

**PUBLIC SPACE FOR
PRIVATIZED INDIVIDUAL**

PUBLIC SPACE FOR PRIVATIZED INDIVIDUAL

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Master of Science
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ABSTRACT

The spaces of the of the future are ones that take the fourth plane of space making(digital) into account. This is built with a symbiotic relationship with the other three. Throughout history, the public spaces have been a medium to open utilities and tools that were meant only for the affluent. The newspaper democratized the access to information and thus giving rise to the spatial typology of café. The fountains of Europe were a great platform for public to gather and for young artist. These were spaces of public discourse. With the wide spread of internet, the online space became a platform for public discourse. People could share their thoughts and ideas across boundaries and build a global public sphere.

This change was accelerated by pandemic, by people showing support and solidarity everyone. The whole world came together on the digital spaces as a single public space as a place. They gathered to show support and to also arrange to social events. The pandemic extended limits of the public space. The project looks at incorporating this evolution of public space and expanding the discourse of public space into the physical world.

The project looks at developing a public sphere for the city of Washington DC. The strategy is to leverage the attributes of physical and digital spaces to build a better public sphere. The physical spaces bring people together in spaces to confront and exchange value with civility and the digital spaces reach out to the public beyond physical and social boundaries. The physical strategy is a set of Urban furniture that forms a network of spaces throughout the city. This urban furniture can be designed and made locally or can be sourced. The furniture offers a set of various experiences as chosen by the host. The host will be an individual person or a community entity.

The digital strategy is an application that works as a platform for social events. But these events can be conducted by anyone, and they can control that who can get notified about it. The notification is based on your distance from the event. This will cater to hyper local and city-wide events. The platform can also be used by citizens to exhibit their talents and open it up to the public. The public and private institutions can volunteer their space for these purposes.

The application and the public space do not concentrate the use and access the use of information and physical events to a single person or entity. It distributes the power and responsibility in between all stakeholders of the public sphere. Thus, creating a robust public sphere for the fully functioning Democracy.

The Research aims at expanding the discourse on public sphere and public space design. It also introduces the data for public design. The application helps citizens to review their experience of the physical experience of the public space. This data becomes the bedrock for urban designers to design and develop public space for the city.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

The project looks at developing a public sphere for the city of Washington DC. The strategy is to leverage the attributes of physical and digital spaces to build a better public sphere. The physical spaces bring people together in spaces to confront and exchange value with civility and the digital spaces reach out to the public beyond physical and social boundaries. The physical strategy is a set of Urban furniture that forms a network of spaces throughout the city. This urban furniture can be designed and made locally or can be sourced. The furniture offers a set of various experiences as chosen by the host. The host will be an individual person or a community entity.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate these to my Mom, Dad, sister, and the faculty members at WAAC for pushing me to pursue and explore this idea.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am thankful for the support from my family. I dedicate this thesis to my late grandfather, who stood for the values of commitment excellence in life and work.

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PROBLEM FIELD

SPACE

As designers we have shaped the 3dimensional world. We have used the 3 planes to design the world that we live in, namely the Sky plane, wall plane and the floor plane. This has been the basis of designing the houses that we reside in, the museums that we visit for education and cultural purposes, the hotels, hospitals, the airports etc. This has shaped how we percieve the world around us and built a people-enviroment (PE) relationship around the 3 dimensional spaces. However, these have also been challenged with scientific innovations.

The way we perceive space and form has changed with time and scientific innovations. The invention of the elevator gave rise to the birth of the skyscraper. We started pushing the limits of heights that we can build and thus enhancing our relationship with the sky plane. An additional influence on the relationship with the environment is culture. Humans have throughout history built a relationship with the enviroment formed that are deeply shaped by the local forces of form.

But Globalization led to the exchange of knowledge and services of the built environment and soon designs from one part of the world were exported to other parts. Local designs took a back seat and the cities around world started looking the same. Location was no longer important, and we export designs all over the world.

The digital technology revolution has informed this relationship too. We no longer wish to be at any place but rather call for the activities or services to us. This has happened as the environment around has become technologically advanced. Each plane around us gathers information about us and consolidates it. The presence of the digital plane in our lives has morphed howe we think of the spaces we live in.

This thesis aims to explore the relationship of the digital and physical plane and the humans by examining its impact on the public spaces around us.



Above: Human figures surrounded by the three physical planes of designing a space

PROBLEM FOCUS

DIGITAL SPACE

Firstly let me clarify what I mean by digital space for the purpose of the project. The digital space is the virtual environment that is around us when we are using any device. The device can be a laptop, mobile phone, table or a smart watch. It could even be digital AI (Artificial Intelligence) powered speaker that operates at our command. These devices create an invisible sphere around us that is activated when we are around them. The devices can know our location, body temperature, read our thought patterns and present commercial options to us, help us talk to each other in virtual space.

Digital technology has often been used to establish a new relationship between the people and the environment. As the digital-virtual world develops, it imitates the aspects of the physical world. As day to day usage of digital devices increase in every human's life, the prevalence of the digital space has increased. The digital space has established a new cyber based relationship with the people. *Recent evidence suggests that individuals and groups vary in the degree to which they are connected or committed to cyber-based and place-based settings (Misra, Stokols 2012). They also vary in their orientations toward place based and cyber-based environments (Misra, Stokols 2012). It is essential, therefore, to develop more nuanced conceptions of people's environmental orientations that are commensurate with their experiences during the Internet Era (Misra, Stokols 2012).*

The internet era has changed the relationship of humans with each other. Platforms like Facebook and twitter bring humanity together devoid of its location to a single 'cloud' platform.

It is for this reason to recognize the impact of digital space around us and address it as another plane with which we design spaces. For this project, I address it as the 4th plane of space. This plane is always around us when ever we are using a gadget. The fourth plane is devoid of the presence of the 3 planes. It follows us from the bathroom to any garden or even any Nature getaway we plan.

Although the digital space has yielded into a complex relationship between the people and the environment. We no-longer with go to any 'place' rather we can just connect to the internet and connect with our people across a globe.



Above: Human figures surrounded by the three physical planes of designing a space and the Digital space surrounding them.

WHY DIGITAL SPACE MATTERS ?

The digital space is shaping the environment around us. It has changed the reason why we need to go to any place. One can do a lot more things by sitting on one's couch with their mobile phone than by going to any particular place. The impact can be measured by the impact of the digital space on our perception of our environment.

Shalini Misra and Daniel Stokols have envisioned 5 effects of the digital space on ourselves and they are as follows.



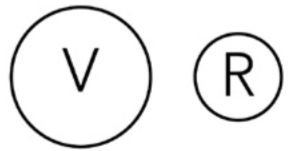
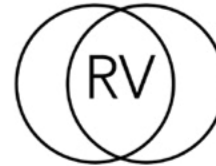
1. The individuals are oriented differently towards their environment and that is based on their commitment and connectedness to virtual and place-based settings, the focus of their personal identity and how satisfied they are with their socio-emotional needs.
2. There can be a prediction made on the individuals' particular environmental orientation by the socio-physical features of their place-based environments, patterns and internet usage and particular features of their cybernetic environments.
3. They don't 'fit' or cohere between individuals' environmental orientations and sociophysical environments as new technologies enable people to engage in concurrent activities.
4. People are able to adapt to new forms of virtual life. Some socio-demographic and age-developmental groups are more likely to be representative of certain categories of environmental experience.
5. Their research on environmental orientations in the Digital Age provides the basis for identifying and understanding the emergence of new human needs and environmental demands and the societal consequences of adapting to those demands.

PEOPLE-ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIP IN DIGITAL AGE

Shalini Misra and Daniel Stokols in their paper discuss about the importance of the people-environment relationship at a societal level. They have clearly discussed about the relationship of the people-environment relationship in the digital age for society.

There has been considerable concern about the societal consequences of virtual forms of interpersonal communication and social interaction such as chat rooms and virtual communities, and the privatization of public life. Putnam, for example, voiced the concern that the effortless usage of communication through the internet might encourage people to spend more time alone and interacting with unknown people not able to make meaningful relationships with face-to-face interaction but rather having superficial exchanges with strangers. Further, online communication by avid Internet users may result in under-developed social relationships with their online communication partners, at least in some instances (Misra, Stokols 2012). *Even when conversing with close friends and family, impoverished online conversations might displace higher quality, face-to-face conversations as people tend to omit the social niceties that promote and maintain social relationships* (Misra, Stokols 2012). *Gergen contends that online conversations, as in the case of email, become obligatory and pragmatic acts instead of personal expressions. Horizontal relationships that emphasize the breadth of contacts are favored over vertical relationships that require dedicated attention, effort, time, and commitment* (Misra, Stokols 2012). There has been considerable

Person's environmental orientation based on connectedness to real and virtual settings and focus of identity and satisfaction of socio-emotional needs.

	Person's connections to physical and virtual worlds	Person's orientation to his/her milieu	Focus of identity and satisfaction of socio-emotional needs	Explanation
Modes of Environmental Experience	Disconnected Real, Disconnected Virtual	Placeless		Identity and satisfaction of needs comes neither from real nor virtual settings.
	Connected Real, Disconnected Virtual	Place-Based (Spatially Oriented)		Identity and satisfaction of needs comes predominantly from real settings and these individuals are disconnected from virtual settings.
	Disconnected Real, Connected Virtual	Cyber-Based (Virtually Oriented)		Identity and satisfaction of needs comes predominantly from virtual settings and these individuals are disconnected from real settings.
	Connected Real, Connected Virtual	Place-Cyber Based		Identity and satisfaction of needs comes from both real and virtual settings.

Above: Table 2 from Misra, Shalini, and Daniel Stokols. "A Typology of People-Environment Relationships in the Digital Age." *Technology in Society*, vol. 34, no. 4, 2012, pp. 311-325., <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2012.10.003>.

PUBLICNESS

A city isn't just a place to live, to shop, to go out and have the kids play. It's a place that implicates how one derives one's ethics, how one develops a sense of justice, and most of all how one learns to talk with and learn from people who are unlike oneself, which is how a human being becomes human.

Richard Sennett, "The Civitas of Seeing," in Places, Vol 5, #4. 1989

"Richard Sennett (1978) best models the Citizen of Affairs for us in his vision of a public life based on civility, the activity that protects people from one another and yet allows them to enjoy one another's company and makes it possible for people to act together as citizens in the political and social affairs of the city" (Zube, Irwin 1989). In a vibrant democracy like America there are bound to be differences and frictions in the interactions. To mitigate the effects of the friction of these interactions it is important to have this exchange in a civil manner. "At civility's base was the right to talk to strangers while not burdening them with the cabinet-of-horrors of your own inner life, all citizens thus protected by the convention of The Mask of Civility" (Zube, Irwin 1989). The citizens are civil with each other, helps people to learn the act impersonally, to interact/join/debate other people on social and political action.

Starting with DeTocqueville 150 years ago, and more recently Arendt (1958), Sennett (1978), Bellah et al. (1985), and others, each trace the several hundred- year transformation of the public portion of life, with most seeing it as a decline (or "fall" or "loss"). Sennett traces the complex transformation, emphasizing a loss of civility, in the modern quest for "personality" and an articulatable inner life (Zube, Irwin 1989).

Michael Brill calls it the familiar citizen (Zube, Irwin 1989). This is a model where people are no longer strangers to each other. This loss of publicness results in a lack of civility towards one another. The impersonal relations that one shares with others develop a need for civility towards because of having only one thing in common between them, of being citizens.

Each person, withdrawn into himself, behaves as though he is a stranger to the destiny of all the others. His children and his good friends constitute for him the whole of the human species. As for his transactions with his fellow citizens, he may mix among them, but he sees them not; he touches them, but does not feel them; he exists only in himself and for himself alone. And if on these terms there remains in his mind a sense of family, here no longer remains a sense of society. – TOCQUEVILLE

PUBLIC SPACE

The meaning of “public space” may seem obvious, but this term too has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. Notions of “public space” can be rooted in the physical characteristics of a location, the institutional structures and policies affecting a place, or the types of uses and activities undertaken in the space (Curry, 2017).

As Per Michael Brill, purpose of the public environments is to shine lights on the public affairs and encourage a sense of citizenship. The nature of public spaces were started to show so. However this is not performed by the current form of the public spaces but this not due to design of public space but rather the evolution of humans to developing a relationship with the digital space. The digital public space has been able to dislocate oneself from the physical self.

The physical spaces we originally made for public activities and for public display of opinion of their government. Post industrialization & globalization, the malls took over as public spaces. As the culture became replaced by capitalism, shopping became a public activity. Shopping coupled with eating and entertainment became spots of public spaces. These spaces the privatized the public conscious of the society and this led to growth of malls and other such spaces.

After the digital revolution, interaction of the public with each other started taking place online on platforms like Facebook, twitter, Instagram etc. These spaces enable people to drop their opinions and views. As the public started realizing that the digital presence didn’t need a confrontation to person one is talking to, it became a great space for public discussions. The internet also erased boundaries and people from diverse background could interact with each other and exchange knowledge. This thus became a great space for public interaction. The use of the digital public space was more enhanced during the Covid-19 Pandemic that used the digital space for work, leisure and for social and political purposes.

