

Team 2: Enhancing the Transit app by integrating new features

We have decided on a new project proposal to enhance the Transit app, as previous ideas did not directly correlate to problem-solving. This initiative aims to address the specific needs of users who rely on the Transit app for bus information, particularly students at UMD. While there are various weather, transportation, and municipal service apps available, the Transit app serves a unique purpose by providing real-time transit information that is crucial for efficient travel within and beyond College Park. Our focus will be on integrating features that enhance user experience and address common issues, ensuring that the app becomes an indispensable tool for residents who frequently travel both within the city and to surrounding areas.

In this project, we aim to solve a real problem within the Transit app, used by numerous people to travel. We are focusing on this as the Transit app is the main source for bus info for many students at UMD, and there are problems with the app that can be solved.

What is the information service you would like to create or reinvent?

We would like to enhance the Transit app by integrating new features that improve user experience, accessibility, and overall functionality for public transportation.

Why is this information service needed?

This information service is needed to address current issues with the Transit app, enhancing user experience and encouraging more people to use public transportation.

What is the specific setting in which the information service will be provided and used?

The service will be provided and used by public transportation users in urban areas, focusing on those who rely on the Transit app for real-time transit information, trip planning, and updates about local events.

Current Issues with the Transit App

1. **Limited Offline Access**
 - **Issue:** Users often face connectivity problems, preventing access to essential information when needed.
2. **Inadequate Multi-Modal Options**

- **Issue:** The app currently lacks comprehensive integration of various transport modes, limiting users' choices for trip planning.
- 3. **No Real-Time Crowd Information**
 - **Issue:** Users have no insight into crowd levels on public transport, leading to uncomfortable travel during peak times.
- 4. **Insufficient Station and Stop Information**
 - **Issue:** Many users do not have access to detailed information about amenities and accessibility features at transit stations.
- 5. **Lack of User Feedback Mechanism**
 - **Issue:** The app currently does not facilitate direct user feedback, limiting improvements based on user experiences.
- 6. **Generic Notifications**
 - **Issue:** Users miss critical updates relevant to their usual routes due to a lack of personalized alerts.
- 7. **Limited Awareness of Local Events**
 - **Issue:** Users are often unaware of local events that may impact transit services or provide new travel opportunities.
- 8. **No Incentives for Frequent Use**
 - **Issue:** The app lacks gamification features to encourage consistent use of public transport.
- 9. **Inadequate Accessibility Features**
 - **Issue:** There is insufficient information about accessible transport options for individuals with disabilities.
- 10. **Lack of Community Engagement**
 - **Issue:** Users currently have limited avenues for sharing tips and experiences related to public transit.

What are the expected functions and utilities of this information service?

The expected functions of the enhanced Transit app include:

1. **Offline Accessibility**
 - **Description:** Enable users to download route maps, schedules, and relevant information for offline use.
 - **Benefit:** Provides essential transit information even in areas with poor connectivity.
2. **Multi-Modal Transport Options**
 - **Description:** Incorporate various modes of transport, including buses, trains, shuttles, and rideshares, for comprehensive trip planning.
 - **Benefit:** Allows users to compare travel times and costs across different options, promoting convenience.
3. **Real-Time Crowd Information**
 - **Description:** Offer live updates on crowd levels for buses and trains.

- **Benefit:** Helps users choose less crowded routes, enhancing comfort and safety during peak hours.
- 4. **Detailed Station and Stop Information**
 - **Description:** Provide comprehensive details about each station, including amenities (restrooms, waiting areas) and accessibility features.
 - **Benefit:** Empowers users to plan their journeys with all necessary information.
- 5. **User Feedback and Rating System**
 - **Description:** Implement a feature allowing users to rate services and provide feedback on their experiences.
 - **Benefit:** Facilitates direct communication with transit authorities to identify issues and improve services.
- 6. **Personalized Notifications**
 - **Description:** Offer customizable alerts for specific routes or lines, including delays and service changes.
 - **Benefit:** Keeps users informed about relevant updates, improving their commuting experience.
- 7. **Integration with Local Events**
 - **Description:** Highlight local events with suggested transit routes to reach them.
 - **Benefit:** Encourages public transport use and helps users plan trips to events.
- 8. **Gamification Elements**
 - **Description:** Introduce a rewards system for frequent users, encouraging consistent use of public transport.
 - **Benefit:** Engages users and promotes sustainable commuting habits.
- 9. **Enhanced Accessibility Features**
 - **Description:** Provide detailed information on accessible routes and transport options for individuals with disabilities.
 - **Benefit:** Ensures inclusivity and usability for all commuters.
- 10. **Community Support Forum**
 - **Description:** Create a platform for users to ask questions and share tips about public transit.
 - **Benefit:** Fosters community engagement and provides peer support in navigating public transport.

Team work plan: Who is going to do what by when?

- **Week 1:** Conduct surveys and focus groups with current Transit app users to gather insights (Research and User Feedback).
- **Week 2:** Analyze feedback and prioritize feature development (Feature Prioritization and Planning).
- **Week 3:** Collaborate with developers to begin integrating new features (Development).
- **Week 4:** Conduct usability testing and gather feedback (Testing).
- **Week 5:** Implement necessary adjustments based on user feedback (Final Adjustments).

- **Week 6:** Officially present the newly enhanced Transit app and promote new features (Launch and Promotion).