

fika

Team Roles

David Lin – Looking Sleepy

Emma Fritzberg – Looking Left

Nathaniel Li – Looking for Love

Steven Horng – Looking Lost

Problem and Solution Overview

People love to travel. Exploring new cultures offers some of the best opportunities for people to develop a diverse perspective and find personal enrichment. But over time, trips have become less about connecting with the place and more about checking off some boxes, going through the motions, and capturing that same shot everyone else has. With Fika, we aim to bring meaning back into travel. *Fika* is a Swedish word that loosely translates to “coffee break,” but really means so much more. True *fika* makes you feel suspended in time, as you relish the joyous things in life with friends, family, coworkers, or in our case, someone you just met. Our Fika connects travelers with locals who love sharing the intimate knowledge of their culture. Locals know cultural practices and how to get around. By connecting travelers with locals who are not only familiar with the area, culture, and language but also share similar interests, travelers can experience something richer and more meaningful on their trips than ever before.

Initial Paper Prototype

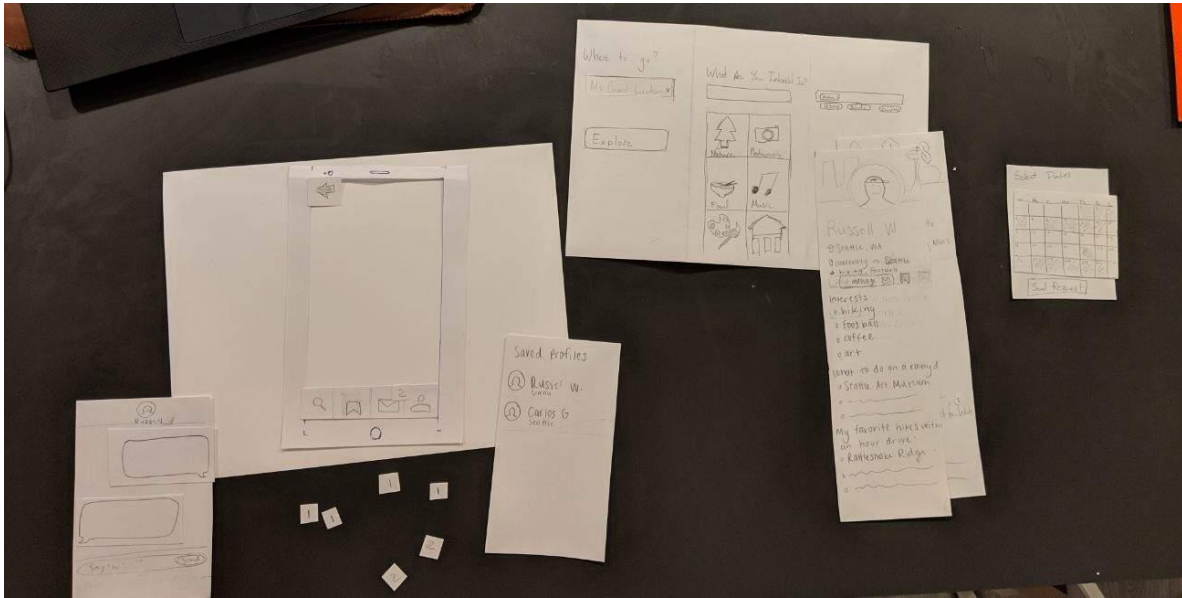


Figure 1.1 Initial paper prototype overview.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local

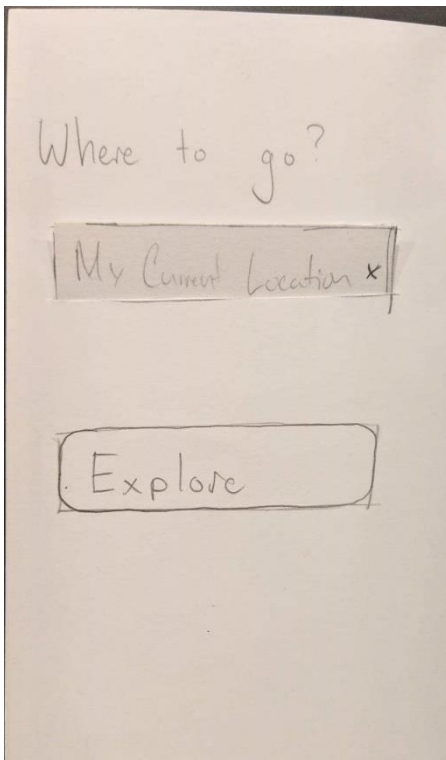


Figure 1.2 User enters the location he wants to search for locals. Current location is pre-loaded by default.

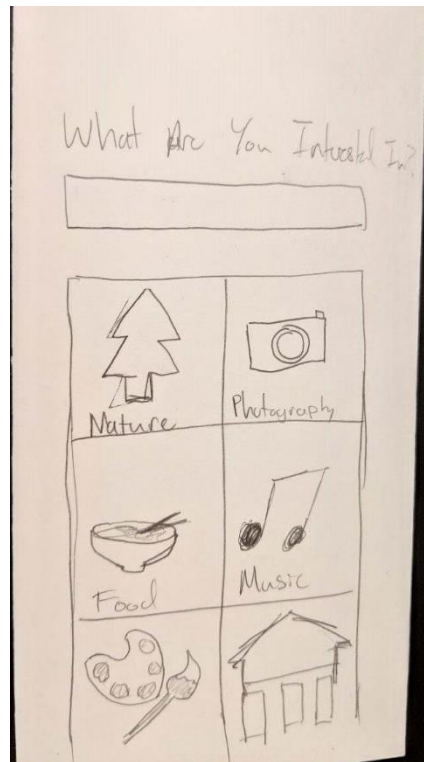


Figure 1.3 User can search for their interests or tap on one of the provided.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local (continued)

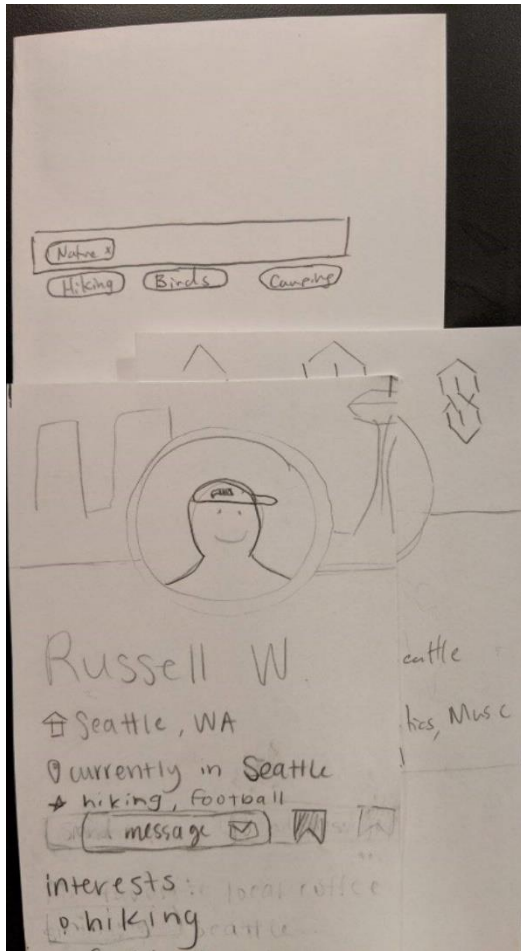


Figure 1.4 User tapped on Nature. Locals' cards begin to show up. User has option to swipe to see the next (or previous, if available) local, if the current local doesn't quite appeal to the user. User may also message or bookmark the local.

