
COMP 3008 Assignment 4

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Part 1: System Proposal

The new project will be done in relation to the website point2homes.com. When looking for homes, users often have to search through multiple different sites and check them frequently for new listings. By developing an application that not only has point2homes' current functionality of pooling together listings, but also with an even larger expanded arsenal of listings, searching for a property on the go, and all in one place will be easier than ever. This new platform would now aim to include listings from other sites such as Kijiji, Facebook marketplace, and rentals.ca. With everything in one place, this new service will be called **Home Central**.

Part 2: Metaphor and Interaction Types

You search for homes on Home Central with the “everything you need in one place mentality” of super centres.

or

The Home central app is a super centre.

Some advantages of the metaphor would be that it would give users an easy understanding that not all of the listings on the site are posted on the actual site and some may be from other sources (or “brands” if thinking in the metaphor). It would also help the user understand the mission of the application, to be a one stop shop for all their property needs.

Some disadvantages of the metaphor would be the checkout system in a super centre, users may get the idea that once they find a property (or “item”) they like they can simply purchase and secure it. Though with buying and renting property this is not the case and there is many steps before that in addition to other users potentially

competing for the same place. Another disadvantage could be the idea of saving listings for later. In a super centre, items can not be saved for later or put on hold.

Although I believe this is a solid metaphor, I do not believe it is sufficiently promising enough for it to be worth it to make a prototype based on this metaphor. Due to misconceptions that may be had between the metaphor and the system, users may make the wrong associations about the system. Therefore I do not believe it is a sufficiently promising metaphor to make a prototype based on.

When looking at the different the different interaction types that would best suit the system and the advantages and disadvantages of each, three were considered: **Interaction, conversing, and manipulating**

Interaction:

Advantages:

- Users can instruct the system of exactly what sort of property they wish to find
- Users can easily remove one or more criteria from their search

Disadvantages:

- May be somewhat hard to learn for users who have never seen any kind of property listing system
- Not the most intuitive way to present the application as it would require a lot of instructions (typing on the virtual keyboard for the most part) which would be rather slow on a mobile device.

Conversing:

Advantages:

- Very user friendly to novice users that may be unfamiliar with rental websites / apps to use. This is because users can use natural language to tell the system what they want

Disadvantages:

- If using a menu based conversing style then it may take a very long time for users to see their desired search results as again, these search parameters can be very specific.
- Can misunderstand the user and therefore slow down the time it takes to use the system. If a user receives results with properties they are not looking for then they would have to start the search process all over again

instead of just altering some of the parameters of their search like they would in other interaction types.

Manipulating:

Advantages:

- Very quick way of performing key operations such as saving listings, contacting the poster, and sharing the listing
- Gestures would be intuitive and would allow the users to develop a clear mental model (swiping through a list, tapping on specific icons that you would like to see more information on)

Disadvantages:

- No clear way to strictly manipulate objects in order to produce a list of various properties with specific criteria. (In other words no clear way to search by strictly manipulating objects)

Note before moving on to Lo-fi Prototypes: All comments and callouts including those talking about principles of layout and UI patterns are in the .bmpr files

Part 3: Lo-Fi Prototypes

Storyboard: Prototype #2



The user starts off the application on the main screen. Their goal is to quickly find a house that they would consider renting and put it in their saved listings to take a deeper look at later. When first opening the app, the user will realize the location is not where they would like to be looking, as well as seeing way too many houses. They decide to narrow down the search and select the search icon

