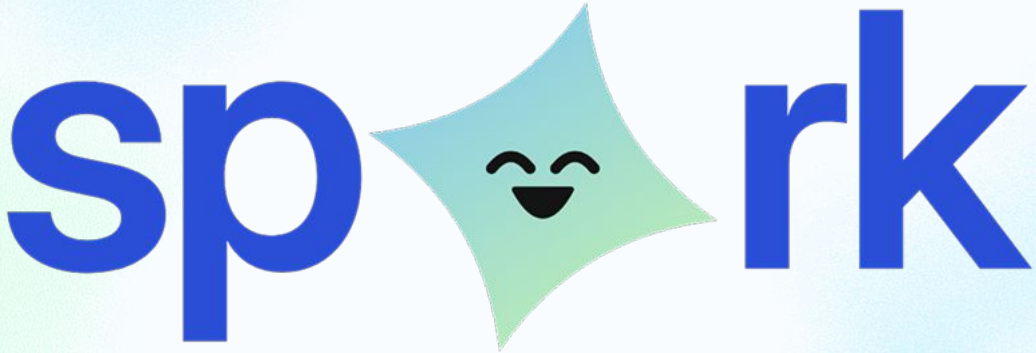
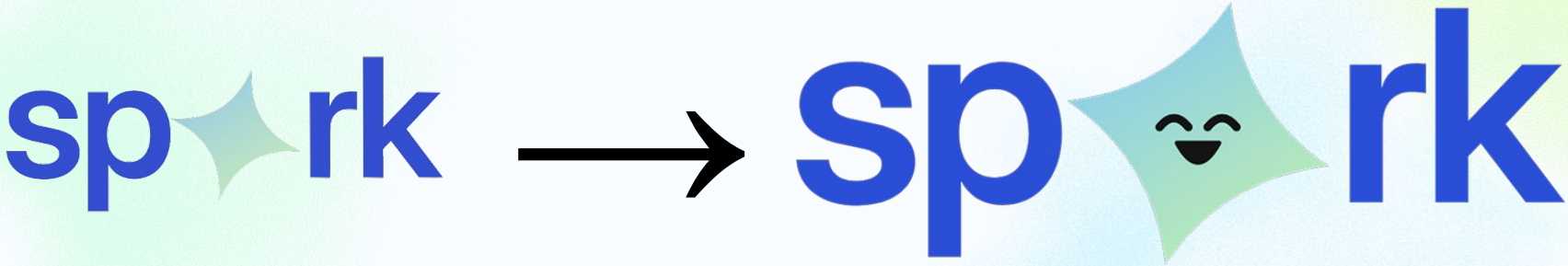


by the KRAMberries

(Katherine Kricorian, Rebecca Alcala, Angela Yang, Meredith Nam)

the old spark logo looked too much like Google Gemini's logo, so we decided to personify the logo **to differentiate it**



still, the name "spark" and its somewhat humanoid mascot may **mislead users** into thinking spark is a dating/social app, so we modified our tasks to reframe our app's focus as **discovering shared spaces based on interests**, with meeting & hanging out w/ others as an additional goal.

sp rk-ing connections at shared spaces with one click.



sp✦rk-ing connections at **shared** spaces with one click.

shared spaces may be less known to users of different generations/cultures, so we reworded the value proposition wording for **more immediate understanding.**



the problem

people want to **find interesting shared spaces** and engage in low-effort conversation, but **struggle to gauge & express comfort** w/ being approached within shared spaces.

spark, our solution

- based on personalized **user interests, region, and schedule,** app recommends nearby shared spaces.
- users can plan trips to shared spaces **individually or w/ friends**.
- users **check in to shared spaces** w/ one-time location check and can choose to meet with other checked-in users.

spark's design values

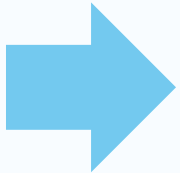
core value	definition within app	a design feature/decision expressing this value	how this feature supports this value
trust	we want users to **trust** that we won't misuse **sensitive information** like personal details and live location	location privacy **disclaimers** and opt-out.	users understand when/**how their location will be used** and can opt out if desired.
personalization	we want users to feel like spark's recommendations are **tailored** to them and their **interests/goals**	interests/**preferences** selection page, **activity details** selection page	users are able to **directly influence** the shared spaces that are recommended to them and the plans that are generated

spark's value tensions & tradeoffs

- tension between **user trust + personalization** may emerge: if users uncomfortable sharing location, may receive less tailored/nearby shared space recommendations
    - **clear disclaimers** aim to ease user concern and enhance comfort sharing location
- nay be tensions between **sharing information with strangers** and retaining user trust
    - only show **brief summaries** of user backgrounds, never reveal full names
    - users must **validate** (eg. scan identification, face) before being able to meet others

revisiting our 3 tasks

Task
share specific interests and personality type.
find an interesting shared space to visit during their free time.
initiate meaningful conversation and spark connections with other people in a shared space.

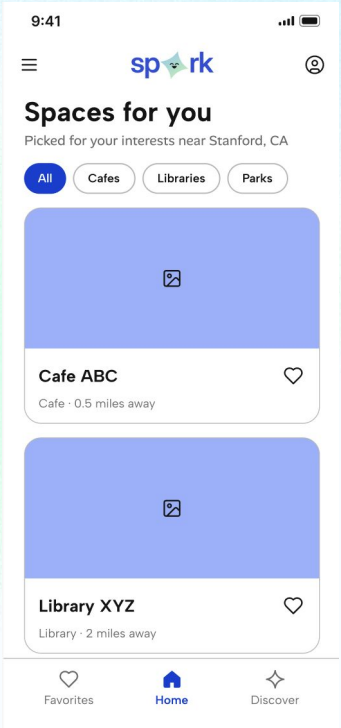


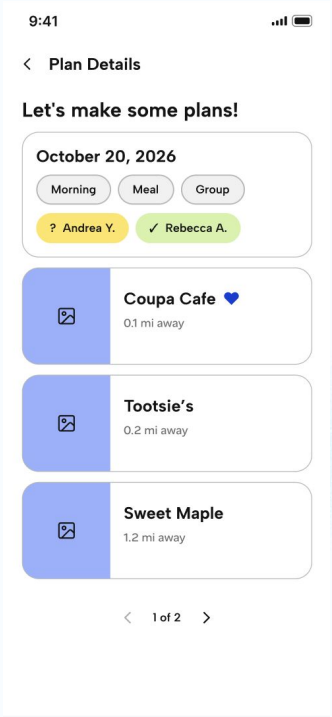
Task
find a new shared space.
make concrete plans to go to a shared space.
go to a shared space and engage w/ people in the space.

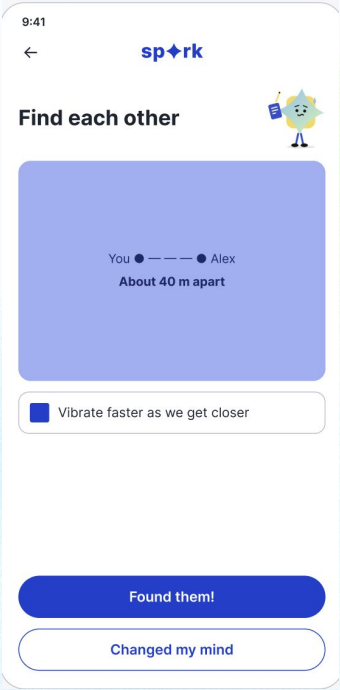
creating & sharing user profiles = too similar to **existing social/dating apps**, which we're trying to avoid. revised our tasks to focus on how people can **interact w/ shared spaces**, not necessarily people.

