Charleston Parker
Traffic and Transportation Committee
City of Charleston

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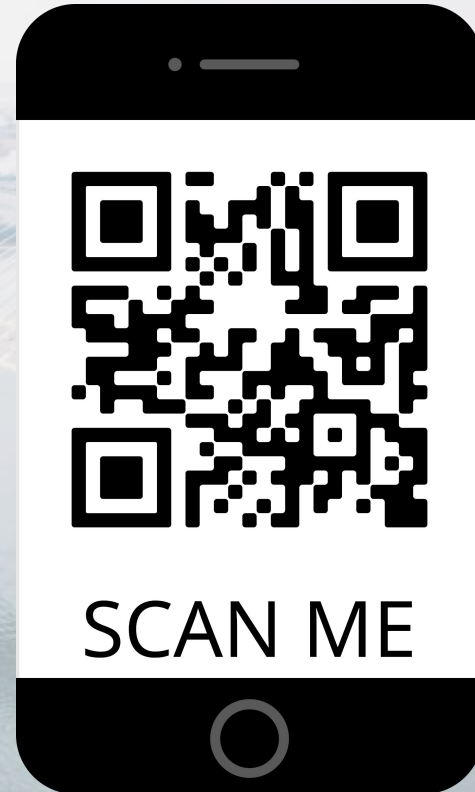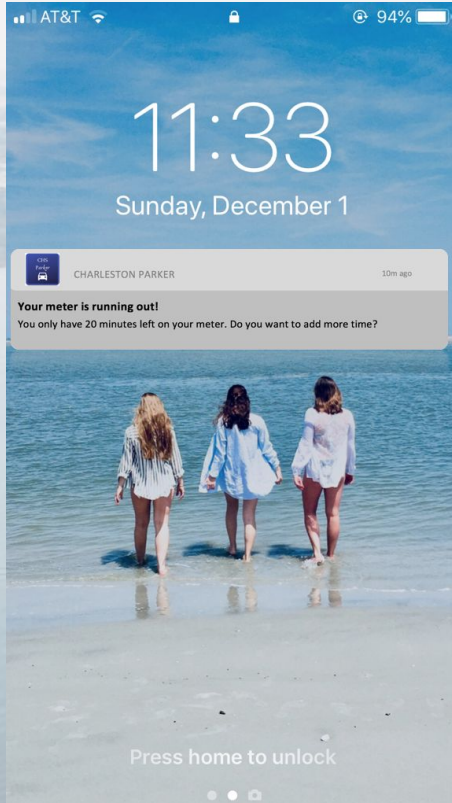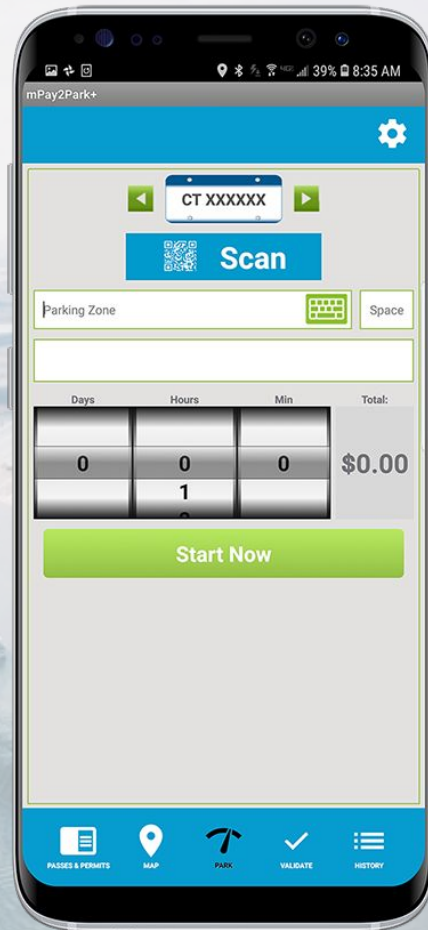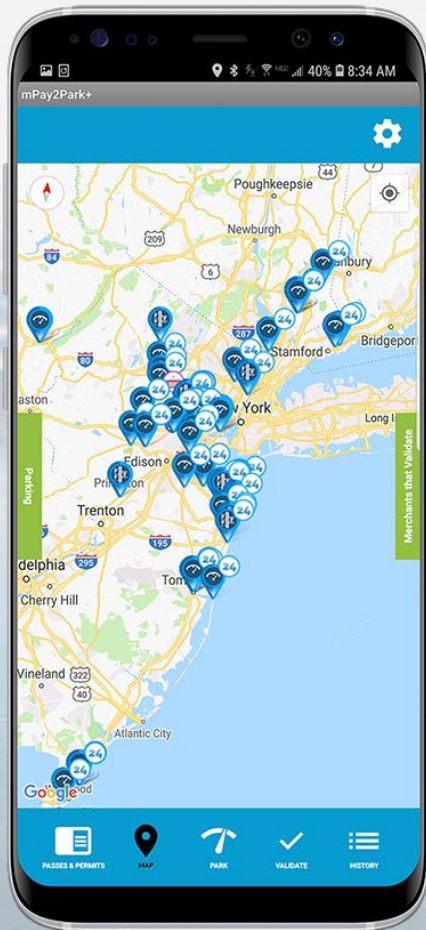
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Background

