

CIVIA

SacHacks 2021: CIVIA

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The Challenge

- Rhoades (USC) et al. found evidence that of nearly 500 surveyed homeless adults in the LA/Long Beach area...
 - "The vast majority (94%) currently owned a cell phone"
 - "Nearly every homeless adult in this study had a cell phone; as such, technology access is unlikely to be a major barrier to the dissemination of cell phone-based health interventions for this population"
 - And concluded that "technology-based programs may be promising methods for improving health and wellness among homeless adults"
- Access to technology by those without homes has been proven in others studies such as those by Burda, Haack, Duarte, and Alemi, 2012; McInnes et al., 2015 who determined that mobile devices could serve as an effective tool for medical interventions (in relation to those without homes)
- With this information, how could we create a tool that could be helpful in multiple ways to a person without a home or even someone in the need of aid?

Finding a Solution...

Creating a resource that lets those in need easily access municipal resources and other people.

Examining other ideas...

- Community Building apps - How can we utilize these community building features to help the homeless/those in need?
 - Reddit – not local but expansive
 - Yik-Yak – hyper local but limited accessibility to posts.
 - Craigslist forums – national but expansive (more limited than reddit)

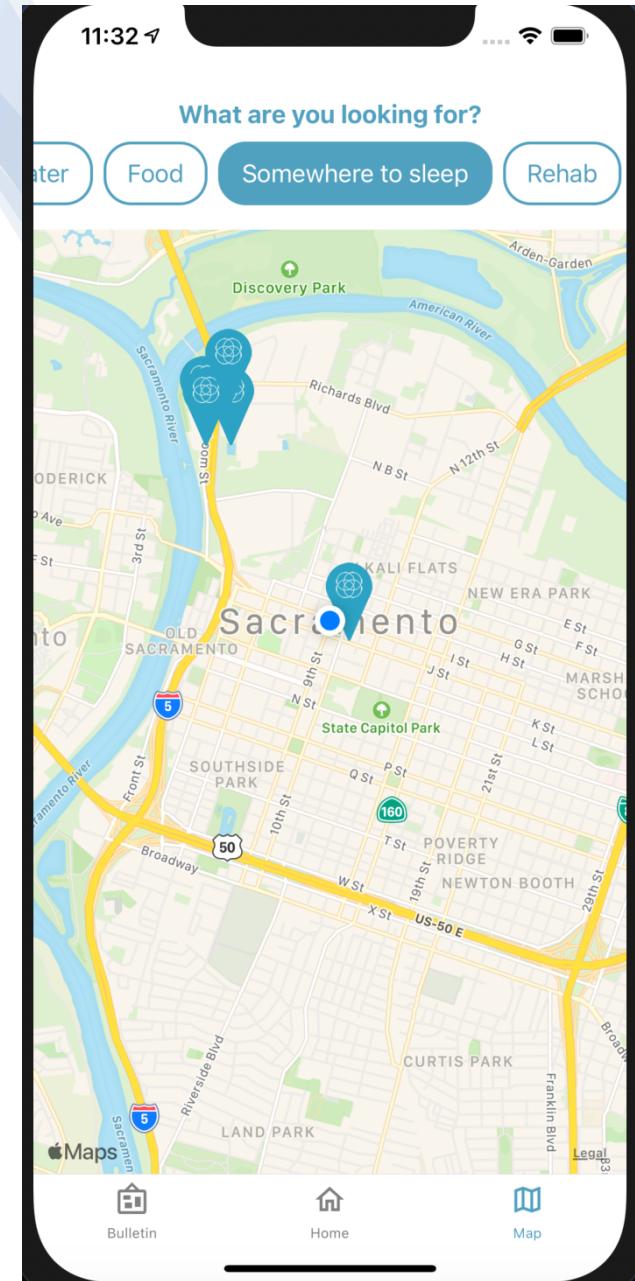
We need to make something...

- That makes resources more accessible.
- That helps the community connect and help each other.