revisiting our 3 tasks

moderate: make concrete plans to go to a shared space







simple: find a new shared space

complex: go to a shared space and engage w/ people in the space

usability goals & key measurements

efficient: the amount of time each task takes is **under 5 min**

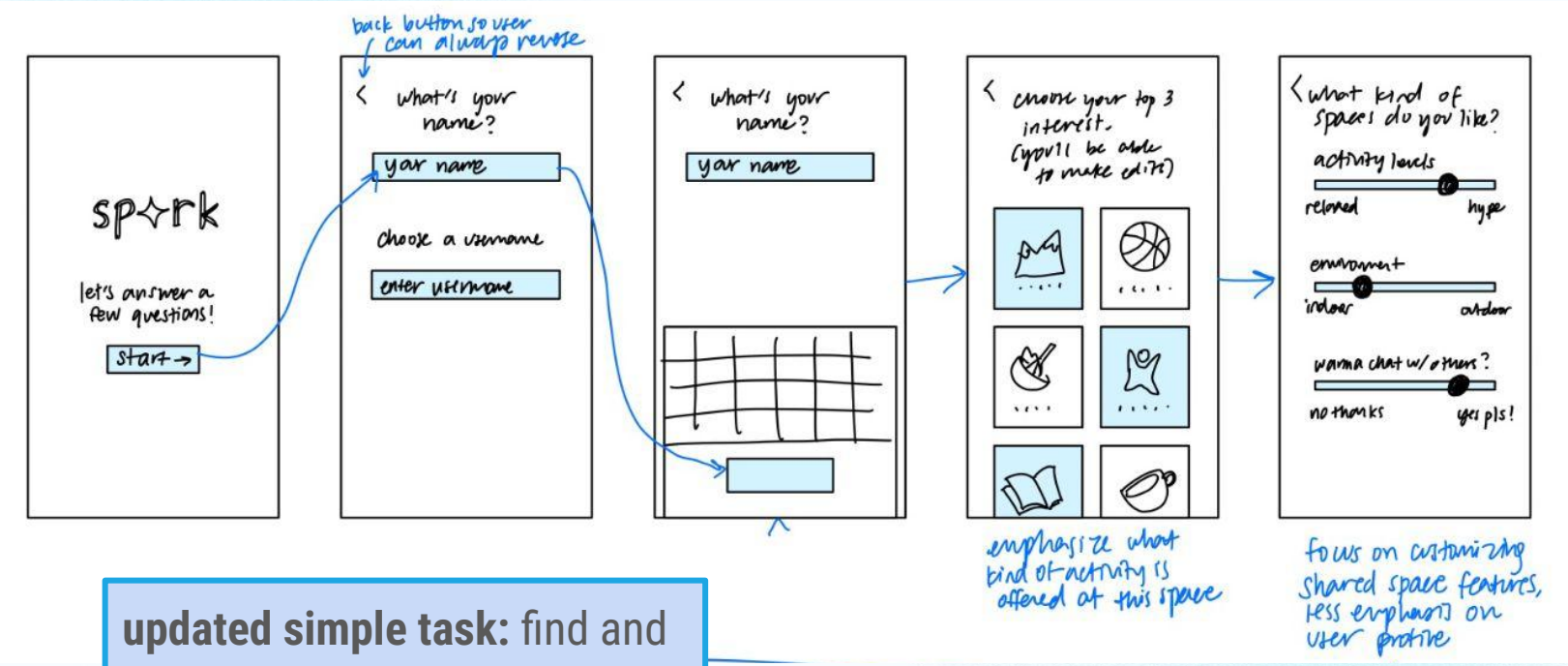
- deciding on a plan involves **fewer steps** and pages (select interest areas).
- inviting friends to a plan is more streamlined (select from **dropdown of recommendations** or **search for** a particular friend).
- check-in process at shared spaces **does not re-request location/camera permissions** but allows users to view usage disclaimers as desired.
- limited user info available when viewing other checked-in users to **shorten time spent** “choosing” who to meet.

pleasing: the process, from **onboarding to checking in to finding matches**, is smooth

- changed structure of the Calendar page to make it more **visually appealing and intuitive**: add images per calendar and **view profiles** of users who are also calendar members
- generating a plan is based on **visual buttons** with icons/images, less reliant on the user reading through small text or numbers
- users can pre-filter other users they want to interact with based on **age, check-in history, etc.** for greater safety and satisfaction when meeting strangers.

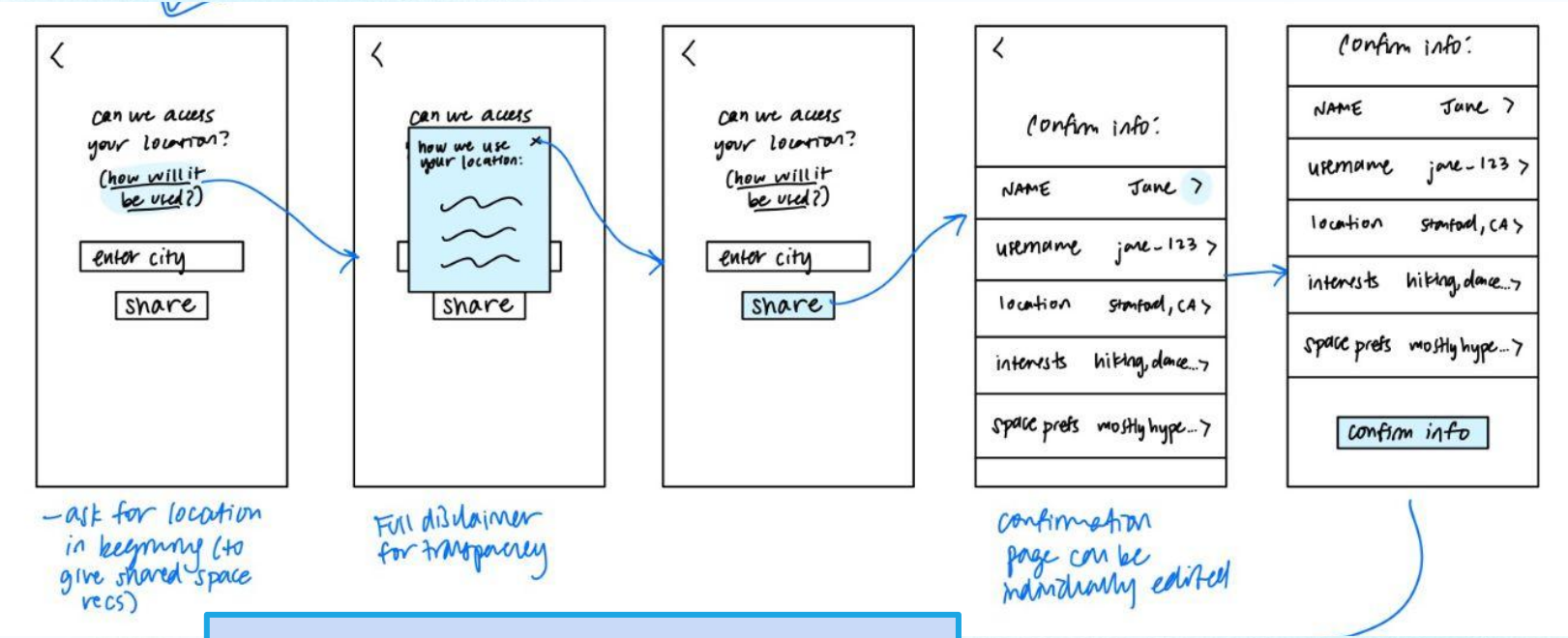
revised lo-fi sketches

revised sketches: simple task



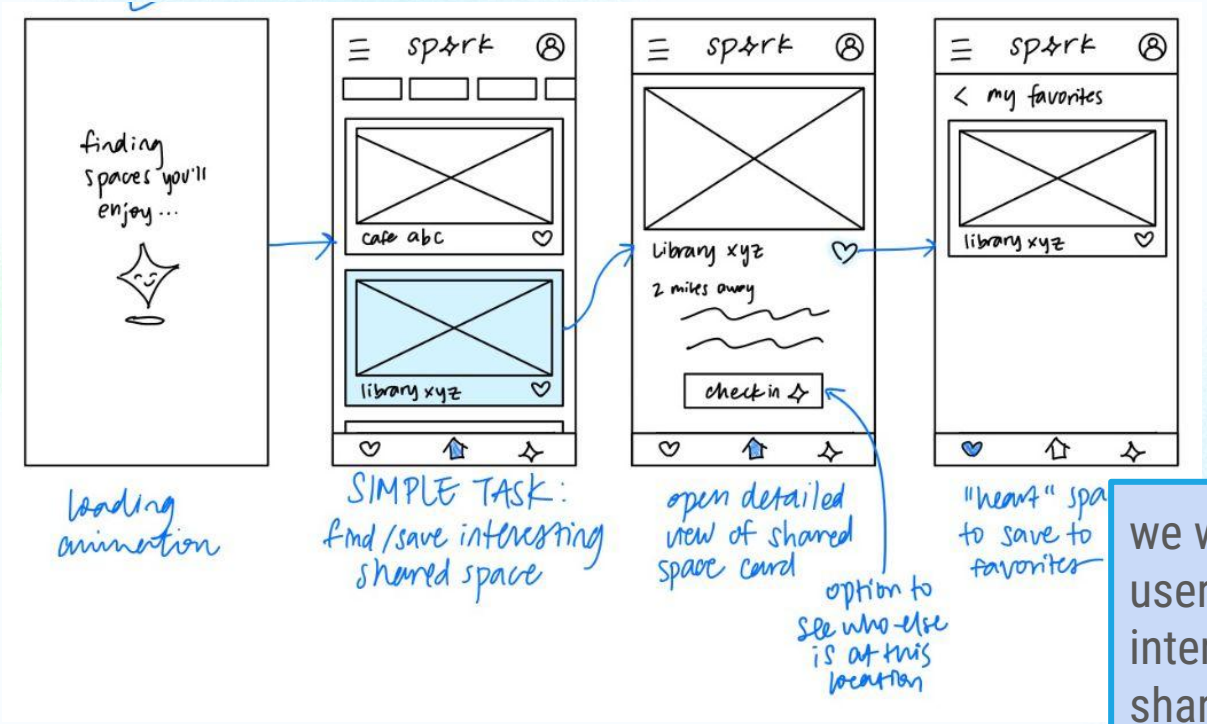
updated simple task: find and save a shared space the user is interested in checking out

