

Connecting cities  
Building successes



PROYECTO COFINANCIADO  
POR LA UNIÓN EUROPEA  
FONDO EUROPEO DE  
DESARROLLO REGIONAL

PROJECT

PLACEMAKING FOUR CITIES  
(P4C)



## RESULTS REPORT

*Design thinking workshop for transforming the  
Boulevard Isabel La Católica and Menendez Pidal*



*5th May 2014*



Proentia

## PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP:

To find innovations to boost (transform) the Boulevard Isabel la Católica and Menéndez Pidal into an attractive and sustainable place which offers an added value for people wanting to work, live and rest there.

## WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

There were 7 participants in the workshop and they represented the followings associations:

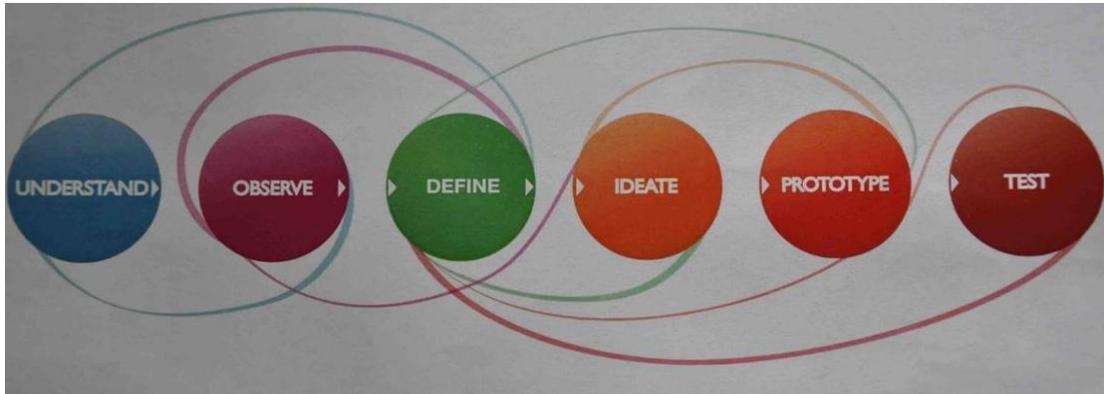
- Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Albacete
- Boulevard Business Association
- CEEI Albacete

## STEPS AND RESULTS

### PHASE 0. Introducing the technique of Design Thinking and the objectives of the workshop

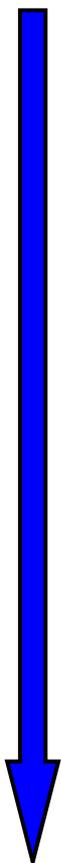
Setting out of the key features of Design Thinking, and the phases to work in the workshop.

These phases are the ones shown in the picture below.

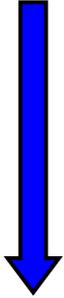


### PHASE 1. UNDERSTAND. Preparation of the Journey Map

*In the first activity we managed to develop a very comprehensive and detailed map showing the different stages that someone would follow since deciding to spend the time on the boulevard until effectively going and enjoying there.*



- *Someone decides to go to the Boulevard because he knows it, however there is little information on business and leisure activities available there.*
- *There is a parking area which is difficult to use..*
- *It is generally perceived that it is a good area and neighbourhood.*
- *It is difficult to cross the Boulevard because of the amount of traffic (pedestrians have expressed their despair because of the time they have to wait at traffic lights.)*
- *People enjoy walking on the Boulevard because it is a nice place, although they have mentioned the place needs a little cleaning.*



- It is an area with good shops and places to drink, nevertheless, young people only spend time on it to go shopping, unfortunately they do not usually go to the restaurants and walk on the boulevard.