What we did – Civia

Feature 1: A Map

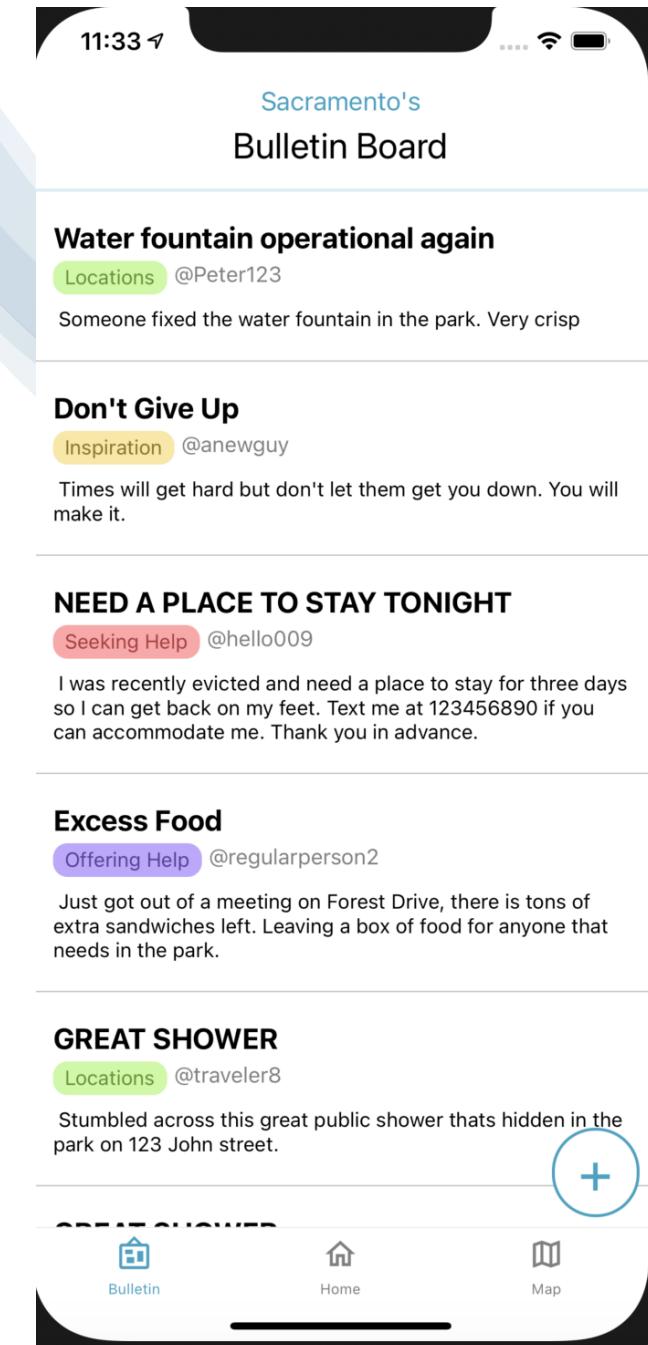
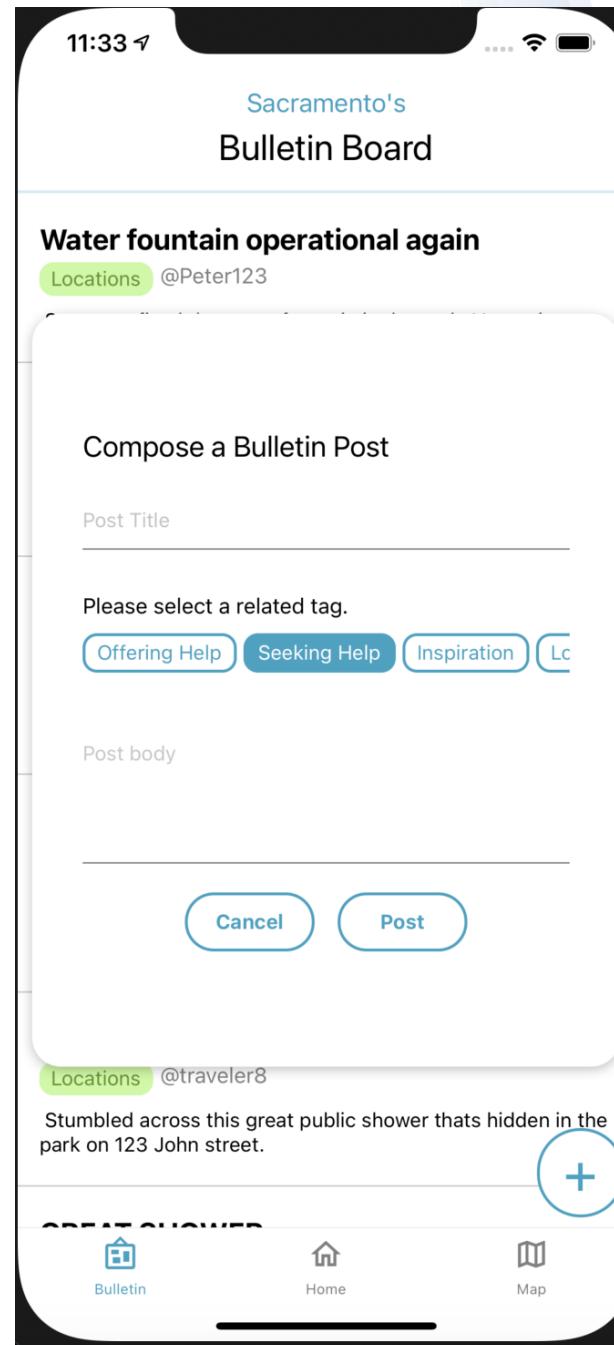
- Leveraging the Google Maps and Places API, various important resources are displayed around the user's current location.
 - Public Bathrooms
 - Water Fountains
 - Food Banks/Free food
 - Cheap lodging/places to sleep/Shelters
 - Rehabs
- Provides centralized location to find resources
- Dynamic – constantly updating current location.
- Each pin provides basic information on the location.



