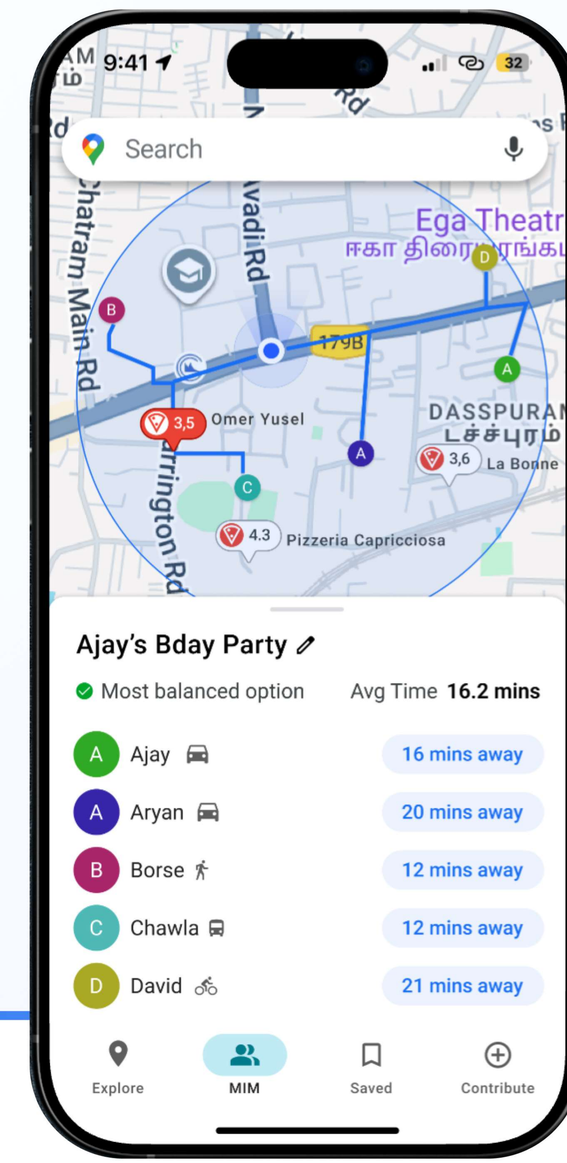
Google Maps

Meet in the Middle

A smart Maps feature for fair and convenient meet-ups

A feature implementation for coordinated meet-ups between people in different locations



UI/UX Case Study - Parth Jadhav

Problem Statement

Coordinating meet-ups between people in different locations is often frustrating. Google Maps lacks a built-in way to find fair midpoints and suggest convenient places (like cafés or parks) for both users.

Instead of introducing a completely new experience, the feature seamlessly extends an existing Google Maps journey — allowing users to create a group and find a fair meeting area directly within the app.

By doing so, users can quickly discover balanced meeting places, view transparent travel times for everyone, and finalize a location without switching apps or manually coordinating.

Research Insight

To validate the concept within a limited timeline, quick exploratory interviews were conducted with friends and family who frequently coordinate meet-ups in cities. In parallel, AI-assisted synthesis was used to identify common patterns from existing user behaviors and known coordination pain points.

The goal was to understand how people currently decide meeting locations and what causes friction in the process.

Key Findings

Most users manually coordinate meeting points, relying on guesses, screenshots, or back-and-forth messages.

