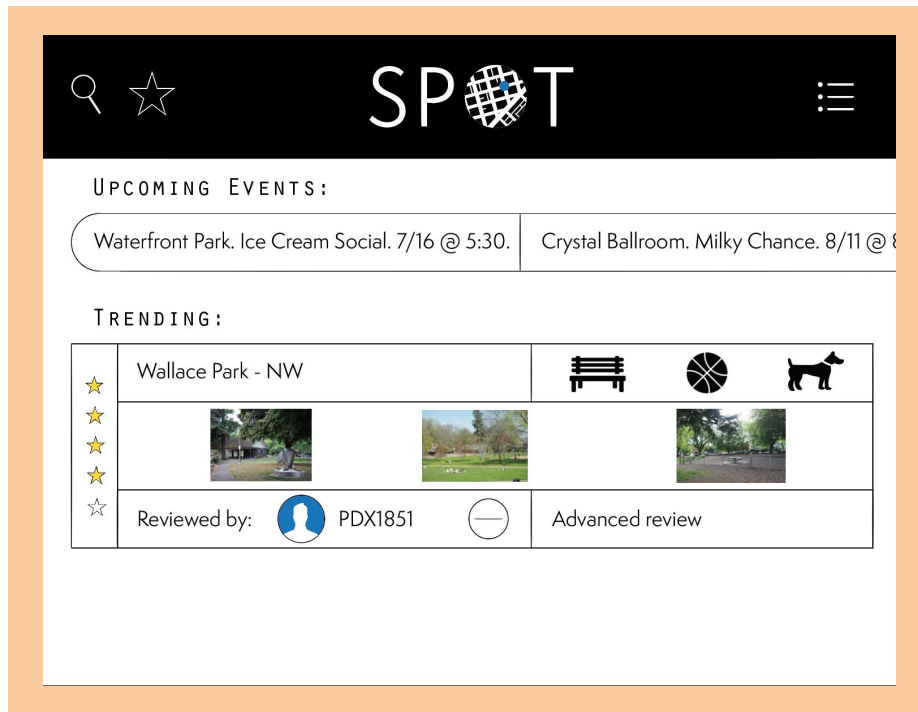
What are possible solutions?

SEARCH ☆ SPOT

fix it

SEARCH search for spot

Implementation: Mockups: Website



Upcoming Events/Trending Page



Profile Page

Marketing

Our marketing plan includes two parts: marketing the app to youth (13-22) and marketing the list of best practices to adult city planners and developers. There is a three-month plan for each. The Best Practices document should be released as soon as possible to ensure developers and planners have the information they need. The app should be marketed three months after the app is developed.

Findings:

From our research we found many effective ways to market to ages 13-22 and city planners and developers. The most successful social and lifestyle apps all have short, enticing names and simple, engaging interfaces and logos. This is how the simple name of our app, *Spot*, came to be. The logo is simple, yet encompasses the main idea and purpose of *Spot*: finding a spot to hang out in your area. According to Joe Swank from THA Architecture, a grand opening is definitely worthwhile when promoting the app. This promotional event might include food, giveaways, and other “freebies” in a park. When advertising to designers/architects, Swank said that a meeting with planners was most appealing. He also said that he receives direct marketing from advertisers. Along with the suggestions from Swank, David Long from X-Factor Advertising Agency also recommended the use of social media as a means of advertising. When asked about how effective that strategy would be, Long responded saying it would be extremely effective, since both our target audiences, developers and youth, rely on social media. He also advised us that trade shows are a great way to initially promote our app to developers, who will get the ball moving. By doing this, the app could receive more funds from investors and others who attend the trade show. This idea of a trade show is backed by the recommendation of Jeff Gaus, CEO of Prolifiq, a company that prides itself in the creation of utility apps for marketing and sales. Although participating in trade shows are expensive, it is one of the best ways to promote an app, making it more “mainstream.”

Marketing

In order to help explain the use and purpose of our app and website, we created two user profiles that exemplify our target audience. We created one for a teenager who would be using our app, and one for an adult architect who would be the ideal user for our list of best practices.

User Profiles:

Adult profile: Jack Smith

DOB: 1/7/1985 (30 years old)

Education: University of California Berkeley Architecture School

Profession:

-Architect at Waterleaf Architecture, LLC in Portland, OR

-Working to help create youth friendly spaces in Portland that will benefit today's youth

Personal Life:

-Married



Jack Smith is a 30-year-old male moving in Portland with his wife, Ruth. He graduated from University of California Berkeley Architecture School and was quickly hired by Waterleaf Architecture LLC in Portland. He and his wife met in college and fell deeply in love right away. His wife is a park planner working for the Parks Department in Portland. Both Jack and his wife are devoted to helping make Portland a better city, and they hope to start this process through learning how to make Portland better for today's youth.

