TO: TOWN COUNCIL

FROM: TOWN MANAGER

RE: MINDMIXER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DEMONSTRATION

ISSUE
A request has been made for MindMixer.com, a community engagement company based in Omaha, Nebraska, to make a brief presentation using WebEx regarding what they can offer Loomis to improve community engagement.

RECOMMENDATION
Discuss and give direction to staff.

CEQA
There are no CEQA issues at present.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no financial issues at present, however, should the Council wish to engage the services of MindMixer.com, the annual fee would be $5,000.00.

DISCUSSION
MindMixer.com is a company that specializes in improving community engagement through web and mobile applications. Two Council Members were present at a League of California Cities (LOCC) conference where MindMixer had a demonstration booth. Attached is information about the company and the services they can provide.

mindmixer

LET'S TALK COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

www.MindMixer.com

MindMixer is a community engagement company based in Omaha, Nebraska. We specialize in providing web and mobile applications for community engagement to government and not-for-profit organizations around the country.

Survival of the Brightest	More Efficient Idea Generation	The Mixing of Minds	Convenient Participation	Everyone's Voice is Heard

In fact, we are the only virtual town hall provider dedicated to working with government organizations in the United States. The founders of MindMixer have considerable expertise and more than 50 years of professional experience in the fields of urban planning, public participation, and interactive technologies, combining that knowledge into an easy-to-use community engagement platform. MindMixer was formed in 2010 to provide a more intuitive way for citizens to communicate with government through the web.

Our first, last, and only service is designing and implementing on-line and mobile tools for community engagement. More specifically, we have designed a proprietary web application for this purpose – allowing citizens to not only submit ideas, but assist with prioritization. Our on-line platform is accompanied by services that include account management, data analysis, and reporting. We have the capability, staffing capacity, and expertise to form a strong partnership with the client to deliver an on-line platform, coordinate the implementation of the tool, and provide both real-time and post-project data, metrics, and result analysis. MindMixer brings four undeniable advantages to this project:

- We have a 100% developed and implemented web application for community engagement, leading to huge savings in cost and time to market.

- We have deployed the application in more than 30 cities nationally in the last 6 months, including 6 of the 40 biggest cities in the United States, leading to an incredible level of understanding about how citizens engage through web-based mediums.

- The founders of MindMixer are experts in the fields of urban planning, public participation, and interactive technology. No other participation platform blends expertise in these fields into one easy-to-use and accessible engagement tool.

- We understand the value of utilizing and visualizing data in meaningful ways, largely because of our experience as urban planners. The client has access to real-time metrics and data infographics at any time through our visually-oriented data dashboard.

The MindMixer application has been deployed in more than 30 cities nationally in the last 6 months, and is set for launch in 20 additional cities in the next 90 days. Some of our current and upcoming clients include:

Tuscaloosa, Alabama	**Hattiesburg, Mississippi**	**Knoxville, Tennessee**
Flagstaff, Arizona	**Kansas City, Missouri**	**Columbia, Tennessee**
Fullerton, California	**Lee's Summit, Missouri**	**Denton, Texas**
Los Angeles, California	**Joplin, Missouri**	**El Paso, Texas**
Burbank, California	**Lincoln, Nebraska**	**Houston, Texas**
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	**Omaha, Nebraska**	**Federal Way, Washington**
Norwalk, Iowa	**Papillion, Nebraska**	**Representative Lee Terry (House of Representatives)**
Cherokee, Iowa	**Sarpy County, Nebraska**	
Wichita, Kansas	**Greensboro, North Carolina**	**Congress for New Urbanism (Professional Organization)**
Kansas City, Kansas	**Fargo, North Dakota**	
Springfield, Massachusetts	**Nashville, Tennessee**	**Alabama Commercial Real Estate Organization**

Engage Omaha

The City of Omaha and MindMixer partnered to provide citizens an online method to help prioritize the city budget. MindMixer provided the online collaboration platform, marketing outreach, account management and service, and a robust analysis of the feedback and participation. After receiving great qualitative and quantitative collaboration, The City signed a 2-year partnership with MindMixer to extend the conversation regarding current and top-of-mind topics for its citizens.

