Des Moines Park Population Analysis – James Thompson

What I liked:

What a comprehensive list of datasets! I thought you included many useful datasets, and I loved that you included all of your sources and how you created/summarized them! Including methods is something that I really appreciate, especially because your title implies that there is an analysis, or academic study being conducted through the project. I also really enjoyed the pictures that you included, you are definitely a talented photographer. The buttons that you included to zoom to different map features were useful, although the most useful (I thought) was the “Return to Des Moines” button. It can get really frustrating zooming in and out trying to figure out how to get the map to look like it did when you started.

What I learned:

The major takeaway that I got from your webpage was that there is good coverage of parks in the Des Moines area, with almost the entire city having walking access within 20 minutes to at least one park. As far as web design, I learned that multiple boxes for “hover for information” can be included on the map. I remember seeing that design element on the chloropleth map, but didn’t realize how many applications they can have on one map.

What I think could be changed:

As I got to looking at different parks in the Des Moines area, I realized that cemeteries were included as parks. While they might fit the official definition as a park, I was not under the impression that cemeteries would be included in the analysis, just because they are not a place where the general public goes to recreate. Another piece of your parks dataset that I thought could be adjusted was the scope of the parks layer. Because your title refers to Des Moines specifically, I would’ve clipped the layer to the Des Moines city limits to keep the user more focused on where the analysis is being conducted.

I really like the “hover” for information bubbles. I think having them all on when the user opens the webpage would be easier to understand. It took me a minute to figure out why information wasn’t popping up as I hovered over different areas (except for park area).

As I mentioned in the things I liked, your pictures are great! I might’ve highlighted them a bit more by embedding them, rather than just having links to them. I think they would really draw the user’s attention in further if you had a gallery of photos above or below your map.

For your basemaps, I would’ve kept it simple and stuck with the streets layer. I don’t feel like I gained any new information about your subject from the topography layer or the satellite layer. Especially when considering walking distance, I think the streets layer provides the most context for your subject.