***Proposal questions:***

*Overview*

What is the interface that will be the subject of your project?

Where did the interface come from? Who developed it? Who manages it?

*Goal/focus/Objective*

2. Is the primary focus of your project on general usability or more specifically,

Accessibility?

5. What are the current unknowns or perceived problems about the interface?

*Target Users*

3. Who are the targeted users for the interface? Is it expected that there will be a

large percentage of users with disabilities?

6. How, during the semester, do you plan to have access to representative

users?

*Methods & Outcomes*

7. What do you hope for the outcome of the project?

8. What are the primary expected roles for each of your group members?

***Any questions for new meeting?***

1. What’s the difference between data layers and data sets?
2. How do you define beginner users?

**Meeting Notes (transcribed):**

*Beta product:*

* introducing components
* Components essentially groups layers. For example place label, walking and cycling, transit or road network
* Components essentially groups layers in a way that makes sense from a cartographic map design perspective abstracting a need to know the properties of an individual layer.
* eg:Can turn on or off road network, Making individual editing efficient and seamless
* From a design perspective this helps associate layers better with manageable tool changes. Eg: colour
* Problem: Don’t understand layers.Don’t understand the relationship between the layers
* Unable to identify hierarchy or different ways you can style a layer
* Beta releases next week
* Being given temporary access to the Beta
* Release on Wednesday

*Need help in (not on components per say):*

* In Layers, lots of ways to style and frame- size, zoom levels, labels
* These are very advanced functionalities where the UI is “terrible”
* Advanced formula based integration
* Usability improvement in this section
* Lots of Ui appearing the deeper you go in these formatting controls
* Have already prioritized and simplified the basic actions and functionalities that people want to take.
* Need to think through and look at these advanced formatting capabilities and give recommendations on how to make those better
* Layer editing panel, different ways you can style across zoom, data range or conditions, formulas
* Prioritizing usability
* Not worry about the overall ease of use problem hopefully will be resolved with the new component system
* Are they common operations that can be prioritized, hierarchy is the same has the same weight
* Most common layer activities/function that can be prioritized over some of the lesser used ones.
* Each option allows interjection of json code. So for some options the UI is a lot harder to use than writing the json for advanced users.
* These are common functions we need a good ui for those and these are less common maybe can just have the Json
* The power of studio is the availability of multiple settings, we are not going to remove them but how we prioritize them can be an area to be understood better
* Visual design recommendations
* Informational studies, usability, observation of users
* Nothing in the market that has the breadth and capability of Mapbox studio
* Users include: Novice (super beginner), intermediate and advanced
* Layers mostly used by advanced users
* Need this Ui to meet in the middle to convert novice/intermediate users to use layers
* Since you cannot use components for all the functions of editing. At some point users have to engage in using layers
* We want beginners who use components to transition into layer editing
* But right now layers is too hard for those making that transition
* Needs it to be more accessible to novice and beginner users
* Research goal: identify how beginner users can transition into layer editing through an improved experience with a UI
* Not really concerned with advanced users, since they’ll take the time and “trudge” through the UI to understand layers
* Inclusive design - more beginners and transitional users
* Don’t want to alienate advanced users so for the sake of our usability studies I want to over rotate on
* Customer showcase maps to see what they look like
* Blog for design tabs- style
* Look at the breadth of the Use cases:

Outdoor use cases- strava

social use cases-snapchat, FB

Data visual use cases- Tableau

Each one has a vastly different basemap style, let alone layering their own custom data on top

*Recruiting Avenues:*

* Reddit r/MapBox
* Mapbox blogs
* Developer communities
* Github tickets for users
* CJ’s Friend (Competitive product Users) ArcGIS

***Citations/Sources:***

<https://techcrunch.com/2013/10/16/mapbox-closes-10m-series-a-from-foundry-group-to-build-the-future-of-interactive-mobile-maps/>

<https://techcrunch.com/2015/06/17/mapbox-raises-52-6m-led-by-dfj-to-build-the-map-layer-for-all-apps/#.f4enjv:w05Q>

<https://talkingpointsmemo.com/idealab/mapbox-aims-for-open-source-digital-map-revolution>

***Meeting Questions (10/24/19)-***

1. What part of the MapBox studio suite will we be doing usability-testing on? (Function, widget, process, specific task...)
2. Who are your users?   
   Anyone wants to customize maps.   
   Big companies, from novice users to GIS developer  
   What are the users’ goals/expectations/incentive when they get to MapBox Studio?
3. What is the context of usage? Is there a customer journey map?
4. Do you have any available previous research data or results that would help our usability test?  
   What are the current unknowns or perceived problems about the interface?
5. Apart from the existing functions, are there any other functions to be designed and developed based on the latest company strategy and marketing goals?
6. What are your expectations for our team?
7. Do you have access to any representative users we can recruit for usability testing?
8. If not, where would you recommend we recruit these users?
9. Is GIS (Geospatial information science) students in UMD qualify as a target user? (My friend says they use [ArcGIS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ArcGIS) to make maps)
10. Who are your competitors? What services?
11. Are you doing any automated data collection, such as GA to monitor users’ behavior?
12. Is the result of this usability test able to be published to our class and on our personal portfolio?