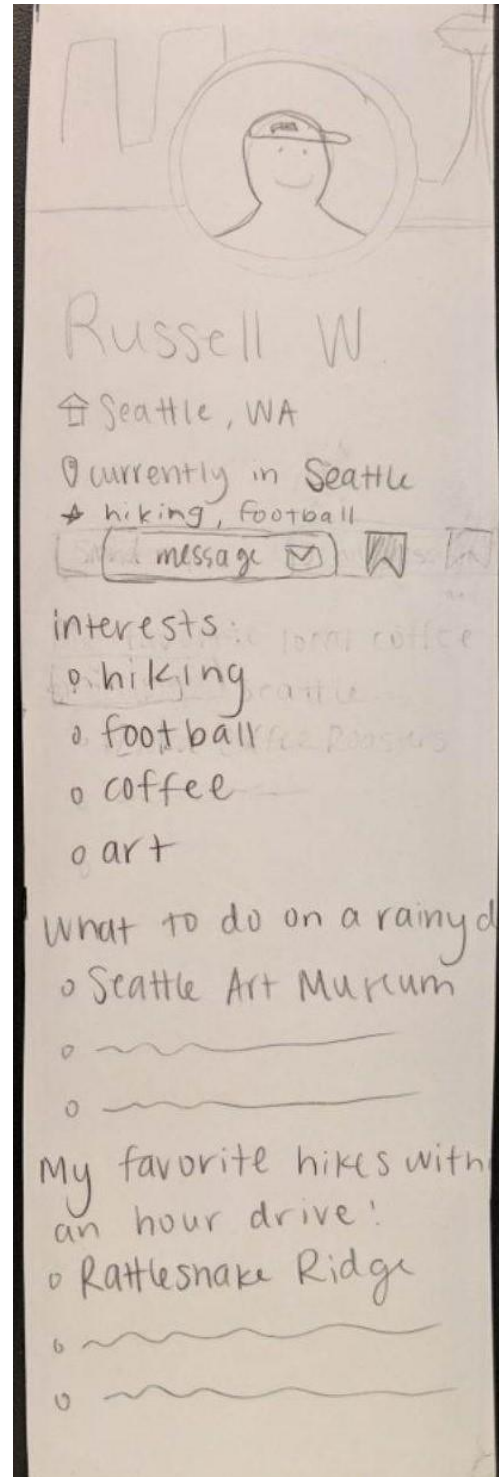


Figure 1.5 The user can scroll down to see more on the local's profile.

Task 2: Connecting / Meeting Up with a Local

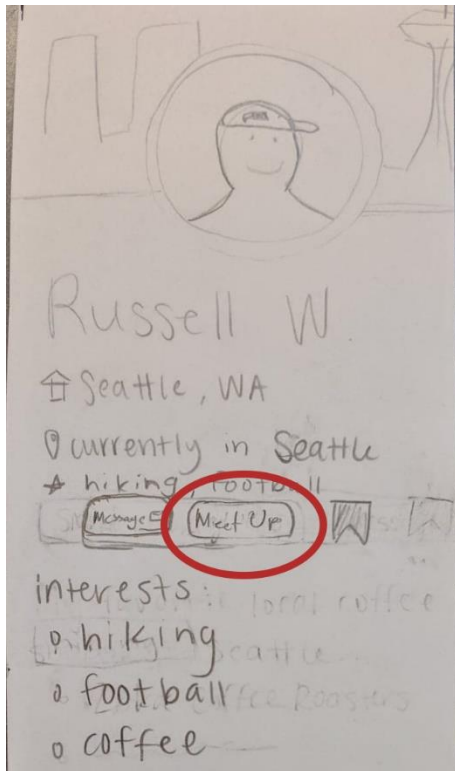


Figure 2.1 After finding a local a user wants to meet up with, the user taps on "Meet Up" to schedule to meet or "Message" to message the local.

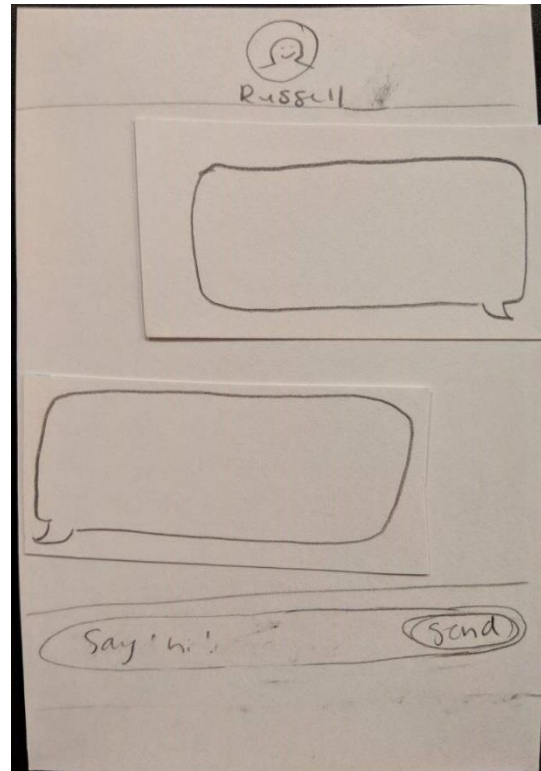


Figure 2.2 The user and local exchange messages, deciding on a date and location to meet.

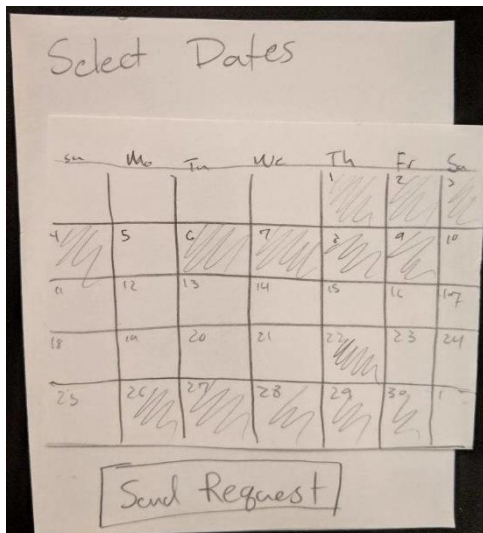


Figure 2.3 The user selects from available times to choose a time to meet.

