



Community PlanIt Fact Sheet

A Production of the Engagement Game Lab
Directed by Dr. Eric Gordon
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Platforms: Web and Mobile Web
Release: Summer 2011
<http://www.communityplanit.org>

Overview

Community PlanIt is an online engagement platform for local planning efforts. Bringing together the interactivity of social networks and the incentives of online games, *Community PlanIt* transforms participatory planning into a fun, engaging activity for all ages. Users participate online in six weeks of planning-themed missions to earn PlanIt Coins, which they spend on the values most important to them. The community joins together at the end of the process to discuss the results and plan for the future.

In each six week game, players will:

- * learn about important planning issues facing the community
- * problem-solve and dialogue with other residents to find solutions
- * send feedback and local knowledge directly to decision-makers
- * strengthen community bonds and build capacity
- * challenge others to complete community improving missions

Community PlanIt's curation system allows each community to design a custom game tailored to its own planning issues. Decision-makers can also upload and display important documents on the system, allowing Community PlanIt to serve as a hub for information sharing, as well as a record of community preferences and feedback.

History of Local Engagement Games

The Engagement Game Lab is devoted to researching the use of digital games and social media to enhance local civic life. In the summer of 2008, it developed the *Hub2* project (<http://hub2.org>) to bring virtual worlds into face-to-face community planning processes in Boston. After exploring the affordances of immersive environments and virtual characters in augmenting community planning, this process was built upon in 2010 to



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create the game *Participatory Chinatown* (<http://participatorychinatown.org>), a MacArthur Foundation funded effort to reframe public meetings through the use of 3D, immersive games. Through its use of digital characters, photorealistic environments, and point system, *Participatory Chinatown* invigorated two master planning meetings in Boston's Chinatown neighborhood with friendly competition, empathy, deep deliberation--and even fun.

Community PlanIt is the next phase of this work, allowing communities to launch a mission-based game tailored to the needs of their residents. Playable on a web browser or smart phone this game extends play beyond the computer screen, asking residents to go outside, explore, work together, and solve community problems.

About the Engagement Game Lab

The Engagement Game Lab is a research lab focused on the development and study of games and social media to enhance urban civic life. It resides at Boston's Emerson College, the only four-year private college in the United States devoted to teaching communication and the arts in a liberal arts context. For more, visit <http://engagementgamelab.org>.

Contact

Steven Schirra, Coordinator
steven_schirra@emerson.edu
(617) 824-3828