UNIQUE VISITS

26,291

CITIZEN-SUBMITTED IDEAS

557

DURATION
24 Months

CLIENT CONTACT INFORMATION
Nikola Jordan, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office
402.444.5921
nikola.jordan@ci.omaha.ne.us

The MindMixer site has been incredible for the City of Omaha and its citizens. In the first 24 hours of the site being live, we received more ideas than we had in the previous year of the Mayor's administration. Not only has the activity been fantastic, the quality of the ideas and feedback has been great. We definitely recommend MindMixer for any city looking at innovative tools for public participation and feedback.

Burbank Townhall 2035

The City of Burbank used MindMixer technology to receive ideas about a comprehensive plan. The second iteration allowed participants to read the draft plan and offer suggestions for improvement.

UNIQUE VISITS

8,274

CITIZEN-SUBMITTED IDEAS

215

DURATION
12 Months

CLIENT CONTACT INFORMATION
Tracy Steinkruger, Senior Planner, City of Burbank
818.238.5250
tsteinkruger@ci.burbank.ca.us

Several members of the community contacted me directly to tell me that the MindMixer experience made them feel like someone was actually listening during the engagement process. In a town where public engagement has been difficult in the past, MindMixer exceeded expectations and was a wonderful way to expand our engagement efforts.

L Plan 2040

The City of Lincoln partnered with MindMixer to manage and evaluate community participation during a comprehensive plan update.

DURATION
12 Months

CLIENT CONTACT INFORMATION
Sara Hartzell, Senior Planner, City of Lincoln
402.441.6371
shartzell@lincoln.ne.gov

The ideas that residents submitted were creative, insightful, and more extensive than we could have ever imagined. It was a perfect supplement to the extensive on-the-ground outreach process and reached a much wider range of people than we have in the past.

UNIQUE VISITS
10,553

CITIZEN-SUBMITTED IDEAS
100

Long Term Recovery

BNIM Architects, the lead consultant on a project for Nashville, Tennessee, commissioned MindMixer to manage and evaluate community participation.

DURATION
12 Months

CLIENT CONTACT INFORMATION
Stephen Hardy, Director of Design, BNIM Architects
816.718.4758
shardy@bnim.com

UNIQUE VISITS
9,704

CITIZEN-SUBMITTED IDEAS
165

Not only did MindMixer generate a substantial amount of online feedback, it actually increased the number of participants at the face-to-face community meetings. The site really helped to engage a much different demographic of people, both online and offline, than we have seen on other projects in the past. Most importantly, the team is incredibly easy to work with and makes the process of engagement enjoyable.

The Citizens of El Paso Get Engaged.

*From the October Edition of **Planning Magazine***

El Paso used a virtual town hall website — created by the Omaha company MindMixer — as part of its Plan El Paso comprehensive planning process. Looking at four small-area plans, including three sites for transit oriented development, the city and its consultant, Dover, Kohl & Partners, sought to create a citywide master plan for sustainable development.

Public outreach began six weeks before the June 2010 charrette. MindMixer and Dover Kohl promoted the website through fairly traditional means — a press release signed by a prominent official — and the University of Texas at El Paso's Communication Department also pushed the site address out to students via email.

As a result, the website attracted both high-quantity and high-quality participation: Thousands of participants offered great insight that otherwise would not have been possible.

During three two-week charrettes, the planning team talked to more than 1,200 studio visitors, meeting attendees, and hands-on participants. More than 35,000 people followed the project on its website or took part in online conversations and polling in the project's virtual town hall. Topics included transportation, public facilities, community health, sustainability, land use, economic development, housing, neighborhoods, and implementation.

One online participant complained that El Paso's new housing was "poorly designed" and asked the team to hire an architect to fix the problem. The team did just that. As a result, front porch homes with simple massing and context-sensitive local styles became a focus of subsequent workshops with local developers.