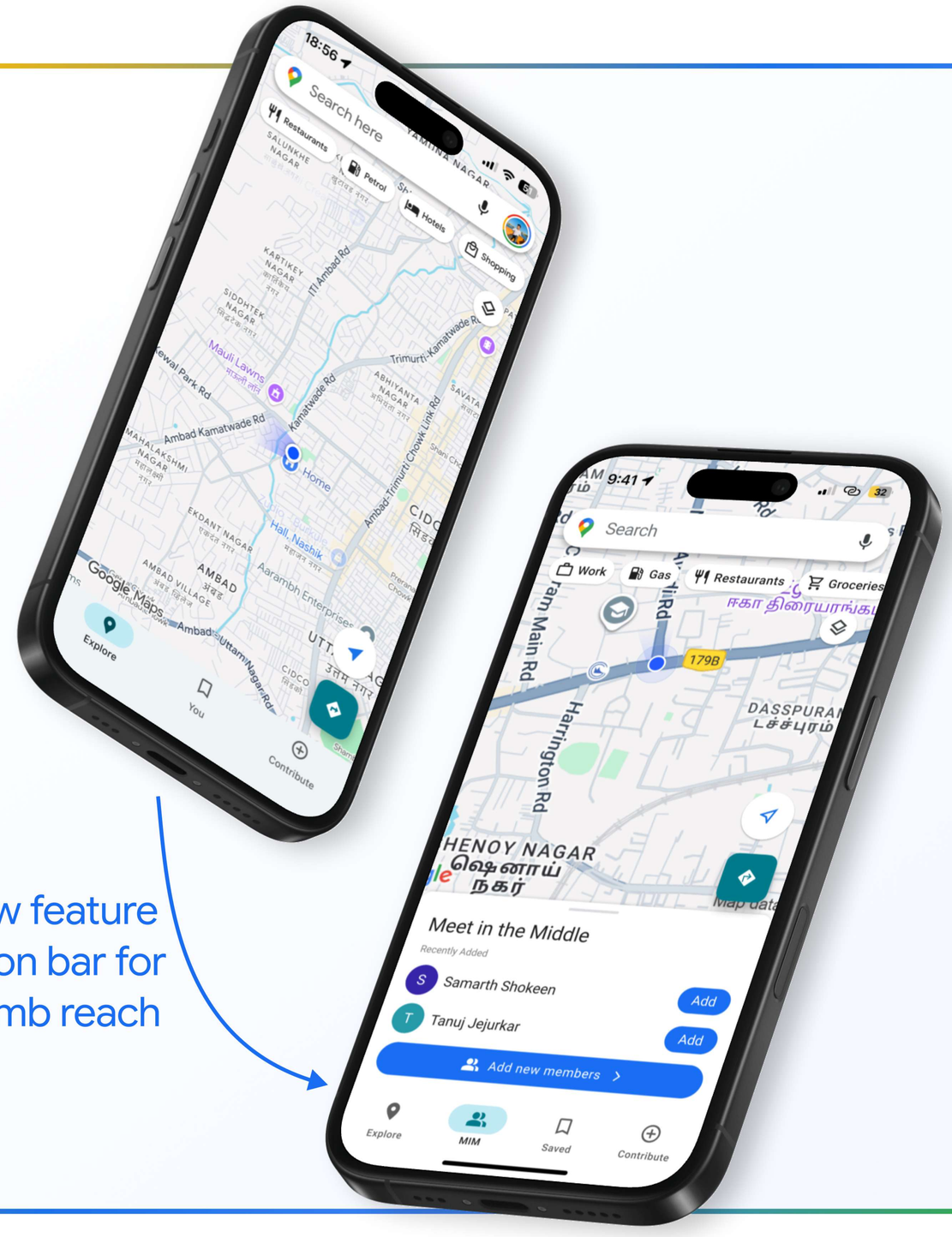
Fairness is judged by travel time, not distance — users prefer locations where everyone arrives around the same time.

Context switching between chat apps and Maps creates friction and slows down decision-making.

Users rarely use separate planning tools, preferring solutions built directly into the apps they already use.

Proposed Solution

Meet in the Middle is a mobile-first Google Maps feature that simplifies group meet-ups by automatically finding fair midpoints based on participants' locations. It visualizes a balanced travel area and recommends convenient places within it, along with transparent travel times for each person