revised sketches: simple task



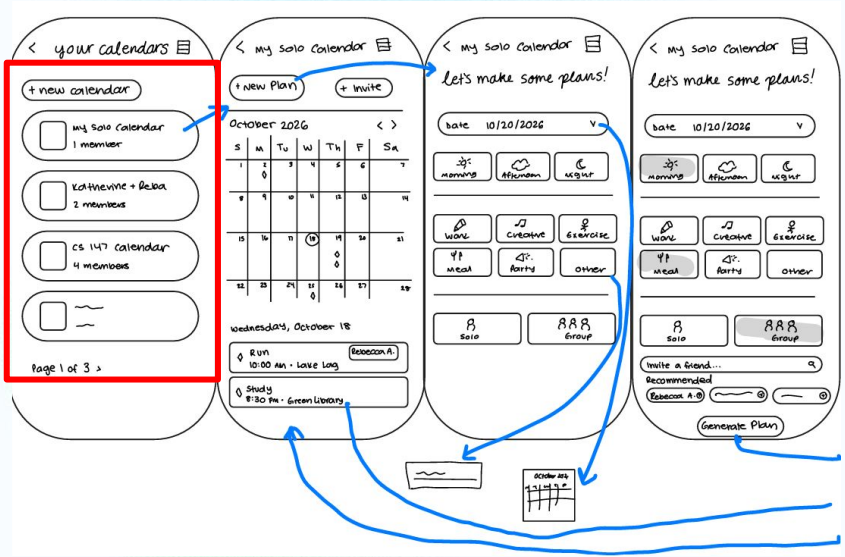
prioritize **asking for location + being transparent** about how location is collected to ensure users feel comfortable with sharing information

revised sketches: simple task

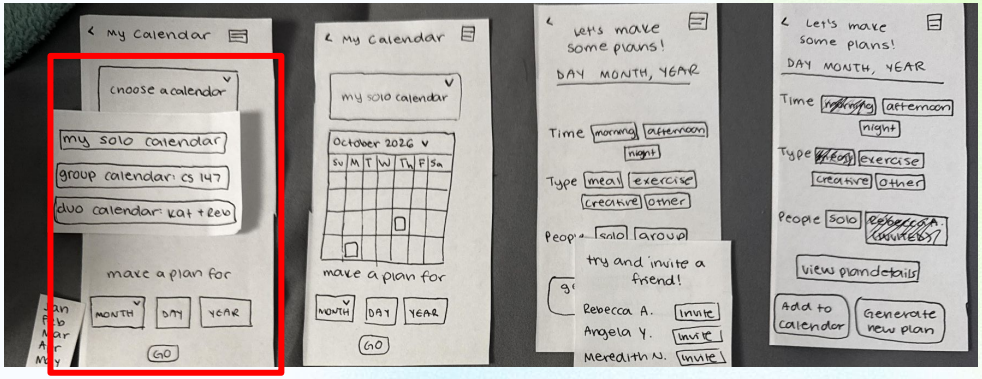


we want to emphasis on letting users **find shared spaces** they're interested in (possibly sparking shared connections), instead of finding people they like **based on their profiles**

revised sketches: moderate task



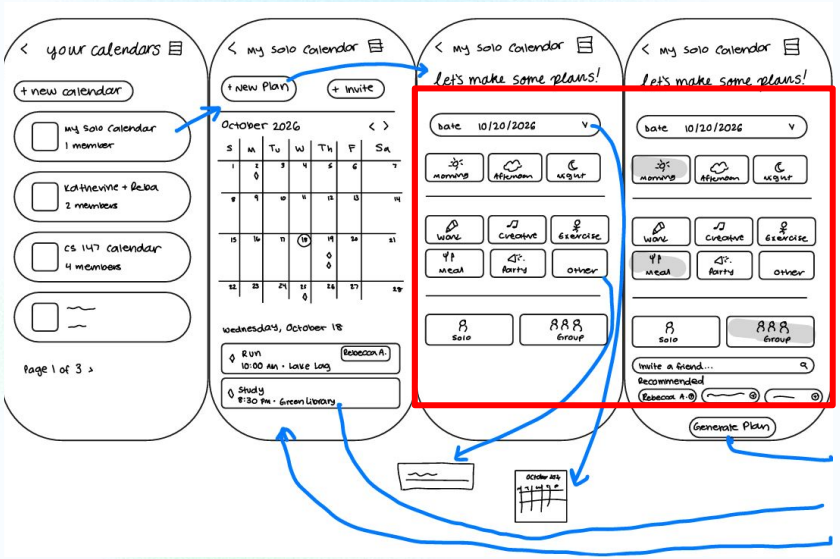
after



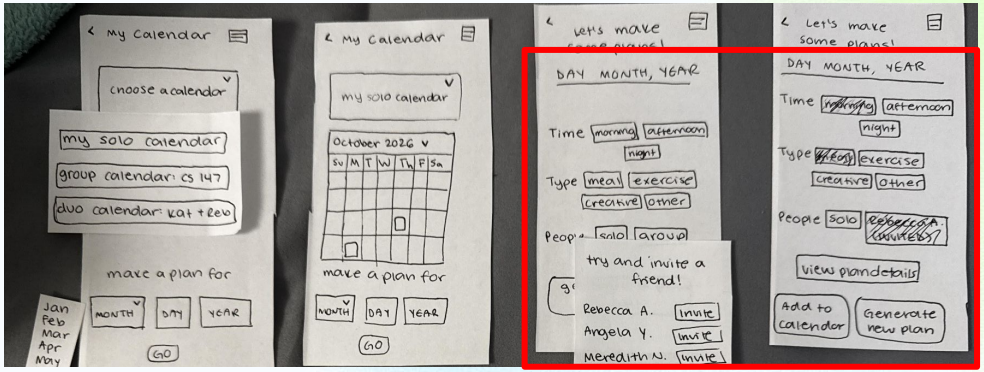
before

changed layout of Calendar page to make it more intuitive that the **user has multiple calendars** and more visually appealing (before, users **didn't identify** it was a dropdown)

