

Topic: Neighborhood Parks

Project Proposal

Currently, there is a notable absence of an all-in-one information-sharing platform for neighborhood parks, compelling users to scour multiple websites for essential details. This fragmented information landscape leads to inconvenience and potential misinformation for community members seeking accurate insights into park amenities, safety ratings, and user experiences. For this problem/solution, we will consider a neighborhood park as an outdoor space maintained by the city or homeowners association (HOA) and located within a residential area, with the following essential amenities: a child play area or playset, picnic area, and a grassy field for recreational activities. We aim to bridge this informational gap by offering a centralized platform where the public can easily access reliable and up-to-date data on park facilities. To stand out from other platforms, our solution will feature user-reported statistics to guide users to the right park. Overall, our goal is to provide a trustworthy, one-stop platform for users to access accurate data on outdoor facilities.

The current landscape for park information depends on word of mouth and information-deficient websites. On a positive note, word-of-mouth communication creates a closer community, as locals choose their favorite parks and share the information with friends and neighbors. However, the current situation of informal information exchange among park-goers relying solely on word-of-mouth communication presents challenges. What happens if no one has been to the park recently or if they fail to inform their community of changes in safety or amenities? In such scenarios, our solution offers a dependable means to stay informed about park conditions without relying solely on chance encounters. Additionally, individuals who are the first to encounter a hazard or issue at the park can promptly share their findings with others through our platform, contributing to a safer and more informed park experience for all users. Furthermore, the current landscape for park information is often hindered by the inadequacies of existing park websites and reviews, which frequently overlook crucial aspects of neighborhood parks. These platforms often fall short of capturing park amenities and features.

Critical details such as the availability of sports fields, variations in playset types, safety ratings, and accessibility of restroom facilities remain absent or inadequately addressed. As a result, community members are left with incomplete or outdated information. Our solution will provide a reliable way to access park information without relying on the usual word-of-mouth method and often useless websites.

User Research Review

Interview:

1. Who you observed or interviewed, their background, and the environment. A few examples of the participants that were interviewed, their background and environment.
 - Participant 1 : Was a parent, lived around the point defiance area and worked during the day and usually goes to the park with their children after work twice a week.
 - Participant 2: Was a Senior Citizen who goes to the park mainly for walks and leaves in an Elderly home
 - Participants 3 : Was a youth in their early to late 20s, mainly goes to the park for leisure usually with friends.
2. Note anything unique about each participant and comment on the rationale behind these observations.
 - Each participant had distinct motivations for visiting neighborhood parks, ranging from family recreation to solitary nature appreciation, reflecting the diverse needs of the community.
 - Participant backgrounds varied, influencing their preferences and priorities regarding park amenities and information sources.
 - While some participants emphasized the importance of family-friendly facilities, others prioritized features like walking trails and dog-friendly spaces.
3. What did you learn?
 - Neighborhood parks serve as multifunctional spaces catering to diverse demographic groups, including families, Elderly, youth, and nature enthusiasts.
 - Access to accurate and up-to-date park information is crucial for visitors, but preferences for information sources may vary based on age, lifestyle, and technological proficiency.
 - Safety and cleanliness are common concerns among park users, highlighting the importance of regular maintenance and community involvement in park management.
4. What tasks, problems, or opportunities did you uncover?
 - Tasks: Participants engage in various activities at neighborhood parks, including picnics, sports, nature walks, and community events.
 - Problems: Challenges include accessing reliable park information, ensuring park safety, and addressing maintenance issues like litter and broken equipment.
 - Opportunities: There is an opportunity to improve park information dissemination through digital platforms tailored to different user demographics, enhance park safety measures, and foster community engagement in park maintenance and events.

Survey:

1. Discuss the structure of the survey; in terms of total questions, demographic information (if collected), objective of the survey and total number of participants/responses.

We used a google form for our survey and it presents our questions in the form of multiple choice, select all that apply, text response, rating scales, and yes or no multiple choice. Our survey had 10 questions and the objective of it was to gain information from our target demographic for our project in order to help us best tailor a solution that fixes the problems our demographic is facing. We had a total of 15 responses for our survey so far.

2. What did you learn from the survey results ?

We learned that giving participants the option to write in their own answers for some of the questions was a good idea because they were able to express concerns or ideas that could not be represented in just a few options. It also gave us more variability in terms of gathering information, there were things that we didn't think about until the participants brought it up. We also learned that a lot of the participants face a lot of the same issues when it comes to visiting parks, so it's helpful for us to know that a lot of people are having the same problems because it means that finding a solution for it will be important.

