

"Addressing civic challenges with civic technology."

# New Urban Mechanics

"Sixteen years ago I was labeled the Urban Mechanic and described as a sort of one-man 'Mr. Fix-It' when it came to the basics that make our city work. The nickname was overstated then, but it's outdated now—we are all urban mechanics."

#### Mayor Thomas M. Menino

5<sup>th</sup> Inaugural Address January 4, 2010



#### New Urban Mechanics



#### New Urban Mechanics Strategy

The New Urban Mechanics strategy involves five components, enabling the Office to explore and build new ways to engage constituents in the design and delivery of services.

# 1. Source Ideas for Innovation The Office encourages and cultivates innovators inside and outside of government

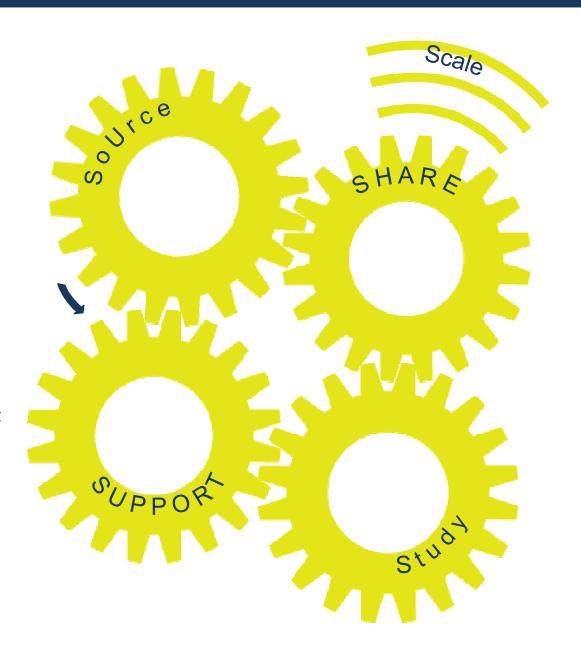
# 2. Support Pilot Projects The Office shapes, invests in, and guides pilot projects with these innovators

3. Study Their Impact
The Office analyzes the impact of the pilot projects

#### 4. Share The Results

The Office makes the evaluation available to other cities and the general public

5. Scale The Projects
If appropriate, the Office helps scale the projects within Boston and to other cities



#### Assessing the Office's Projects

Through this network of partnerships, the Office has been able to incubate a series of original pilots targeted to address a key city issue by engaging constituents and new parties in the process.

Clicks and Bricks	21st Century Learner	Participatory Urbanism
Citizens Connect General Release	Boston One Card Pilot	Welcome Home Challenge General Release
Mobile app providing easy channel to report issues to City	All-in-one student ID that makes whole city a campus for learning	Business recruitment challenge in City's Innovation District
Impact Metric: Source for 14% of all constituent requests to the City	Impact Metric: Time on task returned to school day; pilot school metrics analyzed summer '11	Impact Metric: Yielded \$50K in Venture Capital funding for a new Boston startup
Engagement Metric: Over 12,000 downloads by the public	Engagement Metric: Attendance increase at schools, libraries, & community centers; pilot school metrics analyzed summer '11	Engagement Metric: Over two dozen businesses competing
Mobile Forester General Release	Backpack Apps In Design	SoChange General Release
Mobile app for City arborists to expedite care of street trees	Suite of web & mobile apps connecting parents, teachers, & youth	Crowd-sourcing platform that builds momentum for buying local
Impact Metric: Arborists 17% more productive through first 2 months	Impact Metric: In design, but will likely include student attendance and achievement	Impact Metric: Platform actively used to shift spending to businesses that employ local youth
Engagement Metric: Other front line depts. now designing own apps	Engagement Metric: In design, but will likely be use metrics by parents, teachers & youth	Engagement Metric: Over 100 residents and 8 organizations or businesses involved
Street Bump Pilot	Technology for Autism Now In Design	Hub2 General Release
Mobile app that automatically detects potholes	Talent-based app designed to help autistic children learn	Community planning and design platform based in Second Life
Impact Metric: Early stage, but will be % of new potholes reported through Street Bump	Impact Metric: In design, but will likely focus on student achievement	Impact Metric: 60+ teens & young adults offer design suggestions
Engagement Metric: 400+ members of public working on enhancing the app	Engagement Metric: In design, but will likely be use metrics by parents & youth	Engagement Metric: 8 community workshops facilitated through Hub2









2009

Would residents use a smart phone to report issues to City Hall?









### 2010

What features would create a community of users around this app?