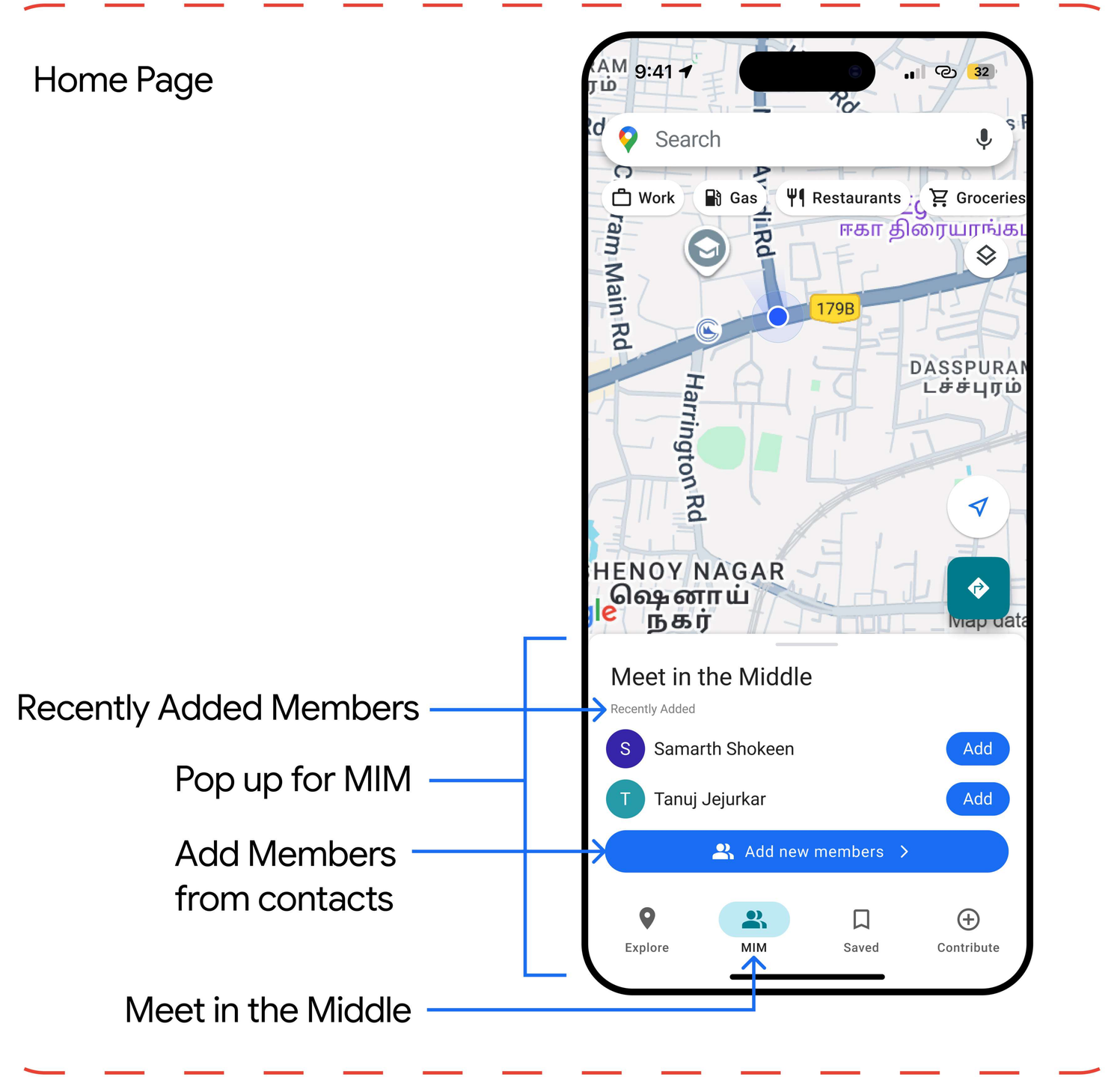
Added new feature in navigation bar for better thumb reach

Design Concept

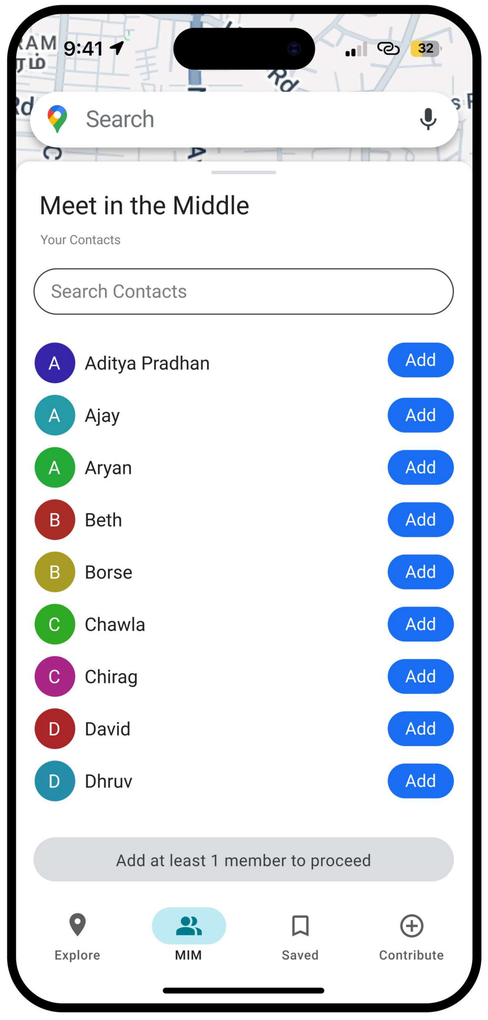
The home entry for Meet in the Middle integrates group planning into the existing Maps experience without adding complexity.