Discussions continued through the week-long charrette, where the public could access the MindMixer website, view the uploaded plans designed by the charrette team, and contribute their ideas and critiques in real time. Online discussion remained active for weeks after the charrette, allowing the team to glean information while generating subsequent reports and plans.

MindMixer's virtual town hall requires participants to sign in and provide their names and e-mail addresses. The lack of anonymity discourages negative, heated, and one-sided discussions. Ideas with only one supporting vote get ranked very low in the results of the virtual town hall's ongoing idea tally. Ideas with many "seconds" rise to the top of the list reviewed by the consultants, municipal staff, elected representatives, and general public review. The end result is a well-rounded conversation that represents many points of view.

Although El Paso's comprehensive plan will take some years to complete, the charrettes already have informed several ordinances that will improve the quality of the city's open spaces, street design, and neighborhood design. For example, the plan has included more than 22 square miles of illustrative plans showing areas targeted for form-based coding, new communities, infill sites, and new civic spaces. Several of these plans are currently under development.

"New development in El Paso is more likely to be safer, greener, denser, more diverse, more lively and — thanks in large part to MindMixer's virtual town hall — more informed by local ideas," said Jason King, AICP, project director for Dover, Kohl & Partners.

Read the full article: www.planning.org/planning/default.htm

Nick Bowden
Co-founder, CEO

nick@mindmixer.com
(402) 802-8374

After experiencing years of frustration with the public meeting process, Nick decided to do something about it. Nick led MindMixer from concept to reality and now serves as CEO. Nick's professional experience as an urban planner and meeting facilitator gives him unique perspective into the stakeholder input process. He will continue to guide the growth and development of MindMixer from that "cool idea" start-up to industry leader in web-based stakeholder collaboration.

Since MindMixer's inception, Nick has worked on projects across the country, learning valuable insights about public engagement along they way. In fact, simply providing useful tools for engagement may not lead to broader citizen involvement. In order to reach the greatest levels of engagement, citizens must be able to participate within the context of their lives.

Nick's motto, "there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing," explains his eternal optimism. He believes strongly that citizens want to be involved in meaningful participation efforts, but need to have simple and convenient opportunities to get involved. This belief serves as the foundation for everything MindMixer does.

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Urban Geography University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Master of Business Administration University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2011 (anticipated)

Professional Affiliations

American Planning Association
Urban Land Institute

Relevant Experience

- Engage Omaha *Omaha, NE*
- Burbank General Plan *Burbank, CA*
- Nashville Long-Term Recovery *Nashville, TN*
- Kansas City Sub-Area Plan *Kansas City, MO*
- Papillion Comprehenisve Plan *Papillion, NE*
- Go Fargo! *Fargo, ND*
- San Fernando Blvd. *Burbank, CA*
- Moore Parks and Recreation *Moore, OK*
- Lincoln Long Range Transportation Plan *Lincoln, NE*
- Environment Omaha *Omaha, NE*
- Pass the Potatoes *Omaha, NE*
- Lincoln Comprehensive Plan *Lincoln, NE*

Mike Snyder
Partnership Manager

msnyder@mindmixer.com
(402) 690-0727

Mike joined MindMixer in July of 2011 from the world of higher education. Previous experience in student recruiting, retention, and market branding has allowed for Mike to transition well and provide valuable insight regarding engaging populations and marketing projects.

Mike will serve as the partnership manager for this project. Mike will represent MindMixer as the point-of-contact for the client during the RFP process. Once the project goes from concept to reality, Mike will facilitate the introduction of the client and the planning team to Nathan as the project coordinator.

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Business Administration Hastings College

Relevant Experience

- Engage Omaha *Omaha, NE*
- Burbank General Plan *Burbank, CA*
- Foundation for Community *MindMixer National*
- Engage Barnstable *Town of Barnstable, MA*
- Lee Listens *Congressman Lee Terry*
- Fullerton CollegeTown *City of Fullerton, CA*
- Fullerton Homelessness Task Force *City of Fullerton, CA*
- Nebraska.gov *Nebraska Interactive*

Nathan Preheim
COO, Project Coordinator

nathan@mindmixer.com
(402) 595-0055

Nathan brings more than 15 years of experience in technology, urban planning, and web-based engagement efforts. He has an extensive background in using technology to help facilitate community engagement.

