ZARAGOZA MILLA DIGITAL

The Zaragoza Digital Mile incorporates digital media into everyday aspects of the public realm to make places that respond to their users: accommodate multiple activities; and provide stories, information and services to the people of the city.

Introducing technology into the city raises some interesting questions: Can technology enhance public use and enjoyment? Can it make space more productive, or meaningful? What types of urban forms best accommodate digital media? Can it create a public realm that is more flexible and adaptable to different users, activities, or moods? How do you develop content for the media and who should manage it?

On the Digital Mile, both physical and digital elements work together to create a unified, imageable, and transformative place.

AMBIENT TECHNOLOGY

All of the spaces, parks and buildings on the Digital Mile include free, public wireless connectivity as well as open access to the digital systems and responsive media elements located along the Mile.

DIGITAL SYSTEMS

Digital systems are programmable according

to users' wishes and thus facilitate experiences on the Digital Mile. These are concentrated along the pedestrian path called the Paseo del Agua.

The WATER WALL is an interactive fountain where people can digitally control the streams of water. With a command – by jumping into the water or sending a message through an electronic device – the water can start and stop or change in pressure. This is a monumental urban element like a canal running through the city, but twisted into a vertical plane so that people can experience it from a distance as a landmark or interact with it directly.

The intelligent streetlight system creates a distinctive atmosphere along the Mile by changing color or intensity in response to the time of day, demands for use, or artistic desires. In tandem, digital street furniture – – like café tables, bus stops, and signage -- display information about such practical matters as menus, bus arrivals, or the location of available parking spaces.

These digital systems are intended to make moving through the Digital Mile a seamless, entertaining, and instinctive experience.

DIGITAL PLACES

Two event places, Portillo and Almozara, anchor the Digital Mile and feature responsive digital elements to support different activities and

enhance users' perceptions of the urban environment.

Affixed to the facades of buildings, URBAN PIXELS delineate the edges of the Zaragoza Digital Mile from the rest of the city. When viewed from the air or from the ground by pedestrians, drivers, and train passengers, this 'light' footprint intervention works synchronously or asynchronously to emphasize different moods or zones along the Digital Mile. Each pixel unit includes a solar charging unit and can be programmed wirelessly.

The MEMORY WALK walk makes visible the way people travel through the city by recording pedestrians' steps across a space. Every time a footstep falls on a digital paver, the paver emits an additional increment of light. As people cross the pavement, paths of light are illuminated where people tread the most; untread areas emit no light. Thus, people become aware of the traces their movements leave upon the surfaces of the Digital Mile.

DIGITAL AWNINGS are screens that can rotate in four directions: up, down, left, and right. The movement of the awnings is controlled by either pre-programming, a command by mobile phone, in response to people's physical movements, or in the service of a collective special event. This system enhances the experience of the Digital Mile by displaying abstract, impressionistic, provocative, personalized, or integrative content, including information and images related to Zaragoza's history or people's real-time activities in other areas of the Digital Mile.

A LAYERED CITYSCAPE

On the Digital Mile, buildings, landscape and media lose their traditional boundaries and meld into a layered cityscape of fine-grained places, visual images, and multiple shifting activities. The simple devices proposed for the Mile, when taken together and animated by the users themselves through open source software, take on an extraordinary organic quality, responding to light, people, and events with a subtlety and imagination t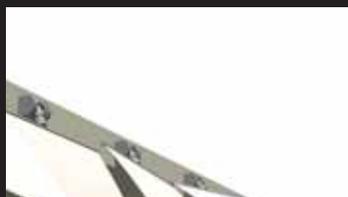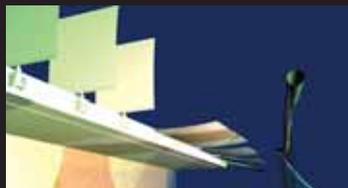hat produces a new kind of public realm.