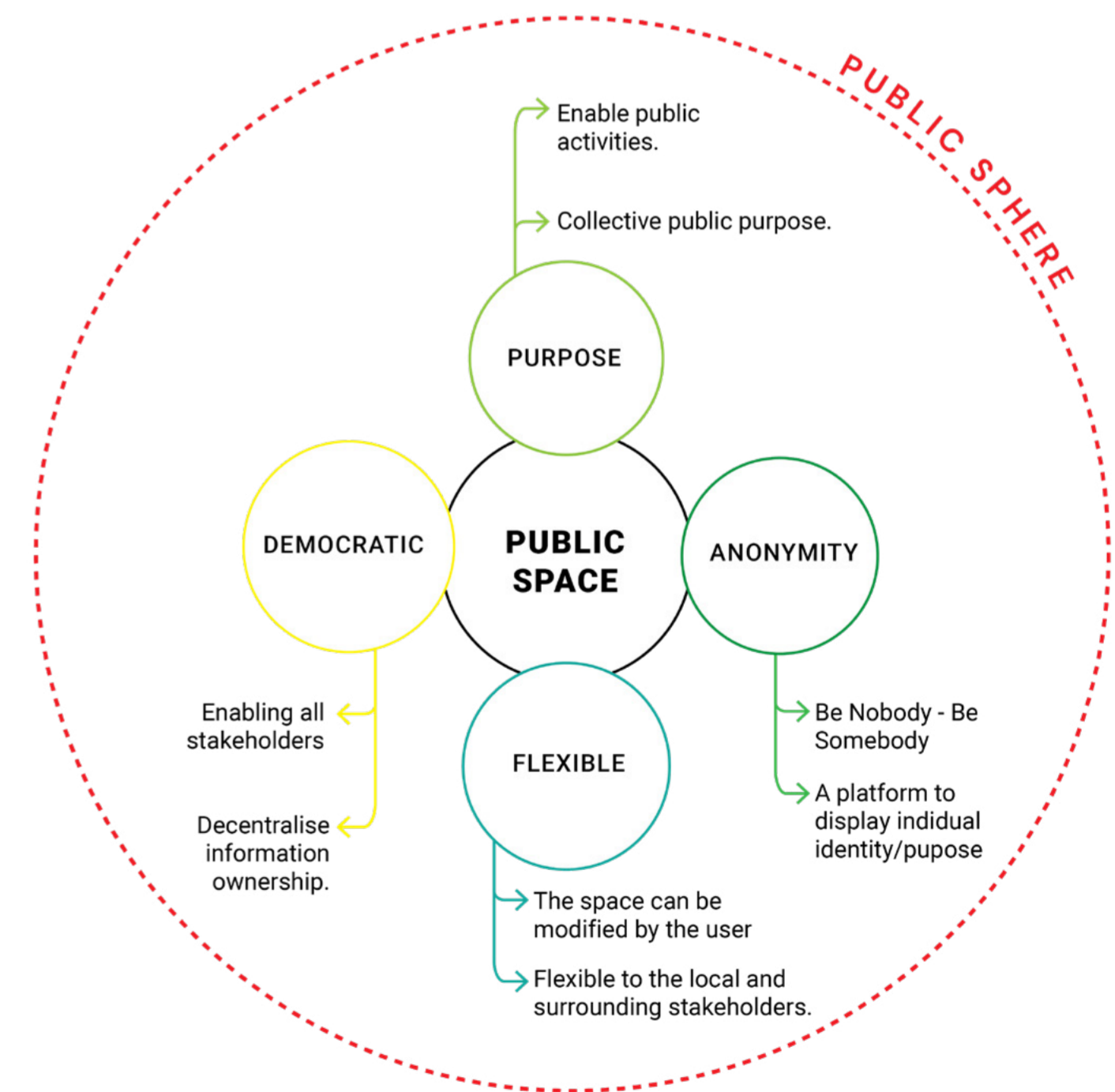
However, there is no dearth of interest in the psychological and interpersonal impacts of Internet use. *The area of psychosocial studies of Internet use stresses pathological Internet use, or what some researchers have termed “Internet addiction”, depression, socio-phobia, and loneliness as predictors and outcomes of certain types of Internet use, computer mediated communication, and their effects on social behavior and interpersonal relationships* (Misra, Stokols 2012).

These side effects can be reduced by increasing the presence of people in the physical spaces. Thus a form of public space of the future is a hybrid of a digital and physical space.

RELATION BETWEEN PUBLIC SPACE AND PUBLIC REALM

Both “public space” and “public sphere” have been used by different actors to signify differing meanings. The Habermasian formulation of the public sphere posited a novel form of social interaction facilitated by a network of institutions comprised by physical locations and mediated discourses. Following this model, public sphere is understood by the scholars as a mediated exchanges that are deeply rooted in place-based communication. “A set of physical and mediated spaces” is what Catherine Quires has defined the public sphere, where people come together to deliberate, express, and identify interest of common concern.

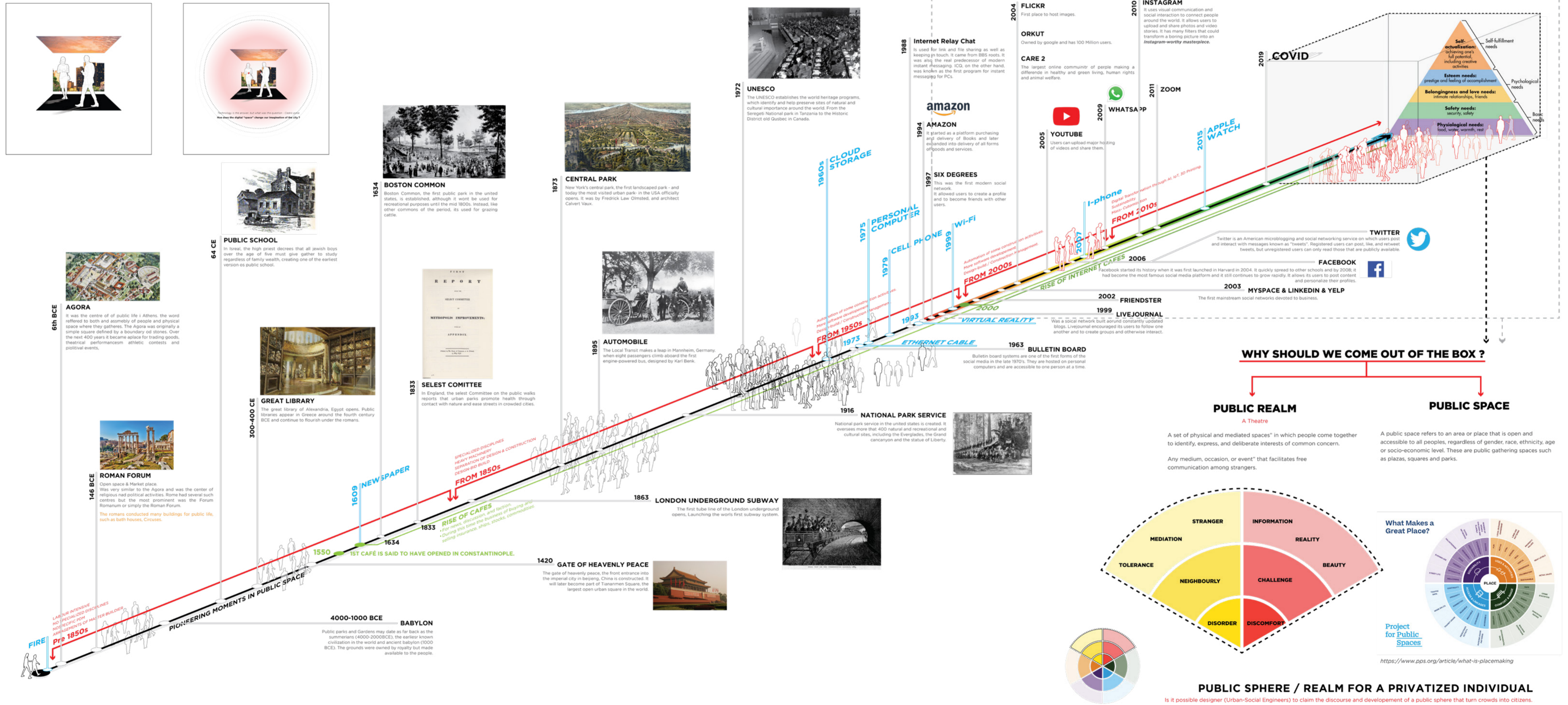
I understand the public sphere as a theatre and the citizens as actors. The form of the public sphere is to stir social and collective imagination. This form also enables for people to come together and agree to principles on which social consensus can be achieved. Thus the form of the public sphere is to be using the most optimum way to reach the masses. The diagram below illustrates the relations between the public space and the public sphere.



Above: Diagram showing the constituents of what makes the public sphere and public space.

HISTORY OF PUBLIC SPACE

PUBLIC SPACE FOR A PRIVATIZED INDIVIDUAL



Above: The timeline maps the times that have influenced the need for defining public spaces. From the invention of the fire for signaling to the Roman Forum of ancient times. The invention of the cafe was followed after the Gutenberg revolution. The printing press democratized information and knowledge in society. The timeline maps the times that have influenced the need for defining public spaces. From the invention of the fire for signaling to the Roman Forum of ancient times. The invention of the cafe was followed after the Gutenberg revolution. The printing press democratized information and knowledge in society.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

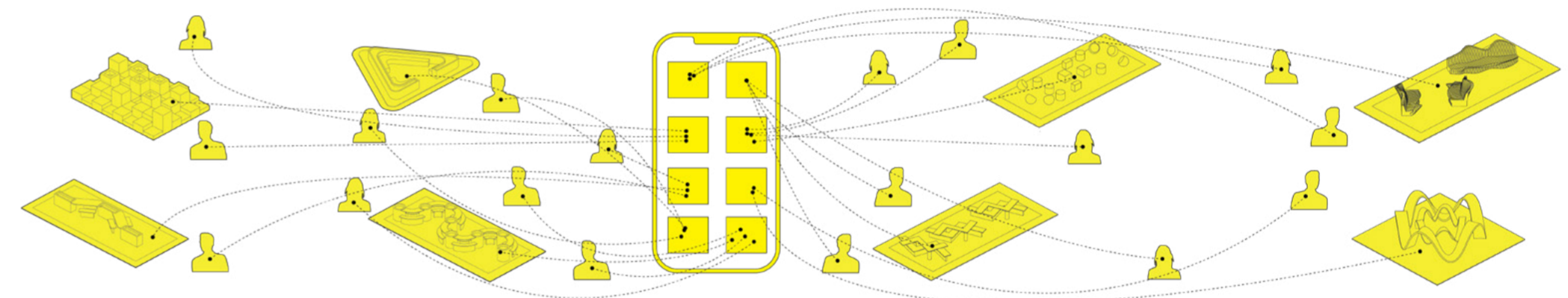
Existing design-based studies of public space some clues, but most do not value public spaces for their ties to public spheres. These designs are constrained by incomplete definitions, the endings and scope of their research are limited. The most successful public spaces have successful physical and programmatic qualities so they can be applied elsewhere. The successful public sphere also attracts the users on the platform with most engaging features.

Taking this basis forward, the design solution is divided into a place and cyber based strategy. The place based strategy is a collection of public spaces and places in a city that respond to the vibrant socio-cultural nature of every neighborhoods. The public space can be permanent or temporary based on the community's choice to participate. These spaces of a city collectively form a single public space for the city. The public spaces can be used by the citizens for social gatherings/ events or any other event of collective in nature.

The cyber based strategy is a platform for the organizer of the event to use it as a platform to inform the citizens around the public space. The cyber based strategy is in the form of a digital application. As the usage of mobile phones has increased and is owned by almost everyone. The cyber space thus gives everyone a possibility to engage in social events in the physical space. The combination of this place-cyber strategy enables the reachability of the social events conducted throughout the city but engages the public in the physical face-to-face situations. This enables citizens to engage in public space with civility. *Richard Sennett (1978) best models the Citizen of Affairs for us in his vision of a public life based on civility, the activity that protects people from one another and yet allows them to enjoy one another's company and makes it possible for people to act together as citizens in the political and social affairs of the city (Irwin. Zube, 1989).*

The digital application is also a tool for the citizens to provide feedback on the physical spaces and furniture. The feedback system can be used as a data for the urban designers to design better furniture. The digital application allows the citizens to start thinking about the physical environment of the city and participate in the making of it. The local communities can design furniture for the public spaces that can be used to any event.

The design is a response the form of the public sphere of today's time. Having a technologically enabled but physically embedded solution of the public space.

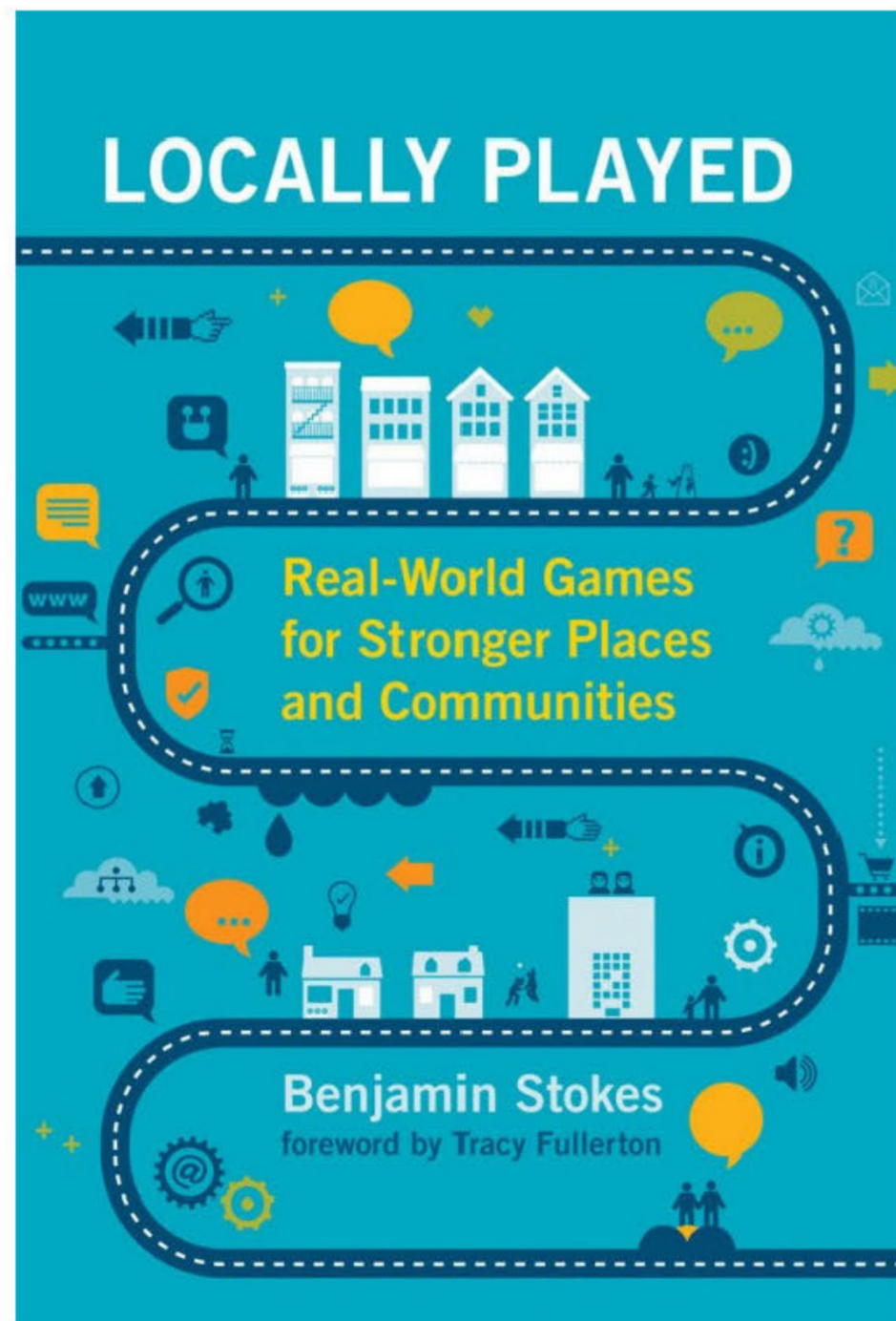


Above: The mobile phone containing the digital application that uses digital space to link the citizens to the physical spaces.