Nathan will serve as the project coordinator. As project coordinator, Nathan will manage the internal design, development, and marketing teams to ensure the highest level of service and effectiveness on the project.

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology Creighton University
Bachelor of Science, Management of Information Systems University of Nebraska at Omaha
Masters in Community and Regional Planning University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Relevant Experience

- Engage Omaha *Omaha, NE*
- Burbank General Plan *Burbank, CA*
- Nashville Long-Term Recovery *Nashville, TN*
- Kansas City Sub-Area Plan *Kansas City, MO*
- Papillion Comprehenisve Plan *Papillion, NE*
- Go Fargo! *Fargo, ND*
- San Fernando Blvd. *Burbank, CA*
- Moore Parks and Recreation *Moore, OK*
- Lincoln Long Range Transportation Plan *Lincoln, NE*
- Environment Omaha *Omaha, NE*
- Pass the Potatoes *Omaha, NE*
- Lincoln Comprehensive Plan *Lincoln, NE*

LET'S TALK COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The client seeks to effectively reach its citizens through a strategic community engagement effort. The foundation of an effective web-based engagement effort is the ability to situate information within the context of a participant's life. People enjoy access to an enormous amount of information, furthering their need to filter, aggregate, and make sense of it all. Our team's understanding of marketing and outreach tells us that simplifying products and messages, uncluttering communications, and condensing information into "snack-size" bites makes everything we do more memorable and more effective.

Our engagement approach is comprised of two key elements; authenticity and data.

Authentic content that educates and excites participants is the real currency of an outreach program. Authentic engagement, the genuine enactment of a community engagement process, produces shared knowledge about people's aspirations and common purpose. Through authentic engagement, the community and participants can be strengthened – even built from the ground-up. Most importantly, authentic engagement leads to new relationships, new shared norms and values, and an evolving social network around a common cause.

Data is what allows for analysis and true measurements of effectiveness. Not only does the data inform the planning process, it actually drives the continued evolvement of the marketing and outreach efforts. The data produced during the project is a constant benchmark of success. The client will have real-time, all-the-time, access to MindMixer's proprietary data dashboard. In addition, we thrive on project transparency and continual evolvement. Each week, the client and its planning team will be able to review the prior week's participation data. Together, authentic content and data create a beautiful, yet measurable, experience for both the client.

Site accessibility and understanding is achieved through a combination of high-touch and high-tech efforts. Specifically, MindMixer prides itself on the fact that our application supports more than 50 languages with real-time translation, integrates with SMS and voice-call participation, works well and looks great on mobile devices, and scores highly among test groups with low computer literacy skills.

Our experience and expertise as urban planners, public facilitation practitioners, and technologists has uniquely shaped how we approach community engagement projects.

Given time lengths are approximate. MindMixer is able to shorten the timeframe to produce a live site if the client has content readily available. Each of our projects goes through a customized, tested, and proven 5-phase process.

Phase 1: Initiation Phase (1 Week)
Phase 2: Discovery Phase (1 Week)
Phase 3: Design Phase (1 Week)
Phase 4: Construction Phase (1 Week)
Phase 5: Outreach Phase (Ongoing)
Phase 6: Data Analysis and Reporting Phase (2 Weeks)

Phase 1:
Initiation Phase

(1 Week)

The Initiation Phase is the first step to a successful project. This phase focuses on establishing common goals between the client, its planning team, and MindMixer. Together, we define what a successful project looks like at completion and craft a plan accordingly to achieve those goals. Additionally, this phase includes the following key milestones:

- Invitation and orientation of project management and collaboration tools
- "Welcome to MindMixer" training session for staff and key stakeholders
- Complete project communication schedule

Phase 2:
Discovery Phase

(1 Week)

The Discovery Phase is all about establishing expectations for the partnership between the client, its planning team, and MindMixer. This phase incorporates product customization and identification of key stakeholders. Key milestones within the Discovery Phase include:

