> Locative Urbanist Project

Planning Proposal Prepared For The City Of Melbourne 2011



Ludean Guilds of Urban Codemakers Proposal 2, January 2011

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# > Executive Summary

The Locative Urbanist Guild is committed to better understanding of city development through the use of technology, metrics, and encouraging inhabitant's behaviours through careful consideration of behaviour, play like mechanics, and improved understanding of their own movements and activities.

To this end, the Urbanists began a data gathering exercise resulting in a complex simulation of the City of Melbourne and its inhabitants. This simulation was used to model and predict how changes in the city's infrastructure would impact behaviour. These experiments grew beyond those initial terms of reference to include more actively influencing and directing movement and interaction with the city and its component parts. Our most recent experiments have been less successful, but have still given important information about the city, about its inhabitants, and about the essential need for both to coalesce around a single narrative and set of actions. These experiments inform our current thinking about the use of public / private space, the future shape of the city, the need for greater data gathering, simulation, and metric analysis, to fully reach the potential of the city. This document outlines our current thinking on these, and other, matters.



Ludean Guilds of Urban Codemakers



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Ludean Guilds of Urban Codemakers

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> 1.0 Purpose & Background		Our activities range from community consultation, advising councils on city planning policies, and research into the role of ubiquitous media in shaping urban space. We have developed a transdisciplinary approach to urban design called 'urban co- demaking'. This is an experimental approach that draws upon game design, computational semiotics and generative systems for urban planning. We are currently testing this strategy on the streets of Melbourne – a city known for its unique urban character resulting from a blend of planned and unplanned urban spaces. The City of Melbourne commissioned the three guilds to de- velop urban planning proposals for the Melbourne 2020 vision.	of urban codemaking and hosted by an individual guild or by the collective itself. These IDEOTAGs were a way for us to remap and reimagine the city and then invite others to partici- pate in the process. Players collected these IDEOTAGs to play the game. Halfway through the game, two of these players became operatives and began identifying and tagging sites on our behalf. The design of the IDEOTAGs responded to specific themes in the game. Each week explored a different aspect of the city and urban play. These themes are identified here with a full com- prehensive archive online at urbancodemakers.net							
		A new city based on data collected from you. The IDEOTAGs were not placed at random. They trace patterns and paths through the city. Player interaction with them collected data for the ecologist, the urbanist and the codemaker. Each of these + + three used that data to develop different proposals for the City + of Melbourne. Although the outcomes are different, the pro- posal of each guild is based on the same data generated by the + urban codemaking process. + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +	Although the process is the same across all of the guilds within the Urban Codemakers, the guild masters has used this system to undertake their fieldwork in different ways. They have used it for site analysis, data collection, gameplay, histori- cal research, navigation, and documentation. The IDEOTAGs + have been used as a language for exploring urban space - a + language that draws upon urban planning codes, hobo signs + and symbols, iconography of digital games and street art. This +							
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## > 2.0 Methodology

2.1 Process

The Locative Urbanists initially approached the planning proposal with the aim of using metrics and information gathered through observation and tracking to build simulations of the city's inhabitants. These simulations were planned to support improvements in existing developments, future planning, and empowering city inhabitants to better understand their own environment.

In the first instance, this metric gathering was done purely through observation and through the actions of our fieldwork operatives. As the project progressed, we found it necessary to direct the flows of inhabitants through the city in order to test certain hypotheses about movement and awareness. These experiments were conducted with a mix of publicity and secrecy, and the results added to our simulated model. The unexpected results of these initial experiments shifted our focus entirely towards directing & simulation, with our tracking and observational systems geared towards gathering the data of these new experiments.



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## > 2.0 Methodology

#### 2.2 Site Analysis

location of Queens St-Russell

Russell House is the oldest residence in Melbourne. For our purposes we will use it to establish a baseline from which all movement evolves. It is the constant in our equations. The building sits on the corner of La Trobe and King Street and is surrounded by the evolution of the city. It's temporal and spatial location makes it a unique starting point for sequence graphs.

The State Library of Victoria is another such hub, but its focus is different. It represents in our simulations of the city a hub of books and open access to technology, and its use as a point of convergence for the city's inhabitants make it a uniquely interesting space.

Docklands is the most recent development in Melbourne and presents unique opportunities to observe the stratification of inhabitants. For our purposes, it represents the least well understood area and represents the fuzzy zero in our equations. For the city itself, it showcases a range of experiments in sustainability, digital business, and citizen



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> 3.0 Design Principles The planning proposal is underwritten by the following design principles:



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# 4.0 Proposed Redevelopment



**Redevelopment of Melbourne CBD around** these core values of metric gathering, simulation, and data analysis, will substantially change the interaction of the city's inhabitants with their space across a wide range of metrics:

Where necessary we will encourage engagement with the cities existing parks, as well as with the creation of new ones. Parks provide ideal stopping points and gathering points suitable for data storage and localised phenomena in ways substantially different to the existing buildings

The Locative Urbanists have pioneered the use of technology in the urban space and have found the existing broadcast systems - projection screens, speakers, and connected information systems - provide key points of interest. Inaddition, improvements to GPS, locative tracking systems, and advanced behavioural maps, will let us see exactly how people use space, providing a carrot and stick approach to guiding people optimally through the city.

We acknowledge that the city cannot, and should not, remain static + and its inhabitants are the same. However, we would + encourage new social structures and systems to only be allowed to evolve based on the directions of our underlying simulation.

Across all of our experiments, we have discovered that play is a fundamental driving force in the development of space and our understanding of it. Play is how we explore the parameters of a space and develop our internalised knowledge of it. The recent ban on play is an attempt to restrict the development of our simulations and systems, and in turn fundamentally changes the ability of the city to understand itself.<sup>+</sup> Our use of play has been to extend this understanding of the space itself, and to encourage engagement of its inhabitants with unfamiliar routes and dead pathways. It is essential to our continued work that we are able to focus on play and its component outputs.

It is our aim with our recent work in the city - and with our future work - to continue to explore the intersection of technology, play, and space. These fundamental elements will be tracked, monitored, graded, simulated to find the optimal strategy for future city development. We believe that through this, we can create something completely uniquein terms of how people interact with the city and how it considers and contemplates itself.



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rategy Simulation

# > 5.0 Planning Provisions

The Locative Urbanists are committed to the development of the city, its understanding, and the engagement of its inhabitants through the use of technology, metrics, and simulation.

Development of better tracking systems through locative games and play will give us increasingly improving information about inhabitant's movements and social behaviours. We are already seeing this with the tag gathering, but the Locative Urbanists will extend this current game across the whole city - bringing a wider audience into play.

Simulation and testing of how people interact with urbanised and parkland space will enable us to optimise the layout of the city, changing and encouraging behaviours beneficial to both the individual, the collective, and the city itself. In addition, we will look at the intersection of such spaces and find ways to better manage the transition such as increased trees, grass, and decorative plants.+

We will also look at the intersection between public and private space. Clearer signposting between the two, including at boundary points, will create clear divisions - and we assume also create an increase in the amount of exploration as people attempt to find where one ends and the other begins, as well as hidden areas. We will provide software to enable the mapping and simulation of the public / private division.





City Tagging

City Analysis/Recon

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	Simulation Analysis of the Fractality of Cities by L. Benguigui, D. Czamanski; Geographical Analysis, Vol. 36, 2004
	Batty M, XieY, 1994, "From cells to cities" Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design 21 Supplement, s31 – s48
	Simulation of cities to be applied to data on ancient Mesopotamia - http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/021024/
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