Marketing

User Profiles:

Youth Profile: Sara Johnson

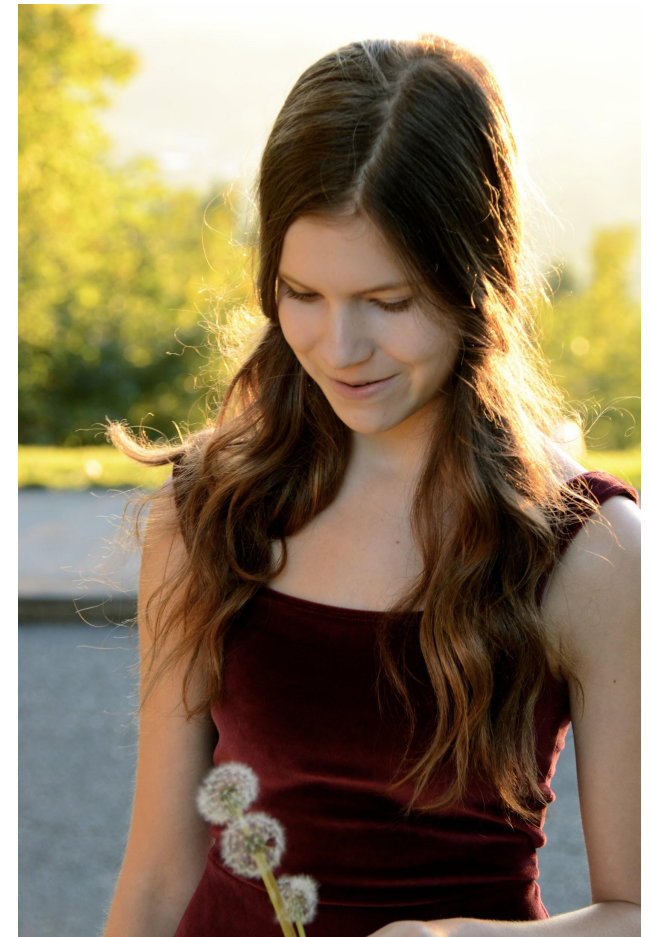
DOB: 9/16/98 (16 years old)

Education: Attends high school in Portland, Oregon (Rising Junior)

Personal life:

- Has lived in Portland her whole life
- Plays Varsity soccer during the fall
- Enjoys spending time downtown with her friends

Sara Johnson is an average teenager from Portland Oregon. She enjoys playing soccer and hanging out with her friends. Like most Portlanders, she has access to public transportation and still does not have her license. When Sara is with her friends, she likes to walk down to NW 23rd to get bubble tea, then heads over to the hill at Chapman Park to drink it. Sometimes, she jumps in on the pick-up soccer games going on at the field. While Sara enjoys soccer in the park, she sometimes has trouble finding things to do with her entire friend group when they visit public spaces, beside enjoying the occasional bubble tea. For this reason, Sara and her friends often do not know where to go in their free time. While they have their usual spots to hang out, these places have started to become bland and repetitive.



Marketing

The Challenge:

Spot, the app, aims to allow young people to evaluate public spaces in their cities. It also provides a way to connect with friends over popular hang out places. The list of best practices provides developers and city planners with information on the best ways to involve youth in the planning of public space. If marketed correctly, it would provide ways young people can become involved in public spaces, something that is not currently happening.

- Situation Analysis:
 - Goal: To provide youth with an app to rate and find public spaces in a fun and interactive manner.
 - Scope for the app: Youth (age 13-22)
 - Scope for the best practices: Adult professionals involved in city planning
- Collaborators:
 - PLACE Program- Catlin Gabel
 - Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
 - Joseph Swank- THA Architecture
 - David Long- X Factor Advertising
- Alternative Marketing Strategies:
 - Advertising at local public schools- this was decided against because we thought it might make teens less likely to use the app/website.
 - TV/ YouTube commercial- though this is a great way to reach teens and adults alike, this seemed to be too costly to pursue.