***Meeting Notes (10/24/19)-***

Prioritize info with map design   
Difficult to use Most ppl don’t understand what those layers are

Prioritize UI Depend on frequency

Old Target audience

Firstly, there seems not to be a large percentage of users with disabilities for the MapBox Studio, for the studio is mainly designed and developed for designers, developers and product managers in companies. In such a case, there won't be many disabled people be involved in the testing procedure.

Secondly, the target users of this project are beginners and transitional users. However, the definition of beginners is not clearly specified by the UMD team currently. The team will define that precisely after the second meeting with Mapbox. Transitional users are defined as intermediate users who are trying to learn more advanced features to make exquisite maps. The UMD team will recruit participants through school resources and online communities.  We can recruit map designers from M. P. S. in GIS (Geographical information system) students in UMD. For online networks, we will reach out to users through Reddit r/Mapbox, MapBox blog and developer communities. The team will utilize snowball sampling methods to screen out more participants that can help us achieve our research objectives.

Old research objective- version 2

The diaspora of users for Mapbox Studio ranges from large public application/web developers such as Uber and Snapchat to smaller individual users. Therefore, the population of representative users have an assortment of skill levels with the interface. The target users for this project will focus on the developers who are beginners and intermediate users of the studio suite. These novice users aren’t clearly defined by the UMD team, we will characterize that more precisely after a second meeting with the Mapbox team. Transitional users are defined as those users who are trying to learn the more advanced features of studio in order to make more detailed changes to their maps.

Since MapBox Studio was created for designers, developers and product managers there isn’t a largely identifiable percentage of users with disabilities. The Studio Suite is fundamentally visual and hence relies heavily on visual perception. In the pursuit for recruiting users, the team hopes to enlist some users who can add value to accessibility.

The research team will be recruiting participants through school resources and online communities. The team has also approached Mapbox for some support in the recruiting process. We will attempt to recruit map designers from M. P. S. in GIS (Geographical information system) students at UMD. We will be reaching out to online networks to recruit users through Reddit r/Mapbox, MapBox blog, GitHub and other developer communities. The team will utilize snowball sampling methods to draft and screen out more participants who can help us achieve our research objectives.

Old research objective- version 1

The Mapbox studio caters to developers from novice to advanced users.

Novice users can directly use the template styled maps and advanced users may take the time to understand the interface better. However, intermediate users using components find it daunting to attempt the advanced functions of layers. The state of the UI isn't inclusive enough to support a learning curve for users making that transition. The research goal is to identify how intermediate users can be transited from the super beginners with a steep and smooth learning curve, and gain experience of layer management skills with an improved user interface.

Given that they have so many functions to style and frame, the layer, the target users have difficulties understand every single property and apply the optimal value to it from numerous options. And the relationship between different layers is hard to understand at first hand. The advanced functionalities of layer management have a challenging user interface and require improvement in usability.

The perceived problem for the current Mapbox studio is that the target users, intermediate users, cannot be transited from the super beginners with a steep and smooth learning curve. The management of layers and the exact formula within them is very complicated for a novice user to learn and use correctly, so there exists a need to help those beginners with better learning instructions and limited options when selecting between options when dealing with the advanced layer functionality. To be noticed, the revised version of Mapbox studio, which will be delivered this Wednesday, has simplified the layer formula using the component tool. The component tool can be seen as a way to instruct the users with grouped layers, and can even quickly hierarchically manage between different layers. However, the actual effect of the latest component tool should be tested in the research to better improve the effectiveness. Besides, the prioritization of layer functions and recommendation of property values should be designed to better suit the most common and useful operations in the layer formula.

Additionally, the project primarily focuses more on usability, and will also include the necessary accessibility testing to better cater the novice/super beginner users to advanced layer functions, considering the variance in software manipulation experiences of the studio

**TIMELINE**

Nov 1 - Nov 5: Screening & recruiting

Nov 6 - Nov 15: 1st usability test, other methods  
Nov 19: 1st usability test Due

Nov 20 - Nov 25: Prototyping

Nov 26: Improved Interface

Dec 2 - Dec 13: 2nd usability test

Dec 17 - Final Deliverable

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