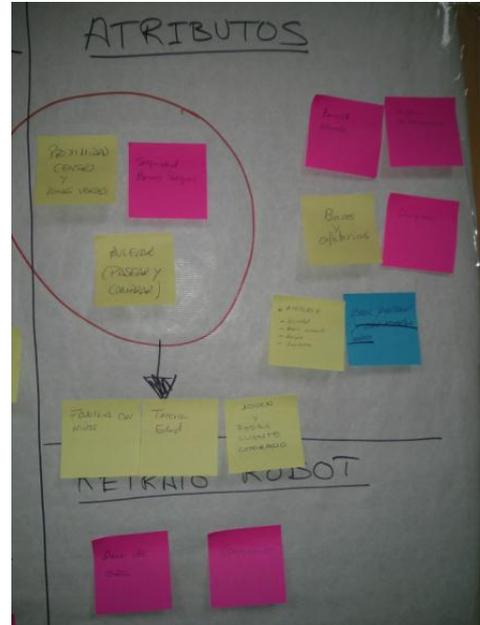


## PHASE 2. OBSERVE. Attributes and profiles

Once defined the Journey map, the group went on to identify "featured attributes" of the boulevard, and user profiles:

"Featured Attributes":

- Pedestrian area
- Relaxing neighbourhood
- Safe neighbourhood
- Clean
- Bright
- Recreational area
- Tranquillity
- Proximity to downtown to Albacete
- Walking
- Shops
- Water (Fountains)



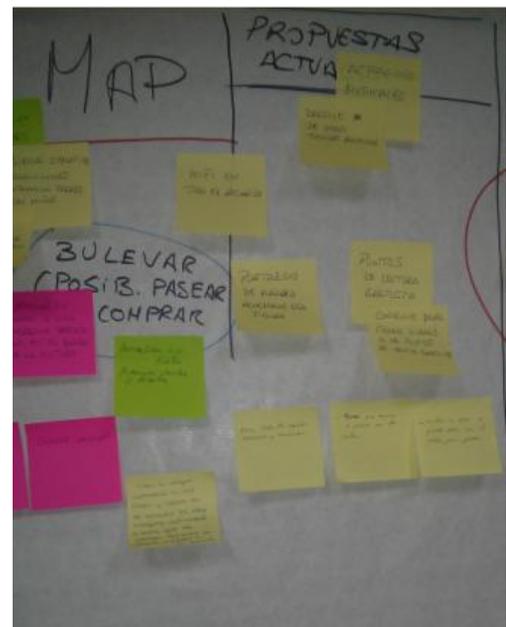
Apart from the attributes, participants identified a number of limitations that must be taken into account for dynamization:

Limitations of the area:

- Heavy traffic all around the boulevard
- Lack of cycle lanes
- Poor public transport.

### User profiles:

- Families with children
- Senior citizens
- Young people
- People with disabilities
- Teenagers
- Tourists in Albacete
- Housewives
- Traders



### PHASE 3. DEFINE. Synthesizing the problem

The group selected the following attributes as the most important aspects in order to undertake the transformation and revitalization of the Boulevard.

- Safe neighbourhood
- Proximity to downtown (Albacete)
- Place to stroll and shop

The segment identified by the group to undertake the strategy of dynamization of the boulevard was: Families with children.

#### PHASE 4. IDEATE. Brainstorming to transform and energize the boulevard Isabel La Católica and Menéndez Pidal

The group decided that in order to revitalize the boulevard, actions should be taken that not only entertain the children, but the whole family.

Therefore, they propose a series of actions that will meet the leisure needs of families and make the place more attractive from a commercial point of view.



The proposals of the group have

been to establish permanent activities in order to implement actions related to sports, reading, history and commerce and using ICT as a crosscutting to all.

Then they started to make a prototype including the following list of actions:

1. Installation of a WiFi network available throughout the course of the boulevard.
2. Paint on the floor throughout the boulevard elements which invite families to play (chess, checkers, ludo, traditional games, etc.)
3. Storytellers
4. To sow plants that will be cared for by families
5. Dedicate trees to famous people of Albacete in the field of culture. The laying of a commemorative plaque could be an event organised on a quarterly, half-yearly or yearly basis.

6. Remembering the importance of the “Portazgo de Madrid”.
7. Establishing free reading points.
8. Fashion shows
9. Musical performances.

