**Interview Protocol/ Moderator Guide**

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| **Problem Statement** |
| As a property renter, I need to find available residences that offer an authentic, genuine experience of everyday life from people who already live there so that I am upfront about what I am renting as a prospective local. |

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| **Topics to Investigate** | **Relative Importance to Topic** |
| **Users’ search behaviors** to locate a property that meets personal preferences and lifestyle needs (e.g., walkability, accessibility & proximity to schools, transit, and amenities, etc.) | To identify participants’ prioritization of specific neighborhood features and the influence of area resident insights from ratings, reviews, and/or photos about a given location. |
| **Discoverability/ Effectiveness** for users to find, view, and understand neighborhood overviews | To evaluate the website’s usability for first-time and experienced users alike, pinpoint user frustrations with Trulia’s functionalities, and offer suggestions for improvement. |

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| **Moderator Notes for Audio Recordings or Photographs** |
| **Ask participant(s) permission upfront to be video/audio recorded and note any accessibility issues.**  [*Read consent statement aloud and give details about data storage and collection policies; inform them that you value their privacy, and ask if they have any further questions or need clarification before participant(s) sign written consent form*] |

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| **Introduction to Research Study** |
| Hello <participants’ name> and thank you for your participation in this study. My name is Melissa, lead designer on this school-based project.  The purpose of this study is to discover how users, like yourself, search for and choose a new rental to live in.  Please feel free to speak your mind and think out loud about your responses. There are no right or wrong answers- I’m most interested in learning about your own personal experiences, so any feedback is welcome. |

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| **Gaining Informed Consent** |
| Before we begin, I would like to ask your permission to record this [remote or in-person] interview and take internal notes during our conversation to help me accurately recall information that you share. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous and won’t be shared with anyone without your consent.  Your participation is completely voluntary. If you change your mind for any reason or would like to skip any questions you feel uncomfortable answering, the recorder will be turned off, the interview will stop, and the data I collect will be removed from the study.  Is it okay to record this conversation? Yes (start recording)/No |

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| **Instructions to Give Participants** |
| A quick overview about what to expect from this 30-minute session: I’ll start by asking you a few background questions, then move onto activities for you to perform with Trulia’s [website/mobile app].  Do you have any questions or need me to repeat anything before I start? |

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| **Background Questions About Participant(s)/ Small Talk** |
| I would like to ask a few questions to get to know you:   * What does your typical day look like? * What are your career goals? * What modes of transportation do you typically use? * Where do you live and how would you describe your current living situation?   + Follow-up: How did you find your house/apartment? |

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| **Main Questions & Tasks** |

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| **Questions** | **Follow-Up Questions** |
| How would you describe your prior experience with apartment renting? | * (If yes) How do you currently search for rentals? What resources/tools have you consulted to find a place to live? Where do you usually find real estate/rental listings? * What are some of the features and characteristics you look for in a rental? * Which do you prefer to search, in person or online, and why? (Online) What must have criteria do you use to search/browse listings? |
| How often have you moved? | * How do you make decisions about where to move? |
| When searching for a place to live, what considerations do you give to a neighborhood? | * What is your experience with moving to your neighborhood? Tell me a story of how you decided to move to your neighborhood. |
| What is your experience with using Trulia and the Neighborhoods feature/What Locals Say? | * How do you interact with the neighborhood overview page/explore the area? Which feature would you navigate to first? * How much time do you typically spend searching about a neighborhood (or specific feature on page)? * What do you like or dislike about Trulia Neighborhoods? * Tell me what you were thinking the last time you searched a rental listing in an unfamiliar environment. What strategies would you use to learn more about a new community? |

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| **Projected Duration for Responses** |
| 1 on 1 qualitative interviews, 30-45 minutes per user. Timeframes proposed below are approximate:  **Introduction:**5 minutes  **Background/Discovery Questionnaire:**5 minutes  **Tasks/Scenarios:**20-25 minutes  **Closing Statement:**5 minutes |

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| **Concluding Statements** |
| Thank you for your participation and time sharing your feedback and insights to help me learn about Trulia’s rental experience.  Before we wrap up our session, can I help answer any further questions or is there any feedback you wanted to share that I didn’t ask? |

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| **Resource Requirements** |
| Both participants and moderators would require internet connection with access to video camera (Zoom), and audio recording equipment, browser type, and screen-recording capability.  Notetaking via paper and Microsoft word/excel sheet |

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| **Project Plan & Responsibilities** |
| * Recruit and schedule target participants for user interviews; ask open-ended and think-aloud questions to demonstrate Trulia *Neighborhoods* functionality * Identify analysis method(s), frame problem, and gather research deliverables * Analyze data collection, and finalize executive summary and final report with proposed project feedback |

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| **Behaviors + Demographic Profiles of Target Participants & Screener Questions** |
| A total of 5 participants from various professional backgrounds will be recruited for user research, focusing on two target groups: |

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| **Target Participants** | **Demographic Criteria** | **Screener Questions** |
| Native apartment renters  (New to renting/never rented)  Experienced apartment renters  (Previous knowledge of rental properties via remote real estate platforms) | * Average age between 20-65 years old * 3 Females, 2 Males * Geographically located in California | What is your annual income?  What home type are you seeking?  How would you rate your familiarity with computers & mobile devices?  What are your reasons for moving? What is your timeline for living at your new place? How often how you moved in the past 5 years? |
| **Acceptable Variations** | | |
| * Currently own or rent a different residence type (i.e., home), but have previous apartment rental experience * Primarily consult other real estate websites or apps, include Trulia in their rental search process | | |