3. What tasks, problems, or opportunities did you uncover?

While collecting our survey results the issues we uncovered was that one participant was very interested in the dash point pier. This was something that was not evident to us before we created this survey so now we are aware of additional issues that we weren't aware of before.

High-Level Themes:

Identify high-level themes and problems the participants share in their practices. Do these themes, problems, and practices suggest tasks that are important to design for?

Across the participants, common themes and problems emerge regarding the utilization of neighborhood parks. Firstly, the importance of reliable and accessible park information is evident, with participants expressing challenges in finding updated details about park amenities, events, and safety measures. Additionally, concerns about park safety and cleanliness are shared among participants, indicating a need for measures to ensure a secure and well-maintained park environment. Moreover, the diversity of park users' needs and preferences highlights the necessity for parks to offer a range of amenities and facilities catering to various demographic groups, including families, retirees, young professionals, and nature enthusiasts. These themes and problems underscore the importance of designing for tasks such as improving park information dissemination through user-friendly digital platforms, implementing effective safety measures, and enhancing park facilities to accommodate the diverse needs of the community.

Task Analysis

Informed by your design research, provide brief answers to the following questions. These should help you begin to identify tasks essential to your design.

1. Who is going to use the design?
 - Our design will be used by people with families or pets who are looking to go to their neighborhood parks to use the playground, grassy fields, and pet areas. It may also be used by anyone looking for a neighborhood park in the South Sound area.
2. What tasks do they now perform?
 - Users are often gathering information from friends, family and neighbors. They may also receive information from local or online ads from the community. Many users from our research have reported trouble with finding parks online and normally get it from others in the area.
3. What tasks are desired?
 - Simplifying the sharing of word-of-mouth information, making it more convenient for users to access and exchange valuable insights and recommendations. Including information about ratings, amenities, and safety.
4. How are the tasks learned?
 - The user must have general knowledge of website browsing and searching in order to perform the tasks required. The user may also know how to leave a review if they would like but is not required for our design. They should be able to navigate through an application with the desired function of searching for information. No academic knowledge or special instruction/training is necessary from the user.
5. Where are the tasks performed?
 - The tasks will be performed in almost any environment where the user has access to the internet and a smart electronic device, such as a computer or phone or tablet.
6. What is the relationship between the person and data?
 - The user may use our design as a guest, where they do not have any personal data collected from them, to look up parks and information. However, the user must create an account that collects some personal data to leave a review as this will prevent bots. Whether they would like to reveal their name on the review or not is their choice.
7. What other tools does the person have?
 - Other tools may include keyboard, mouse, and touch pen, depending on the user and how they like to utilize their smart electronic device.
8. How do people communicate with each other?

- Users may leave reviews and ratings in our design in order to communicate how they feel about the park. If users need help with our design, there will be a help section with commonly asked questions and contact information.
9. How often are the tasks performed?
 - The type of tasks required for our design are frequently performed by most users with a smart electronic device and users who are on the internet. These tasks are not performed often by those who do not use the internet to search for information online. A quick tutorial may be helpful for these users, with the option to skip for other users who already know what to do.
 10. What are the time constraints on the tasks?
 - There are no time constraints when searching for information in our design. There may be a time constraint when editing a review or rating in case the user made a mistake.
 11. What happens when things go wrong?
 - If the task goes wrong because of user error, the task may be reperformed without any consequences. If a review was written wrong or a rating was misrated, the user may edit their mistakes within a certain time period. They may also choose to delete their review or rating at any time.

Short-Listed Tasks

Task 1: Looking for a park with a playground for my little brother.. To find information I would search on google or look at google maps to try and determine if the park has a proper playground.

Task 2: Looking on different websites for reviews and ratings on parks. People will often make google searches to find ratings and reviews or sometimes Yelp if the park they are looking for is available there. This will be a consolidated way to look at parks specifically.

Task 3: Safe space to organize functions and small events that is free and has quality amenities to keep people and children occupied as well as safe. In this scenario I am a wheelchair user looking for parks that have good accessibility.

Task 4: Looking for a pet friendly park that is wide greener and has a good cleanliness score (Means free of broken glasses, needles, and overall cleanliness). The Cleanliness score will be generated in regards to the reviews received about the cleanliness of the park.

Task 5: Utilize a quick safety reporting feature while at the park to report instances of unsafe behavior or poor park conditions, such as public indecency or cleanliness issues.

Task 6: Search for public events planned in a specific park or organize public events within parks, leveraging online platforms or community resources.