Testing Process

Overview

After we created our initial paper prototype, we conducted heuristic testing in class. Our participants for these tests were fellow CSE 440 students. During each of the two testing rounds, we received specific heuristic issues from two members of another project team. Then we conducted three independent usability tests with participants who were not familiar with the project.

Usability Test 1

For our first usability test, we found a college student who is an avid traveler that loves to visit new places on his own. We thought that he would be a perfect person for a usability test as he faces the problems our designs aim to solve. We brought the test to him—in his home—as it is likely that he would be planning a trip from the comfort of his own home, as well as to make it easier on the test subject. For this test, Nathan facilitated the session while Steven took notes and asked follow-up questions. Results can be found in Table 1.

Usability Test 2

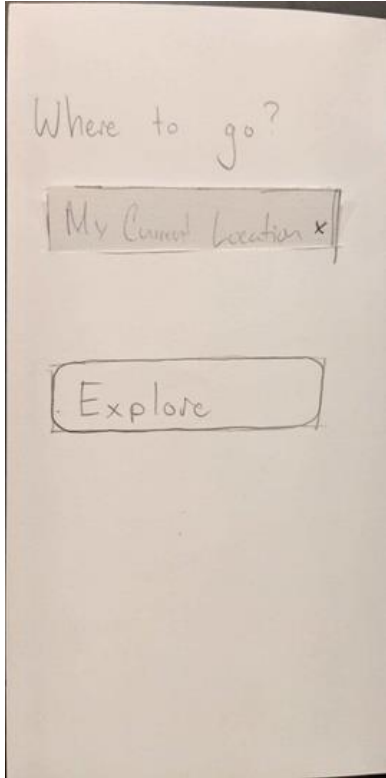
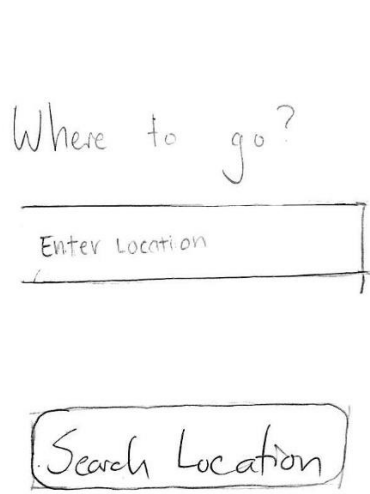
Our second participant is a 23-year-old photographer who frequently travels on his own and posts photos from his travels on social media. We chose him because we anticipate travelers who also enjoy photography to be a significant demographic within our target user population. The test was done in his home. This participant did not express experiencing much difficulty navigating the interface to complete our tasks. However, many of the comments he made had to do with making sure he could find a local that actually fit who he was looking for. As a result of the test, many revisions were made to improve a local's profile. Steven facilitated the test while Nathan took notes. Results can be found in Table 2.

Usability Test 3

All our participants so far have been college students or young adults, so to add variety to our sample, we found an older adult willing to participate in our final usability test. She is a physical therapist, lives in Seattle and is married with two children. She travels mostly with her family and likes to experience local culture when in a new place. The test was conducted in the comforts of her home. For the test, we asked the participant to go through the app flow and complete the task of reviewing user profiles for locals in Seattle, selecting one, and scheduling a meet-up. She was able to complete the task by requesting dates with little hesitation, but she also expressed to us that it was confusing whether it was okay to just request dates, or if you need to message the local first, introduce yourself, then check with them about dates before sending an actual request. We talked about Airbnb, which the participant has used several times. In Airbnb, you request the dates, and send a personalized message along with the request. We aimed to accomplish something similar by combining the calendar feature into the messaging feature. Our participant also felt apprehensive about meeting up with someone whose identity was uncertain and was confused about the purpose of the bookmark icon. Emma facilitated the test while Steven took notes.

Testing Results

Table 1. Critical Incidents Identified from Usability Test

Prototype	Issue	Updated prototype
	<p>"Explore" is ambiguous. User may think "Explore" is exploring the selected location, but may also think "Explore" is exploring all locations, regardless of what's selected. (Severity 1)</p>	

📍 Seattle, WA
 📍 currently in Seattle
 ➔ hiking, football
 [Message] [Meet Up] [Bookmark]

interests:

- o local coffee
- o hiking
- o football
- o coffee
- o art

What to do on a rainy day

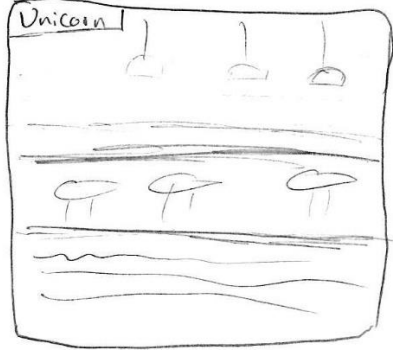
- o Seattle Art Museum
- o _____
- o _____

My favorite hikes with an hour drive!

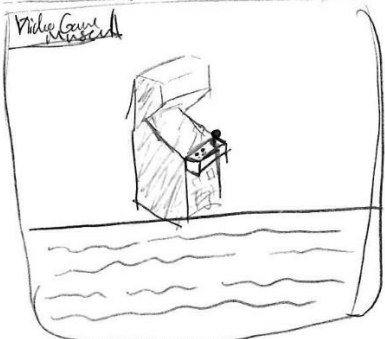
- o Rattlesnake Ridge
- o _____
- o _____

User is unsure which local to choose because current information does not describe much about what would happen during their time together. (Severity 3)

Day 1



Day 1


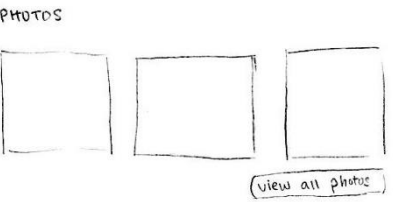
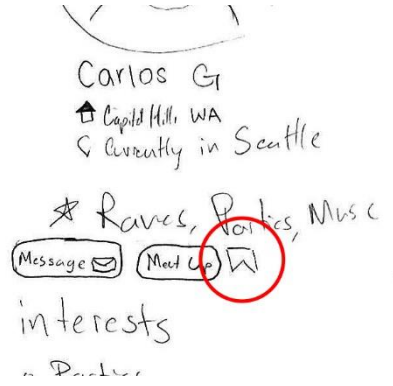



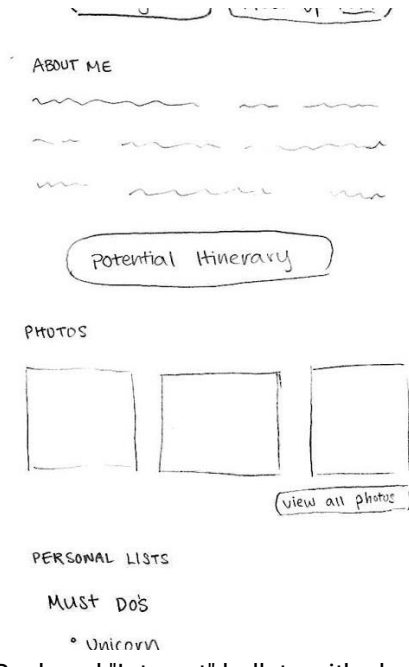
Day 2



"Potential Itinerary" button leads to this screen.