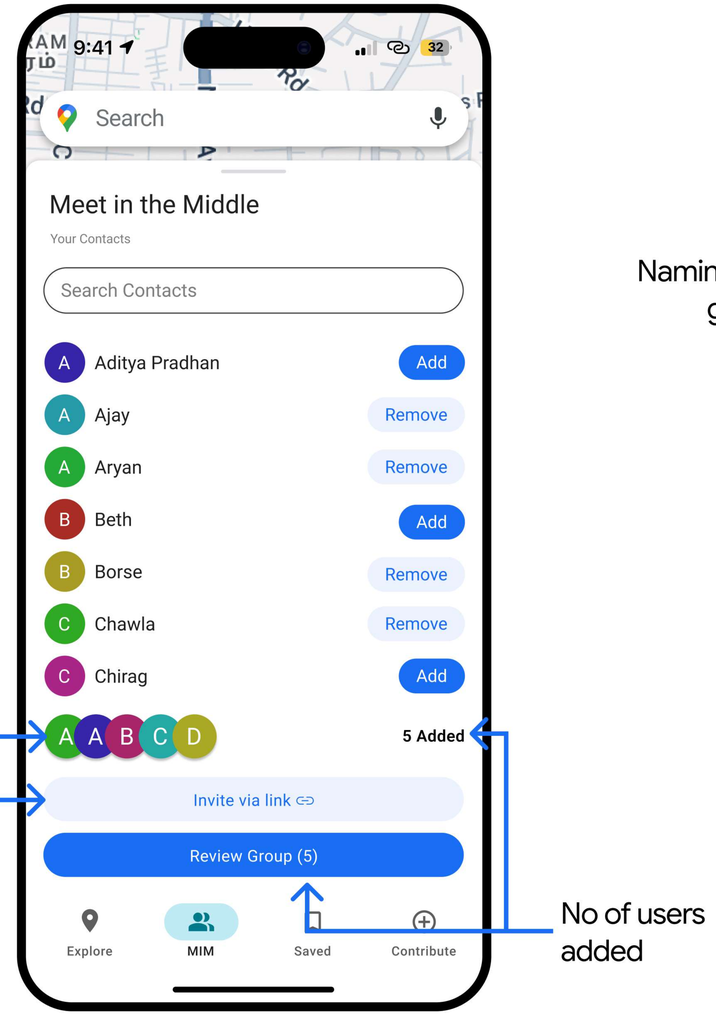
By surfacing recently added members and a clear call to add more, the design reduces setup friction and helps users start planning meet-ups quickly and intuitively.