STRATEGY - LOCALLY PLAYED

In 2016, city officials were surprised when Pokémon GO brought millions of players out into the public space, blending digital participation with the physical. Yet for local control and empowerment, a new framework is needed to guide the power of mixed reality and pervasive play. In *Locally Played*, Benjamin Stokes describes the rise of games that can connect strangers across zip codes, support the “buy local” economy, and build cohesion in the fight for equity.

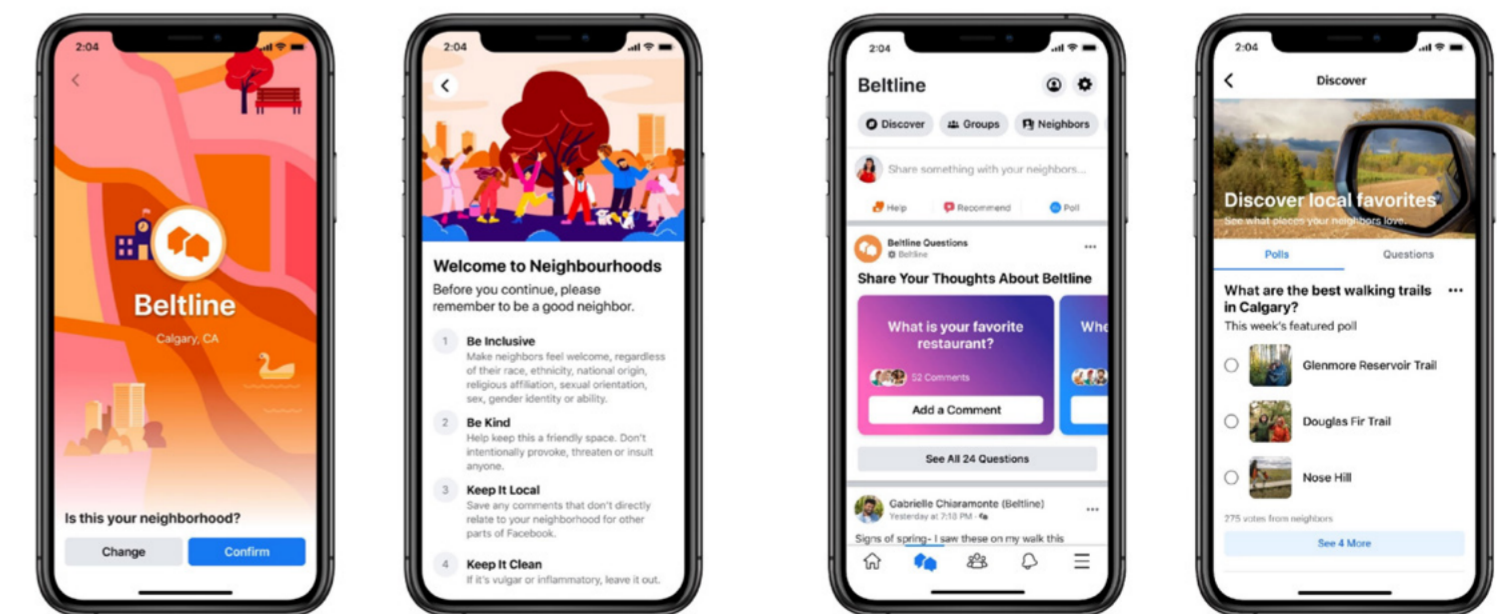
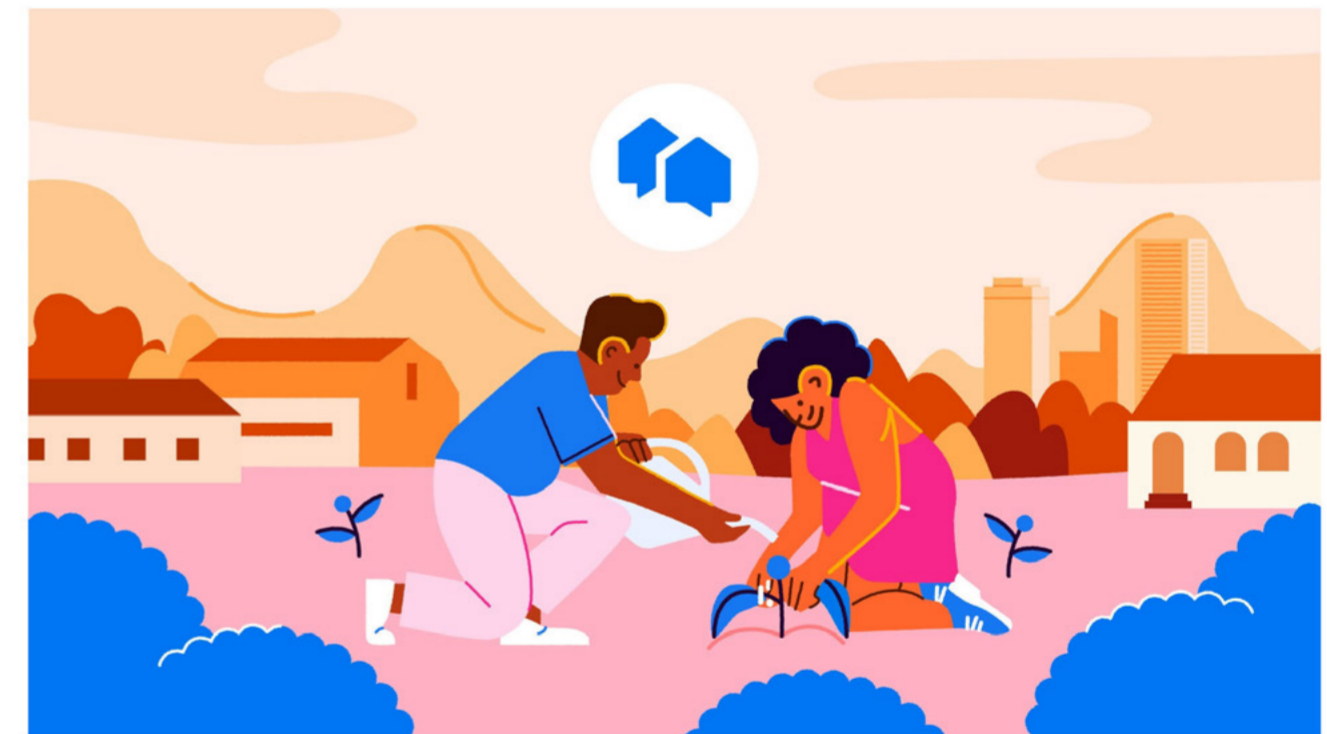
Stokes shows the impact on the local community of a movement is most what it is in the form of a game not just in terms of culture but at a level of network structure and group identity. “By pairing design principles with a range of empirical methods, Stokes investigates the impact of several games, including Macon Money, where an alternative currency encouraged people to cross lines of socioeconomic segregation in Macon, Georgia; Reality Ends Here, where teams in Los Angeles competed to tell multimedia stories around local mythology; and Pokémon GO, appropriated by several cities to serve local needs through local libraries and open street festivals” - (Stokes *Locally played*).



Above: Book Cover of Locally played

DIGITAL SPACE - FACEBOOK NEIGHBOURHOOD

Facebook Neighborhoods is a section of the Facebook app dedicated to your neighborhood, with a Neighborhoods profile that's different from your main Facebook profile. To join, you'll need to be 18 years or older and confirm your neighborhood. You can choose to join just your own neighborhood or, in addition, you also have the option to join your Nearby Neighborhoods to see neighbors and posts from your surrounding neighborhoods.



Above: Screenshots of facebook neighbourhood.

SITE

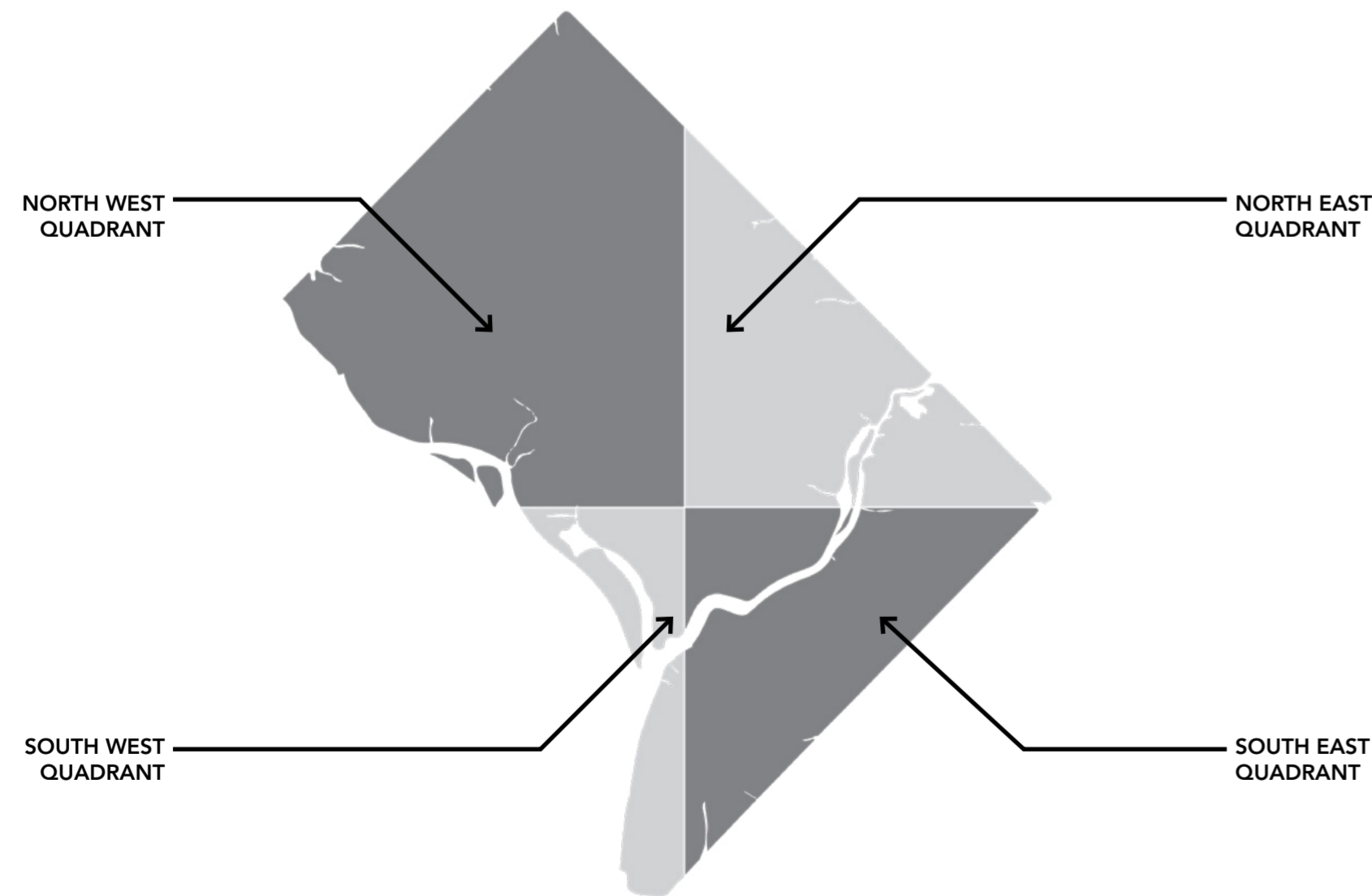
The site for this strategy to be implemented is the city of Washington DC. The city of Washington DC has several open and green spaces however, these spaces are designer for recreational purposes. The planning department of the space itself is engaged in the spatial.

The city of Washington DC is divided into quadrants and each quadrant has a strong socio-economic background. However, the public space and the public furniture designed in these spaces it is the same. The citizens using these space and furniture are different and the neighborhoods thy are in is different. Thus a new P-E (people-environment relationship) is established in these the different parts of the city.

To establish a diversity of public spaces in DC, we have a select site that have the following characteristics.

1. Open spaces.
2. Large Pathways.
3. Internal spaces of social buildings (e.g.- Libraries, museums)
4. Alleys.

Once these spaces are identified, the design of the space reflects the local influences of the site and the utilitarian objectives of the design. Once this is identified throughout the city and a spectrum of public spaces can be established throughout the city working as a one large public space of the city but localized as per community needs.



Above: Quadrant division of Washington DC



Above: Map of Washington DC



Above: Diagrammatic representation of a grid of spaces across the city of Washington DC. This is how the spaces of the city will differ from ewach other in design once the strategy is implemented.