- Charleston population growth of 18.5% between 2010 and 2018, higher than the national average of 6%.
- 7.3 million visitors in 2018
- Peninsula is only 4.5 square miles
- 1,656 metered spots that take Visa, Mastercard, and SmartCards

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Charleston Parker

Vision

- To create an enjoyable and relaxing visit to Charleston from the moment you park your car

- To connect all of Charleston citizens

- To continue to be the number one destination city in America

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Objectives

- To have Charleston Parker available to the public by August of 2020

- Replace all 1,656 meters by August of 2020

- To increase revenue for the City

- Spread awareness to multiple audiences

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Strategy

- To define our multiple audiences and effectively communicate and market towards them
- Main Audiences
  - Charleston Locals
  - College Students
  - Tourists

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Tactics

Create specialized advertisements for each of our audiences

- Charleston Locals & College Students
    - Advertising through social media, email, and mail
    - Fliers placed throughout the city
    - Billboards placed in the Charleston Suburbs
    - Stickers with the QR codes placed on meters
- Tourists
    - Advertisements in the Charleston International Airport
    - Advertisements in Tourists Booklets

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Strengths

- Convenient for locals
- Reaches a large audience
- It's just adding something to the government, they already have pre-existing contacts and email lists, etc.
- Other cities have created similar programs so we can see where the new development has failed or succeeded

Weaknesses

- This will lead to less parking violations, which means a small loss in revenue
- New meters creates a large cost
- Maintaining the application. For example, what happens if the app crashes?
- More cars mean we may have to create more parking spaces

Opportunities

- Increase in revenue if tourists and people who live in the suburbs start driving downtown more
- Appeal to multiple audiences with the downtown parking problem
- Keeping up and adapting to a faster-paced environment makes Charleston look more attractive to tourists and those who are wanting to move here
- We can build on this technology and pair it with CARTA/DASH buses and their schedules

Threats

- Some people might see the extra cost as frivolous
- "Older generations" may not support the idea of the parking app, although they still can pay via cash or coin
- The app could get hacked and credit card information could get stolen
- Natural disasters could severely damage new high-tech parking meters

Key Messages

- An effective, efficient parking experience
- Have an enjoyable and relaxing visit to downtown Charleston from the moment you park your car
- Reach a diverse audience with various marketing tactics

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Audiences

- Charleston Locals
    - Suburbs and people from downtown
- Tourists
    - People flying in and driving in
- Individuals ages 16-75
    - People who have valid drivers licenses and those who are most likely to utilize apps to increase quality of life

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Desired Outcomes

1. Implement 800 meters by May 2020, with all 1,656 meters changed by August 2020 - latest October 2020.
2. Breakeven on profit by January 2021.
3. Double parking meter revenue for 2020. (2018 revenue was $1.45M)
4. Bring more people to the City of Charleston.
5. Engage influential Charleston officials like Mayor Tecklenburg and Mike Seekings.
6. Spread awareness through multiple media channels.

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Research & Measurement

- 2019 Charleston Comprehensive Parking Study
  - Mobility Demand vs. Capacity Improvements
  - Driving vs. Unreliable Public Transportation
  - Technology Improvements
- Relevance of 16-75 age group
- 6-month check-ins
  - Track metrics, measure results and growth
  - Learn about demographics to continue marketing
  - Focus groups and surveys

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Staffing Considerations

- Bring in an app developer to create the app
- Bring in a software developer to create the technology for the new meters
- Bring in an agency for 2-3 months to rollout app
- All other tasks can be completed internally in the Charleston City Government
  - Communications Department can handle PR
  - The Traffic and Transportation and Parking divisions can assist in changing out meters

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Budget

Expense	Description	Quantity	Cost	Cost for duration of project
Staffing				
Software developer	Start in February and end in August	1	$100/hr	$24,000
App developer	Needed for at least 5 weeks to create app	1	See below for breakdown	$17,225
Agency for rollout	On board for the first 2.5 months of the rollout	1	$3,000/mth	$7,500 for 2.5 months
			Subtotal:	$48,725
Marketing				
Email Marketing	Needed for July-September	3 months	$400/mth	$1,200
Airport Advertisement	Bag claim and banner displays	6 month trial period	$80/hr (creation per advertisement)	$3,200
Social Media Marketing	Market on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook	3 month campaign	$3,000/mth for Facebook, Instagram & Twitter	$12,000
Fliers on meters and mail sent to houses	Using FedEx		3,000 fliers to be mailed and put on meters	$1,740
Stickers	To put on meters with a QR code	3,000		$651
Billboards	One close to airport, one off exit towards downtown	2	$2,183 per billboard	$4,366
			Subtotal:	$23,157
Materials				
Parking meters	Meters will be replaced between March and August	1,656	$650 per meter	$1,076,400
			Subtotal:	$1,076,400
			Total:	$1,148,282

Budget

- Staffing: $48,725 total
- Marketing: $23,157 total
- Materials: $1,076,400 total

Total: $1,148,282

Where is the money coming from?

- In 2018, Charleston made around $26.36 million on parking
- This plan would use roughly 4% of the revenue from 2018

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