Marketing

- Selected Marketing Strategy:
 - Budget; determine break-even point for any additional spending- for you to decide
- Short & Long-Term Projections:
 - We're hoping that within a period of 7 weeks both the list of best practices and the app would be pushed out both locally and nationally. Within the 12 week window, the app will be in use and kept up and the practices will be considered by city planners and developers around the nation.

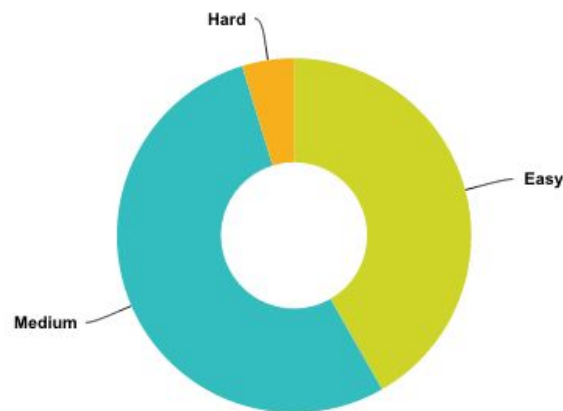
Timeline:

1. Branding for the App
 - a. Chosen name: "Spot"
 - b. Slogans: "Find your Spot", "Find, rate, share your spot", "I just Spotted" meaning I just rated something, "Spotters"- someone who participates in spot
2. Price
 - a. Free for the customer for both the app and the best practices
3. Advertising options include (see examples below):
 - a. Flyers to developers and planners around the nation
 - b. Local- local newspapers, parks and word of mouth
 - c. National- online advertisements, flyers, press release
 - d. Advertising on social media, in newspapers and at parks
 - e. Promotional programs- events hosted for youth as well as for planners and developers

Appendix: Survey Results

How easy is it for you to find places to hang out? Select one option. Why?

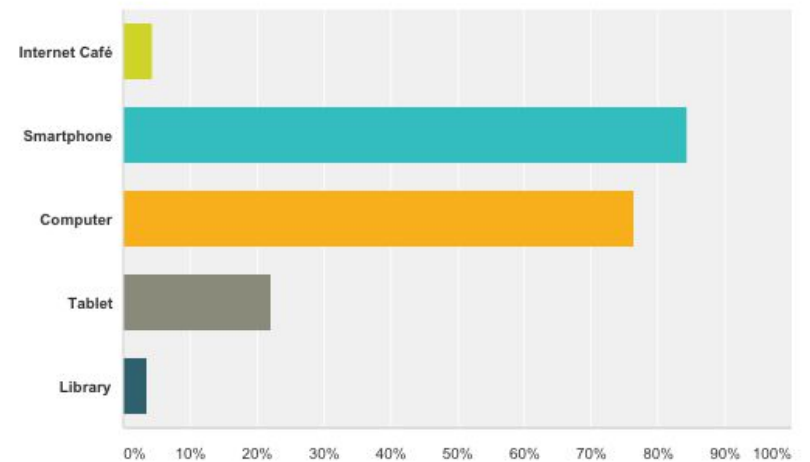
Answered: 127 Skipped: 13



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Easy	41.73%	53
Medium	53.54%	68
Hard	4.72%	6
Total		127

In what ways do you most often access the internet? Select all that apply.

Answered: 140 Skipped: 0

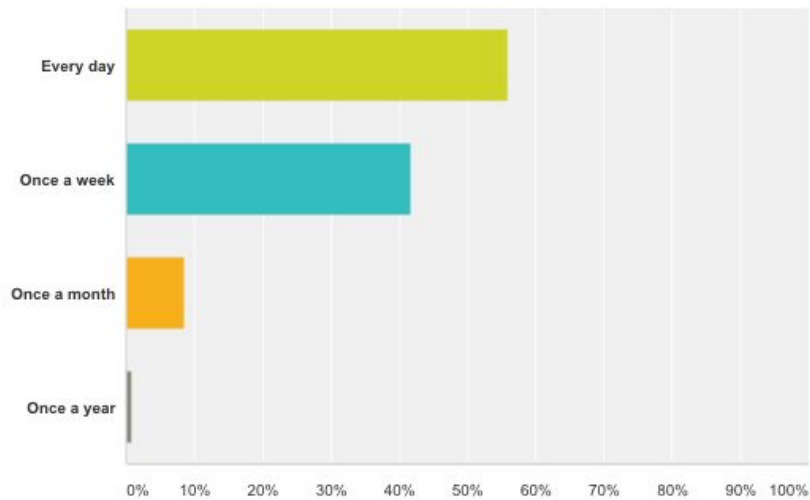


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Internet Café	4.29%	6
Smartphone	84.29%	118
Computer	76.43%	107
Tablet	22.14%	31
Library	3.57%	5
Total Respondents: 140		

Appendix: Survey Results

How often do you spend time in public spaces?