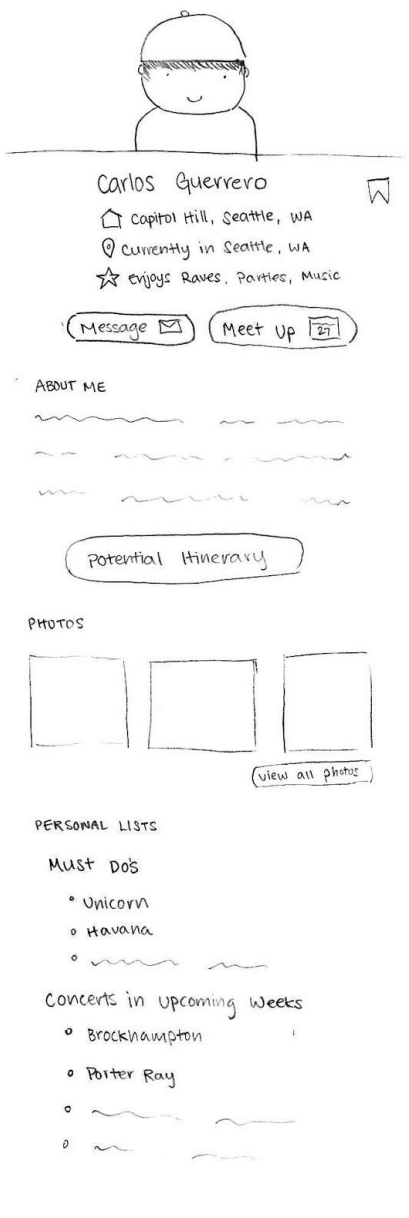
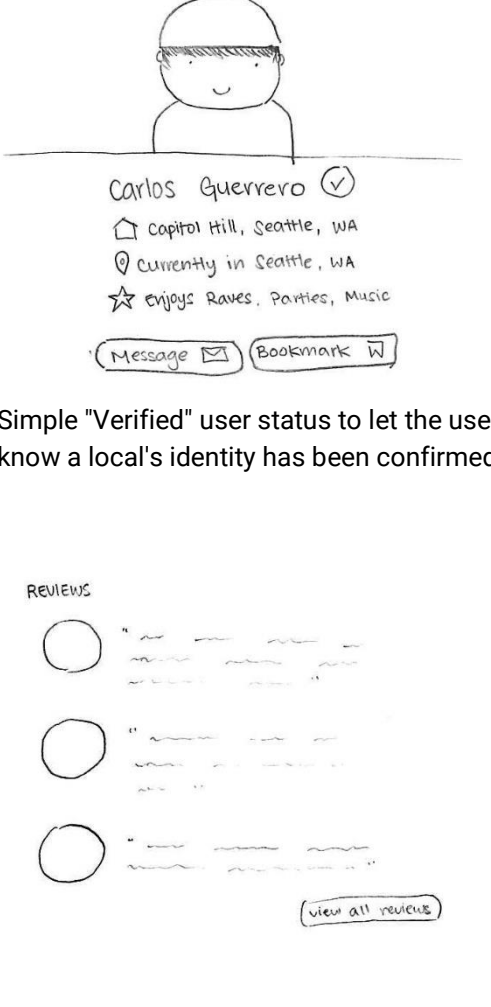
Table 2. Critical Incidents Identified from Usability Test 2

Prototype	Incident	Updated Prototype
 <p>Carlos G</p> <p>Only photos in old prototype were main and cover photos.</p>	<p>Participant wondered if there was a way to view more photos, perhaps photos with other travelers. (Severity 1)</p>	 <p>PHOTOS</p> <p>view all photos</p> <p>Photos section between "Potential Itinerary" button and "Personal Lists."</p>
 <p>Carlos G</p> <p>Capitol Hill, WA</p> <p>Currently in Seattle</p> <p>Raves, Parties, Music</p> <p>Message Meet Up</p> <p>interests</p> <p>in Parties</p>	<p>It was not clear to the participant that the bookmark on a profile was a button to interact with. However, when asked to save a local for later viewing, the participant instantly recognized it as a bookmark that other apps have, such as Instagram. (Severity 1)</p>	 <p>Carlos Guerrero</p> <p>Capitol Hill, Seattle, WA</p> <p>Currently in Seattle, WA</p> <p>enjoys Raves, Parties, Music</p> <p>Message Meet Up</p> <p>Moved bookmark to corner, like Instagram which may be more familiar to some of our users.</p>

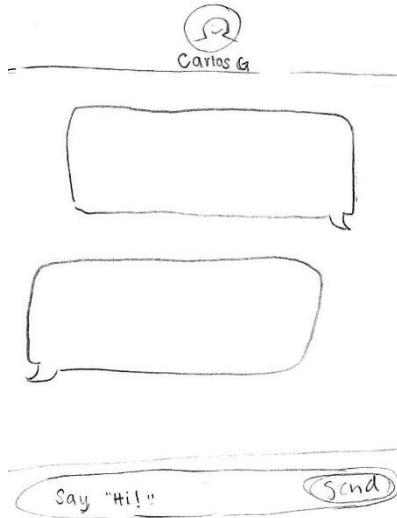
<p>message (Mud Up) W</p> <p>interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Parties o Video Games o Bars o Clubs <p>Potential Itinerary</p> <p>Must Do's -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Unicorn o Havana o ~~~~~ <p>Concerts in the next few weeks</p> <p>o ..</p>	<p>Participant felt like simple interest bullets weren't enough to convey whether a local would be a good fit.</p>	 <p>ABOUT ME</p> <p>POTENTIAL Itinerary</p> <p>PHOTOS</p> <p>view all photos</p> <p>PERSONAL LISTS</p> <p>MUST DO'S</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Unicorn
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Replaced "Interest" bullets with clearly defined "About Me" section. Labeled section below "Photos" as "Personal Lists" for more clarity.

