Github Repo : https://github.com/ghairfield/CS465Final_Project
JoiRide URL: https://cs465final.herokuapp.com/about
Group members : Ashley Maddix and Greg Hairfield

The app we made for this class, Joi Ride, was intended to help those going on a road trip or a vacation. It would ideally take a starting address and destination address to help the user determine where to go along their trip. The user would have options for the radius of their search, and various keywords to filter their type of establishment the search results display.

As far as the overall goal of this application, I think we accomplished the main points. Joi Ride does successfully retrieve a starting and ending address and displays the route from point A and B. Additionally, we were able to implement an autocomplete functionality for the address input, to help users enter a correct address. The site also displays the step by step directions, which wasn't in the original plan but a helpful addition for the users. As another bonus we are able to retrieve the location of the user, so that the map is centered on their current location.

The waypoint works slightly differently then the original vision, where we had hoped to be able to gather multiple keywords and display all those to the user at once. However, there were complications getting the google maps api to do a nearby search request with multiple types. But since our site allows us to use multiple waypoints, this doesn't really affect the final result. In our site currently, you would select a single keyword checkbox, and after clicking the waypoint button it allows you to choose a spot on the map. It then shows all nearby results (within the selected radius) matching the keyword. If the user wishes to look at nearby establishments with a different key word, they could do so by just selecting that new keyword and creating a new way point. I did originally have some complications getting the nearby search request to read in a specific keyword variable, however some tinkering around with my program i figured out how to grab a value from the type ‘checkbox’ (which was defined in my html file), and making sure that my value for each checkbox where set to a type name supported by this api.

Another issue that we ran into but were successful in fixing was making sure an info box is displayed when each search result is clicked. Initially after the search request, the info window showed up as blank. To solve this issue, I ended up using google places along with the result’s place id to display the establishment name and rating. I did attempt to make a sidebar that would display this information and more, however due to time I could not get this functionality working successfully. If I had more time, I would also want to change the map icons to show different logos based on type of establishment.

The biggest problem we faced in our program was just finding what framework to use. Initially we started with angular, then we moved to react, lastly we chose to use express. Both in angular and react we ran into problems revolving using the google maps api. React worked a little better compared to angular, but still wasn't successfully displaying the information we hoped. Changing our framework in this way meant having to basically start from scratch 3 different times, so a lot of work ended up being unused. It also left us with very limited time to get our code working how we envisioned.

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For the future I would definitely allow myself more time from the start to work on this kind of project. And if I'm using a large and complex API like google maps again, I would also make sure to do more research on which framework would work best.