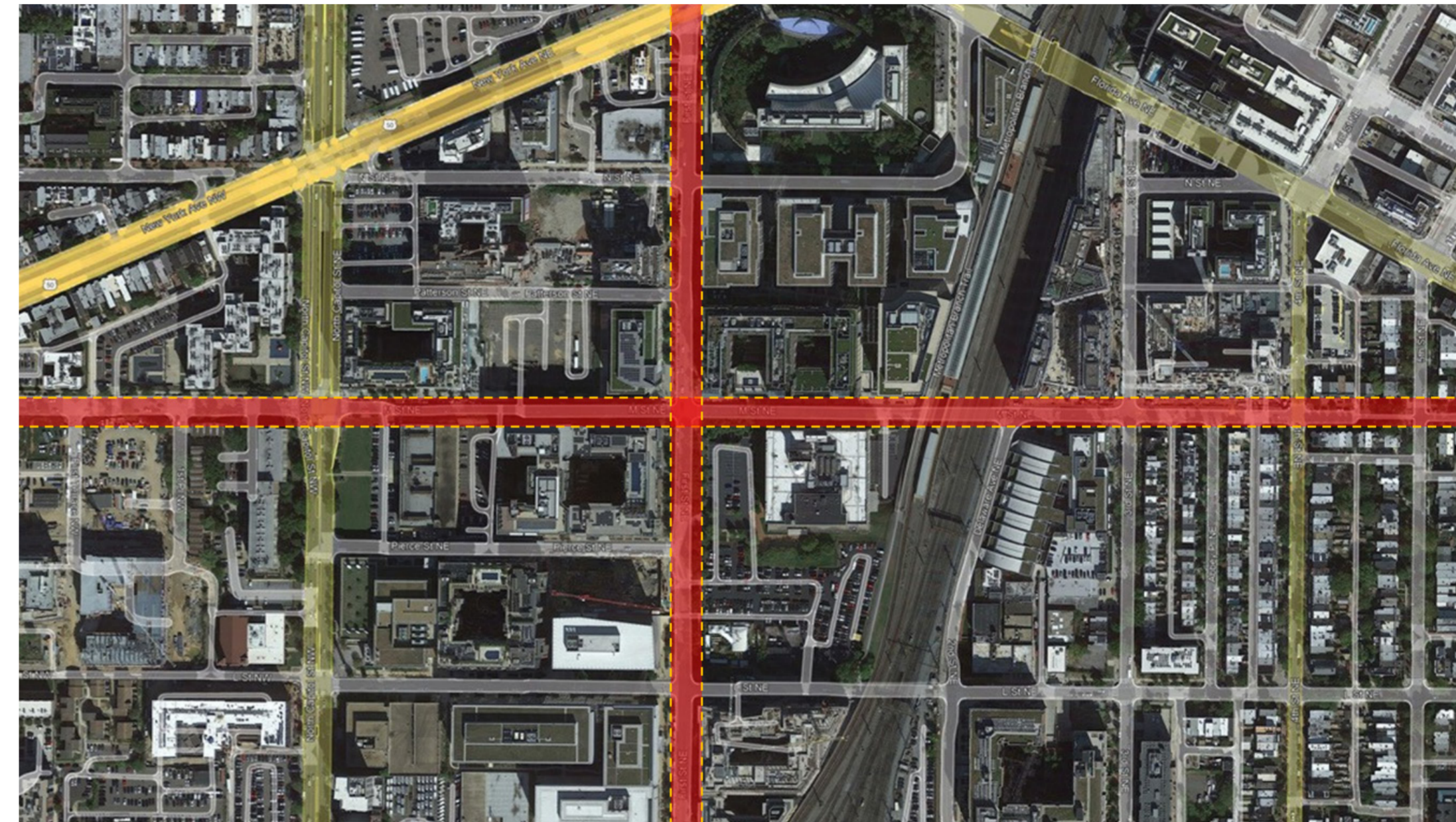
DESIGN

DESIGN

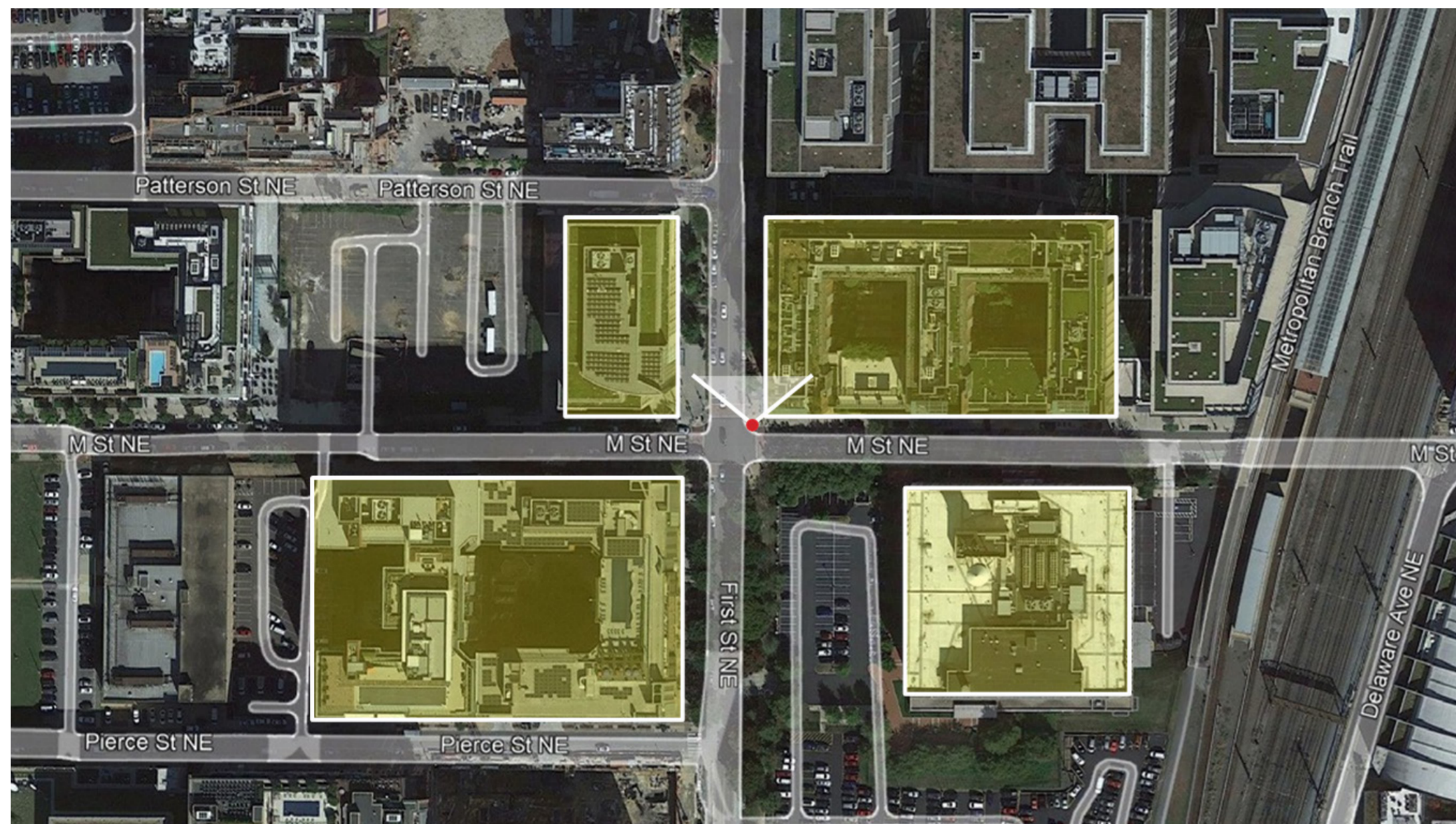
For the purpose of example of how an site can be designed. Lets take a NE intersection between M St stand the 1st street. The site has grocery chain store and cafes on the ground floor of the buildings on the block. The intersection also has an office building and a metro station at 0.2 miles. Thus, this becomes an interesting space for design intervention.

The design expectations of the design are as follows.

1. Space of people to walk along the building and the sidewalk.
2. Space for people to socialize or hangout.
3. Build a better relationship between the building ground floor and the pathways.
4. Enabling people to use the space for movable furniture as per their needs.



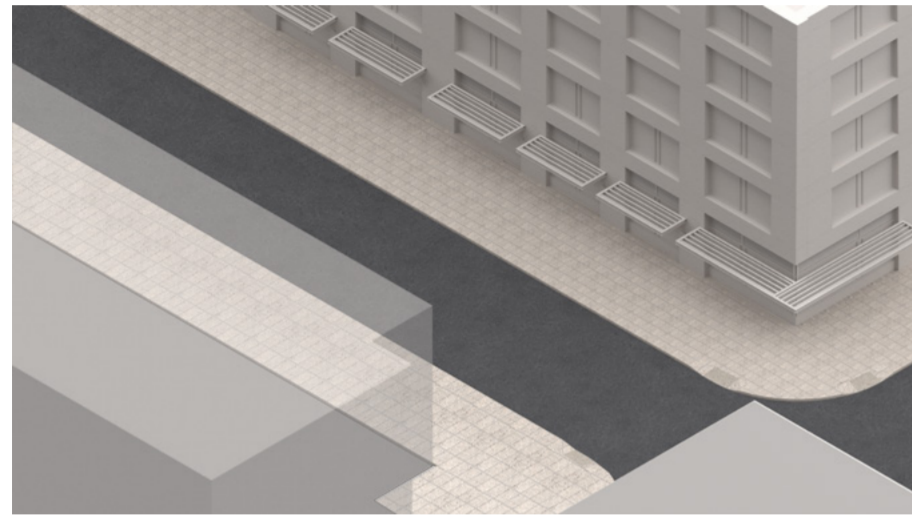
Above: View of pathway from First ST NE



Above: View of pathway from First ST NE



Above: View of pathway from First ST NE



STEP 01
Identification of spaces for permanent transition public space to build a better relationship with the ground private and public space.

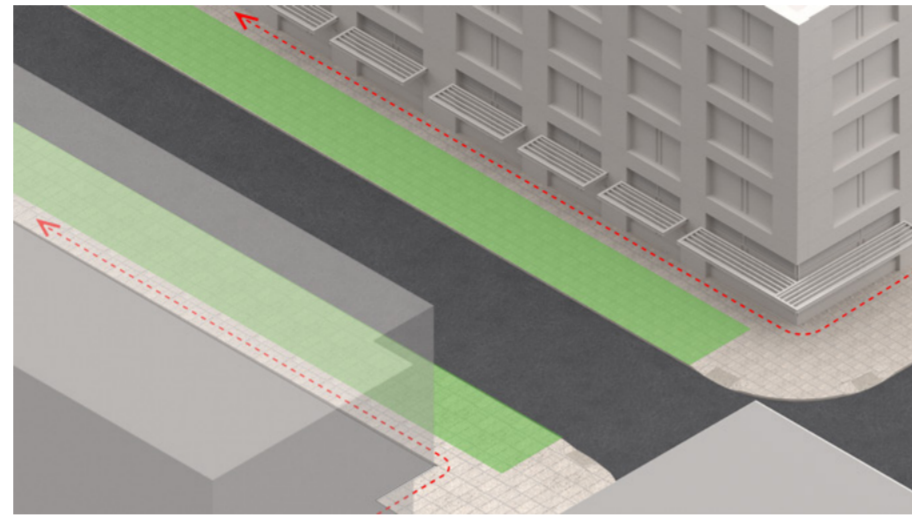
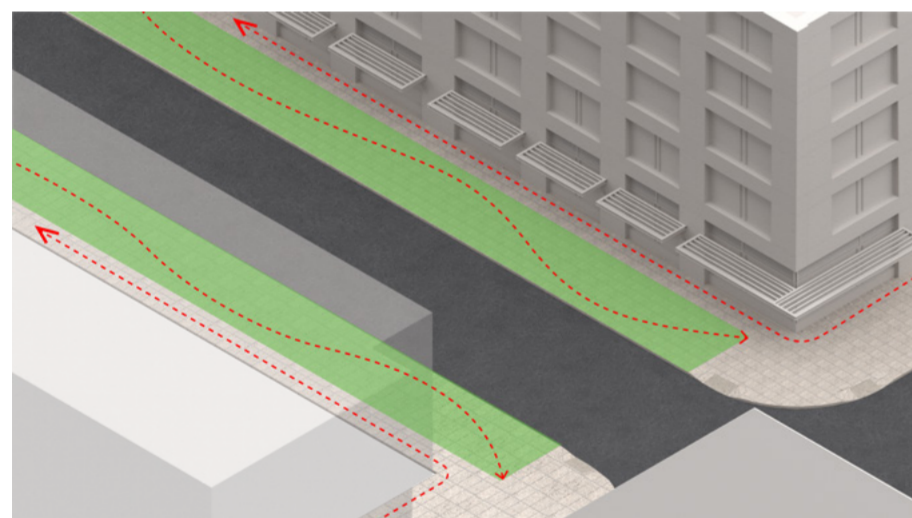


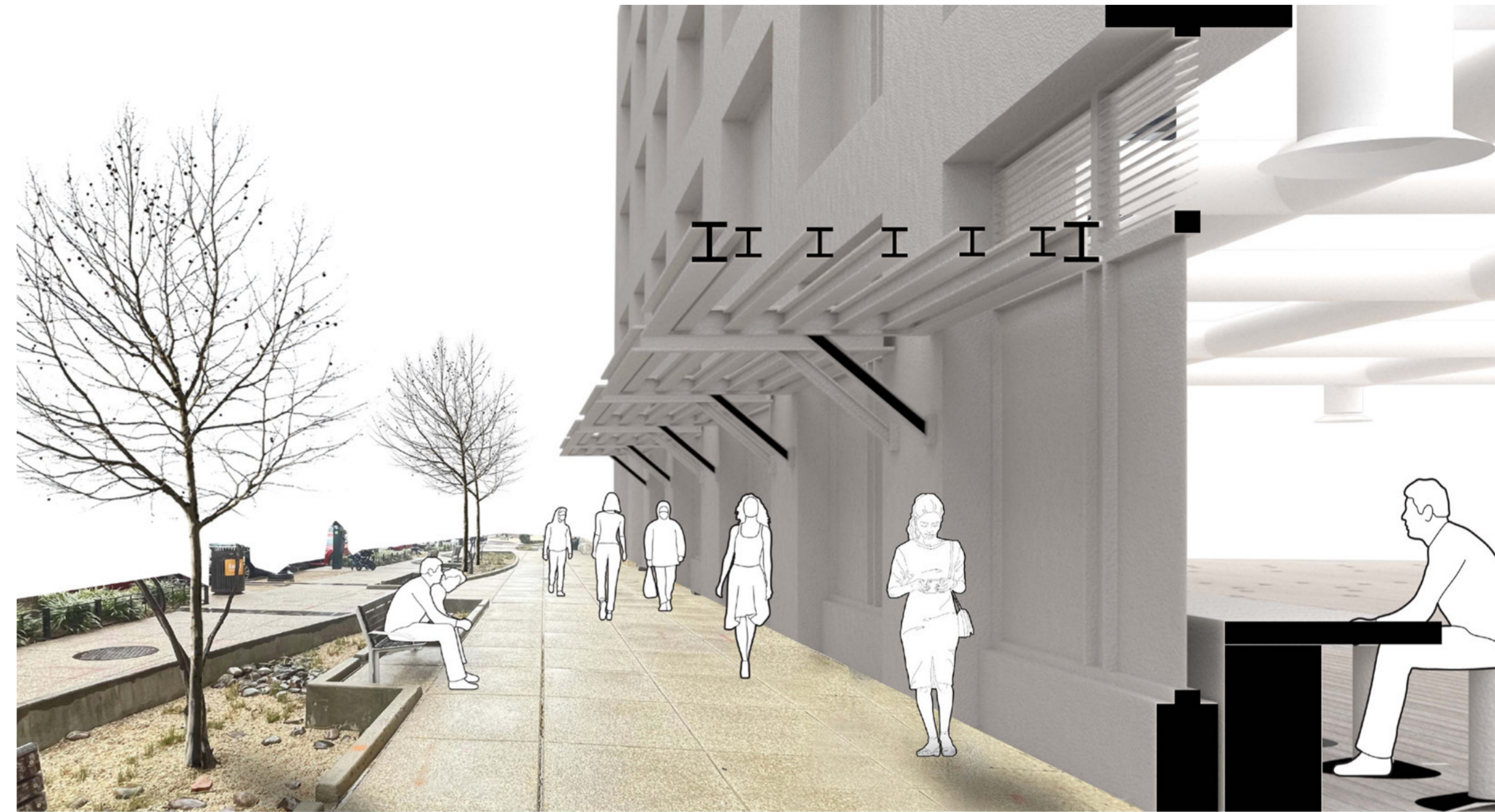
Figure 01
STEP 02
Addition of greenery in the space.