- Finalize site design checklist and special client customizations
- Identify key project stakeholder

Phase 3:
Design Phase

(1 Week)

This phase incorporates site design and the project brand and messaging. This phase is hugely important as it sets the tone for project messaging, a key indicator in project success. This phase includes the following key milestones:

- Design key site elements including color themes and interface visuals

Phase 4:
Construction Phase

(1 Week)

The Construction Phase is programmers' heaven. This incorporates the nuts-and-bolts of site creation, analytic integration, integration of chosen game mechanics, and any additional technical details. This phase includes the following key milestones:

- Final site creation and client review

Phase 5:
Outreach Phase

(Ongoing)

The Outreach Phase is the "doing" phase of the marketing and outreach plan. This includes implementation of all site marketing elements including traditional media, social media, and on-the-ground efforts. Prior establishment of the marketing responsibility matrix allows for a true partnership between the client and MindMixer, leading to greater accountability, constant communication, and measureable efforts. This phase includes the following key milestones:

- Mayor's press event and press conference
- Distribution of traditional media materials and communications
- Social media marketing official launch and messaging
- Distribution of marketing collateral like posters, fliers, newsletters, etc…
- Ongoing, measurable, outreach efforts as the project evolves

Phase 6:
Data Analysis and Reporting Phase

(2 Weeks)

We must admit, we are planners and market researchers at heart! We love measuring, reporting, and visualizing data in usable and meaningful ways. We feel strongly that this phase is the difference between a good project and a great project. In addition to providing real-time, all-the-time access to the data dashboard, at the conclusion of each project a data-driven report is generated that measures or accomplishes the following items:

- Usage levels broken down by age, location, and gender
- Compare MindMixer usage levels to traditional meeting attendance and other engagement platforms
- Analyze depth of participant engagement, return percentages, and adoption rates among different targets
- Measure the quality of project ideas and solutions, based upon the ability to implement
- Create visual representation of data, including maps and infographics

MindMixer has developed and refined this proven methodology for implementing a successful on-line engagement project. The combination of authentic content and data-driven marketing and analysis offer the client a dynamic and flexible opportunity to take on-line engagement efforts to the next level.

MindMixer provides various assessments of platform results. At the conclusion of all MindMixer projects, clients are provided with project documentation detailing both site activity and content as well as comparative results to other outreach efforts. In order to achieve the highest levels of data analysis and assessment, a strong partnership with the client is achieved. The most effective data analysis requires the client to provide available metrics related to other ongoing or past engagement efforts. MindMixer can and will provide incredible insight and analysis related to data gathered through the MindMixer site, but requires assistance from the client to make accurate and thorough comparative assessments.

Data Summary and Analysis
This portion of the assessment report includes all site activity and content, an analysis of the quality of content (as compared to other outreach efforts), and an analysis of the level of participation among project participants. In addition to the end of project report, clients can access and generate this report at any time during the project from the Data Dashboard.

Comparative Data Analysis
MindMixer prides itself on being a service designed to compliment and integrate with other outreach efforts. Comparative data analysis takes into account the level of activity, depth of engagement, breadth of engagement, and quality of content from the on-line tool in comparison to what may have been achieved through traditional outreach efforts. This comparative analysis also takes into account outside metrics including attendance at traditional public meetings, quality of content submitted through alternative outreach efforts, and the level of engagement among similar participants on different platforms.

In addition to providing real-time, all-the-time access to the data dashboard, at the conclusion of each project these reports include the following items:

- Level of utilization broken down by age demographics, geographic location, and gender
- Level of utilization as a comparable to traditional meeting attendance and other engagement platforms
- Depth of engagement among participants, percentage of returns, and adoption rates among targeted stakeholders
- Measurement of the quality of user-generated content, as dictated by the ability to implement project ideas and solutions shared through the platform
- Visual representation of data in the form of maps and infographics

Ideas Submitted Infographic

MindMixer will provide its proprietary web application for this planning effort. The application combines a simple, easy-to-use interface with a robust, visually oriented, and real-time back-end data dashboard.