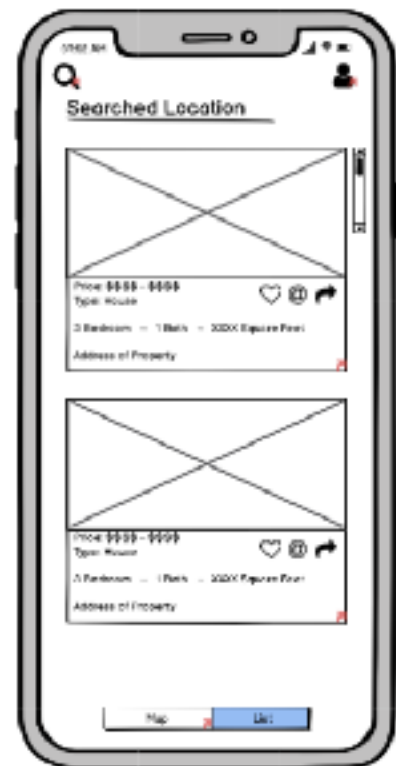
Once in the search menu, the user begins to type in their desired city Ottawa, use the dropdown menus to specify 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, select the onsite parking and dishwasher options for the property amenities (as these are non-starters for them) and selects for rent in the type of property section. They now feel like they will get an accurate search result and click apply. This takes them back to the main screen.

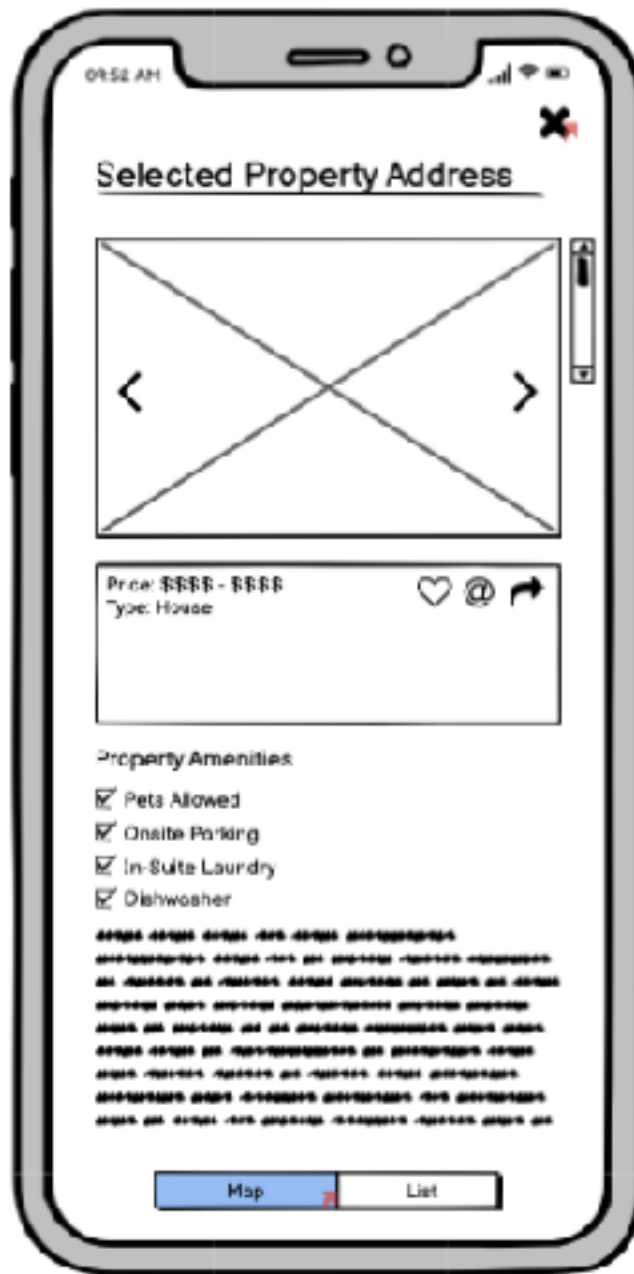




Once on the main screen they decide they would like to see the properties in list view so they select that option. This takes them to the list view page.