STEP 03
Recognize 6ft pathway for people to cross along the building and through the green space.



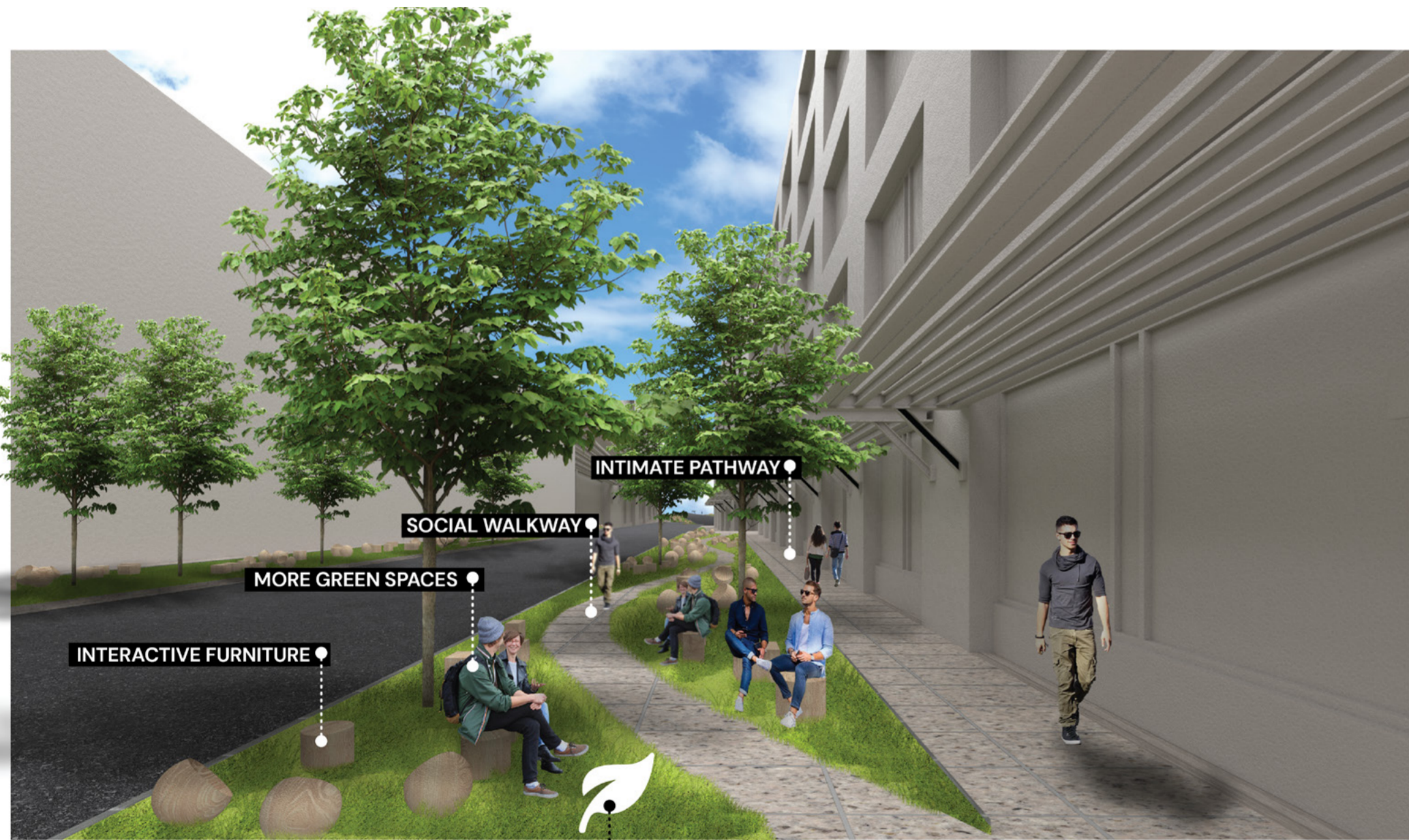
Figure 01
STEP 04
Addition of movable and creative public furniture for people to spill out or gather below the building.



Above: Section through Harris Teeter dining area and the pathway showing the relationship between the building and the street before the implementation of the design.

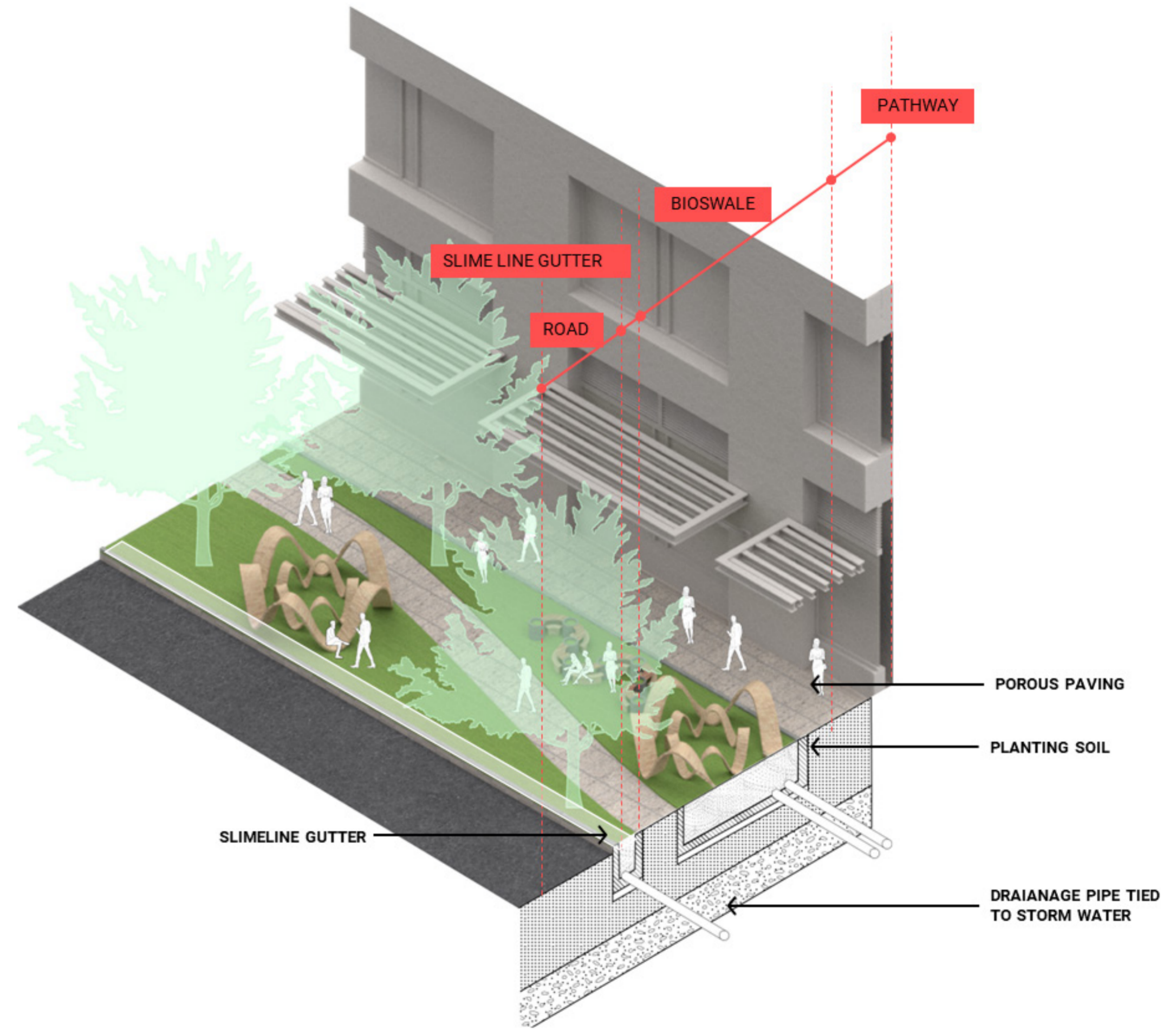


Above: Section through Harris Teeter dining area and the pathway showing the relationship between the building and the street after the implementation of the design.



● MORE GREEN SPACES

Above: Sectional perspective showing the relation between the enclosed space and the public space.



Above: Sectional isometric detail view of the components of the permanent solutions. The sectional shows the technical details for the design.