### PHASE 5. PROTOTYPE.

The actions prototyped by the group for the chosen segment of users are the following:

1. Activity 1. Installation of a WiFi network available throughout the course of the boulevard.

Aim: This activity will be available to all. It is intended that the use of the internet will be a dynamization element itself.



2. Activity 2. Paint on the floor throughout the boulevard elements which invite families to play

Aim: Implement the necessary fixed elements in order to allow families to have fun. It is considered an essential activity because it does not require detailed programming.

3. Activity 3. Storytellers.

Aim: to make families have enjoyable and leisure moments, thanks to the figure of storytellers performing in the boulevard. This activity is directly linked to another proposal: Establishing free reading points.

#### 4. Activity 4. Establishing free reading points.

*Aim: through agreements with the relevant suppliers to supply books, magazines and newspapers, participants. The own citizens could also transfer the books that they no longer need by means of the corresponding agreement.*

*The workshop team proposed to install vending machines which would dispense free books by inserting special coins which would be given when a customer bought something from a shop in the boulevard.*

#### 5. Activity 5. Activities related to nature and environment.

*Aim: The participants proposed to sow plants and these plants could be cared by families.*

*It was also proposed that every tree of the boulevard could be dedicated to famous people in the field of culture from the own city of Albacete.*

#### 6. Activity 6. "Portazgo de Madrid".

*Aim: Participants commented that along the boulevard is the old "Portazgo de Madrid". They would like to put a commemorative plaque in this place.*

#### 7. Activity 7. Fashion shows with clothes of the children stores of the Boulevard.

*It was suggested that the children of the neighbourhood could be the models and this activity would encourage families to visit the boulevard.*

#### 8. Activity 8. Musical performances.

*Aim: Like fashion shows, it was proposed that the performers were groups from Albacete and the own neighbourhood of the Boulevard, thus enhancing the*

participation of the local community. The neighbourhood associations would be the ones recruiting the participants for these performances.

For the implementation of all the proposed activities, participants decided to make a detailed schedule of interventions for those periods of time in which the volume of visitors is lower (for example, after Christmas, during the summer, in the wintry months...).



### FASE 6. TEST.

Once the prototype was analyzed by all participants, more activities were designed, not only related to families with children, but to the entire population that potentially can visit the Boulevard.

*Other proposals were the following:*

- *Markets of handicrafts.*
- *Talks on social issues and current events.*
- *Exchange of objects between members of the local community.*

*A detailed programme for all the activities it will be necessary during the time when there is a smaller number of visitors on the boulevard (for example, after Christmas, summer, winter period, etc.)*

## **OTHERS PROPOSALS IDENTIFIED BY PROENTIA**

1. *The Boulevard of the Art.* *The use the boulevard to put outdoor exhibitions of paintings and photographs made by artists from Albacete.*
2. *Tasting of food* *brought from the shops and restaurants of the Boulevard.*
3. *Exhibition of popular children games* *(hopscotch, handkerchief, etc.).*
4. *Urban agriculture workshops* *directly linked to the activity of planting in family proposed by the group.*
5. *Boulevard 2.0.* *Using the wireless network, it would be possible to implement actions in order to help young people to teach the elderly how to use social*

networks. It also could be possible to organize a *Gymkana2.0* using Internet and Smartphones as a means to solve puzzles and tests along the entire boulevard.

6. Photographic Safari of the Boulevard. The photos could be of the neighbourhood, customs, trades, etc.
7. Outdoor theatre workshops. Where the community can participate and make their performances on the Boulevard of the Art.
8. Installing bulletin boards where the community can post announcements about supply and demand they may have.
9. Painting the asphalt around the boulevard. The group talked about the problems of the traffic around the boulevard. The worst problem is the speeding and the main culprits are normally the people who live there. It is suggested to paint the asphalt with bright colours that will serve to remind drivers to drive slowly.

At the same time it can be an attractive element for people to see and also for living up the whole area.