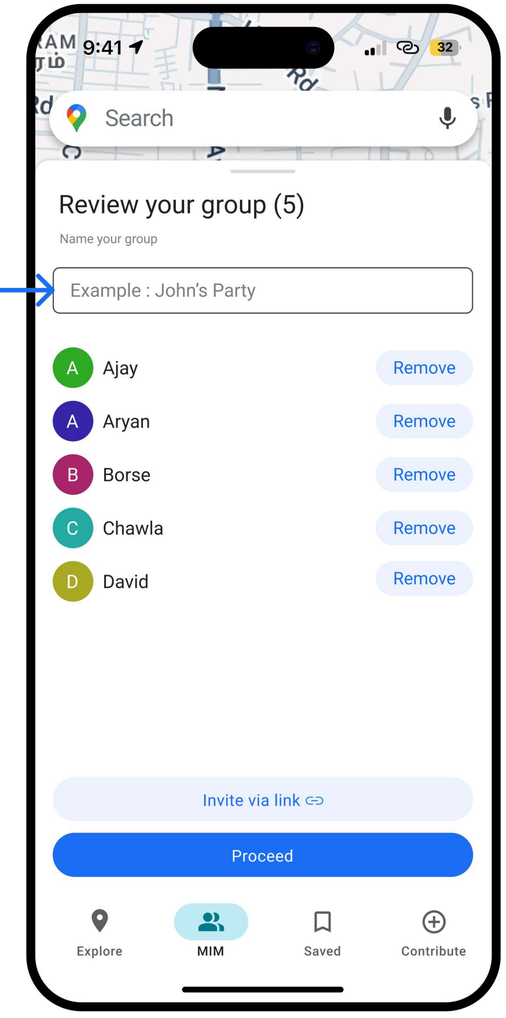
Home Page



User Flow - Group Setup





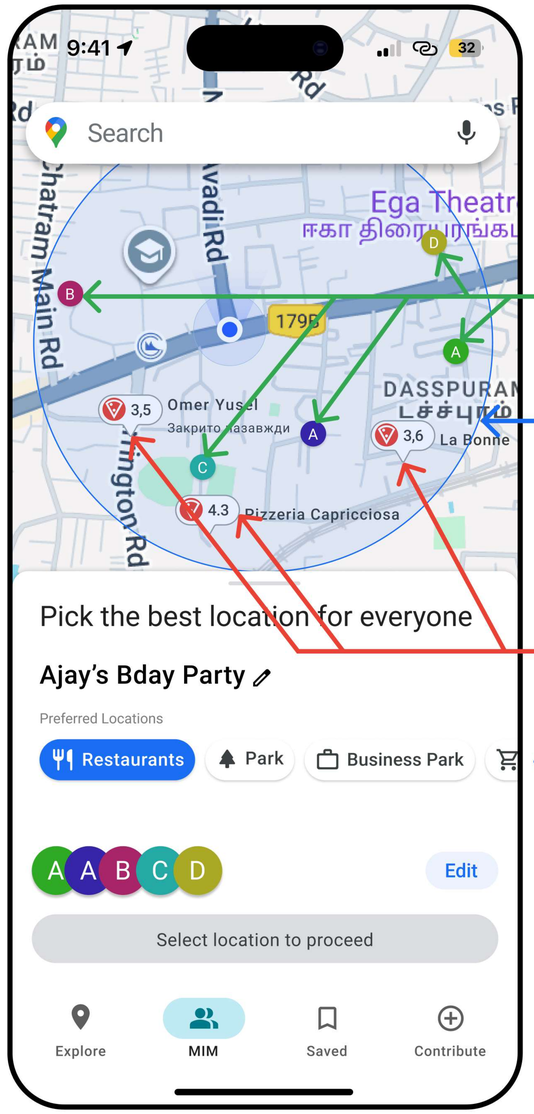


Select Members: Quickly define the group using familiar contact selection.

Review Group: Confirm participants and context before proceeding.

Confirm & Proceed: Move forward to discover a fair meeting location.

Location Selection



Live location for group members (along with avatars)