MOVABLE FURNITURE

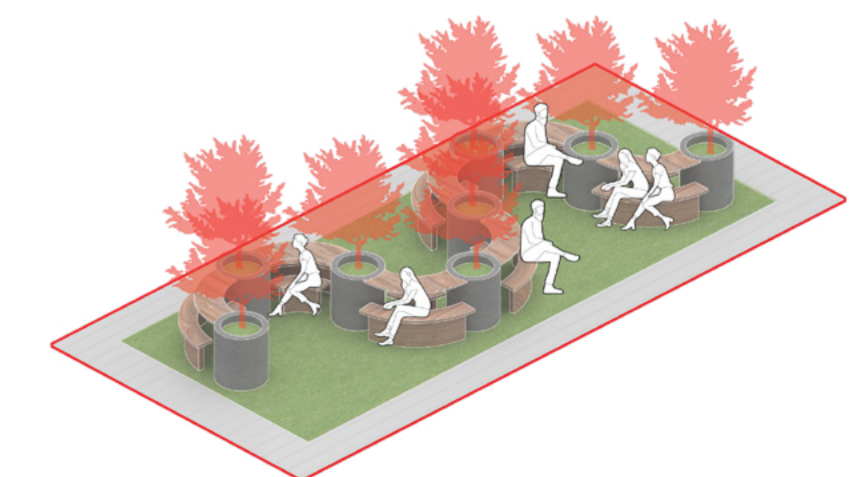
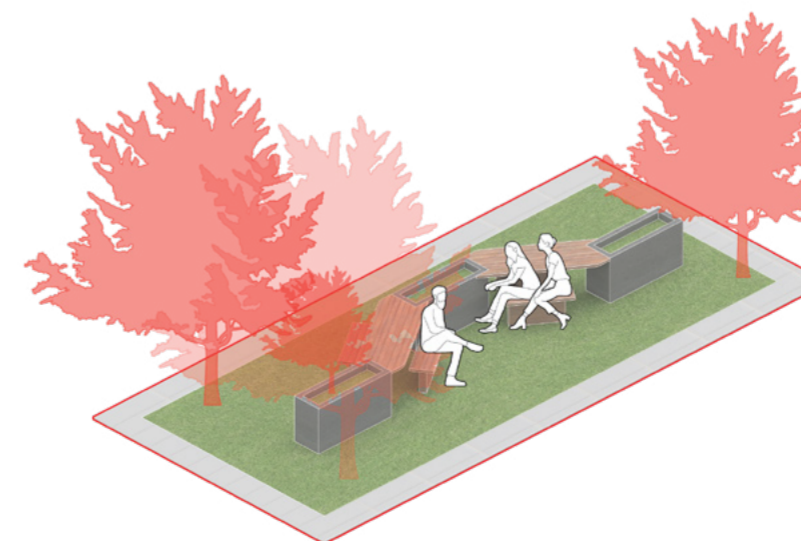
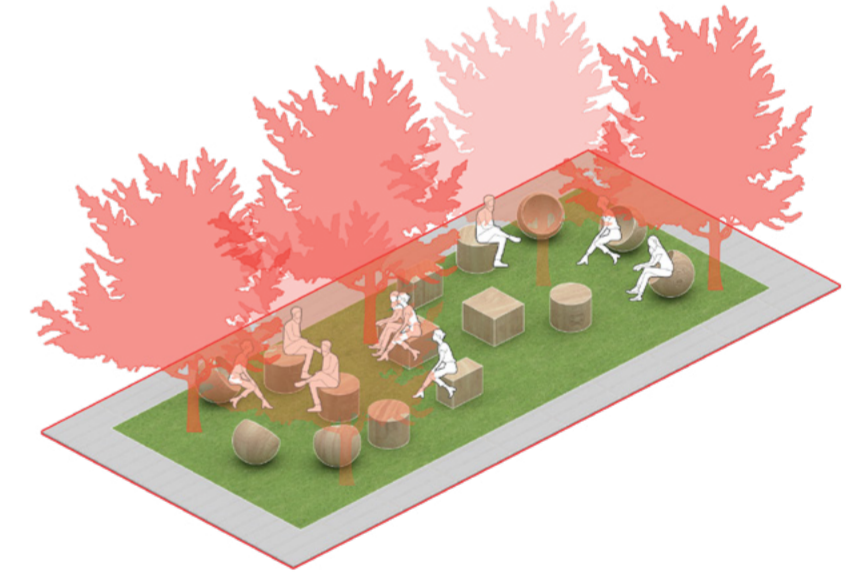
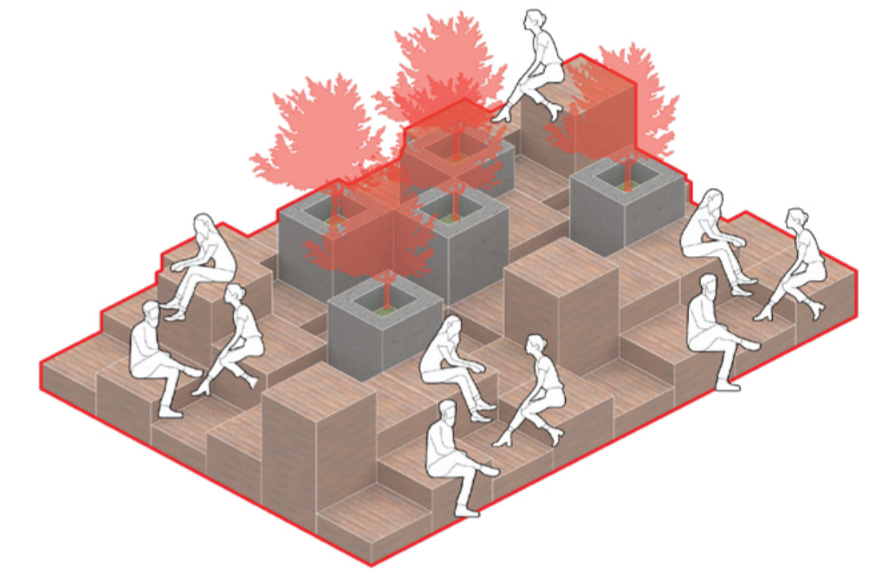
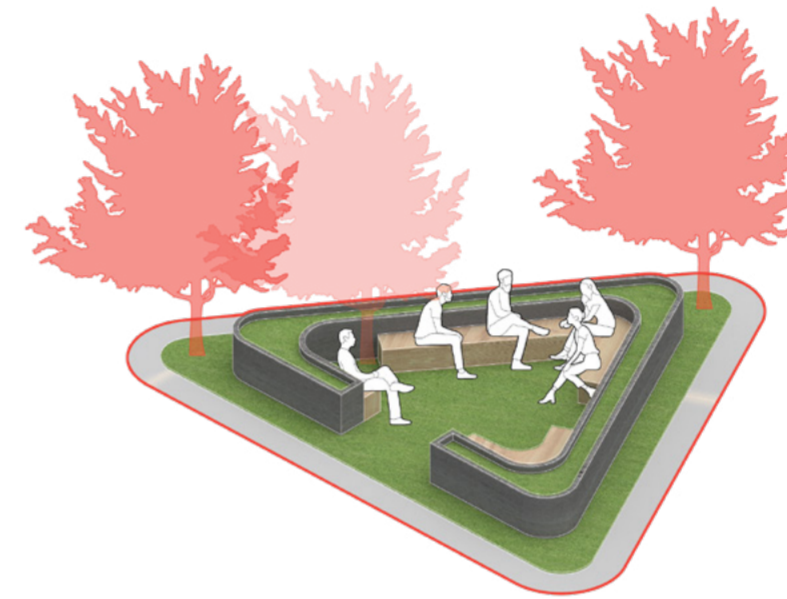
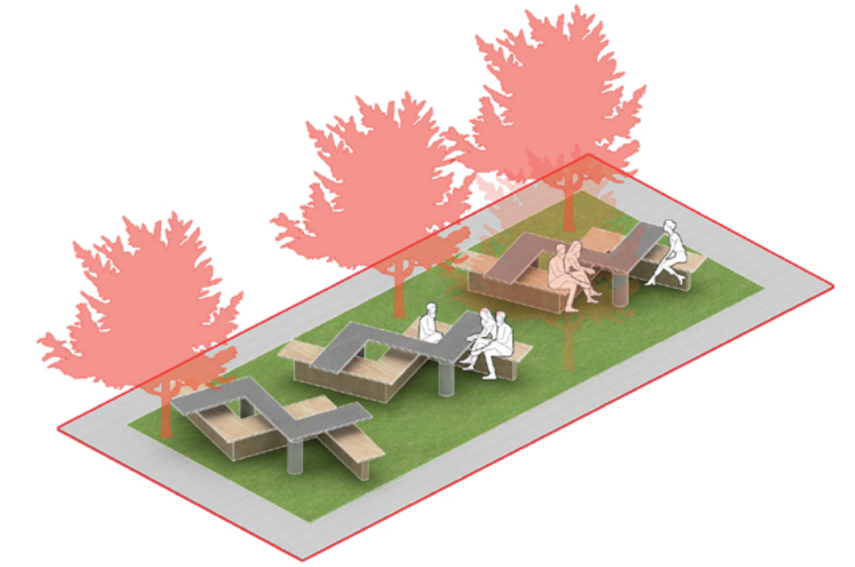
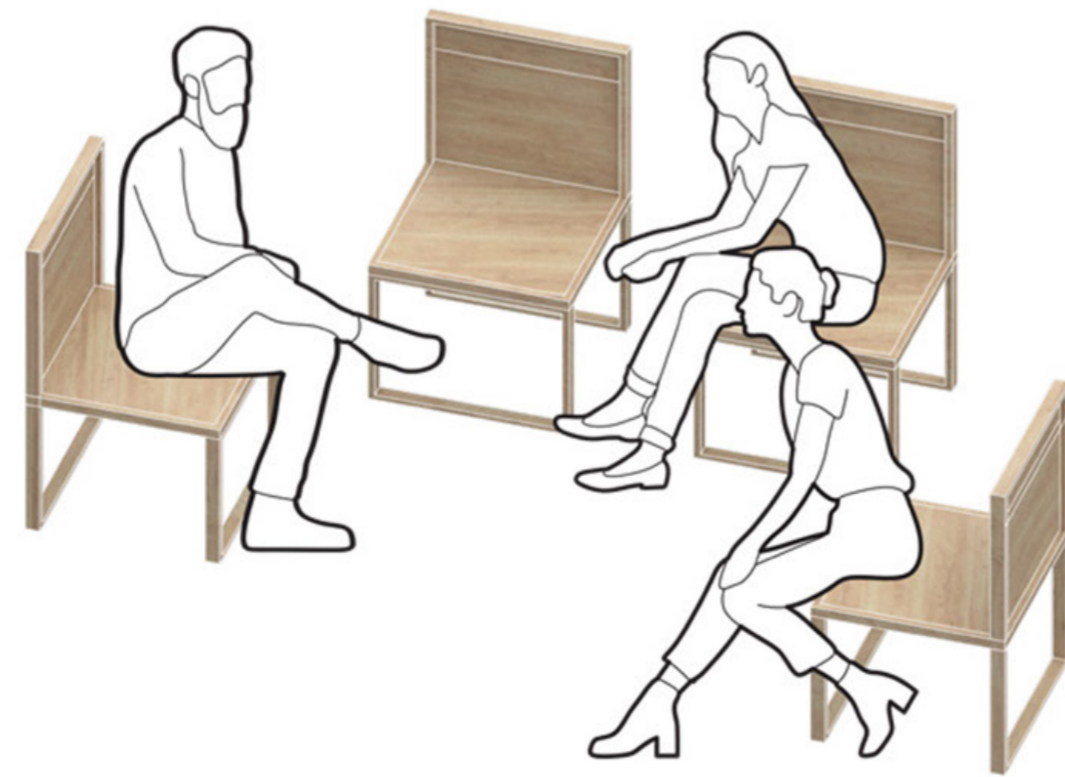
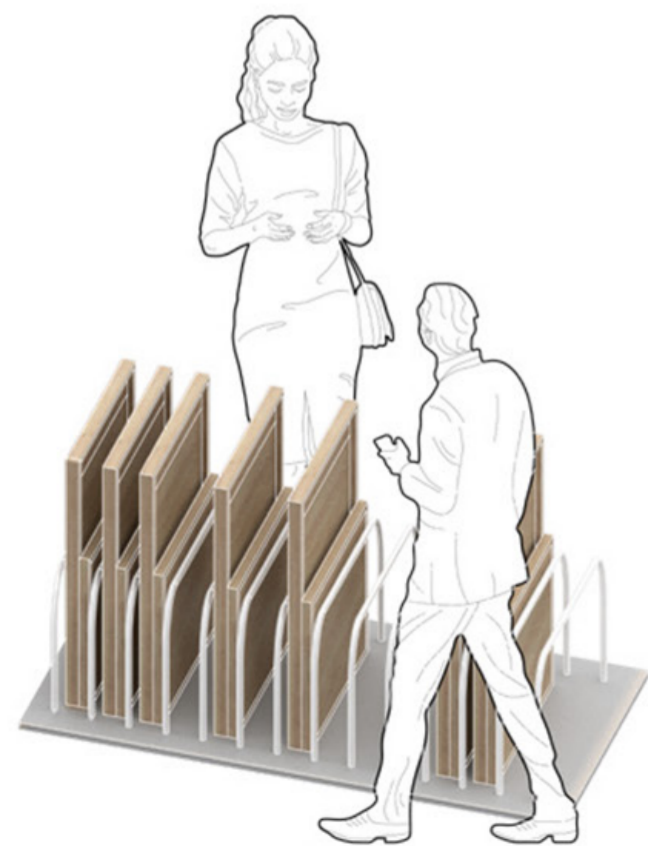
“Habermas’s account of the bourgeois conception of the public sphere stresses its claim to be open and accessible to all. Indeed, this idea of open access is one of the central meanings of the norm of publicity” (Fraser 1990).

The digital application is the space where the user gets an idea about the space and chooses to come for the event. This puts the emphasis on the physical design of the space to attract the crowds. The strategy compels the organizer to develop the space in a manner that can be attractive for the visitor. Just as the design/atmosphere of a restaurant is also important as much as the food to attract customers, it is the design of the individual spaces that will attract visitors.

The reason for having movable furniture is to encourage vibrancy and change in the public place design. The furniture can be made to encourage interaction or solitude for the visitor. The furniture could be a set of benches and table too that can be used by visitors for playing boards games. The furniture could even be designed by local communities to celebrate their festivals thus increasing the diversity and inclusivity in public space design. The furniture could be locally made or brought from any commercial shop.

The community can pool together capital to arrange furniture for a local event or make the furniture itself. This initiative creates a new market for locals to engage in furniture making that can be designed and sold for specific events. This enables local talents for shaping local districts.

The furniture could be designed in space such as a park, a sidewalk, or a street. Each of these types of spaces is then designed following a vocabulary of typologies such as a curb, a bench, or a lawn. The typologies that we use to design public space do not consider the way we communicate and navigate the city through digital devices.



Above: People picking up the chair from the rack to arrange as per their activity.

Above: Simple arrangement of chairs arranged for discussion.

Above: Examples of furniture design possible on sites across the city.

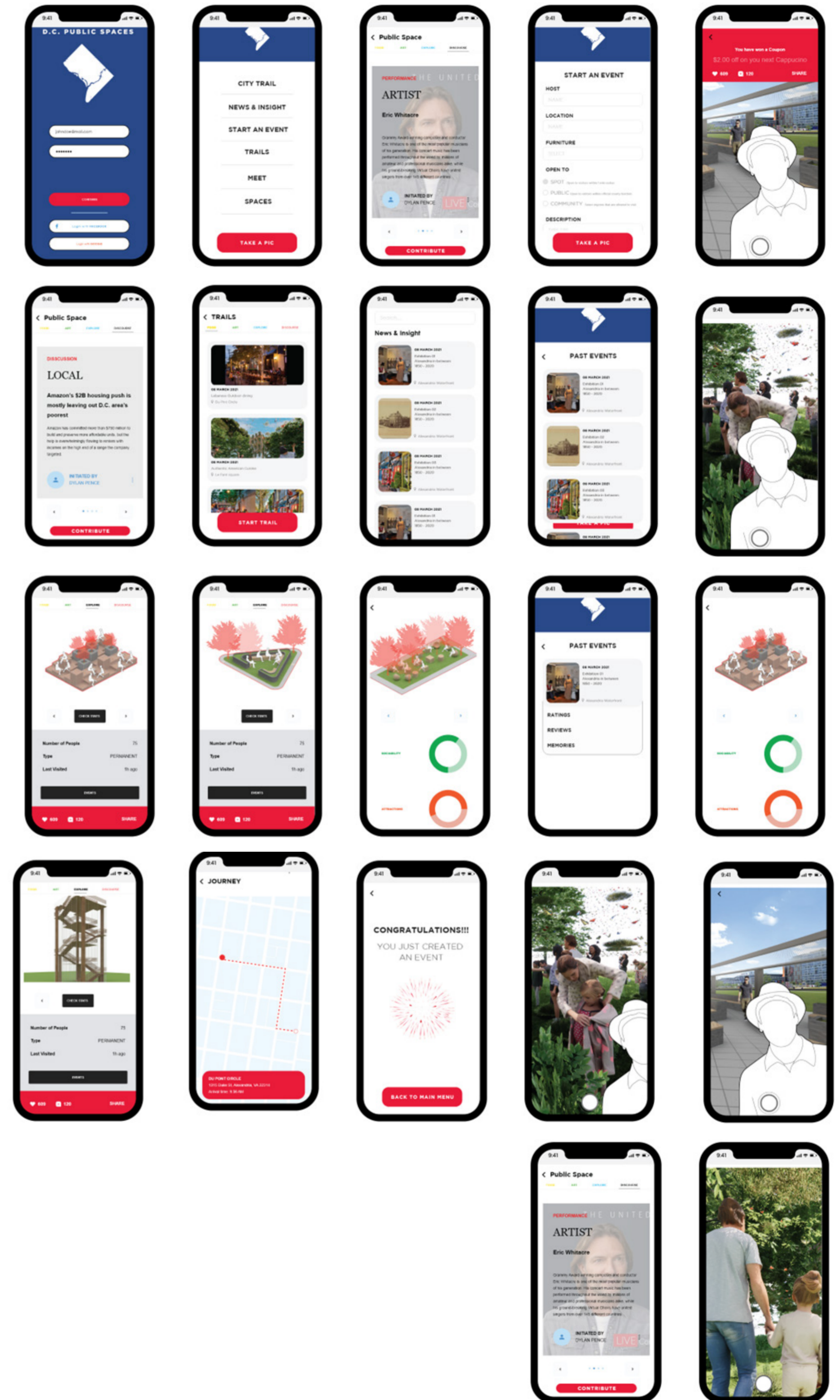
THE CYBER BASED ENVIRONMENT

The Cyber based design is in the form of an application. The application can be downloaded on the iOS and Android platform and is owned by a private company. The company provides the application as a platform for the public discourse. The digital application does not control the curation of any event but rather just enables the user to reach out their target audience for the event.