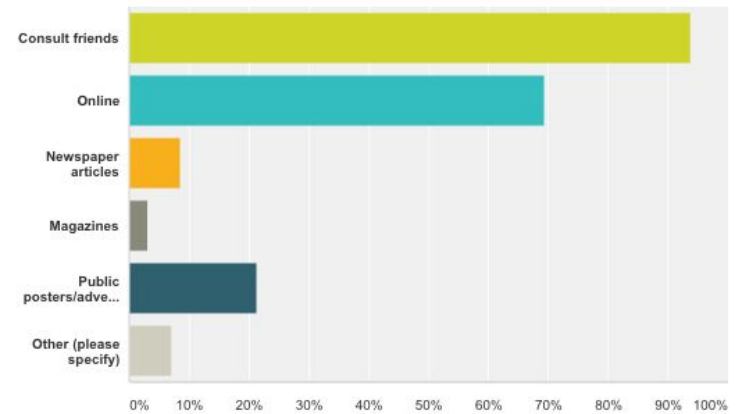
Answered: 127 Skipped: 13



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Every day	55.91%	71
Once a week	41.73%	53
Once a month	8.66%	11
Once a year	0.79%	1

In what ways do you find information about events and places to hang out? Select all that apply.

Answered: 127 Skipped: 13

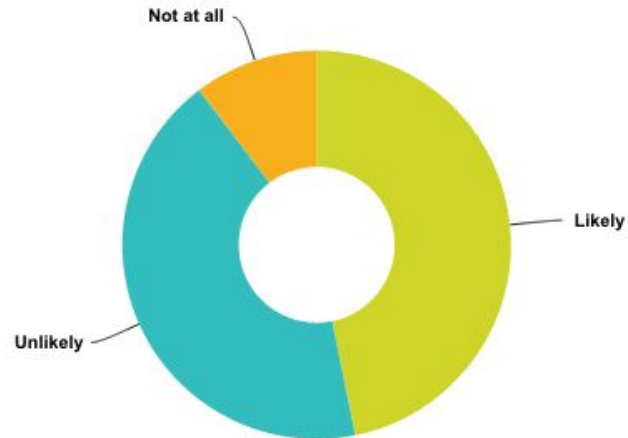


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Consult friends	93.70%	119
Online	69.29%	88
Newspaper articles	8.66%	11
Magazines	3.15%	4
Public posters/advertisements	21.26%	27
Other (please specify)	7.09%	9

Appendix: Survey Results

How likely would you be to use a website to find places to hang out?

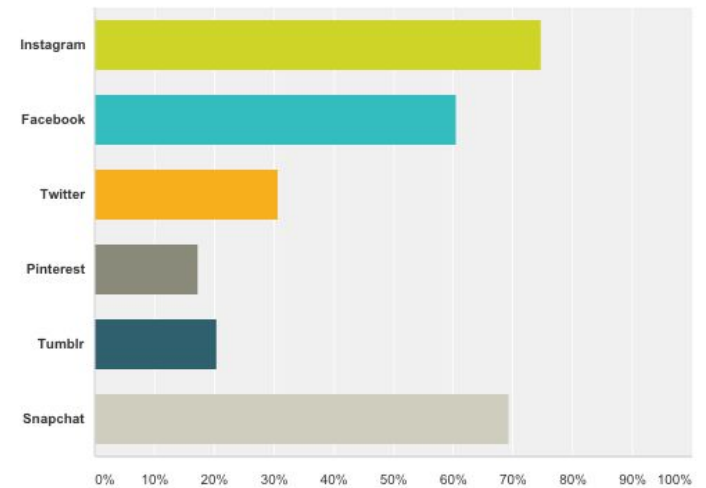
Answered: 126 Skipped: 14



Answer Choices	Responses
Likely	46.83% 59
Unlikely	42.86% 54
Not at all	10.32% 13

Which of these social networking websites/apps would you be most likely to use? Select all that apply.

