Sober Sidekick Meeting Finder

Development Progress Report

Sober Sidekick

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January 2026

Executive Summary

The Sober Sidekick Meeting Finder has undergone significant development over the past week, with **317 commits** and **20+ merged pull requests** delivering major improvements to the platform. Key achievements include enhanced user experience through redesigned UI components, improved performance via intelligent data caching and optimized API calls, new features for real-time progress tracking, and expanded mobile platform support.

The platform now provides comprehensive coverage of 12-step meetings (AA, NA, Al-Anon) across 10 U.S. states with approximately 5,000+ meetings, featuring advanced search, interactive maps, and shareable meeting links.

317
Commits This Week

20+
Pull Requests Merged

10
States with Coverage

Major Feature Releases

1. Meeting Detail Page with Shareable URLs

> ### Direct Meeting Links (PR #256)
>
> Users can now share direct links to specific meetings via a new `/meeting/:id` route. This enables:
>
> - Shareable URLs that can be sent via text, email, or social media
> - "Open in new window" button for easy sharing from the meeting sidebar
> - Full meeting information display including schedule, location, online access, and contact details
> - Back button navigation and responsive design with dark/light theme support

2. Real-Time Progress Tracking

Clustering Progress Sidebar (PR #260)

A new slide-out sidebar provides real-time visualization of map indicator job progress:

- ETA calculation based on elapsed time and current progress
- Phase progress indicators showing current operation
- Real-time log streaming with auto-scroll
- Statistics display showing meetings processed and indicators created

Scraper Time Estimates (PR #242)

Scraping operations now display:

- Elapsed time and estimated time remaining
- Items/second velocity in progress message
- Progress bar with percentage completion

3. Coverage Gap Discovery System

Intelligent Gap Analysis (PR #247)

Enhanced coverage detection with Back4App persistence:

- Gap score (0-100) prioritizes states by urgency and population impact
- Status classifications: critical, low, below_average, good
- Comparison to national average for smarter detection
- Persisted recommendations for each state
- "Reanalyze" button for on-demand coverage statistics

User Experience Improvements

4. Redesigned Scraper Interface

Modern Side Panel Design (PR #251)

- Redesigned scraper UI with side panel for active scrapes
- Expandable failed saves viewer for debugging
- View Progress button for in-progress scrapes
- Clean, modern appearance with improved readability

5. Enhanced Map Experience

Map Improvements

- Subtle loading indicator during data fetch
- IP-based location prefill for public page (PR #245)
- Fixed heatmap click handlers (PR #244)
- Improved heatmap loading efficiency (PR #249)
- Map marker highlight on hover with distance sorting

6. Data Loading Optimizations

Platform-Wide Data Caching (v1.17.1)

- DataCacheContext with configurable TTL and stale-while-revalidate
- Meetings Explorer caches meetings, filters, and available states
- Admin Panel caches feeds, directory, and scraping state
- Data persists during navigation, refreshes only on manual action or TTL expiry

Adaptive Batch Loading

- Batch sizes auto-adjust (10-100) based on network speed
- Parallel batch fetching for faster loading on fast connections
- Real-time network speed detection
- Progress bar with percentage complete

Performance & Stability Fixes

Issue	Resolution	PR
Heatmap API request flooding (100+ calls/second)	Implemented debouncing and request deduplication	#237
Meeting search API flooding	Added debounce to meeting search filter	#240
Coverage analysis timeout	Added backend API fallback with optimized queries	#255
Map/list meeting count desync	Fixed filter synchronization with day filter	#254
Meeting detail page direct URL routing	Fixed SPA routing for direct meeting links	#263
Recent meetings empty when resuming scrape	Fixed edge case in scrape resume logic	#252
Client-side thumbnail loading	Added caching to prevent redundant loads	#238

Release History

v1.17.1 - January 22, 2026

Data Caching System, Location Search, Parse SDK Integration

● **v1.8.0** - January 21, 2026

Enhanced Search Bar, Loading Overlay, State Coverage Heatmap

● **v1.7.0** - January 21, 2026

State Coverage Heatmap Modal, Interactive Coverage Analysis

● **v1.6.0** - January 21, 2026

API Versioning with Changelog, Integrated Changelog Viewer

● **v1.5.0 - v1.5.4** - January 21, 2026

Efficient Heatmap View, Script Generation, Source Testing, State Bubble Click

Current Coverage Status

State	Active Feeds	Meeting Types	Est. Meetings
Alabama	Birmingham AA, West Alabama AA, Alabama NA	AA, NA	~500
Arizona	Phoenix AA	AA	~400
California	Bay Area AA, San Diego AA	AA	~600
Colorado	Boulder AA	AA	~200
Georgia	Atlanta AA	AA	~800
Indiana	Indianapolis AA	AA	~470
Missouri	Missouri NA	NA	~624
Texas	Houston AA, Austin AA	AA	~1,500
Virginia	Richmond AA, Blue Ridge AA	AA	~742
Washington	Eastside AA (Seattle)	AA	~439

Priority States for Expansion

State	Population	Priority Level
Florida	22.6M	**Critical**
New York	19.6M	**Critical**
Pennsylvania	13.0M	High
Illinois	12.6M	High
Ohio	11.8M	High

Technical Architecture

Frontend Stack

- **React 18** - Modern UI framework with hooks
- **Leaflet** - Interactive maps with clustering
- **Parse JS SDK** - Direct Back4App database access
- **Google Identity** - Authentication
- **CSS3** - Custom styling (no frameworks)

Backend Stack

- **Python 3.8+ / Flask** - API server
- **Gunicorn + Eventlet** - Production WSGI server
- **Back4App (Parse)** - Database and storage
- **Nominatim** - Geocoding service

Data Flow

1. **Scraping**: Backend fetches meeting data from TSML and BMLT feeds
2. **Transformation**: Raw data normalized to standard schema
3. **Deduplication**: Unique keys prevent duplicate entries
4. **Storage**: Meetings saved to Back4App Parse database
5. **API**: RESTful endpoints serve data to frontend and mobile apps
6. **Display**: React frontend renders maps and lists for users

Mobile Platform Support

The platform provides full SDK integration guides for mobile developers:

Platform	SDK	Features
iOS	ParseSwift	SwiftUI + async/await examples, downloadable Meeting.swift model
Android	Parse-SDK-Android	Jetpack Compose + Coroutines, downloadable Meeting.kt model
Mac Desktop	Electron	Native app with code signing and notarization

Next Steps

Immediate Priorities

- Expand coverage to Florida and New York (critical priority states)
- Continue performance optimizations for large datasets
- Enhance mobile responsiveness across all views

Planned Features

- User permissions system with expandable settings
- Auto-generated Python scraping scripts
- Intergroup research panel for deep source discovery

- Online meetings dedicated menu and view

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