Georgia Bullen. “Communicating through the Cloud: Civic involvement in planning via New Media & Technology.” Advisor: David King.

New media is the term that is used to refer to the media and technology, which is designed to be democratic and collaborative, enabling users to generate content and participate in conversations openly. This thesis investigates how new media is changing the way we interact with our urban environment, providing citizens new methods of interacting with governments and fellow citizens and even simply navigating the cityscape. Using a mixed methods approach, Gov 2.0 for cities, which is generally characterized by Open Data, Apps for Cities, and Web 2.0 initiatives are explored through inventories, case studies and interviews. The study reveals that the current initiatives are promising, but currently limited – not yet accessing the full capabilities and potential that the medium promotes nor permeating into participation in the urban planning process. The findings are relevant to governments exploring open data strategies and apps contest strategies, planners interested in using technology for participation, and technology firms interested in civic software and engagement.