revised sketches: moderate task



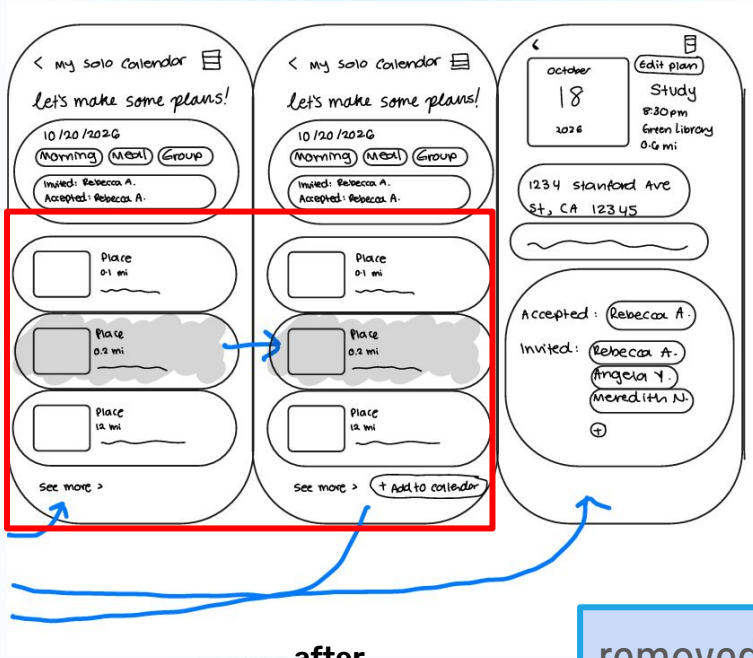
after



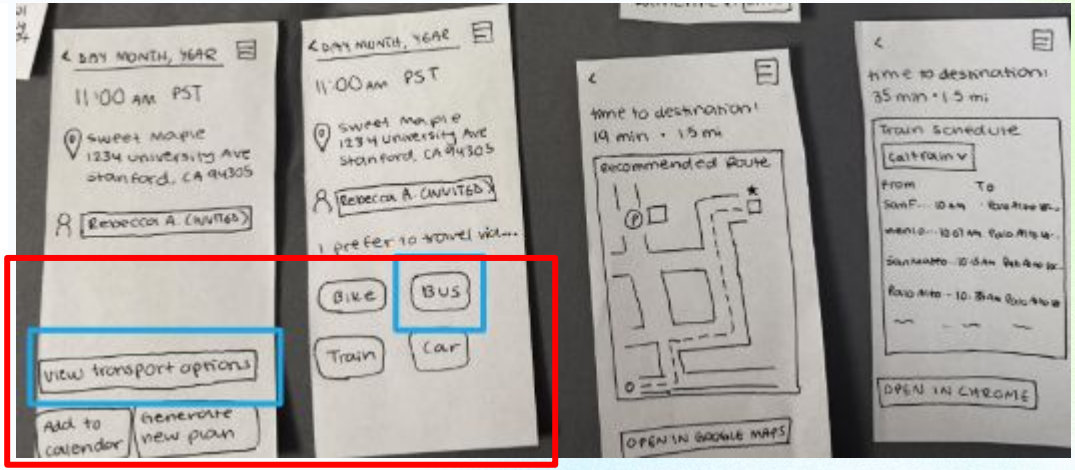
before

changed plan generation procedure to select from **icons rather than buttons** to make more visually appealing and **customizable** (users expressed they didn't have enough input over generated plans)

revised sketches: moderate task



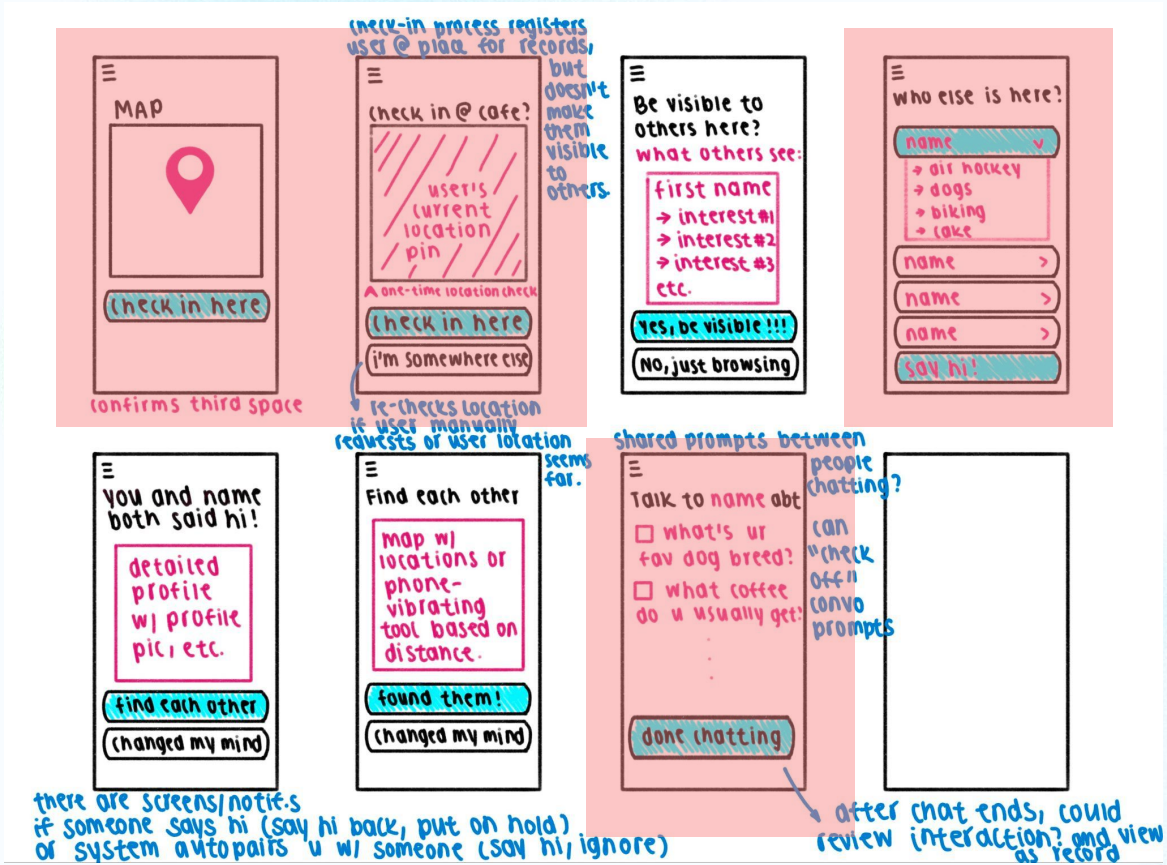
after



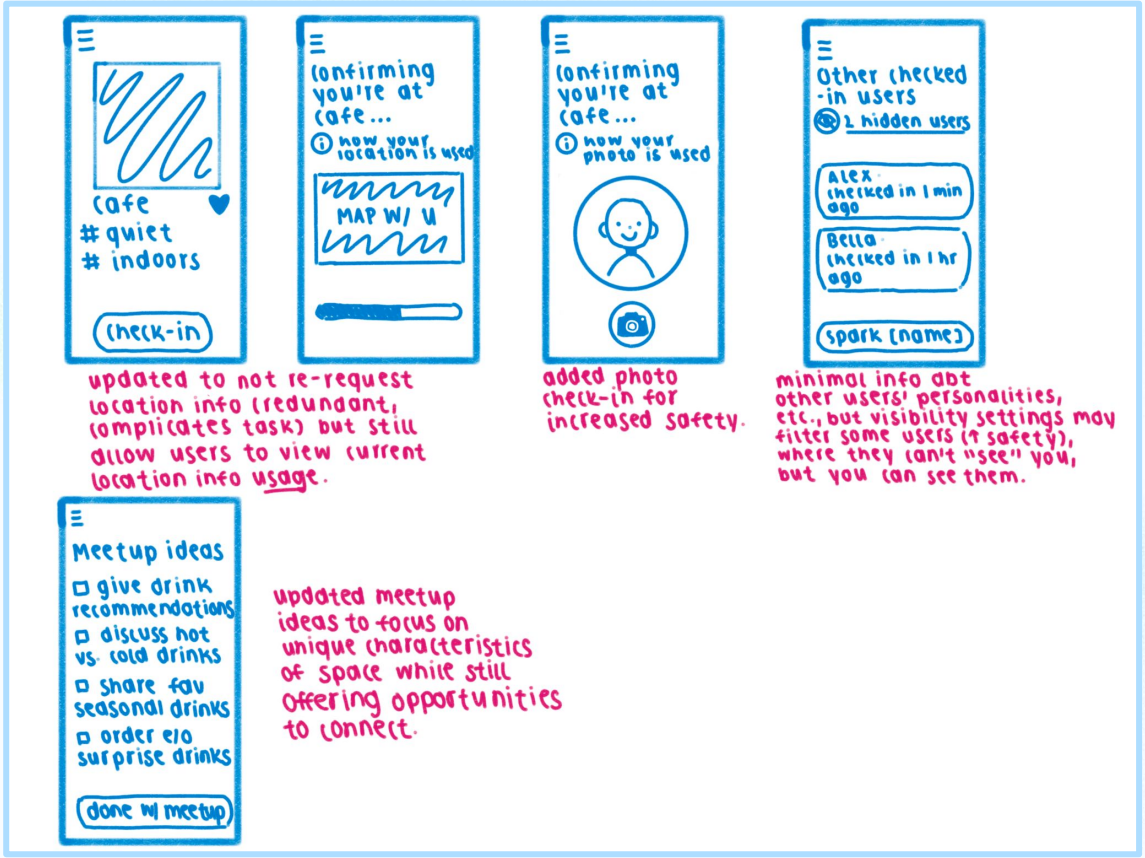
before

removed transportation details to **enhance efficiency** (users can open in Google Maps if desired), instead sort generated locations by location (users expressed dissatisfaction at generated distance, so incorporated **more user control here**)

revised sketches: complex task



revised sketches: complex task



updated to not re-request location info (redundant, complicates task) but still allow users to view current location info usage.

added photo check-in for increased safety.

