Battle Of
The Neighborhoods

Worship

Site Planning

Table of Contents

The Battle of the Neighborhoods

Spiritual Site Planning in the 21st Century

Introduction

This is a proposal that is targeted to Church / Houses of Worship planners. It is intended to provide first level information about the current places of worship: information that can be used to identify a candidate location for installing a new community-based religious outreach. To do this, it is necessary to come to a balance between honoring existing ministries, while also being aware of the need for a different perspective to serve a larger and more diverse audience. Specifically, there are two principles that originated in the Christian Bible which are informative in explaining the challenge of being true in selecting a site location.

Consider the following that comes from the Bible, in Romans 15:20-21:

> *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.*

> *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

This challenges the planner to select a site that has a need for the theological emphasis of the house of worship being designed. It is not necessary that there be no existing structures of that theological persuasion; but it does indicate that there should be some level of additional need, where there is already some support. Of course, ideally, the planner will locate a 'virgin' site.

Also consider the following that comes from the Bible, in the first epistle of Paul the apostle to the Corinthians 9:19-23:

> *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

This challenges the planner to select a location that has more than the single theological focus of the site plan. This is necessary because one of the strongest purposes of building a house of worship is to interact with others who have a mind to serve God. This means that there is a necessity for communication of the message that brings the overseers of the house of worship (pastor, priests, bishops, etc.) to this location. This is the process that includes proselytizing. So, in the surrounding environment of the proposed house of worship, there needs to be other type of theological persuasions (temples, prayer rooms, etc.)

This is the challenge that leads us to use modern data analysis and machine learning methods, to extract insights from existing information about boroughs and neighborhoods. For purposes of illustration, we will look at the Toronto, Canada area.

Spiritual Site Planning in the 21st Century

Data

To recap, from the introduction, we stated the following: this is the challenge that leads us to use modern data analysis and machine learning methods, to extract insights from existing information about boroughs and neighborhoods.

In this study we will manipulate the following resources for location information, as indicated:

1. Scrape the following Wikipedia page, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_postal_codes_of_Canada:_M , in order to obtain the data that is in the table of postal codes and to transform the data into a pandas dataframe. The dataframe will consist of three columns: Postal Code, Borough, and Neighbourhood. For example:

	Postal Code	Borough	Neighbourhood
4	M5A	Downtown Toronto	Regent Park, Harbourfront

2. Additional information will be obtained by utilizing the following link to a csv file that has the geographical coordinates of each postal code: http://cocl.us/Geospatial_data . An example of the information that is needed from there is shown below:

	Postal Code	Latitude	Longitude
2	M1E	43.763573	-79.188711

We will also need information on the existing houses of worship. This type of information is contained in what are known as venues. One of the premier locations for obtaining borough and neighborhood venue information is Foursquare. This is the place where we will search for the necessary information about existing houses of worship. The level of data that is needed include more than just the borough and neighborhood of the house of worship. We must also be able to extract the theological focus of the houses that are contained in those location.

Once we have obtained this collection, we will be able to apply machine learning to order the information in ways that allow us to see patterns of need in the various locations. That need will be based on the specific type of house of worship for which we are planning.

On the following page, there is a screenshot of some of the information that is provided in the Foursquare offering.

Foursquare Sample Categories
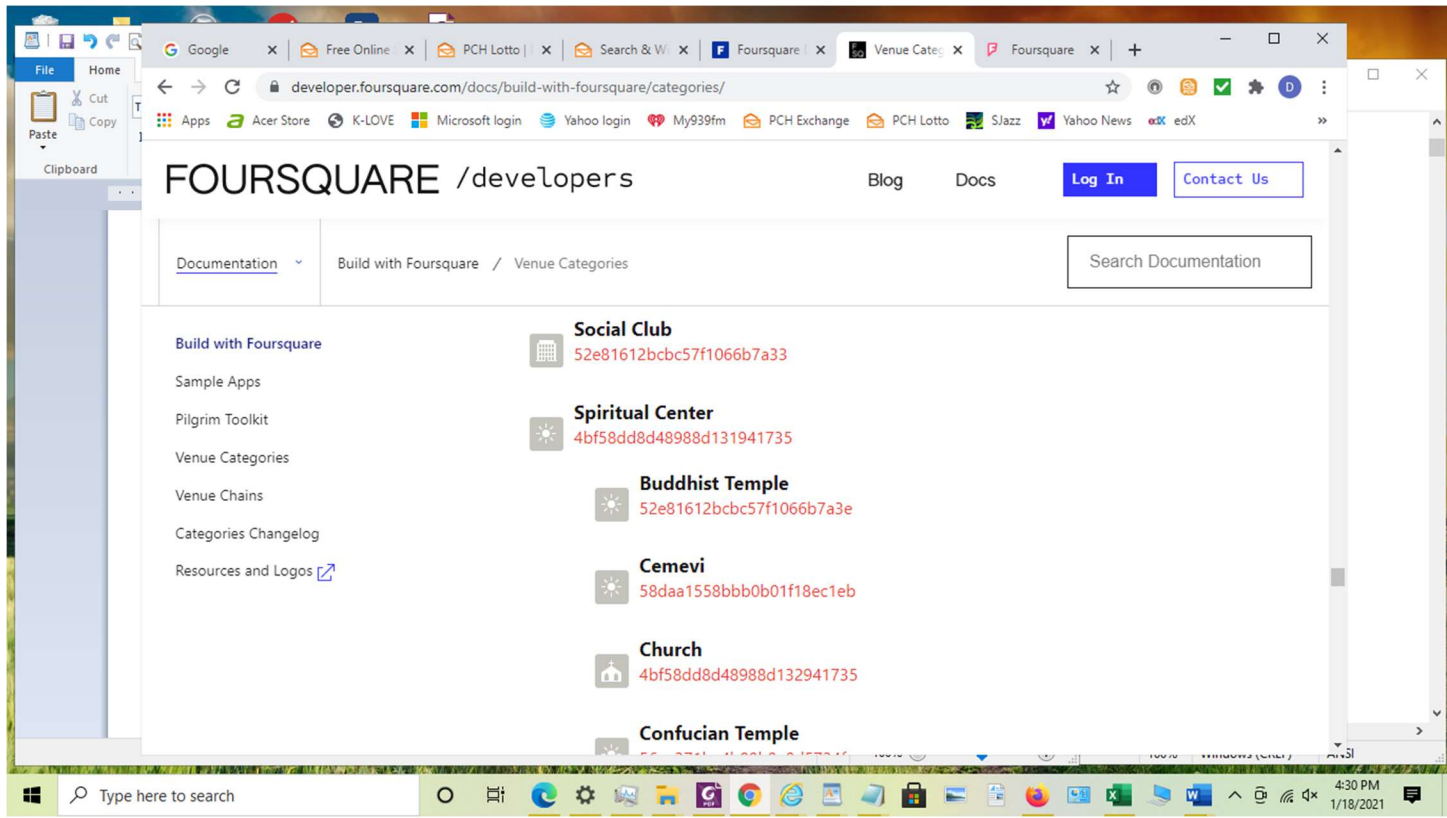
We will have more to say about the use of this information in the Methodology section of the report.