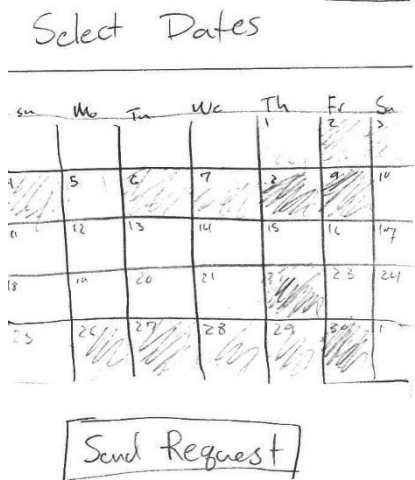
Table 3: Critical Incidents Identified from Usability Test 3

Prototype	Incident	Updated Prototype
 <p>Carlos Guerrero</p> <p>Capitol Hill, Seattle, WA</p> <p>Currently in Seattle, WA</p> <p>enjoys Raves, Parties, Music</p> <p>Message Meet Up</p> <p>ABOUT ME</p> <p>POTENTIAL HINERARY</p> <p>PHOTOS</p> <p>view all photos</p> <p>PERSONAL LISTS</p> <p>MUST DOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unicorn Havana <p>Concerts in upcoming weeks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockhampton Porter Ray 	<p>Participant felt unsure about meeting up with someone when there is no rating or review system. (Severity 2).</p>	 <p>Carlos Guerrero</p> <p>Capitol Hill, Seattle, WA</p> <p>Currently in Seattle, WA</p> <p>enjoys Raves, Parties, Music</p> <p>Message Bookmark</p> <p>Simple "Verified" user status to let the user know a local's identity has been confirmed.</p> <p>REVIEWS</p> <p>view all reviews</p> <p>Replaced "Personal Lists" with "Reviews" to allow other users' feedback to provide a sense of security as well as insight on a local's personality from an outside perspective.</p>

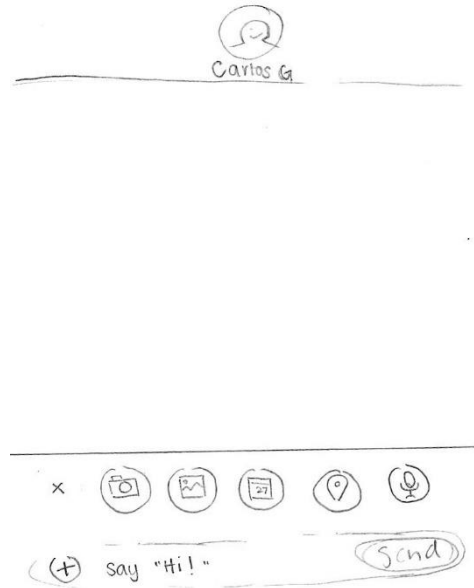
Message:





Meet Up:



Participant felt like "Message" and "Meet Up" functions were too separated, leading to slight confusion. Functions were understandable, but participant felt like simply requesting dates would not be adequate for the local without additional messaging (Severity 3).



"Meet Up" functionality combined into "Message." Includes scheduling and other widgets that users can use to further aid conversations with each other. Allows for a more straightforward user experience.

	<p>Participant did not recognize the bookmark. (Severity 2)</p>	 <p>Since we combined "Meetup" and "Message," we had plenty of space for another button. Converted bookmark into a button for clarity.</p>
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Summary of Changes

One of the most important changes we made this round was modifying the profile to efficiently communicate as much as possible about the local so that other users can see if the local would be a good fit to meet up with. We added an "About Me" section and the option to add photos to a profile.

We also wanted to provide reassurance to users that people on the app are who they say they are, so we added reviews (which would be less like consumer product reviews and more like notes from past meetups) and a verified badge for profiles for which we can verify the user's identity.

We also decided to integrate the calendar feature into a toolbar within the messaging feature. We decided to do this because our usability tests indicated that keeping them separate was confusing to users. While real life meetups are a focus for us, it can also be valuable for users to have a chance to connect with a local through the app and get travel advice, even if logistics prevent them from being able to meet in person. Users also will probably want to chat for a while and then decide to meet up. Viewed this way, the calendar feature which can be used to request a meetup is an "add-on" to messaging, so it makes sense to have it inside the in-app messaging feature.

Final Paper Prototype

Task 1: Finding the Right Local

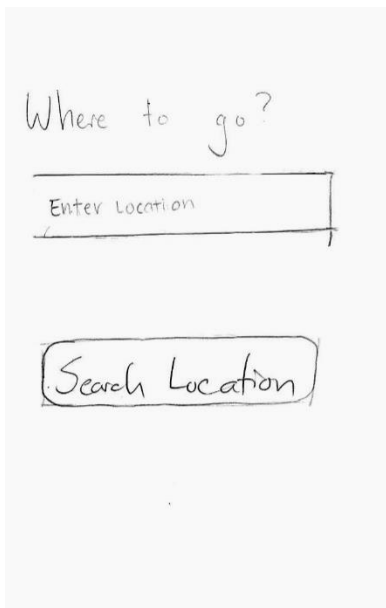


Figure 3.1 The user is first presented with a text input that instructs them to enter a location, indicating to the user that this is a text input.

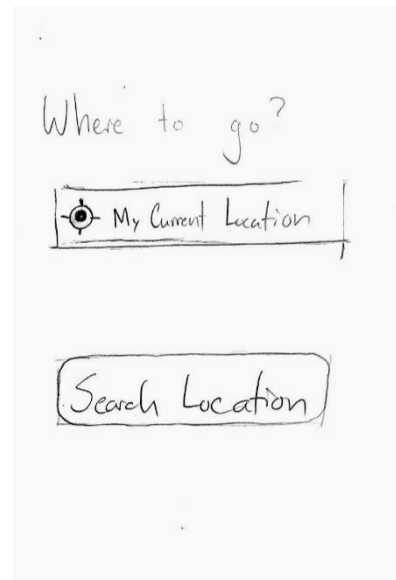


Figure 3.2 Upon clicking/tapping on the text input, a drop-down will indicate to the user that the current location (alongside autocomplete suggestions) can be chosen.

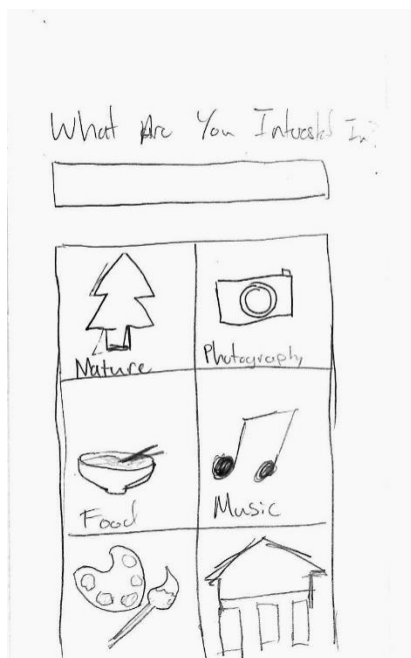


Figure 3.3 User can search for their interests or tap on one of the provided.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local (continued)