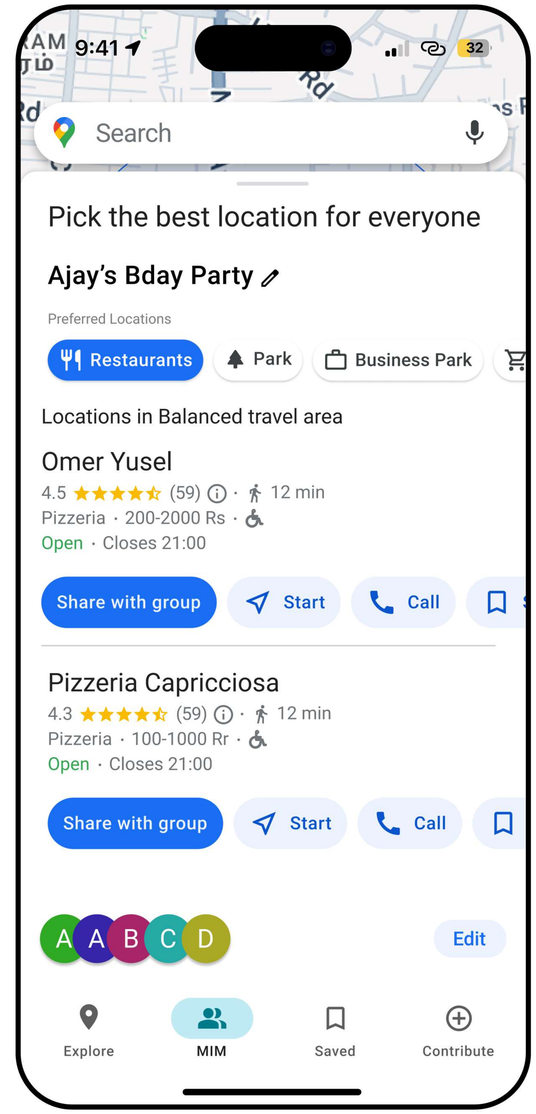
Equal travel time area zone

Recommended point of meetings within travel zone

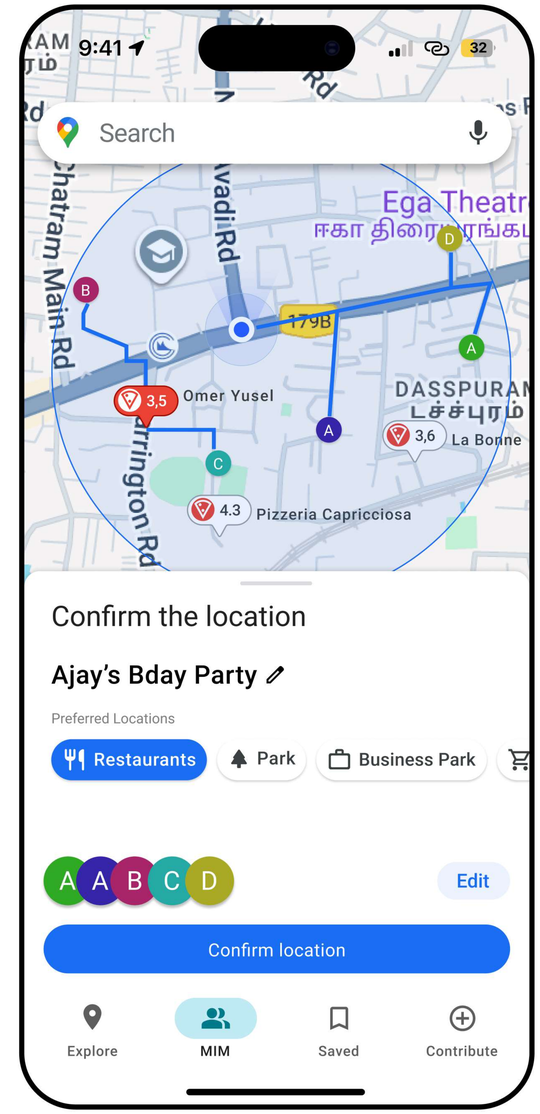
Chips for preference

Location type selection

Location selection option 1
List view



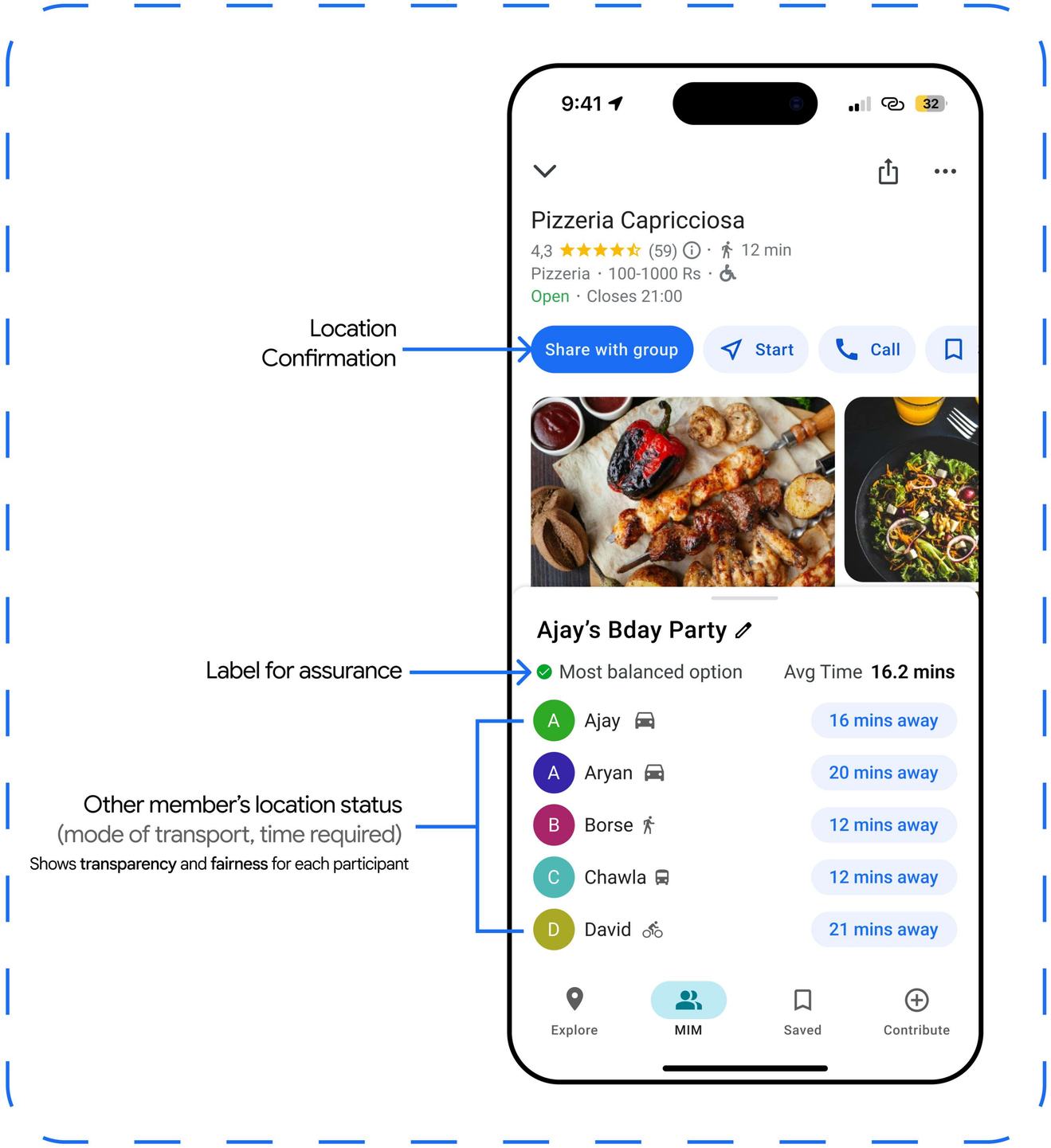
Location selection option 2
Map Selection view



