Voter apathy is well documented but the truth of the matter is that accessibility is the real issue. If we give people access to what is happening in their areas and how to connect with the people in their community, they will be more likely to civically engage.

The Burg is the community's platform, a digital public square that funnels local representatives and local news to verified voters. We operate on three pillars: 1. We connect cities by verifying voters and placing them in their actual district or city (depending on the size). We built our own voter verification infrastructure working with the CA Secretary of State’s office. 2. We make local news more relevant and accessible. As Pew Research Group (and Mark Zuckerberg) have stressed, local news is directly correlated with local civic engagement. 3. Finally, we get local reps and verified voters on the same page. Local reps now have a never before seen direct tap into the pulse of their community, and not just to a data file but real access to their living and breathing constituents.

1. We won the Civic Tech Pitch Competition at the 85th Annual U.S. Conference of Mayors last year (our 5-min pitch). 2. We built the product, ran a successful closed beta with over ~ 60 weekly active users in November/December, and iterated off that feedback. 3. We won a pilot grant with the Knight Foundation (product demo) to facilitate our imminent launch (first week of March) in Los Angeles County with a focus on Long Beach.
In comparison to the market, we are a Reddit meets Nextdoor meets City Hall. The pathway to sustainability is via online polling. Most polls are still done by home phone and we plan to use our verified voter database and civic engagement network to become the home of online polling. After the U.S. Conference of Mayors, we’ve spoken with a number of big cities interested in hosting these polls through The Burg.

**Launch:** If the Apple Review Gods bless us we will be in both the Android and Apple Play/App Stores next Wednesday (initially only available in LA County)!

**Hiring:** We are looking for 2-3 interns with Android, iOS, or backend experience (Swift, Java, Node.js). The product has already been built and the developer interns duties would include building a few new features (ballot information), maintaining the databases, refining the existing code, and improving performance. We use a number of APIs including Google Civic API and Google Maps Javascript API. Anyone familiar with GIS tech and civics /politics in general is highly encouraged to DM or email me @ matt@burg.community!