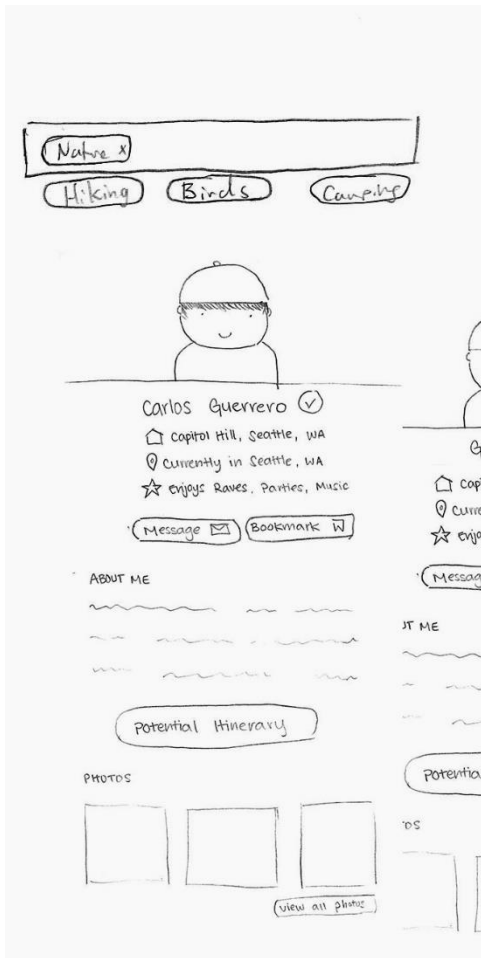


Figure 3.4 User will be brought to a wheel of local guides based on search parameters.

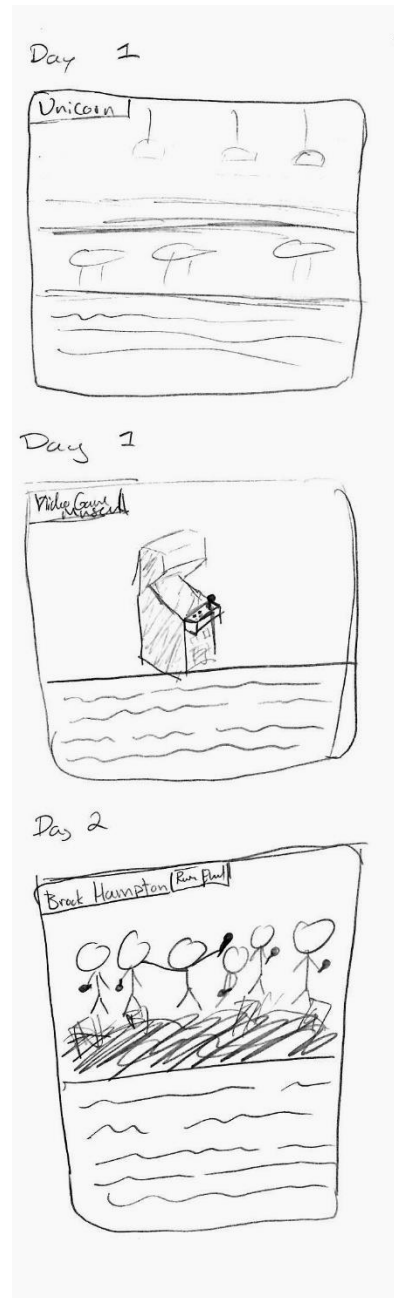


Figure 3.5 Tapping on "Potential Itinerary" will show an example, loose itinerary with pictures and descriptions. Photos and reviews by other users are also provided on a local's profile. Users will use this information to decide on a local guide.

Task 2: Scheduling a Meetup

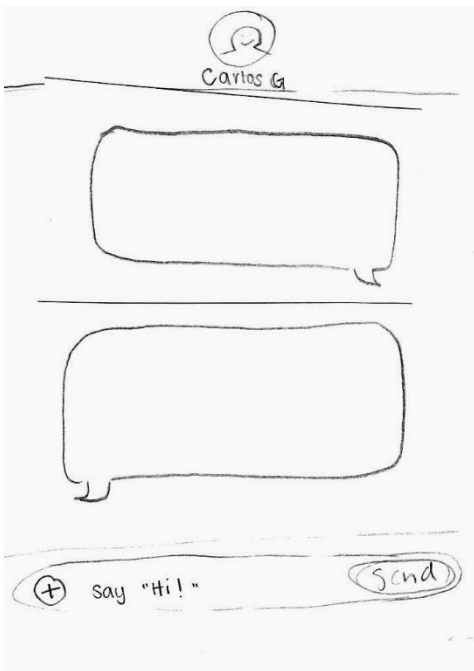


Figure 4.1 After finding a local a user wants to meet up with, the user taps on "Message" to begin communicating with the local.

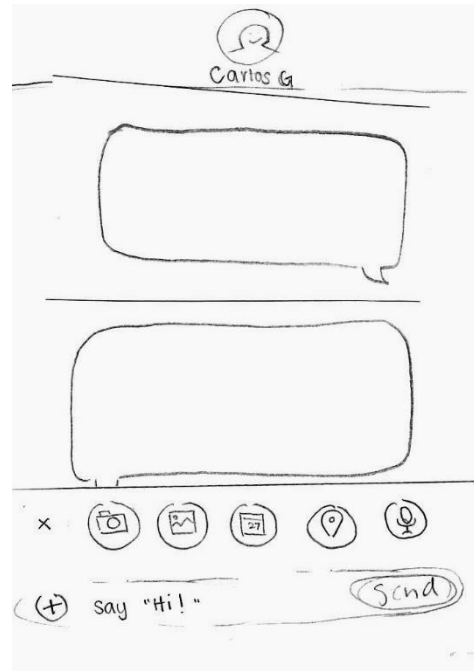


Figure 4.2 The user can use different features within the chat design that appears upon tapping on the "+" button.



Figure 4.3 To set a time / interval to meet, the user can select the dates of the trip after tapping on the calendar button in the bar that popped up during the previous step.

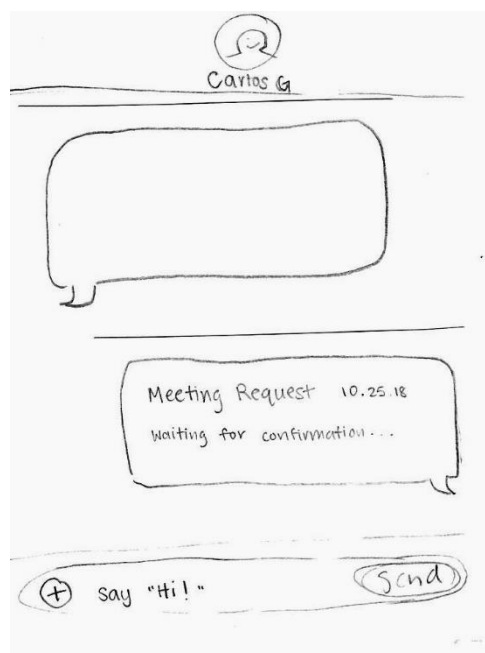


Figure 4.4 Once a request has been set, a reminder will show the user that one has been set.