# Other report at 164-166 W 9th St, Boston

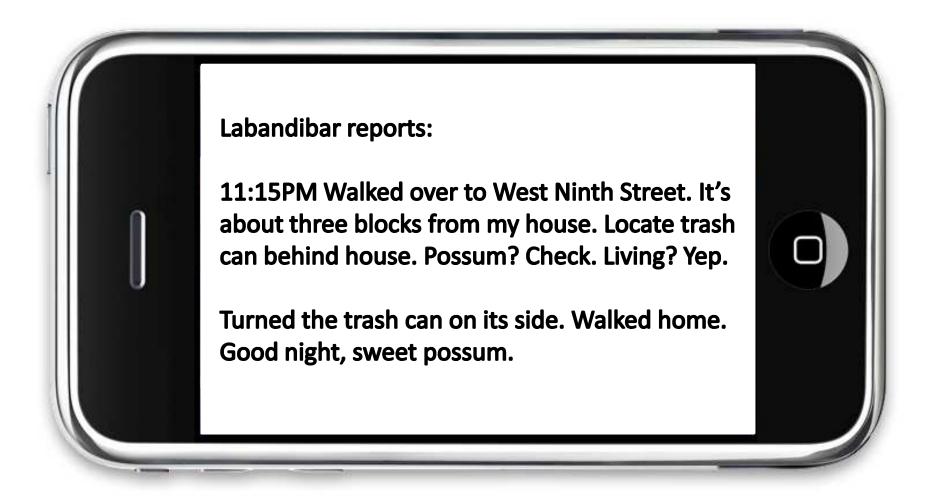
Closed about 1 month ago



Possum in my trash can. Can't tell if it's dead. Barrel in back of 168 west 9th. How do I get this removed?

ticket: 101000243603













2011

Will new channels reach new audiences?









#### Street Bump



Street Bump Test - Enneking Parkway, Hyde Park / West Roxbury March 6, 2011



# 2012

What else can a mobile phone tell us?





#### Community Plan It





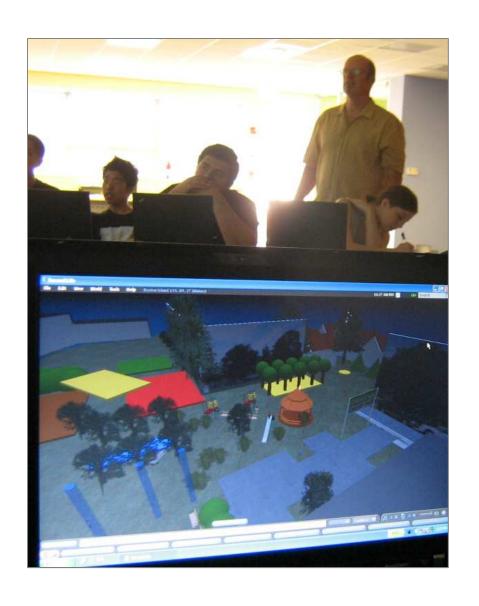


#### Video Games

Some 53% of American adults age 18 and older play video games,

and about one in five adults play everyday or almost everyday.

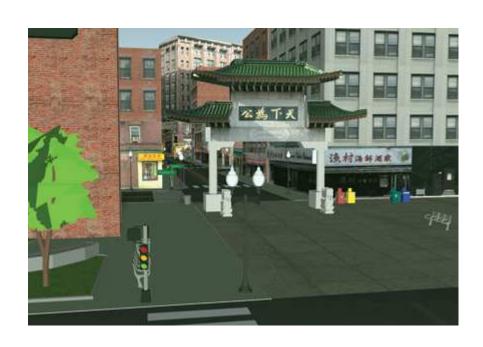




## 2008

Would residents
help design a real
world park
through a virtual
world game?





2010

How about a whole neighborhood using role playing?

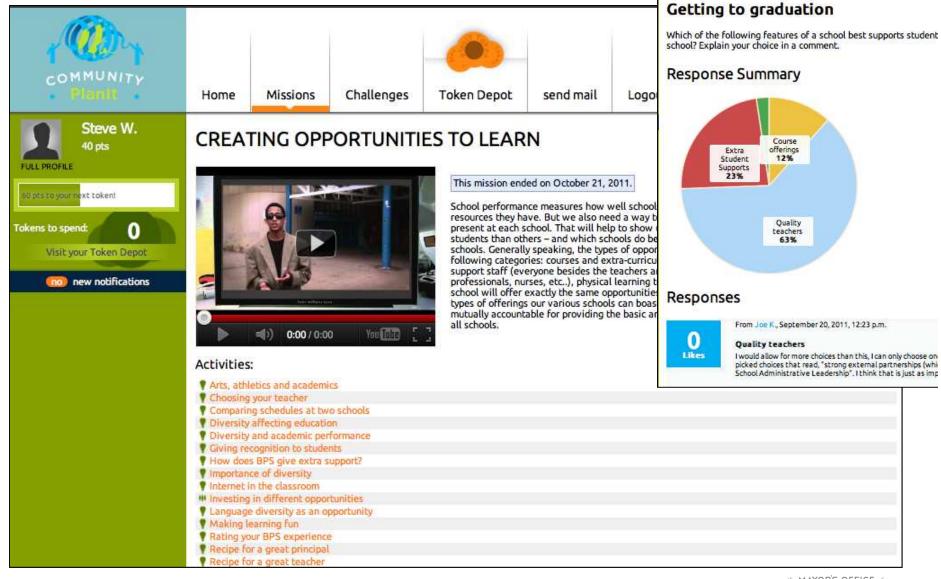




## 2011

Could you use a video game to shape a policy – rather than a place?









2012

How about Boston's biggest policy challenge?



#### The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics

#### **A Civic Innovation Incubator**

- What We Do Provide a front door for outside entrepreneurs
  - Serve as a risk manager for city workers
  - Offer risk capital for pilot projects

Where We Focus On projects that connect city residents and city workers

**How We Work** 

- 1. Run pilots through partnerships
- 2. Learn from those pilots
- 3. Scale & Share

