

YOUR OMAHA APP

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PROBLEM

People don't participate in local government.
There's a disconnect that is long-standing and widely felt. Some of that comes from skepticism in the efficiency of government, and some of it comes from a lack of transparency into what actually occurs. In this case ignorance isn't bliss, it's bias. Many assume that participation would be inconvenient and ineffective, so involvement that is directly detrimental to those who need representation in their local government the most.

MOTIVATION

Provide a tool to give citizens the confidence and information they need to get involved.

We as individuals felt uninformed and alienated when it came to our local government. We wanted to become more informed, more involved, and we wanted to help others do that too. When it came to getting answers or help, we didn't know where to start, and we want to fix that.

GOALS

Create an app that:

Makes it easy to get in contact with representatives to share one's voice

Shows information about local elected officials to encourage informed voting during elections

Fosters community engagement through the publication of events

DESIGNS

MOCKUPS

We created three mockups during our ideation phase, based on different layouts of key information. Our goal was to get feedback on what users felt was the most natural and useful, and we ended up pulling elements from all three designs. We kept the "Your ___" titles, the contact button and introduction, and the dropdown poll results.



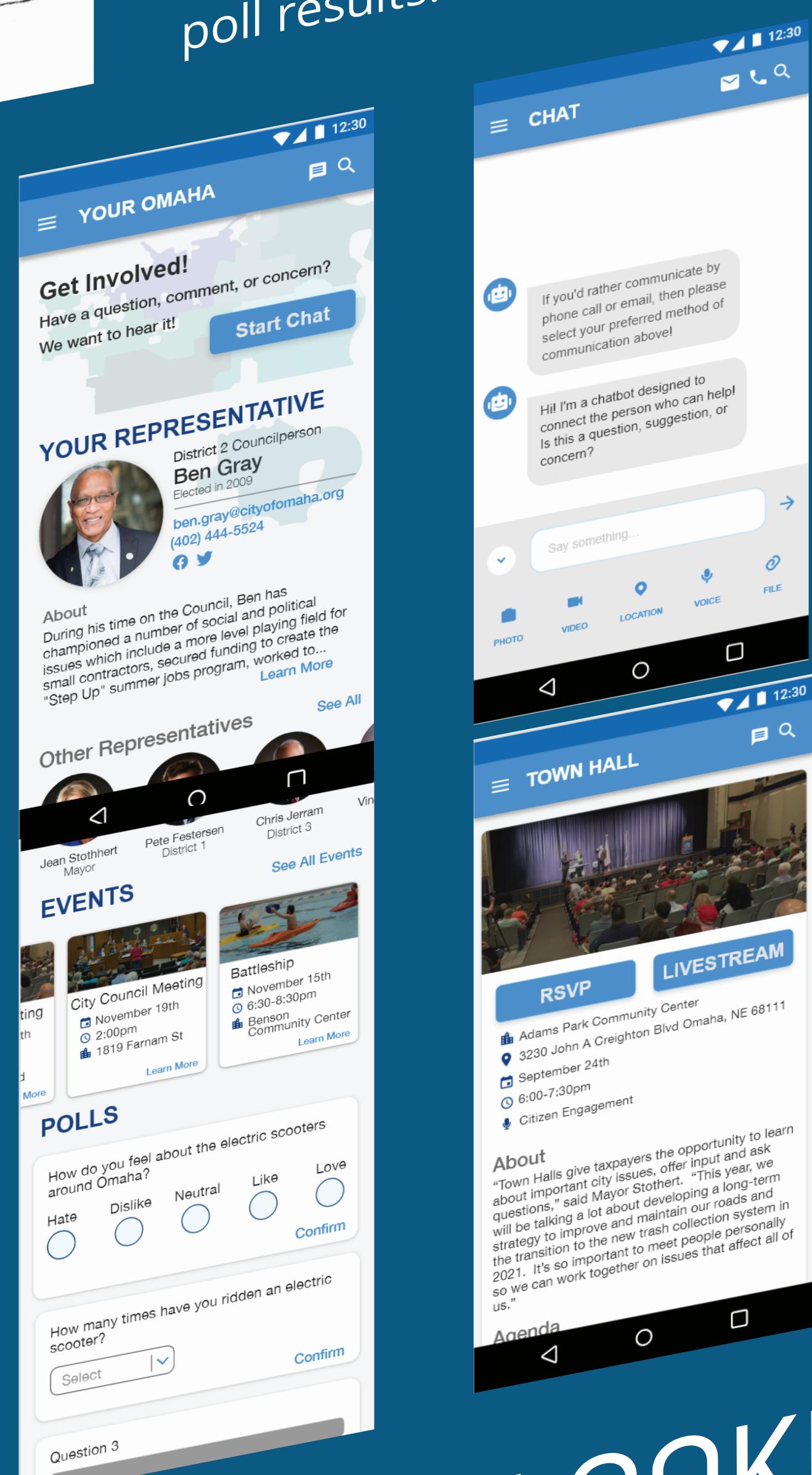
PROTOTYPE

Our prototype was developed mobile-first, with the goal of organizing elements by importance to the user.