Evaluating the Recommended Location

At this stage, users see a recommended meeting location that balances travel effort across the group. Clear indicators of fairness and transparency help users feel confident in the choice.

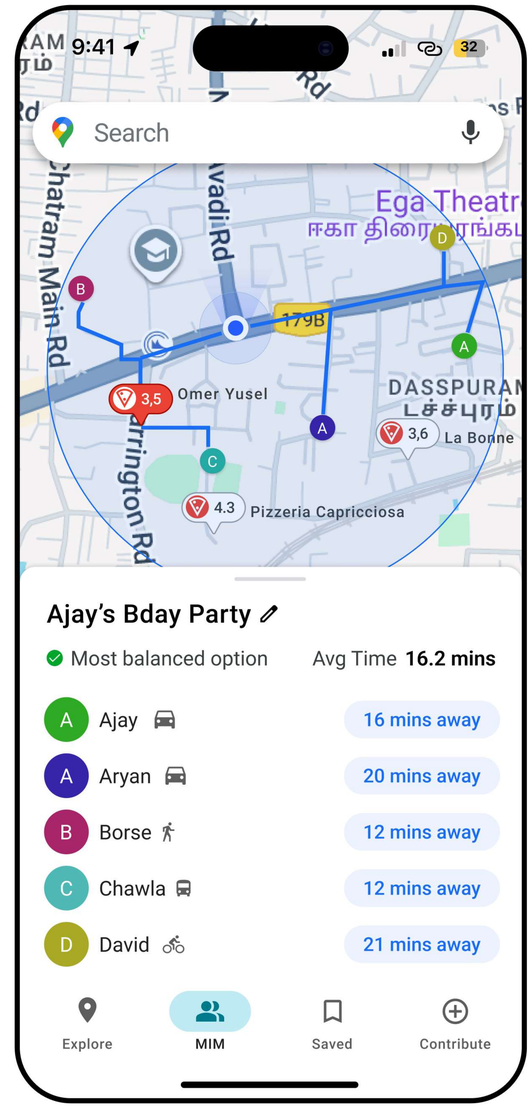
Individual travel times and transport modes are shown for each participant, allowing users to quickly validate that the location works for everyone before sharing it with the group.



Live Location Coordination

This step keeps the meeting location and travel times updated in real time as group members move. The balanced travel area adjusts dynamically to ensure the recommendation remains fair.