What we did – Civia

Feature 2: The Bulletin

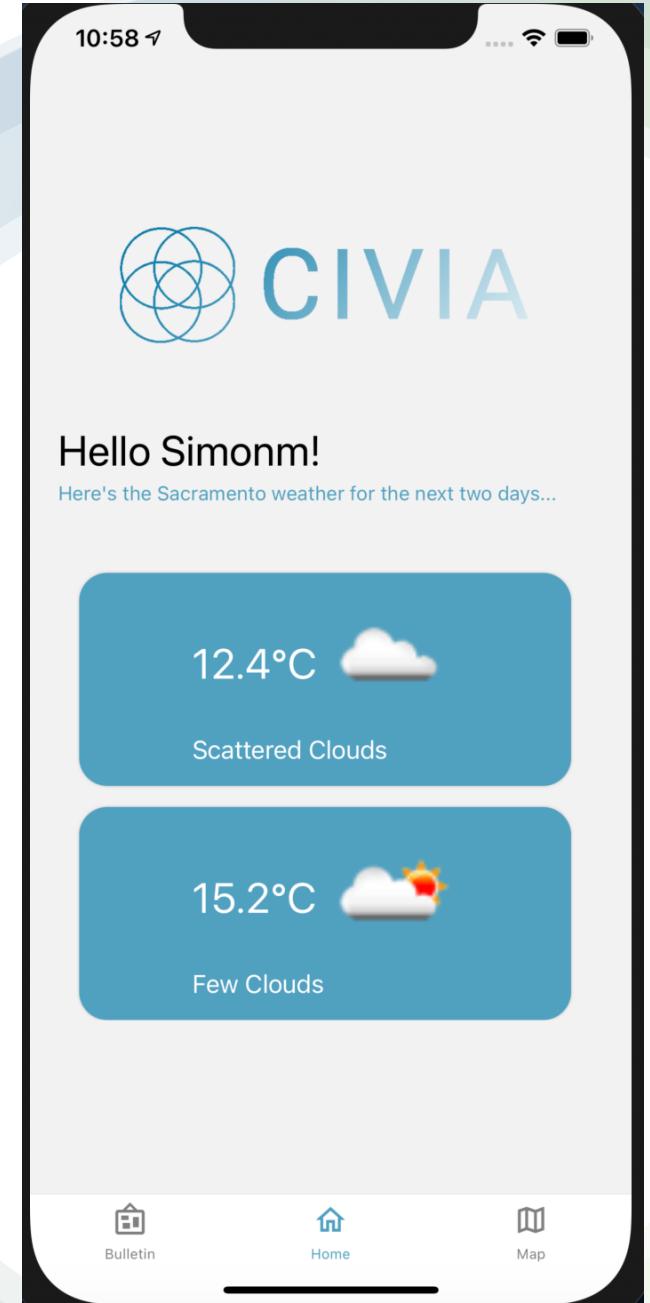
- Learning from the success of YikYak and reddit, the bulletin board is a way for citizens to connect and help each other.
 - Posts within your city appear in the feed.
 - Lets the more fortunate help in a more direct manner.
 - Gives those who are less fortunate a platform to be heard.
 - Cultivates a community of shared knowledge that even travelers can benefit from.
- Information stored in Google Cloud hosted MongoDB database
- Python Flask API hosted on Google App Engine.