The chat action is our primary focus, so we placed it first on the homescreen, and also provided a link to it in the navbar.

The home page is designed to encourage scrolling, so that the user will naturally explore the information and actions available to them.

The interface is designed to be navigable by users of all technical aptitudes, and is color-blind friendly.



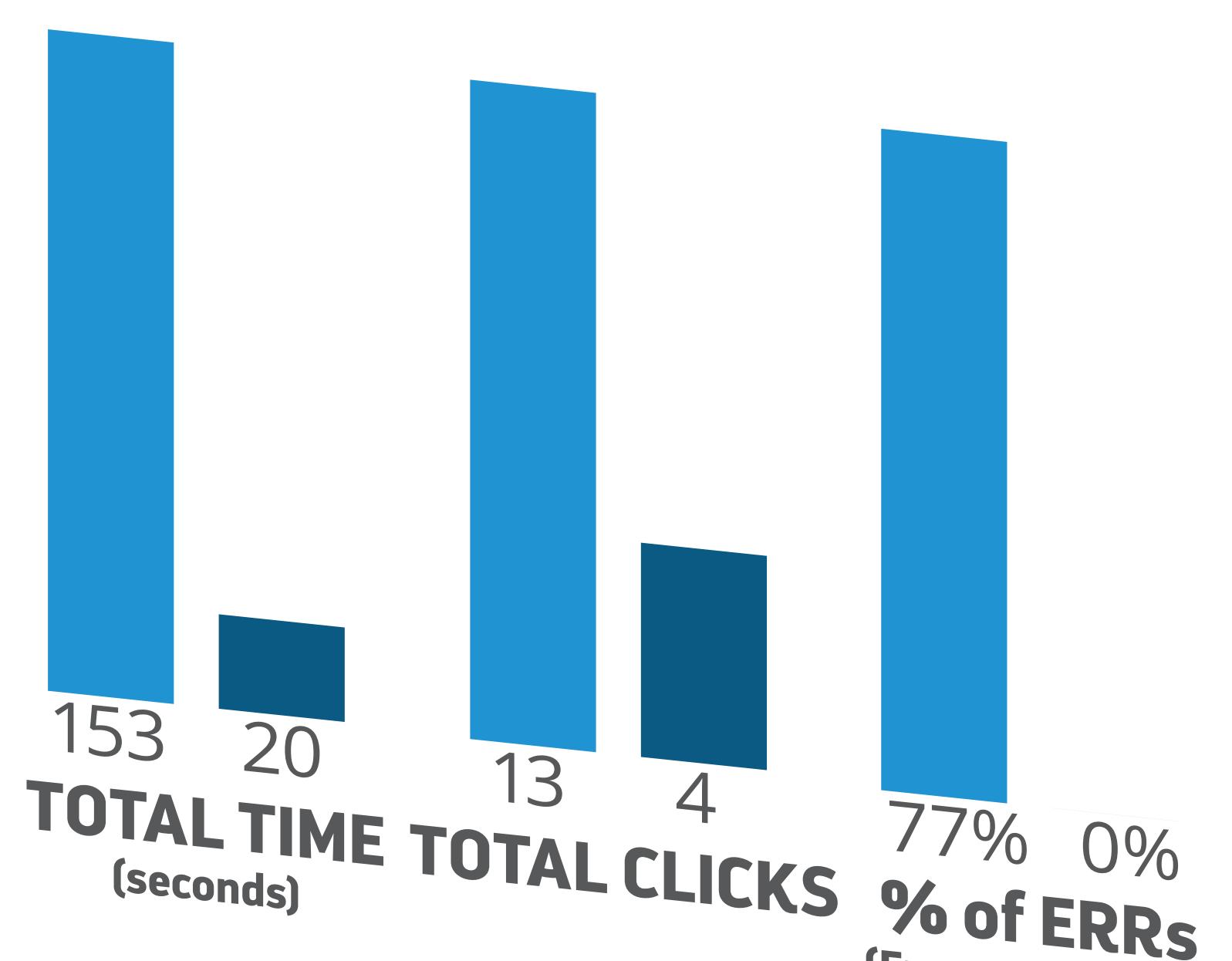
STUDIES

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY

We interviewed 5 people between the ages of 21 and 35, 3 males and 2 females, with varied occupations. We asked them questions on their knowledge of local representatives, participation in local government, participation in communities, and their perspectives on local government as a whole. We found that citizen engagement is low, largely due to an apathetic outlook on the efficacy of both past and future participation in local government. We learned that the biggest barrier to overcome in citizen involvement is effort, both perceived and actual. From our inquiry we created 3 personas that we referenced during the ideation process.

USER STUDY

We interviewed and recorded 8 participants as they attempted to complete 3 tasks on both our prototype and the City of Omaha website. We also asked them to talk through the process, and then share their experience at the end of the test. We tracked the number of clicks, number of erroneous clicks, and total time to complete the task.



LOOKING FORWARD

The next steps are more user studies, and communication with the city government on the benefits of this project. We believe a project like ours would be of great benefit to the citizens of Omaha, and we look forward to seeing Omaha improve as it adopts more smart city technology.