minimal info abt other users' personalities, etc., but visibility settings may filter some users (↑ safety), where they can't "see" you, but you can see them.

updated meetup ideas to focus on unique characteristics of space while still offering opportunities to connect.

reason for change:

1. noticed users were fine w/ giving location but still **read disclaimer,** so simplify task by removing **redundant location info** request and leave disclaimer.
2. expert feedback: **concerns about safety.**
3. noticed testers were actually **more reluctant** to interact if their first impression of someone was w/ **narrow, non-descriptive traits**, so removing user info makes spark less like a social app & makes ppl more willing to interact.
4. expert feedback: even though our needfinding implies ppl can **connect w/ right place/right time**, should still make activities **fun and related to space.**

spark’s design system

design system: color scheme



we chose these **shades of blue** as our primary colors based on our “spark” mascot and logo.

we chose these **shades of yellow/green** because they directly complement our primary colors and provide “sparks” of color.

design system: typography

Title - 56 px

Inter

Header 1 – 32 px

Albert Sans

Header 2 – 24 px

Albert Sans

Header 3 – 20 px

Albert Sans

Body - 16 px

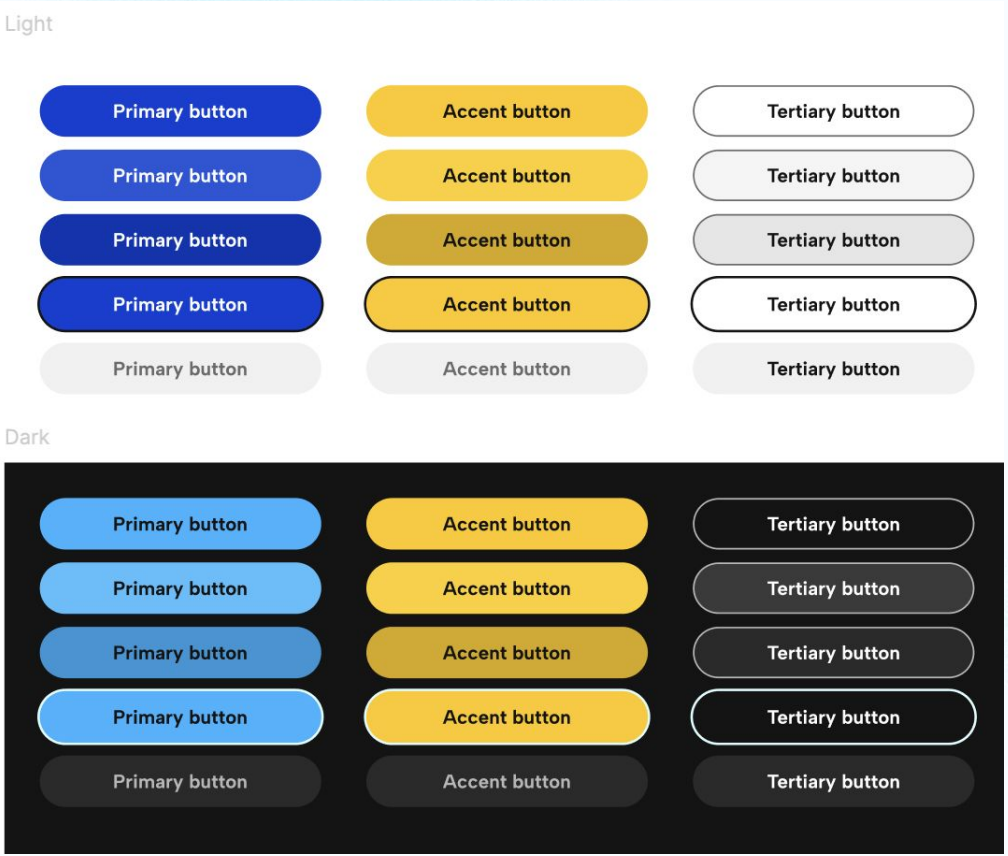
Alan Sans

Tooltip/Caption – 14 px

Albert Sans

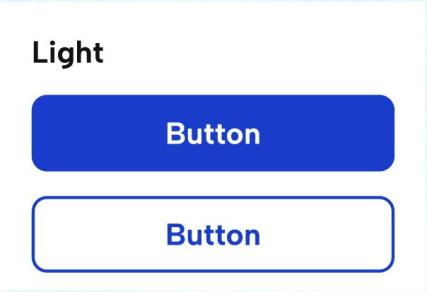
we wanted to use a **clean, straightforward font** that is both trustworthy and approachable. the fonts Inter and Albert Sans convey a **friendly yet formal tone** with their rounded letter elements, and Alan Sans is a body text font that's **readable from a variety of font sizes.**

design system: buttons



strong blue for primary button (with different states for press and hover), **accent button in yellow** (used less frequently than primary button), **tertiary button** for actions other than the primary button (not the priority)

we originally started with **rectangular buttons,** but ultimately decided on rounder buttons to create a **warmer, more approachable UI** that makes users more comfortable interacting with features (like initiating connections, saving recommendations, etc.



design system: logo & visual elements

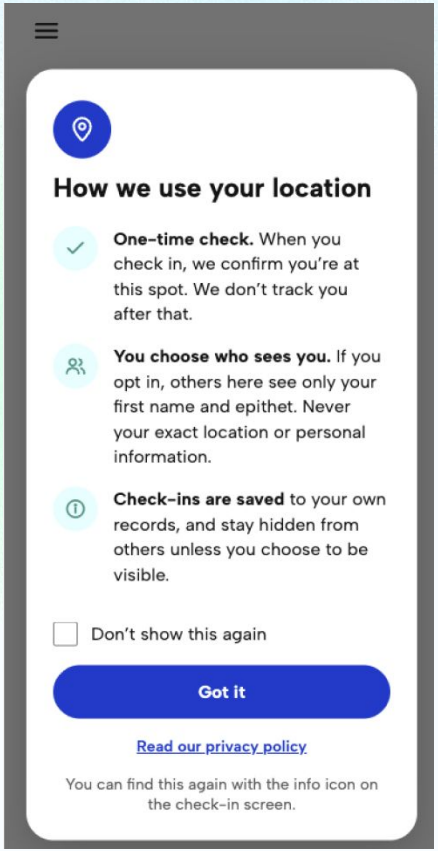


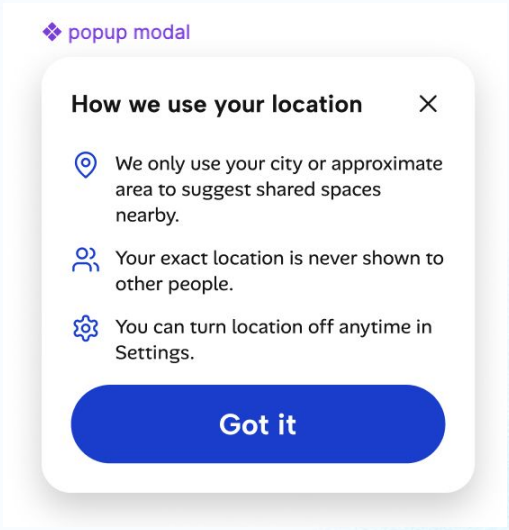
spark

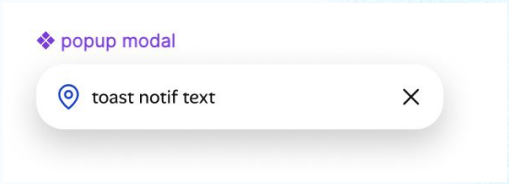


we wanted for the app to convey a **whimsical experience** for shared spaces and finding new friends. thus, we built out our spark logo to depict **various interests users could have.**

