DIGITAL PLACEMAKING
in urban spaces

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what is placemaking?

Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential to create public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. Digital placemaking uses smart city infrastructure and the growing number of personal cellular devices to optimize placemaking efforts. The nature of digital placemaking is more participatory—residents can give their opinion over the internet or research can be done via forums or comment sections to gain information about the beliefs and feelings of residents of a place.

the ways we already placemake

One way we already placemake through digital means is by building up, submitting, or participating in digital representations of our physical world. For example, residents of Capitol Hill let their opinons about projects be known on the Capitol Hill Blog and post pictures to the blog's Flickr account, building on residents' knowledge of the ways their neighborhood exists. Another way we do this is through review sites like Yelp. This can lead to an impact on the physical world if the place does not live up to community values.

the physical – digital feedback loop

Digital placemaking can create a feedback loop that has an effect on the physical world. One of the ways that the loop regenerates itself is with public authoring—the alteration of the physical environment to call attention to a greater movement or ideas that exist in the digital space. This feedback loop is only the first step—participation is the next. One of the questions I am researching is if design can have a role in helping residents take the digital placemaking they already do and become active participants in the neighborhood they live in.

DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES
neighbour's alley case study

A Capitol Hill Eco District project that is set to take place in Neighbour's Alley between Pike and Pine is trying to get residents to participate in the design process through both physical and digital means. The physical includes meetups and activities in the alley and the digital usually means online surveys. Could there be a better way to get people to participate through the digital means and could that possibly lead to more physical participation in this project?

DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES
digital placemaking can create intricacy

Urban spaces require intricacy in space and use. The digital infrastructure of neighborhoods can provide for more of this intricacy in physical spaces. There is also opportunity for diverse uses that can create value for the space or have value communicated for city-making purposes.

DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES
digital placemaking can create a platform for discourse

Location-based information about community debates or thoughts surrounding new additions to the neighborhood is a powerful way to inform. Digital placemaking can create the agency that residents need to engage more in the way their city grows.

Sources: "The Death and Life of Great American Cities," Jane Jacobs, 1961. "Designing Cities for Pleasurable Cities," Anders Schapf, 2015. "Urban Interaction Design: Towards City Making," Martin Brynskov, 2014. "Urban Probes: Encountering Our Emerging Urban Atmospheres," Eric Paulos & Tom Anderson, 2004. "Tangible Possibilities: Encountering Interactions in Public Space," Michael Smyth & Ingi Helgason, 2013. "Making Cities Smarter through Placemaking and Urban Interventions," Martin Tomitsch, 2016. "Urban Tapestries: Wireless Networking, Public Authoring and Social Knowledge," G. Lane, 2003.