The MindMixer interface can be specifically designed to solicit ideas about a cohesive vision, guiding principles, and implementation strategies relevant to the regional sustainability planning effort. The MindMixer application is never 100% finished as we continue to add both interface and feature improvements every 30 days that are automatically available to all clients and users. However, the application is complete and ready for market launch today. Because the application is built and has been tested and refined in more than 30 cities around the country, the speed to market and cost effectiveness is unparalleled.

Easy-to-use Interface

Our easy-to-use interface creates an enjoyable user experience making community engagement fun, easy and accessible.

With Google® Translate, MindMixer supports over 50 languages while the Project Details provides a user with more information, the ideas implemented and links to outside sites.

Establish the important Topics to help guide the Ideas on the site. Each Topic can be used to get new **Ideas**, **Vote** on existing ones or **Prioritize** pre-determined ideas in need of **Ranking**.

Rewards + Comments Feed

MindMixer offers an optional rewards system to create additional incentives for participants. Successful integration of game mechanics – point accumulation, reward redemption, and role-playing – helps drive deeper engagement among participants. The fastest way for users to earn points is to submit quality ideas that gain a lot of support, rather than offering short comments or voting. Responsibility for providing and distributing rewards lies with the client and associated costs are not included in the proposed budget.

Create a variety of Rewards available
to users on the Leaderboard.

REWARDS *On the Leaderboard?*
Win Rewards with Fargo

We'd like to thank you for participating in Fargo's M
More points mean better chances at these Rev

Tour on the S.S. Ruby
Four adult tickets for a tour on the River Keepers S.S. Ruby.

Tickets to Fargo Theatre
Two adult movie tickets for the Fargo Theatre.

Red Hawks Baseball Ticket
Two adult tickets for a FM Red Hawks Baseball game.
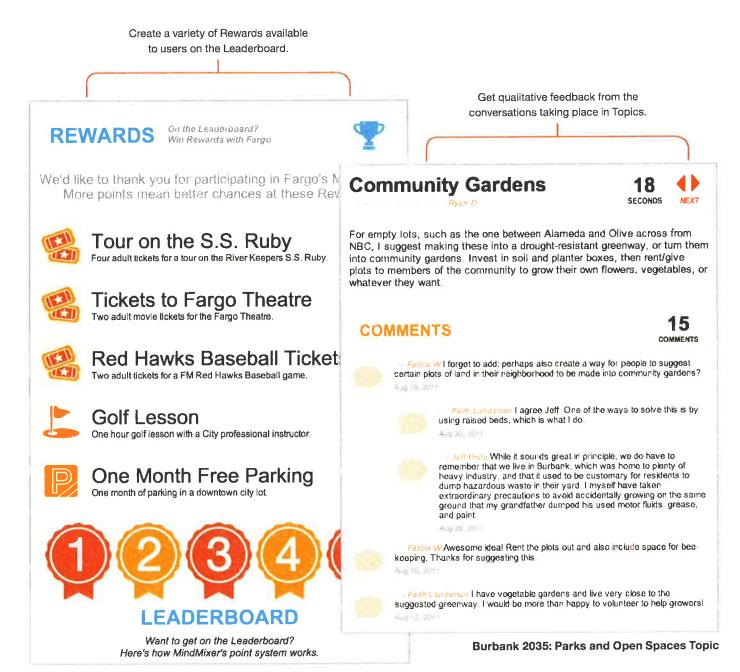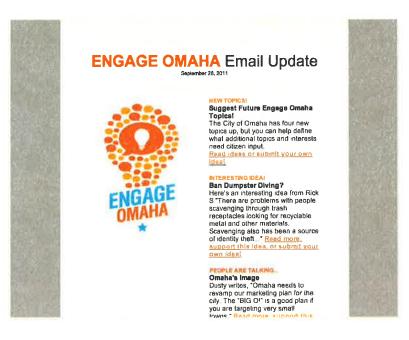
Golf Lesson
One hour golf lesson with a City professional instructor.

One Month Free Parking
One month of parking in a downtown city lot.

