

Quaker Valley Council of Governments

Executive Summary

Community Partner

Susan Hockenberry

Student Consulting Team

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Brandon Hong

Background

The Quaker Valley Council of Governments (QVCOG) is a group that represents 14 municipalities along the Ohio River, serving approximately 31,000 residents. COGs function as representation for small communities in higher levels of government, and also provide shared services and decision making.

The Executive Director and representative, Susan Hockenberry, tells us that the organization wants to build trust by providing value in existing services as well as expanding QVCOG's capabilities through technology. She is constantly looking to improve the COG's ability to serve its residents, and feels the COG has performed its function when residents feel empowered and believe that they are gaining value from the COG's resources.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

The problem we aimed to solve involved human interaction at its core. There was a lack of user interaction when providing feedback about the Rt. 65 Corridor, as well as a way to digest this data. Susan is focused on how Route 65 currently operates, and what problems people experience with it. Route 65 runs through every municipality in the COG, and is a central asset that all of the residents share. They should be able to express their opinions about both the highway and the corridor easily.

Project Vision

We wanted to empower QVCOG by working alongside them to create a technological solution that gives a voice to their residents, instill trust among municipality members, and foster data-driven decision making within the government. Our solution enables users to submit location-based feedback, and will accomplish the aforementioned three things, and more.

Project Outcomes

Our project enables QVCOG to collect location aware feedback from COG residents. Compared to a more technologically primitive method (such as a web form), we provide a more interactive user experience which not only allows QVCOG to gain insight about location, but also is rewarding for users because they can view other feedback pins in their region.

We built the application using ArcGIS (a tool that QVCOG is familiar with) and wrote detailed documentation in order to facilitate maintainability and customizability for the lifespan of the app. We expect our app to ultimately provide value in helping QVCOG make better, data-driven decisions at a local government level, as well as formulate more convincing proposals for community initiatives to other levels of government.

Project Deliverables

Our deliverables include the following:

- Customized ArcGIS Web Application
- Customized ArcGIS Map
- Background and Logo Images
- User Manual
- Final Report

Recommendations

Most of our recommendations involve adding functionality that will make the app more sustainable, including adding email notifications for new feedback. Another recommendation is better data validation. Since the client's ArcGIS consultant is more experienced than we are, it is possible that he can make validations for zip codes and email addresses. Our final recommendation is automating actions such as deleting empty data points, since these points must be manually removed otherwise.

Student Consulting Team

Elliot Allard served as a project manager and a user experience researcher throughout the semester. A third-year double major in the Information Systems and Human-Computer Interaction, he will be interning as a product manager this summer in Phoenix, Arizona.

Roly Garcia served as client liaison, a developer, and a design coordinator during the semester. He is a third-year student majoring in Information Systems. He will be an amusement park ride operator at Cedar Point over the summer, aiming for a career in Themed Entertainment.

Brandon Hong led development and quality assurance efforts for Project Quake. He is graduating in May, and will be heading to California to pursue his interests within the tech space.