Digital Mockup

Most of the designs of the paper prototype made it to the hi-fidelity version. However, our hi-fidelity prototype allows for our design to more easily have clarity of elements and flexibility to convey information. Using colors and the changing of colors, it's easier to express when the user can interact with a button. When the user is required to select a location, the "Explore" button is greyed out, and green once a location is selected. Playing with more colors, we tested differentiating suggested topics on the "Experience" view with various colors but found this to be too busy and opted for cleaner, more minimalist representation of possible interests.

Through a few iterations, we also updated some elements of the hi-fi from the paper prototype version, changing bookmarks to likes—denoted by a heart—which seemed to have a clearer usage to users. Moreover, we moved the calendar scheduler to be static at the top of the messaging view to bring more visibility to the interaction and to encourage its use for scheduling meetups. Other changes included visual updates to the messaging supplements (adding voice recording, pictures, etc.) buttons, giving them a tray with a solid background instead of just simply floating over messages.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local

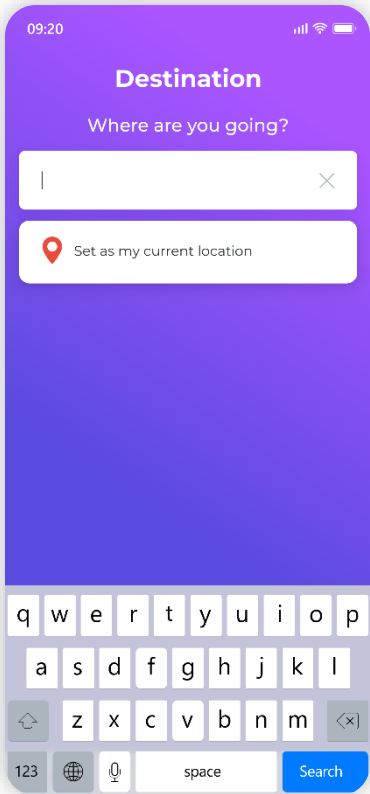


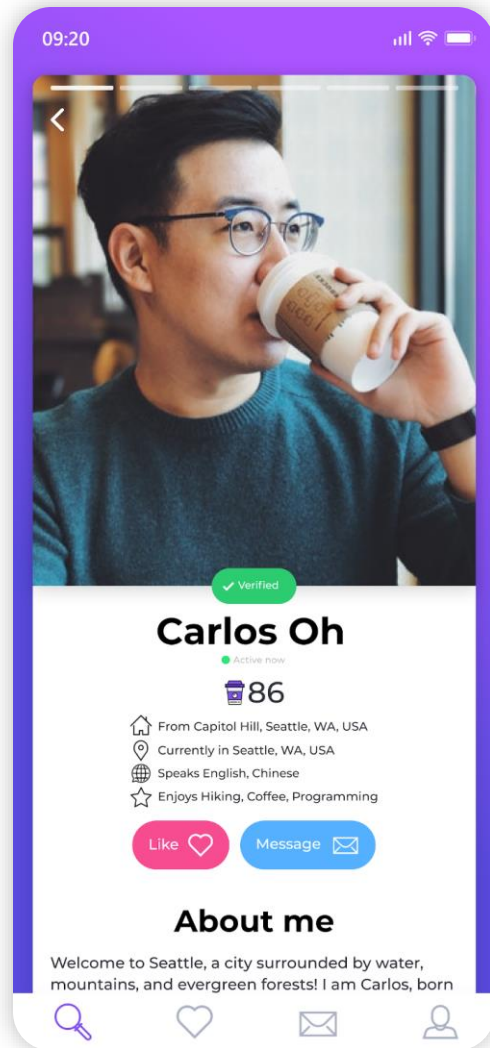
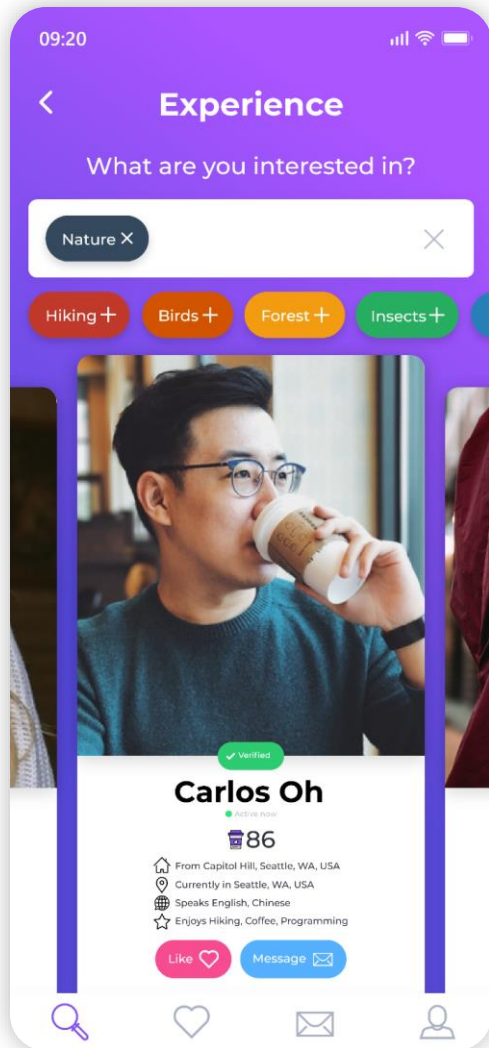
Figure 5.1 Users can plan ahead by searching their next destination for local guides to connect them with the area.

If they're feeling spontaneous, they can look for potential guides or just things to do when they are already out exploring.