What we did – Civia

Feature 3: A Friendly Landing screen

- Weather for the next two days.
- Greeting customized with the user's username

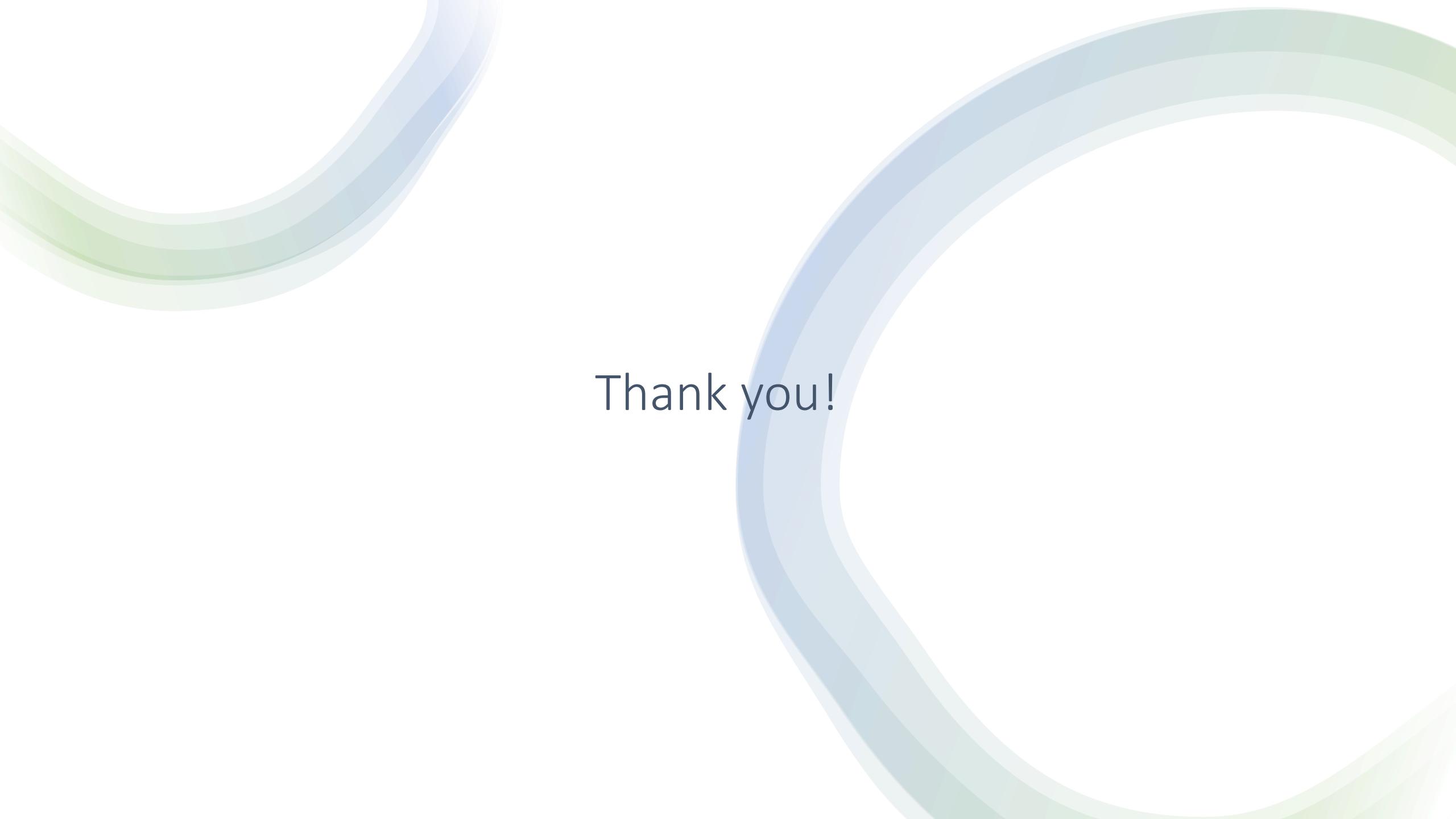




Quick Demo

Looking Forward

- Sentinel coolers
 - Map-based resource distribution - Allow those with excess food to indicate a location on the map. Let resource flow through the community more freely.
 - This lets even regular people contribute more directly, but still is comfortable for both parties and neither is exposed to one another.
- A companion
 - Provide services for keeping on track with goals
 - Display job openings, apply straight from the app
- Custom pins
 - Besides adding more filters to the map, letting users post their own places under a “user curated” filter.
- Minor things
 - More sorting options and likes/dislikes for the bulletin board
 - More robust user system.



Thank you!