Answered: 127 Skipped: 13

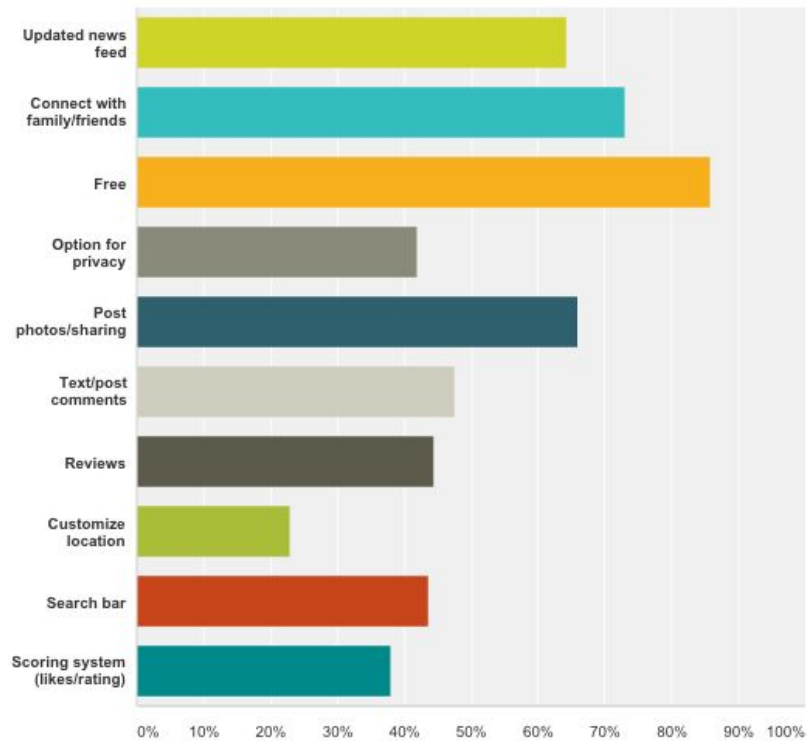


Answer Choices	Responses
Instagram	74.80% 95
Facebook	60.63% 77
Twitter	30.71% 39
Pinterest	17.32% 22
Tumblr	20.47% 26
Snapchat	69.29% 88

Appendix: Survey Results

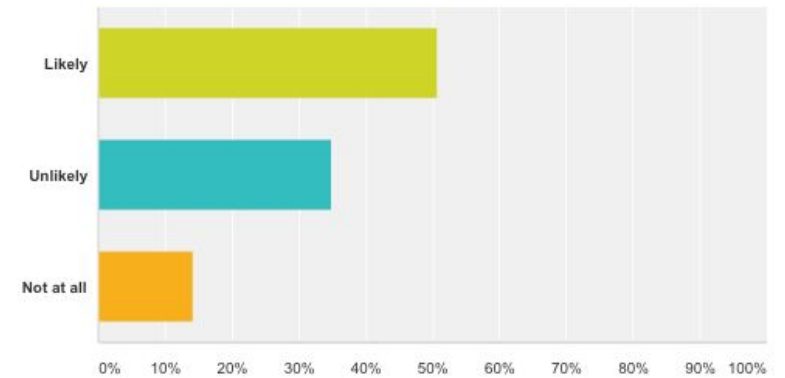
What makes the structure of social networking websites/apps and digital tools appealing? Check all that apply.

Answered: 126 Skipped: 14



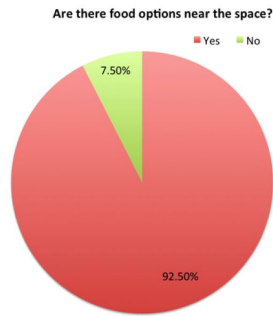
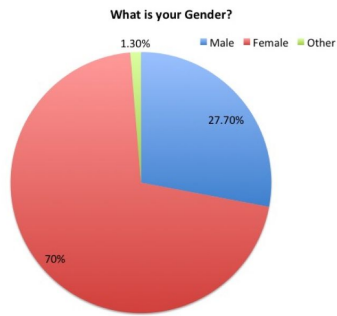
How likely would you be to use an app to find places to hang out?