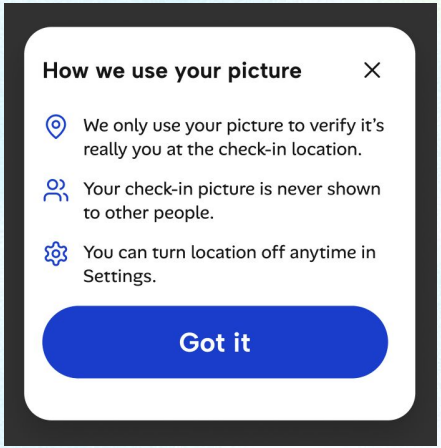
design system: modals & pop-ups



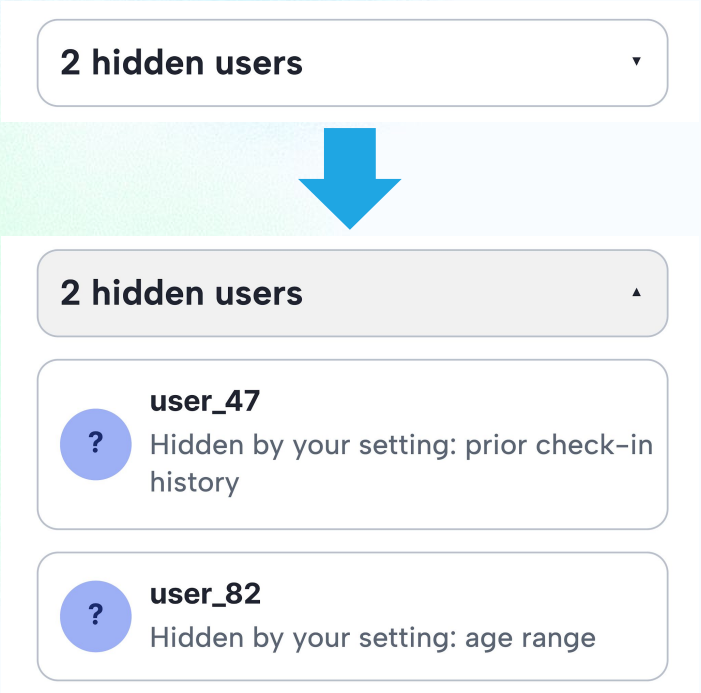




we wanted the popup to be **simple and visible** to users when they encounter them in the app (while also **clearly conveying crucial privacy information**)



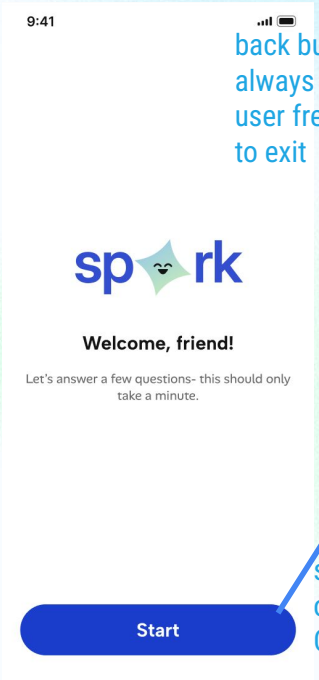
design system: text inputs & dropdowns



this dropdown **minimizes cluttered text** on users' screens (hidden users based on visibility/safety settings), while still offering users the freedom to see which of their own **visibility and safety settings** caused each user to be hidden, so they stay informed and in control.

med-fi prototypes

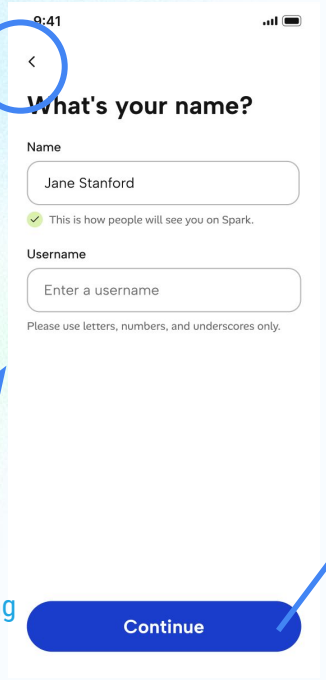
med-fi prototype: task 1



initial onboarding page

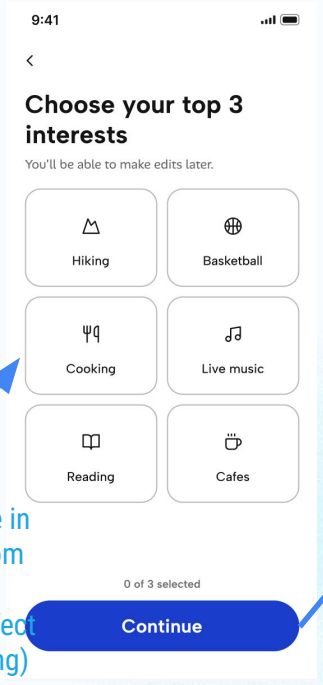
simple onboarding CTA task

back button to always give user freedom to exit



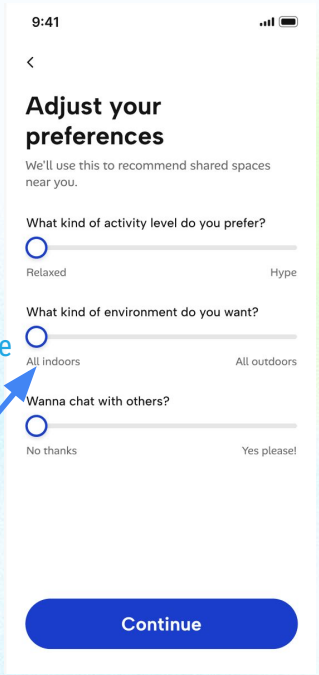
name and username page with confirmation

pages slide in (slide in from the right to give the effect of advancing)



choosing top 3 interests to influence recommendations (currently the interests are hard-coded)

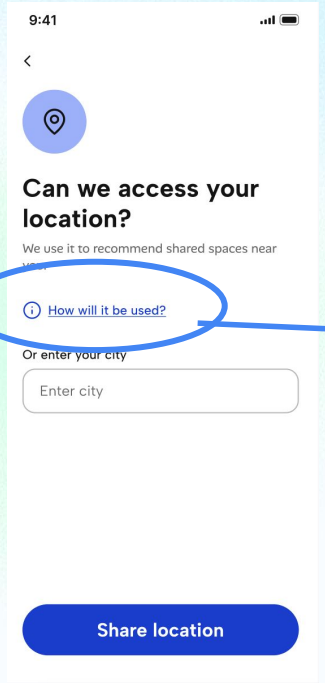
confirmation of 3 interests needed before advancing



sliders offer more freedom when selecting location preferences

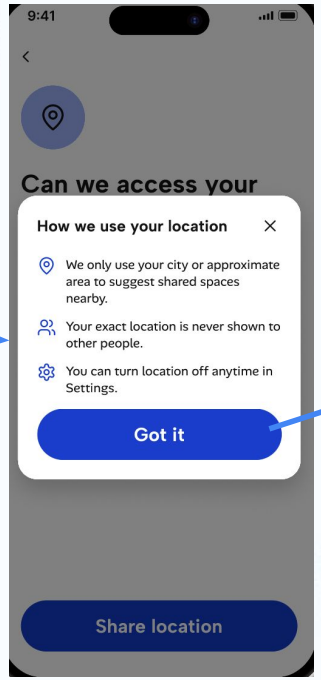
next slide

med-fi prototype: task 1



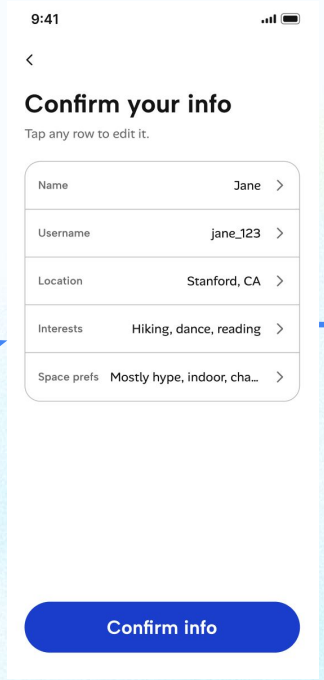
location access page

always provide an option for users to see how their info is being used



location disclaimer for transparency

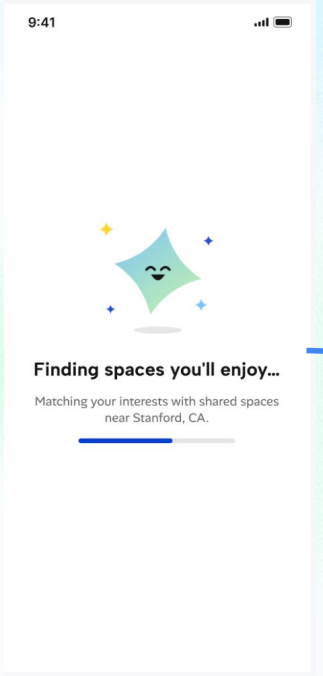
multiple modes of exiting pop-up



confirmation screen with edit abilities

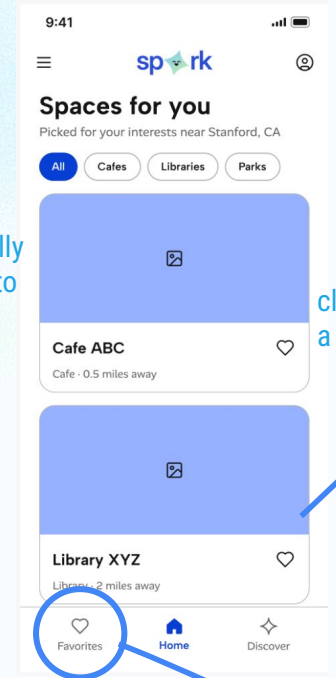
next slide

med-fi prototype: task 1



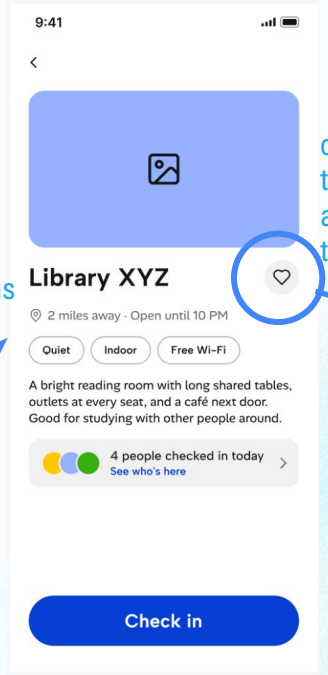
loading page with personable mascot to make waiting process more enjoyable