The user can login into the application and set up an event, the organizer is the main curator of the event and feed the information of the event accordingly. The organizer also sets the location of the space. They can also leave images of how the place looks and feedback rating if it has been rated before.

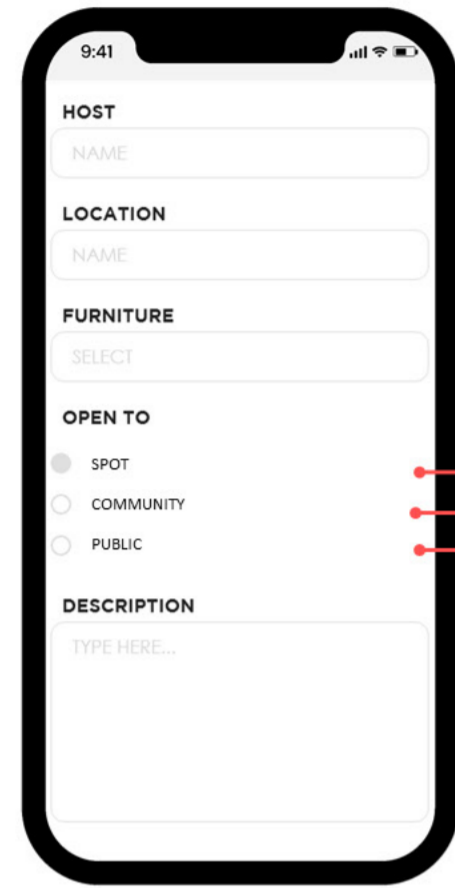
When a visitor is near an event, they get a notification of what is the event happening in that area. If interested further, the visitor can click on it and get a more descriptive view of the event. This is when the visitor scrolls through the review of the event or of the place. The review is a rating system based on the how comfortable, safe, and inclusive the event/space is. The notification radius can be set by the organizer for the kind of event that is to be conducted. This creates an equal platform for organizer to host an event a community or a city wide scale. The objective of this platform is to bring together people for face-to-face interactions but are stimulated to the place by the design of the space.

Just as grub hub or google reviews helps us get an understanding of what is review of a restaurant that we go to. This application gives an idea of what is kind of spaces the visitor wants to visit. The visitor who could have kids or elder family with them can make an educated guess to visit the space.





Above: Digital application bifurcated as per user module.



SPOT

When a user of the app is up to 1 -3 miles radius of the surrounding of the event/place. They get a notification about the event and is open to attend.

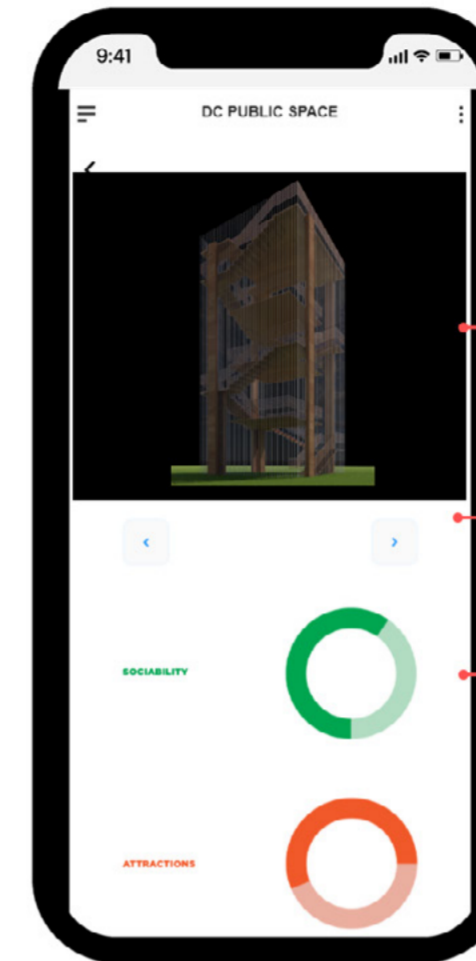
COMMUNITY

When a user of the app is a few blocks radius of the surrounding of the event/place. They get a notification about the event and is open to attend.

PUBLIC

When a user of the app is the city of the event/place. They get a notification about the event and is open to attend.

Above: Digital application event organizer page.



PUBLIC FURNITURE

The user can access how the furniture will look as the event organizer uploads the photos of the space.

SCROLL

The visitor can scroll through various views of the public space intending to visit.

RATING SYSTEM

The visitors can rate the public spaces that they have visited. The review system is activated once they are in the location if the event.

Above: Digital application public furniture information feedback.



PUBLIC FURNITURE

The user can access how the furniture will look as the event organizer uploads the photos of the space.

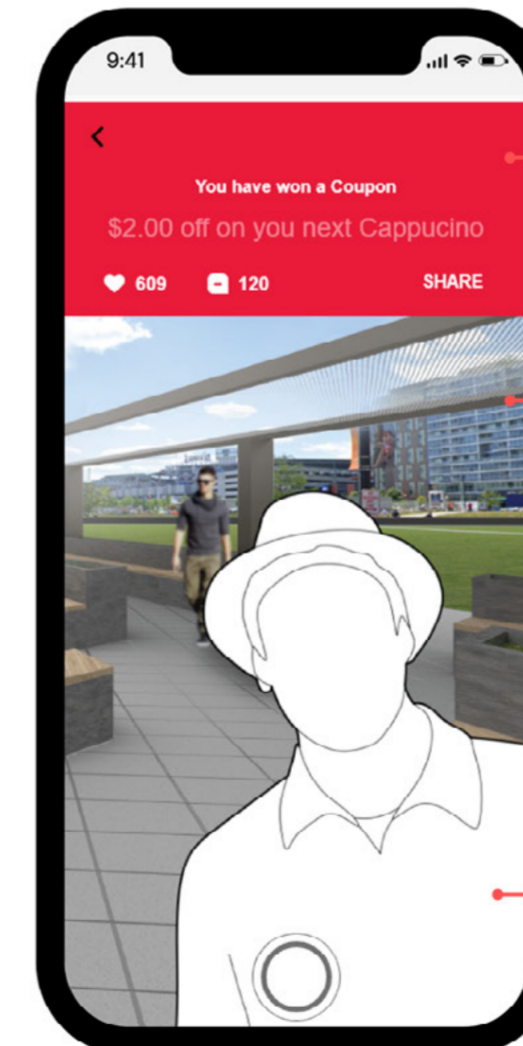
SCROLL

The visitor can scroll through various views of the public space intending to visit.

RATING SYSTEM

The visitors can rate the public spaces that they have visited. The review system is activated once they are in the location if the event.

Above: Digital application public furniture feedback page.



GIFT

The gift works as a way for communities and businesses to participate for the event.

SPOT

The background of the photo of the public space.

SEFLIE

The selfie once posted will make you eligible for the reward. The option will get activated once you are at the spot.

Above: Digital application public space selfie page.

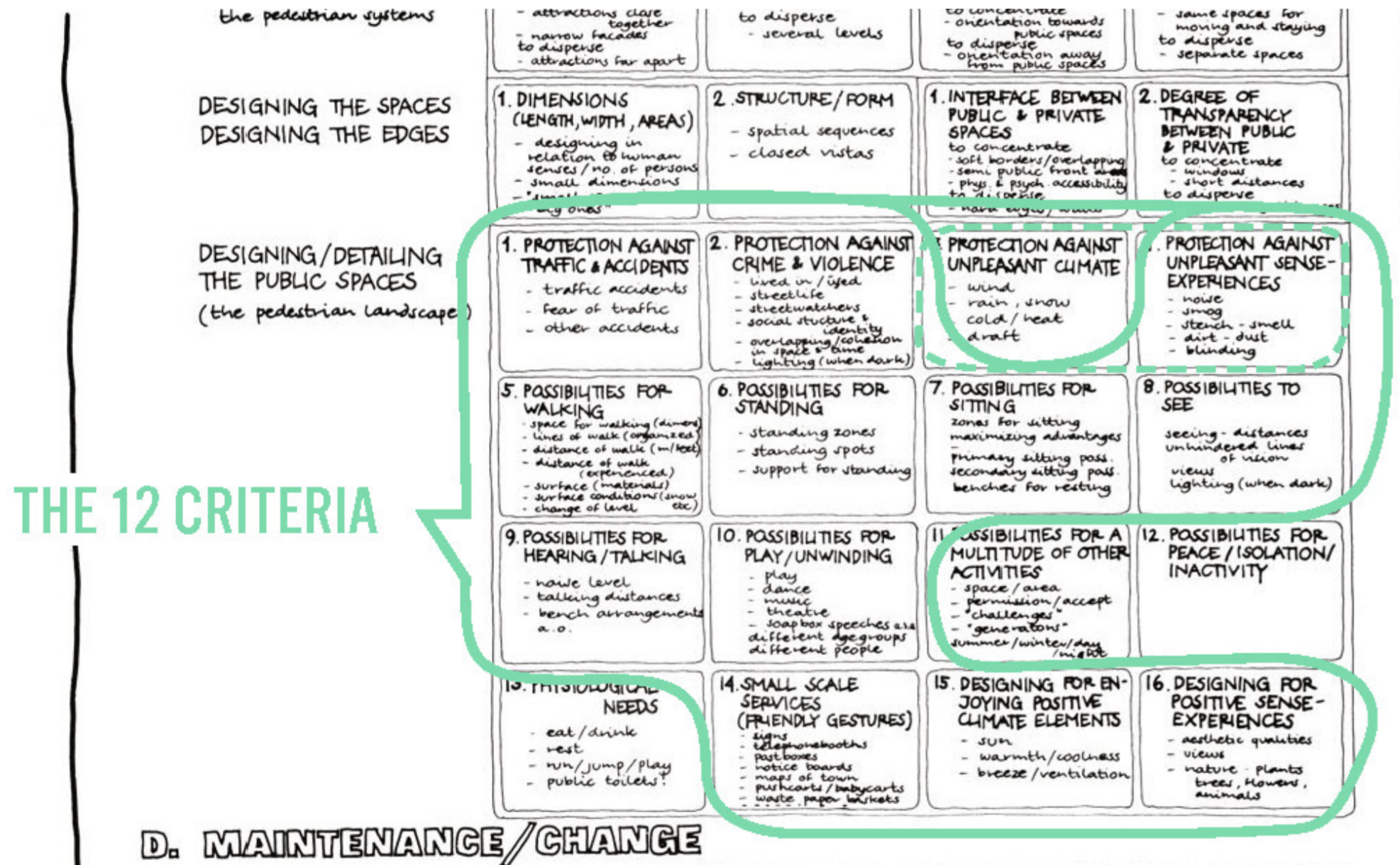


PUBLIC SPACE RATING SYSTEM

The feedback system of the public spaces/furniture is designed to give the user a holistic feedback of the space. The user of the space will rate the physicality of the space - Safety, location and materials and the sociality - curation of the event and type of visitors.

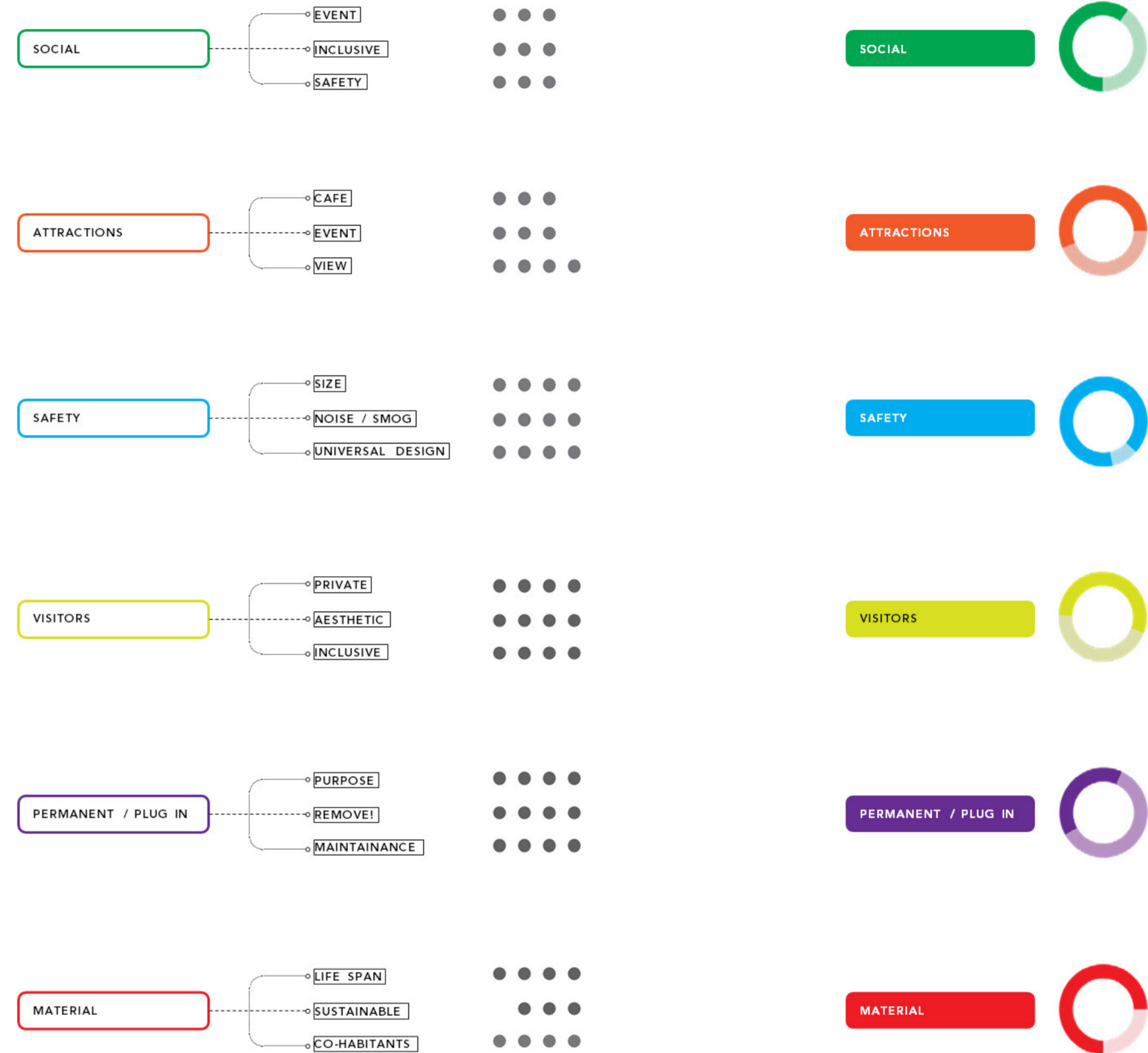
This allows the new user to decide of how to engage with the public furniture. This enables users that are parents to choose what kind of public space to go with their children.