Answered: 126 Skipped: 14

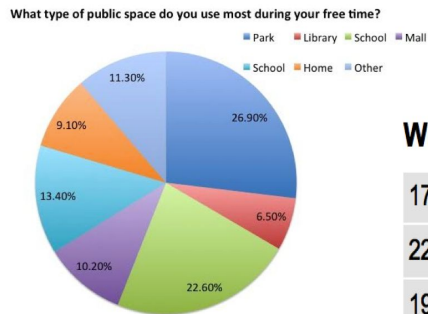


Answer Choices	Responses
Likely	50.79% 64
Unlikely	34.92% 44
Not at all	14.29% 18

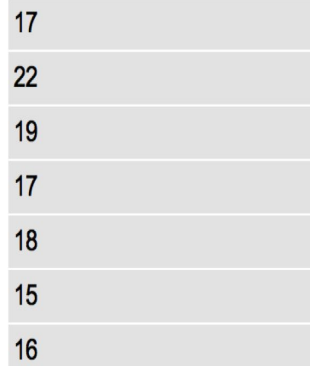
Appendix: Survey Results



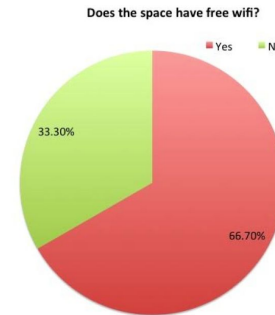
Which of the following areas describes where you spend most of your time?



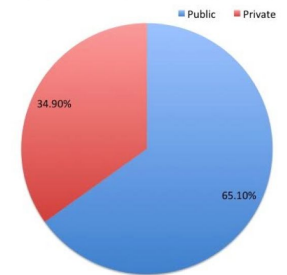
What is your age?



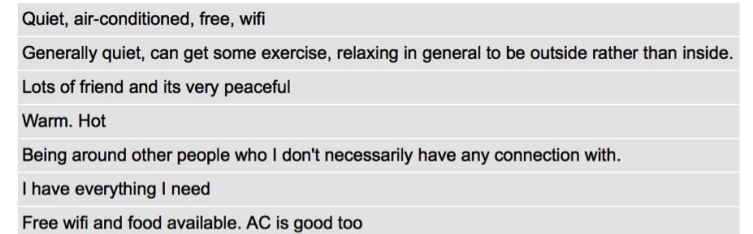
Where is your hometown?



Do you spend most of your freetime in public or private spaces?



What are your favorite aspects of these spaces?



Appendix: Lizzie's Tool

Evaluating the Youth-Friendliness of Public Spaces ¹

Instructions: Take this evaluation tool with you to a public space and answer the following questions based on what you observe and information from staff or patrons, if possible. After you have completed the form to the best of your abilities, add up all of the points that the space has accumulated. Each "Yes" is equivalent to +1 point and each "No" is equivalent to 0 points. Add the values you entered for questions 10 and 12 to get the final youth-friendliness score for the space: the higher the score, the more youth-friendly the space.

1. Does the space have Wifi?

 Yes No

2. Does the space have bike racks or spaces to secure skateboards?

 Yes No

3. Does the space provide adequate shelter from the elements?

 Yes No

4. Are the snacks available nearby and how much does the cheapest food item cost?

 Yes No

Prices:

5. Is it free to enter the space (no entrance fee)?

 Yes No

If yes, price:

6. Does the space provide music or other youth-friendly entertainment?

 Yes No

7. Does the space have moveable furniture?

 Yes No

If yes explain briefly:

Appendix: Lizzie's Tool

Evaluating the Youth-Friendliness of Public Spaces

2

8. Does the space have comfortable furniture?

 Yes No

If yes explain briefly:

9. Are there youth centered programs including pre-professional training programs?

 Yes No

If yes explain briefly:

10. Approximately many youth are currently using the space? (whole number)

11. Approximately how many non youth (children or adults) are using the space?

12. How many youth are employed in this space? (whole number)

13. Is the space visually engaging with art or murals etc.?

 Yes No

14. In there open space for movement, exercise, and/or fitness?

 Yes No

If yes explain briefly:

15. Are there youth friendly amenities available in the space? ie: pool, skate ramps,

 Yes No

If yes explain briefly:

Appendix: Tool Recommendation

First, if you click on the rate button or profile on the toolbar, it would ask you to log in or sign up. If you are signing up, you would be taken to a page where you must add your email address first name, last name, age, city, and create a password. This is required information in order to create an account, however there are multiple other questions, where the user can choose to add information about himself. Once the user starts rating and reviewing public spaces, their reviews would appear on their public profile, which can be accessed by selecting the profile button on the toolbar.