loading screen that automatically takes user to next page



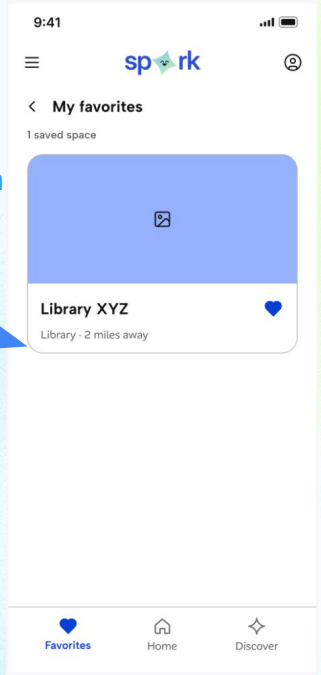
landing page has recommendations of spaces (less emphasis on finding "matches")

clicking opens a detail page



open a detail page for a shared space and see who else is also there

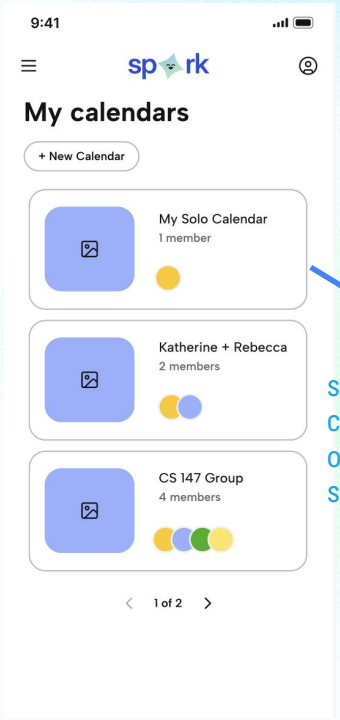
clicking on the heart icon adds a place to Favorites



shortcut to save and access favorites easily

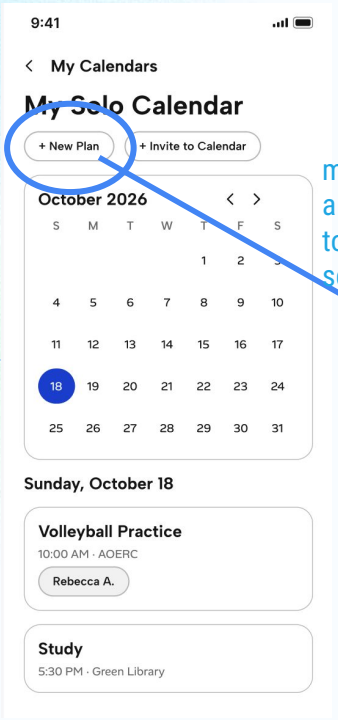
navigate to favorites from bottom menu

med-fi prototype: task 2



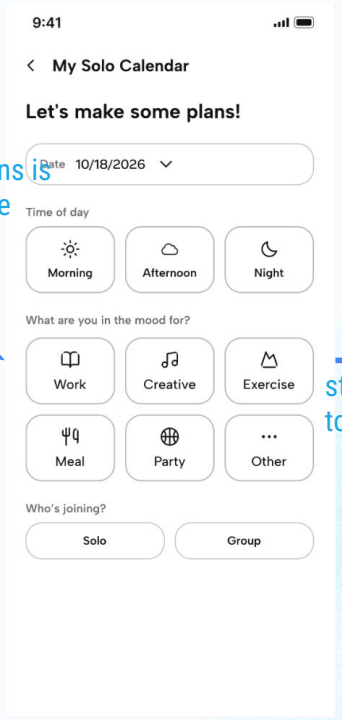
easily access different kinds of calendars

select a calendar to open to full screen



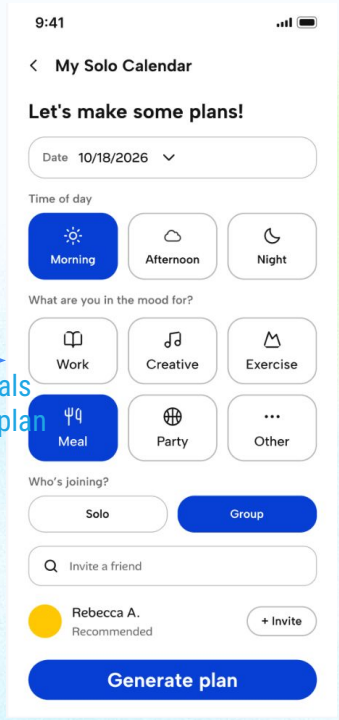
clear calendar view with activity options

making plans is a CTA at the top of the screen



streamlined visuals for making plans

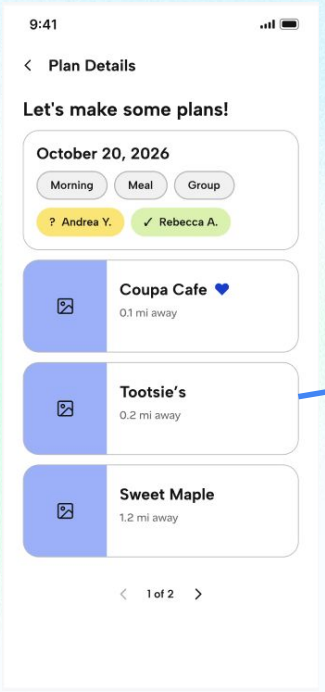
strong visuals to select a plan



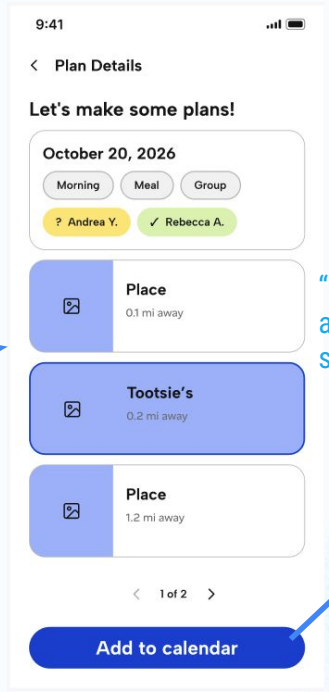
automatically recommend friends

next slide

med-fi prototype: task 2



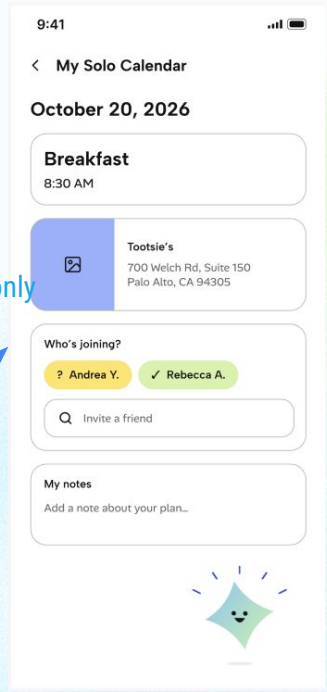
filters and suggested contacts for making friends conveniently