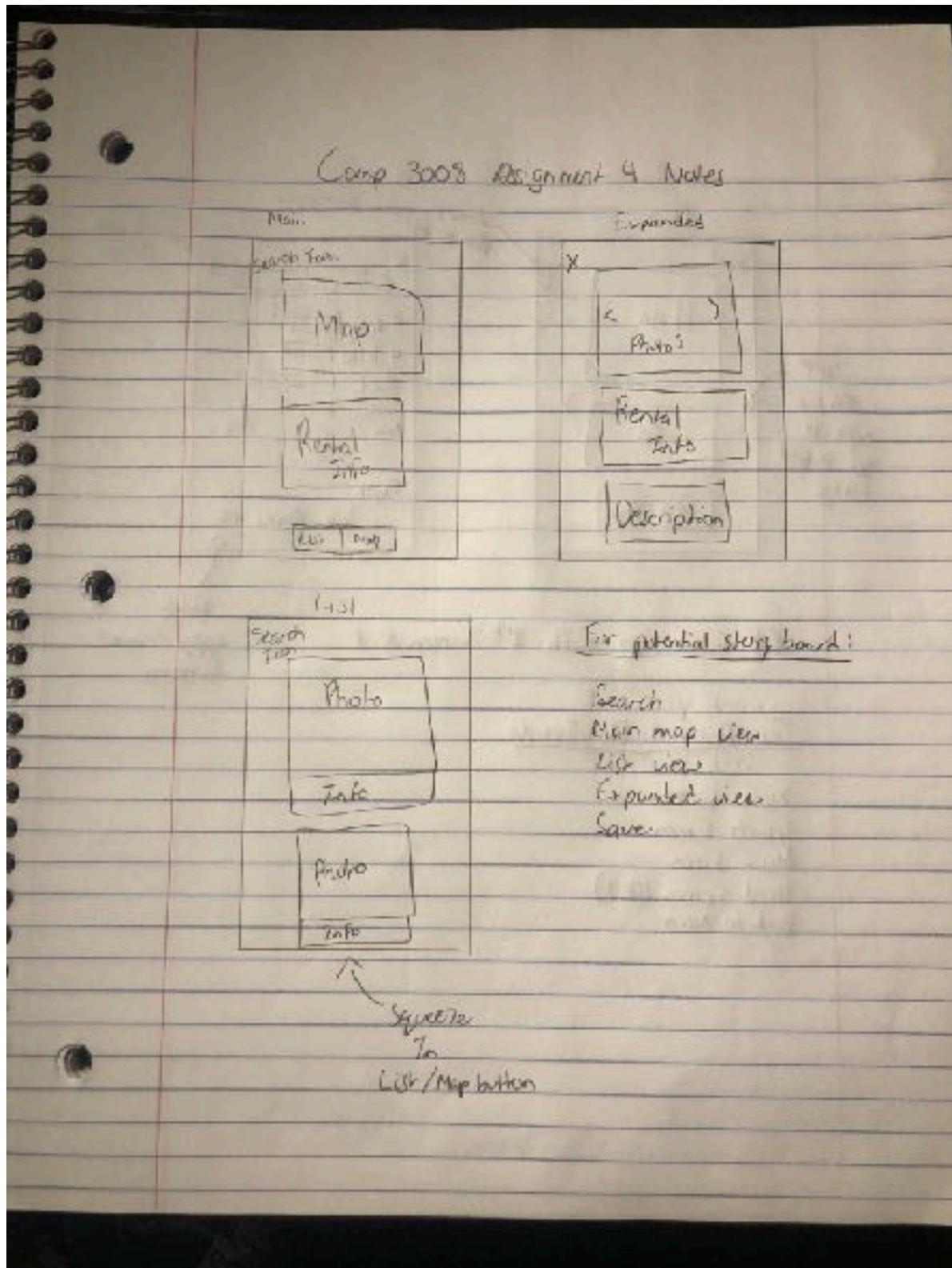
Once on the list view page, they scroll down past a couple of listings, and luckily, after looking at the quick preview photo and the price, the user seems to really like the 9th listing. Given they're on the go, the user considers just saving the listing here and taking a deeper look at it later. They figure they have a little bit of time right now and decide to take a quick scan of the listing. The user taps on the desired listing and that takes them into the expanded card view





Lastly, The user quickly swipes through the listings photos and reads the description of the property that was written by the poster and decides to save it. They hit the heart button and proceed to close out the app as they know the listing will be safe in the saved listings section of their account and they wont have to re-do the search process again.

Appendix



Appendix