1. On the toolbar there would be a magnifying glass icon that would take the user to the “Find” section of the app. Users, whether they have an account or not, can access this portion of the app/website and locate areas they may like to go.
2. First, the user would select the type of space that they would prefer to go to, whether it be a library, park, etc.
3. In this section, depending on which type of space the user selected, they would be given a list of facilities or resources which their desired location may include. The user would then select what criteria icons that are important to them.
4. Next, the user would decide about the location of their desired spot. There are two options: the first is to choose a place that is close to their current location, and the second is to select the general area of their desired destination.
5. The user would then get a page with ‘Suggested Spots’, and would be provided with the name, rating, descriptive icons, and photos of that space. The user, if interested in the brief overview of a space, would also be able to look at a more in-depth review of the described space if they click on it.
6. If the user does click on a ‘Suggested Spot’, it would lead them to even more information about the space, such as general info (like the hours a space is open), advanced ratings (which would show the overall rating but also break down the results into the four categories of questions asked in the Rate section), and written reviews that users with accounts can thumbs up or thumbs down and comment on.

Appendix: Tool Recommendation

We recommend following these steps when creating the 'rating spots' feature:

1. Once the user has signed up and logged into the app or website, the homepage/default page would display the trending page, which is reviews made by your friends, and top reviewers in your area. On the toolbar, there would be a star icon that takes the user to the rating page.
2. The user would first define the type of space they are rating, where they can choose from parks, libraries, swimming spots, community centers, or food/shopping spots. This allows the app to narrow down the options that appear when searching for the specific spot.
3. The user would then select whether they want to find where they are rating by using their current location, which would take them to a drop down menu that has public spaces listed. If the user is not currently where they want to rate, they can search for their location. The user would press the 'find my spot' button which would take them to a search bar, and as they type locations would start to appear in the same drop down menu format as before.
4. After the user has selected their location, the next step is to actually rate the public space. We have created a four question survey based off the criteria of 'access', 'entertainment', 'location', and safety'.
 - a. Entertainment, location, and safety would be rated using a five star scale, while the access question would just have the user select what type of the transportation they used to get to the spot (a car, walking, biking, bus, or max).
 - b. These are our recommended questions:
 - i. Access- How did you get to the spot?
 - ii. Entertainment- How entertaining is the spot?
 - iii. Location- How much is there to do around the spot?
 - iv. Safety- How safe do you feel?

Appendix: References

Documents:

Multnomah Youth Commission Youth Manual

This manual found that the top five issues/activities youth cared about were sports, arts, community, education, and rights. It also spoke on ideas for youth involvement: focus groups, written surveys, oral surveys, school presentations, community events, creating a Youth Public Space Advisory Council.

Online Civic Engagement Tools for Youth: <http://www.lukewalker.org/raynesgoldiewalker.pdf>

This article discusses the engagement of youth through technological means.

Electronic Government: Design, Applications and Management:

https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=heJUDmmlkRoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA99&dq=youth+engagement+government+effective&ots=THHFdPJYFA&sig=_V_vPFo_bxFUwFSuXhB-myrOnLM#v=onepage&q=youth&f=false

This book talks about how youth can get engaged in government through the use technology.

Social Media and Young Adults: <http://missourikidsfirst.org/mosaferonline/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Social-Media-and-Young-Adults.pdf>

This study based in 2010 examines social media and mobile internet use among teens. It gives relevant information on what age group is goes online the most, the trends in each age group's use and how many families have embraced internet-friendly homes.

New Media Technology and Youth: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X00001361>

This article talks about trends in evolution of media.

Appendix: References

Documents:

Youth Civic Engagement in Hampton, Virginia: <http://forumfyi.org/files/Building%20Effective%20Youth%20Final.pdf>

This forum is a record of Hampton's Youth Civic Engagement initiative and its success throughout its history.

Interviews:

Marc Fernandes, Multnomah County Youth Development Coordinator

We interviewed Marc about how he integrates youth into policy and their local communities.

Jon Lebkowsky, App Developer and Co-Founder of FringeWare Inc.

We spoke with Jon about the logistics of app development.

Pham Phan, Former Leader of BPS Youth Planning Program

We talked with Pham about the issues and hardships Youth face when working in policy and more mature settings.

Ted Slupesky, Developer at PLASQ

In our meeting with Ted, we discussed the development of an app idea, and the logistics behind the creation.

Deborah Stein, Principal Planner for the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

We spoke with Deborah about how youth and other minorities can get involved with public space planning.

Appendix: References

Interviews:

Rick Turoczy, General Manager of Portland Incubator Experiment (PIE)

We talked with Rick about starting from an idea for an app, and transitioning into its creation.