1 2 3 4

LEADERBOARD
Want to get on the Leaderboard?
Here's how MindMixer's point system works.

MindMixer Fargo: Project Rewards

Get qualitative feedback from the
conversations taking place in Topics.

Community Gardens
Ryan D.

18 SECONDS **NEXT**

For empty lots, such as the one between Alameda and Olive across from NBC, I suggest making these into a drought-resistant greenway, or turn them into community gardens. Invest in soil and planter boxes, then rent/give plots to members of the community to grow their own flowers, vegetables, or whatever they want.

COMMENTS

15 COMMENTS

Felicia W I forgot to add: perhaps also create a way for people to suggest certain plots of land in their neighborhood to be made into community gardens?
Aug 16, 2011

Faith Landsman I agree Jeff. One of the ways to solve this is by using raised beds, which is what I do.
Aug 30, 2011

Jeff Prutz While it sounds great in principle, we do have to remember that we live in Burbank, which was home to plenty of heavy industry, and that it used to be customary for residents to dump hazardous waste in their yard. I myself have taken extraordinary precautions to avoid accidentally growing on the same ground that my grandfather dumped his used motor fluids, grease, and paint.
Aug 28, 2011

Felicia W Awesome idea! Rent the plots out and also include space for bee-keeping. Thanks for suggesting this.
Aug 16, 2011

Faith Landsman I have vegetable gardens and live very close to the suggested greenway. I would be more than happy to volunteer to help growers!
Aug 12, 2011

Burbank 2035: Parks and Open Spaces Topic

Ideas + Voting + Email

Support great ideas by "Seconding."
Then share them with your friends.

The **Idea Feed** shows all the Ideas in any given
Topic and the supports and comments for each.

Email Distribution to engage target audiences
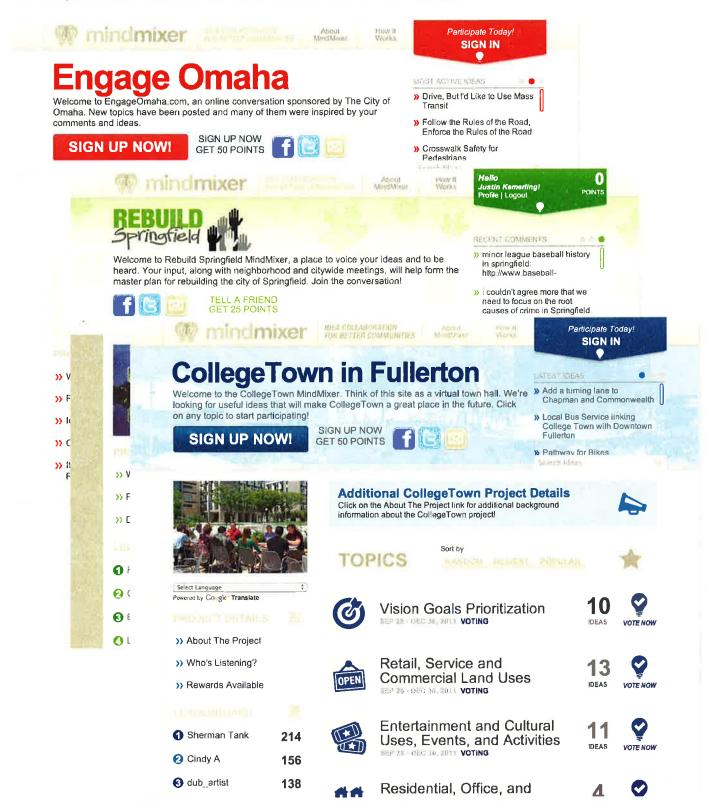and maintain current involvement

Open-Ended Feedback allows for qualitative
comments and Discussion around ideas, allowing
for constant Collaboration among participants

Custom Site

Customize your MindMixer to match the branding and/or colors of your city or project website.

Project Reporting

Get Project Reports that provide an in-depth look at who's participating on your MindMixer and what ideas are being talked about.

Get an overview of your participants and compilation of ideas and comments.