Urban design has often been a top down approach or community engagement approach. This application enables real time feedback of our designs and help us become better designers. This will give the designers the necessary feedback while designing or intervening in local communities.



THE 12 CRITERIA

Above: Gehl, Jan, et al. "Public Life Studies in Practice." How to Study Public Life, Island Press, Washington, DC, 2013, p. 107. The six criteria of review were inspired by the 12 criteria of design considerations from Jan Gehl's book.



Above: Human figures surrounded by the three physical planes of designing a space

USER STUDY

USER PROFILE

As an example to understand how this application can work in real life, a user analysis is performed on Paul. Paul is a middle aged man with a family and works as a consultant.

Below the user profile you can see the time line of the week showing his excitement to take his children to rock creek nature park to educate them about the environment. But due to work delays he is unable to take them.

However, this concern is cleared when he gets a spot notification of an event in the kingsman islands. After checking the ratings and feedback on the event he decides to go to the event whit his children.



NAME Paul G
AGE 42
STATUS Married
CHILDREN 2
OCCUPATION Consultant

MONDAY



Organizing a visit to rock creek award to learn about the ecology & Nature.

WEDNESDAY



Trying to finish all the work as soon as possible as this could be a great trip!

FRIDAY



Last minute changes to be done and thus shouldnt make it by luch back home.

Ah ha! FRIDAY – evening



Can take them to the butterfly trial! They will love it with other kids!

Above: User data about Paul and timeline of his activities.

NOTIFICATION

Paul gets a notification about the event.

The spot notification is an alert system for the citizens that get an alert of the event that is happening around the 1 mile radius of the event. It appears as a drop notification on the users phone.



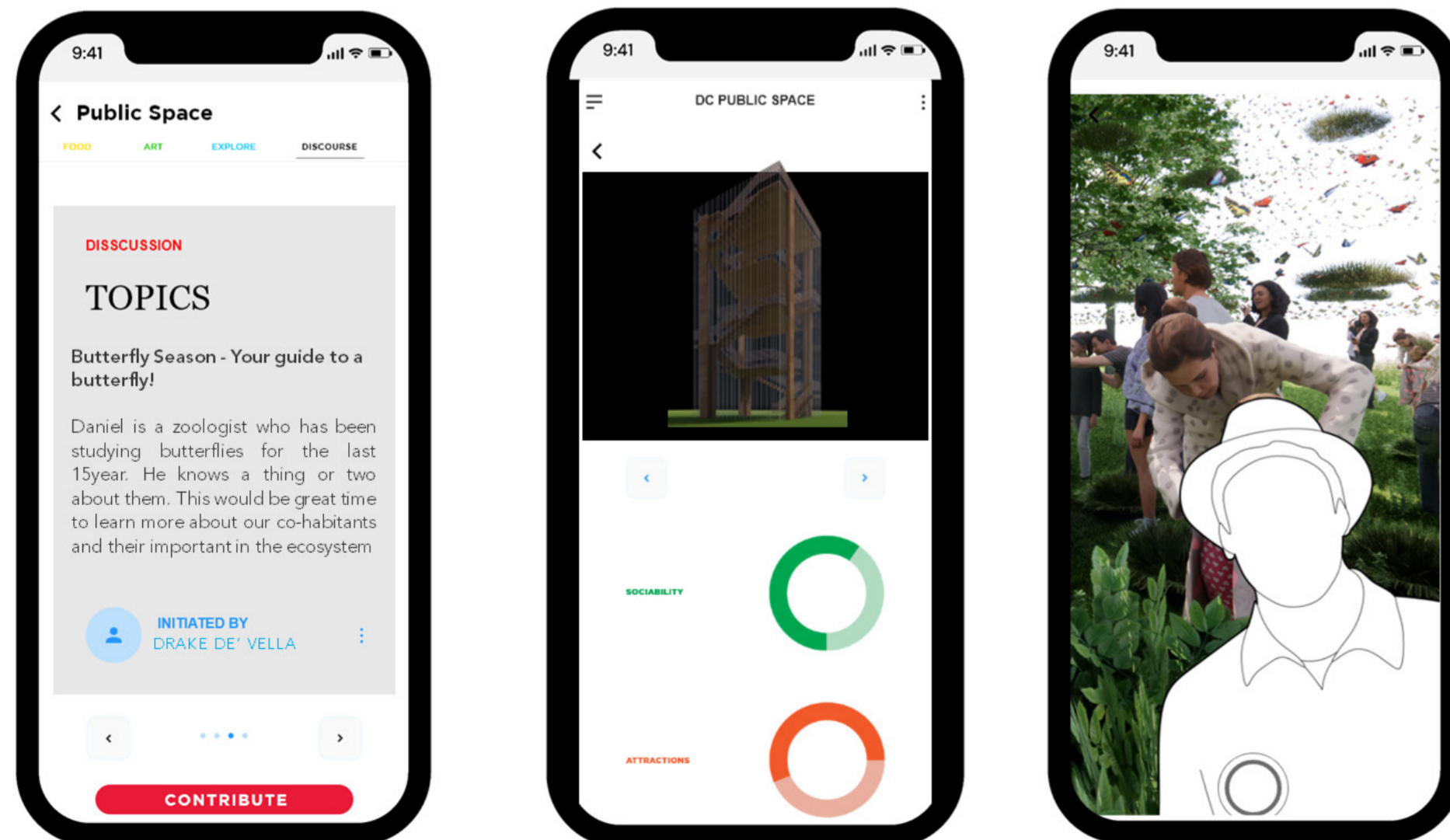
Above: Spot notification of the butterfly season.

EVENT DATA

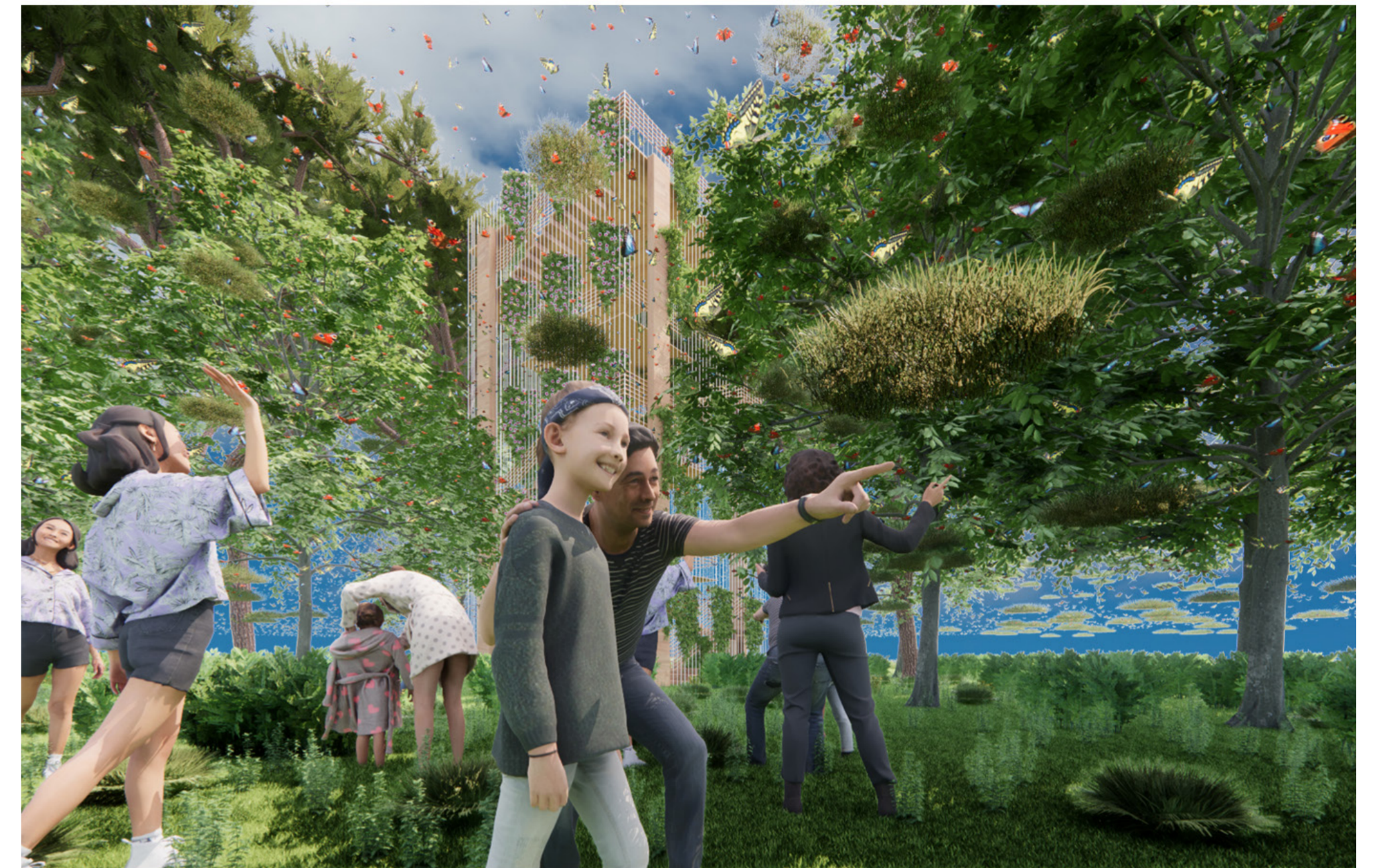
Paul reads more about the event. He sees it as an opportunity to still go to a nature park but get a chance to interact with a curator and have much more engaging in an exchange with an expert to educate his children about nature. He also goes through the reviews and ratings and is able to conclude it to be kids friendly event and space.



Above: Digital application live feedback with selfies of parents with their children.



Above: Digital application tabs showing the event and its feedback.



Above: View at the butterfly event.



Above: View at the butterfly event.



Above: View 02 at the butterfly event.

IMPLICAITONS OF THIS PROJECT

Urban design throughout history has been a top-down approach. Even in democratic countries the vision and idea are decided on the top level and the design is then implemented to the citizens. The citizens must confine within the design objective of the state. The urban designs evolution of to community engagement has opened doors to including the community in their say to how and what kind of a city they want to live in.

This design takes the next step toward democratizing urban design. The project enables the citizens to rate the urban furniture and how they can be used by urban designers to enable them to get live time feedback on their design. This feedback can help them to make a better and more inclusive design city and the movement will start at the smallest scale of urban design, the urban furniture.

CONCLUSION

FURTHER RESEARCH

The project just touches the tip of the iceberg in thinking about the future of the environment. The project looks at the impact of the future of the public space in the digital future. After this, I would like to recommend a few topics that can be used to explore in the future. The topics are categorized as 2 types. The first explore the physicality of the vibrant public space i.e. how are sustainable materials embodied into our urban spaces. The second is about the digital space i.e. its impact on the public space and build environment at large.

PHYSICAL

- 1. Materiality of furniture** - The temporary public space furniture designed is very specific to the site. The exploration of the materiality of this furniture is a thesis itself. The material is to be responding to the climate and the purpose it is built for. It will also be responding to an urban and a micro cultural context of the neighborhood. The exploration of sustainable materials that can be used to design these spaces can be a great research to shape cities.
- 2. Would it be possible to use city waste to shape the urban fabric of the city?** Is it possible that we can use data to understand how waste shapes urban fabric. In this manner the there is local economy created for urban waste and urban furniture.

DIGITAL

As much the impact of the digital space on public space is examined in this thesis, it is also important to examine what is shape of a "HOME" in the digital world. As our perception of space changes so does our bodies expectation from the space. And this crucial to understand the impact shape of our Intimate spaces in the digital world.

- 1. Shape in Urban Commons.** – The public space is just one urban common in the city. There are streets, cafes, museums, gardens, clubs, movie theatres etc. These spaces are already impacted with how we perceive them. Since the advent of Netflix, movie theatres have significantly lost business. And the shopping malls have lost it to Amazon. And so on. There are many such urban commons that are loosing their spatial value but there needs to be research on what would be the emergent spatial value in the urban fabric.
- 2. Energy – What is the cost of a digital future of the planet ?** Although the digital space does not require physical space, but making batteries and generating energy for running it consumes a lot the resources. The cost of Lithium and cobalt in making the batteries is having a similar impact on earth as those are also finite resources. We as designers need to think the implications of moving into a digital future that is still unsustainable for the earth.
- 3. Privacy – Data is the new oil – Mukesh Ambani.** Each digital device we use is retaining with itself data about us. Where we travel, eat, sleep, work, our heart rate, blood composition, body temperature etc. This data will be captured by government/institutions and the citizens will be at the mercy of them. Thus, it becomes even more important to protect democracies as data is the citizens into the wrong hands can become a case of dictatorship soon. Although the research of privacy is not in the domains of design but with socio-politics, the impact of it shapes the very intent if design. Thus, it's important to address the issue of data and privacy that will help build a better future.

WHY SHOULD DESIGNERS BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE THINKING OF FUTURE OF DIGITAL WORLD?

The thinking and development of digital futures has often been pioneered by engineers or people with an science background. The developments of engineering and technology is efficiency. However, in the pursuit of efficiency we end up stepping on the very values that keep the social fabric of the society together. These are the most connected but the loneliest times of history. This very paradoxical nature of our society shows the advantage and the curse of technology.

Technology works of efficiency; design aims for synthesis of form and reason. Both are important for innovation and society but if one is left behind, the society faces the consequences of the first. It is important designers start taking a leading role in thinking about the future and build research to show the future direction to technology.

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