George Zaninovich, PLACE Leader

We spoke with George briefly about how youth can get involved in planning, and why it is so important to get youth into planning.

Websites:

Yelp, Citysearch & Yahoo Local: <http://searchengineland.com/yelp-crushed-citysearch-yahoo-why-google-stealing-yelps-playbook-78623>

This article talks about how Citysearch and Yahoo.local were overtaken by yelp.

Public Perception and Teen Reality: http://frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/PDF/youth_public_perceptions.pdf

This article speaks on public perceptions of teens and realities of teens, and the contradictions thereof.

The Internet and Youth Political Participation: <http://uncommonculture.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1977/1852>

This First Monday article discusses how American youth's online involvement can function as a gateway to increased political participation.

Code for America: <http://www.codeforamerica.org/about/>

This organization that works with the US government to create technology for services in the city.

Appendix: References

Websites:

This City Life: <http://thiscitylife.tumblr.com/post/68326736619/toronto-named-the-most-youth-friendly-city>

Article on what made Toronto the most youth-friendly city in the world: there were 16 criteria, and Toronto scored high on nightlife/music/film. This gave us an idea for the kinds of criteria that we need to use in our survey.

IMDb vs. Rotten Tomatoes:

http://moviepilot.com/posts/2015/02/14/who-should-you-trust-for-reviews-imdb-or-rotten-tomatoes-2695862?lt_source=external>manual

This review talks about how the reviewer prefers IMDb, because of the accessibility of the website.

What Teens Are Doing Online: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/media/generation-like/what-are-teens-doing-online/>

This article provides statistics regarding youth's interaction with the internet and how it has evolved. It also discusses the different ways in which youth access the internet and where they go when they are online.

Teens Fact Sheet: <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/teens-fact-sheet/>

This factsheet contains information on a wide-range of topics involving teens and the internet. These topics from the 2012 survey include: social media accounts, mobile devices, communication choices and apps.

Why Yelp Works: http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/12/why-yelp-works/?_r=0

This NY Times discusses how yelp became successful as an app, and community.

Appendix: References

Websites:

National League of Cities:

<http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/governance-and-civic-engagement/democratic-governance-and-civic-engagement/city-examples-in-civic-engagement/youth-civic-engagement>

This article talks about examples of youth engagement in cities. Mainly including examples of youth on councils or groups to prevent teen substance abuse and decrease the amount of violence in cities.

PPS Project for Public Spaces: <http://www.pps.org/blog/young-people-and-placemaking-engaging-youth-to-create-community-places/>

This article spoke about public spaces with qualities that youth look for with examples from Australia's Fremantle Esplanade and Spain's Factoria Joven and how these are great successes for youth involvement in planning and planning public spaces for youth.

Y-Plan (Berkeley, CA): <http://citiesandschools.berkeley.edu/y-plan>

<http://y-plan.berkeley.edu>

This article talks about how the "Y-Plan toolkit has been designed to equip educators, adult allies, and young people with the resources and the "know-how" to develop and implement community development projects.". The tool provides information and resources for how young people can work with adults to make change in their cities.

Multnomah Youth Commission: <https://multco.us/multnomah-youth-commission>

The official youth policy body to both Multnomah County and the City of Portland. It consists of three committees: Education/Youth Voice, Sustainability, and Youth Against Violence. Very successful example of youth involvement in local policy.

Appendix: References

Websites:

Youth Content Creation: <http://nms.sagepub.com/content/10/3/393.short>

This article explores teen use of websites for privacy/self-expression.

What Teenagers Think of Social Media: <http://www.businessinsider.com/what-teenagers-think-of-social-media-2015-1>

This Business Insider article shares a 19 year-old's opinion on the different social media platforms and why they are successful/unsuccessful.

League of Oregon Cities Youth Advisory Council: <http://www.orcities.org/AZIndex/tabid/810/itemid/403/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

This article talks about legislators in Salem created a provision establishing a Youth Advisory Commission funded by a Pendleton resolution which placed a local tax option on the ballot.

The council deals with youth-specific issues like substance abuse and after school recreation, but also general community issues like active citizenship and minority inclusion.

Civic Life Online: https://mitpress.mit.edu/sites/default/files/titles/free_download/9780262524827_Civic_Life_Online.pdf

This document talks about the Civic Life Online. It also talks about the how social media can be used to promote civic engagement. There are also specific examples of youth civic involvement and the intersection of media.

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