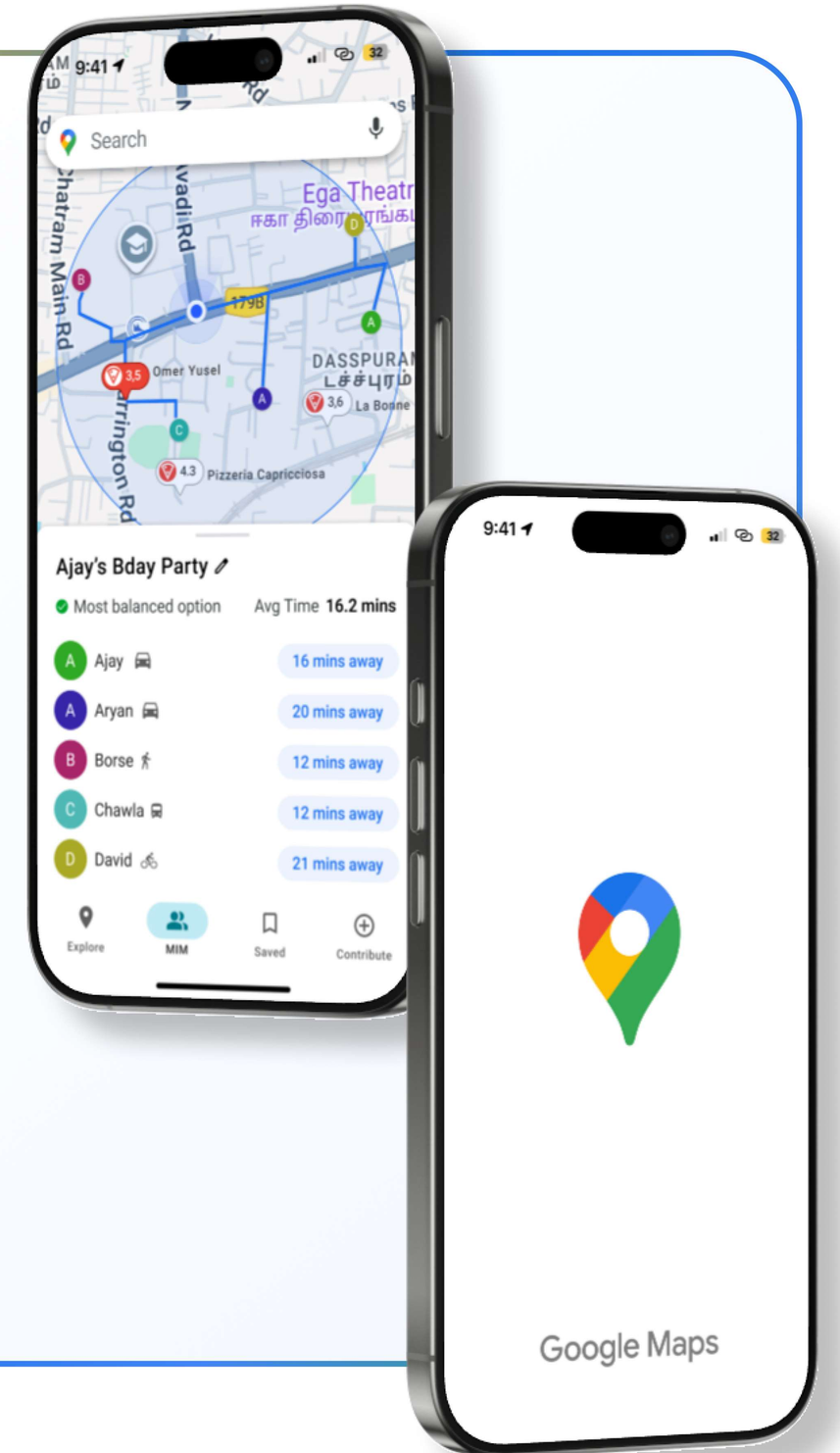
Live location updates support ongoing coordination and reduce the need for manual check-ins before the group meets.



Full View

Consolidated View

Impact of the Feature

A lightweight addition that improves coordination without adding complexity

- Reduces coordination friction by eliminating manual midpoint estimation and back-and-forth messaging.
- Makes meet-ups feel fair and transparent through real-time travel time balancing for all participants.
- Keeps planning and navigation in one place, avoiding context switching between apps.
- Scales naturally from 2 to many users, supporting both casual and group meet-ups.
- Adapts in real time as users move, ensuring the meeting location remains relevant.