filters and suggested contacts for making friends conveniently

shortcuts to plans with others

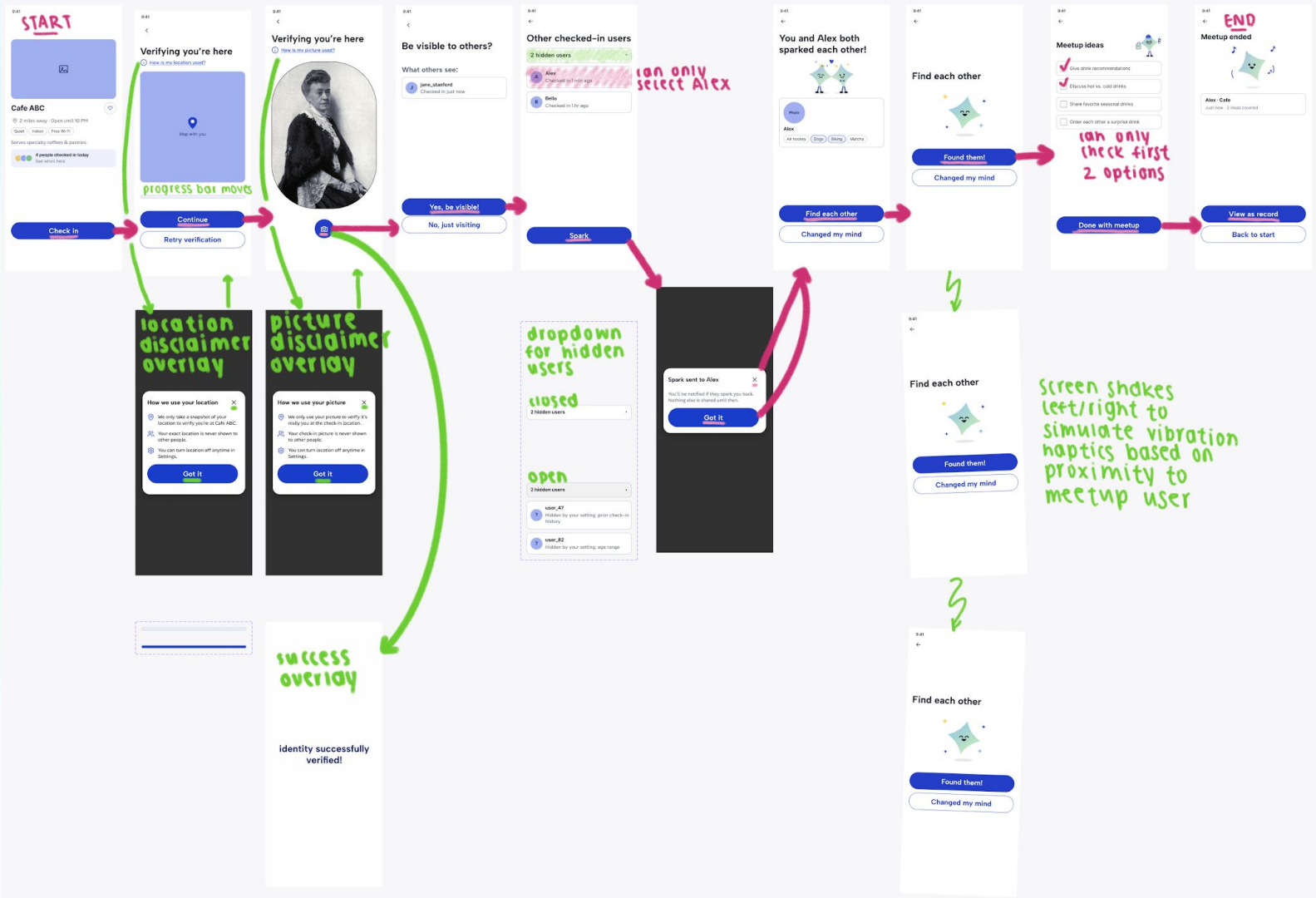
"add to calendar" CTA only appears once a plan is selected



confirmation screen for plan consolidates all info into one screen

task 3

user goal: check in to shared space and meet another user.



tools, limitations, workarounds

prototype tools used



we used **Figma** to structure all of the screens and design the layouts of each page.

pros:

- easy to create **element/text styles**, allowing us to maintain consistency throughout different pages/tasks
- **industry standard tool** with a wide variety of features
- comprehensive library of **wireframing and prototyping** features

cons:

- some of our most unique features (live location/photo check in and phone vibration) **cannot be replicated** with Figma, so we had to hardcode the mechanisms
- **moderate learning curve** and more time spent on trying to get things to look “right” and as imagined rather than **focusing on core value/functionality**

prototype tools used





we used **Goodnotes and Notability** for initial brainstorming and our lo-fi wireframes.

pros:

- many **built-in tools** to draw different shapes and move wireframes around
- easy to **annotate and revise** design sketches
- convenient and portable for **sharing designs** across group members
- still keep the freedom of **sketching on paper,** but more cleaned-up

cons:

- **less tactile** than having paper prototypes (**couldn't physically move** screens around and replace them like we would an actual app
- we found ourselves focusing on **small details** instead of the actual user flow (due to the many editing features in both apps)

prototype limitations & workarounds

- not all buttons are fully functional and several selection options are **hardcoded**, even though spark **depends on user input.**
    - for example, the **keyboard is an image** and doesn't let the user actually type out a desired username, and some multiple-selection pages **enforce selection** of certain options to illustrate how the page works.
- user's live location and camera are **not used due to limitations with the prototype**, so the user's location and picture are hardcoded.
- we had to hardcode **making the device vibrate** when locating their meetup partner and "shake" the current screen to simulate a vibrating phone.
- user visibility settings are hardcoded to only let the user be visible to accounts within a specific age range, but users should be able to **edit visibility settings** (who can "see" them) in spark's actual settings.

limitations & user experience impact

- **personalized user input**
  - the hardcoded user input supports **the functionality of our prototype**, but it may feel **less personalized**, as users are not truly experiencing the app from their own perspective and unique traits.

- **engaging in “conversation” with meetup partners**
  - to fully achieve the complex task, the user must **meet and interact with** another user in the shared space.
  - however, the prototype is **completed w/ 1 user** and their device, so it’s not possible for the user to actually use the **phone vibration, conversation topic, etc.** features to interact with another user.
  - so, they **lose connection with the shared space** and its users when they only experience the phone interface component to meeting up, rather than **actually physically engaging** w their environment.

med-fi prototypes:

simple task
moderate task
complex task

thank you!

- sincerely, the KRAMberries



appendix

our README doc

wizard of oz techniques

1) “Spaces for you” claims to generate personalized spaces based on location and preferences but always shows a set list of locations assuming Stanford is the user’s location.
2) “Favorites” tab claims to show the user’s selected favorites but always shows Library XYZ regardless of user actions.
3) “My Calendars” claims to show the user’s created calendars but always shows the same 3 calendars.
4) “Invite to Calendar” is meant to show the user’s existing friends and recommend people based on availability and interests but will always recommend Rebecca A., Andrea Y., and Meredith N. and no invitation will actually be sent.
5) Generating a plan is meant to intelligently generate location options based on the user’s preferences and locations but will always show the same 3 location options.
6) “Add to Calendar” is meant to add the generated plan to the selected calendar but does not have any functionality other than showing the user the plan in detail.
7) “Verifying you’re here” does not check the user’s current location or utilize their device camera, but simply demonstrates that the app has this functionality.
8) “Other checked-in users” should periodically update based on incoming/departed users, but only has 2 fixed users.
9) “Find each other”’s vibration strength should change based on both users’ current locations, but it maintains a fixed vibration.

hard-coded items

1) Name and username are hardcoded as Jane Stanford and jane_stanford.
2) City is hardcoded as Stanford, CA.
3) Favorites page is hardcoded as containing only Library XYZ.
4) Pagination is hardcoded (can't move to other pages of calendars, etc).
5) Current day is hardcoded as October 18, 2026.
6) Current day activities are hardcoded as Volleyball Practice and Study.
7) Clicking on a scheduled activity is meant to show that activity in more detail but will always show the breakfast at Tootsie's activity in more detail.
8) Clicking on any calendar is meant to bring the user to that specific calendar but will always bring the user to My Solo Calendar.
9) Selected plan preferences are hardcoded as Morning, Meal, and Group. Invite Rebecca A. option is hardcoded.
10) Selected plan location preference is hardcoded as Tootsie's.
11) Check-in location is hardcoded as Cafe ABC, and location verification process is always successful.
12) Check-in picture is hardcoded as Jane Stanford, and picture verification process is always successful.
13) User visibility settings are hardcoded to only let the user be visible to accounts with a previous check-in history and accounts within a specific age range.
14) Checked-in users are hardcoded as Alex and Bella.
15) Alex is the only meetable user.
16) Can only discuss first 2 topics with Alex.

slide of decorative icons for future use