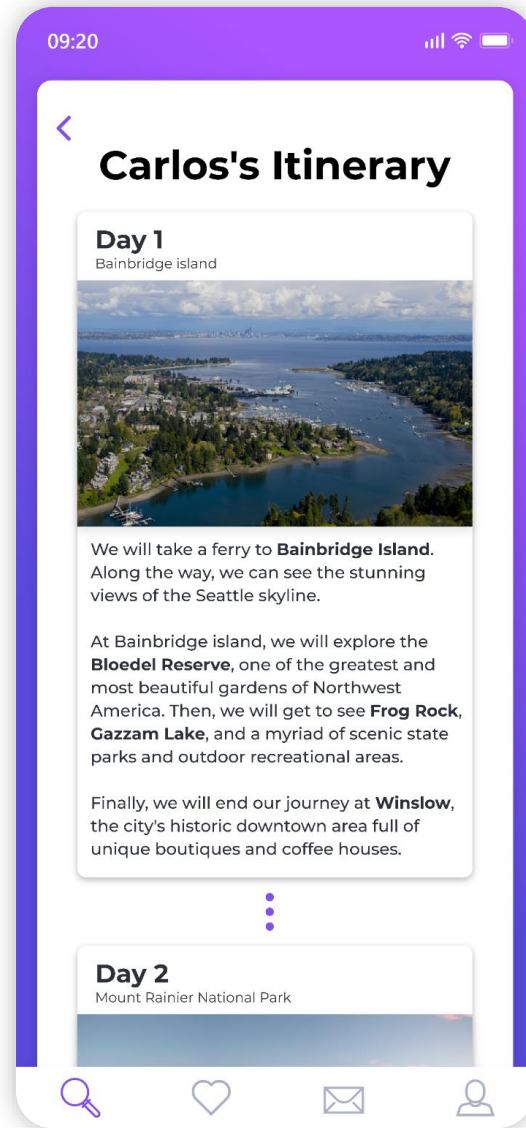
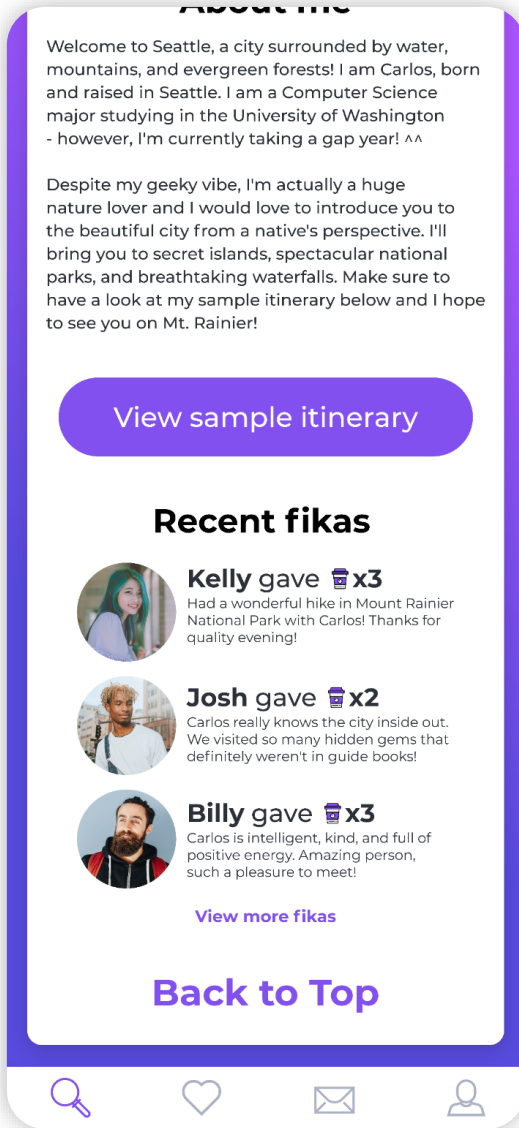
Figure 5.2 Users can search for local guides by filtering with various topics and interests that they enjoy.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local (continued)



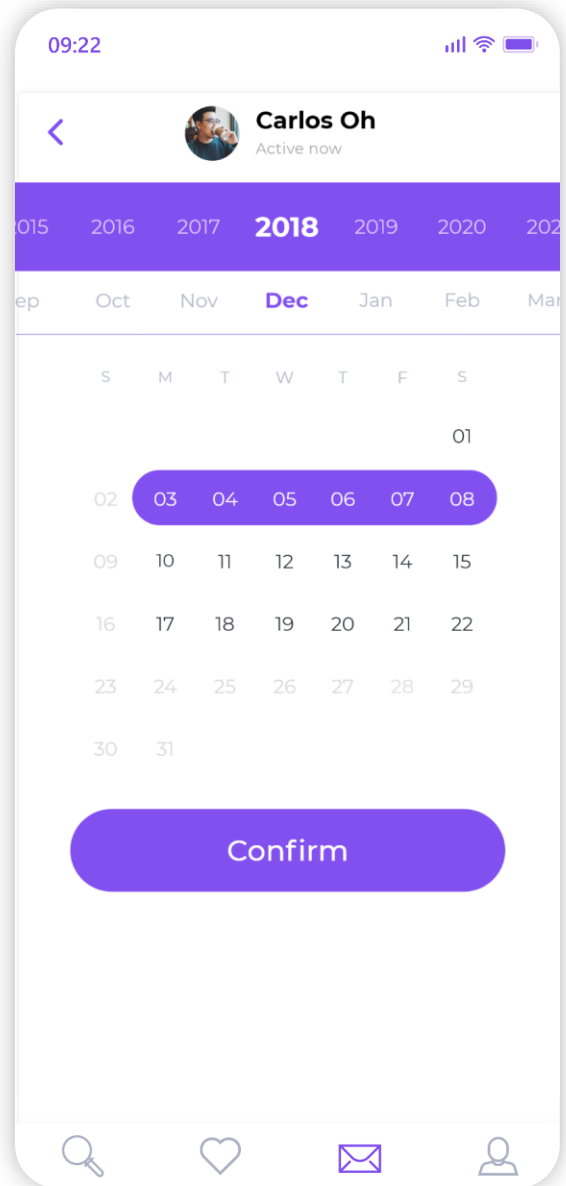
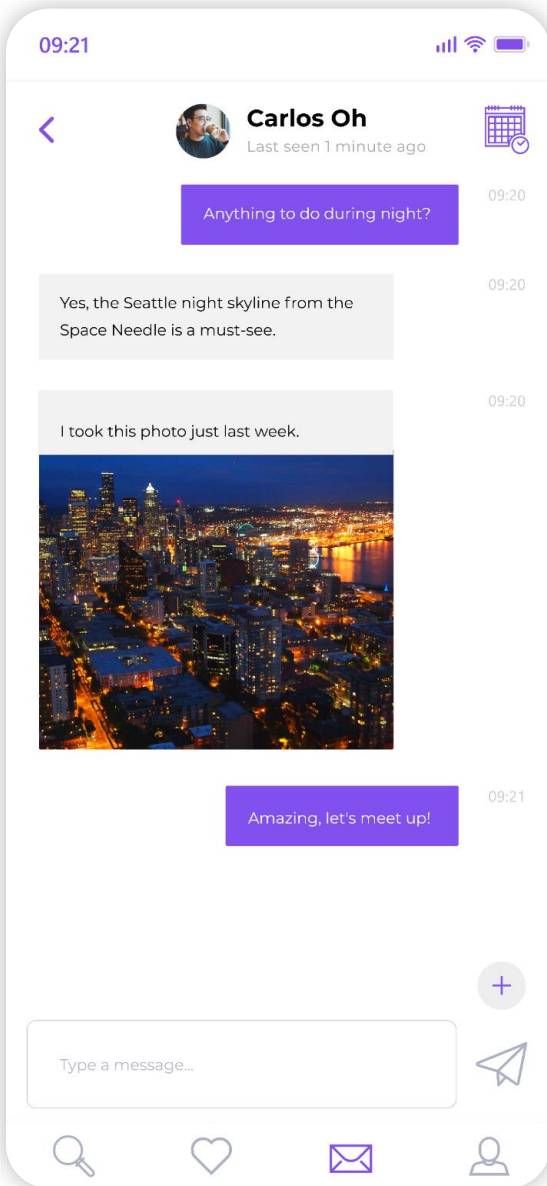
Figures 5.3, 5.4 Users can go through a carousel of different profiles of potential guides that share similar interests.

Task 1: Finding the Right Local (continued)



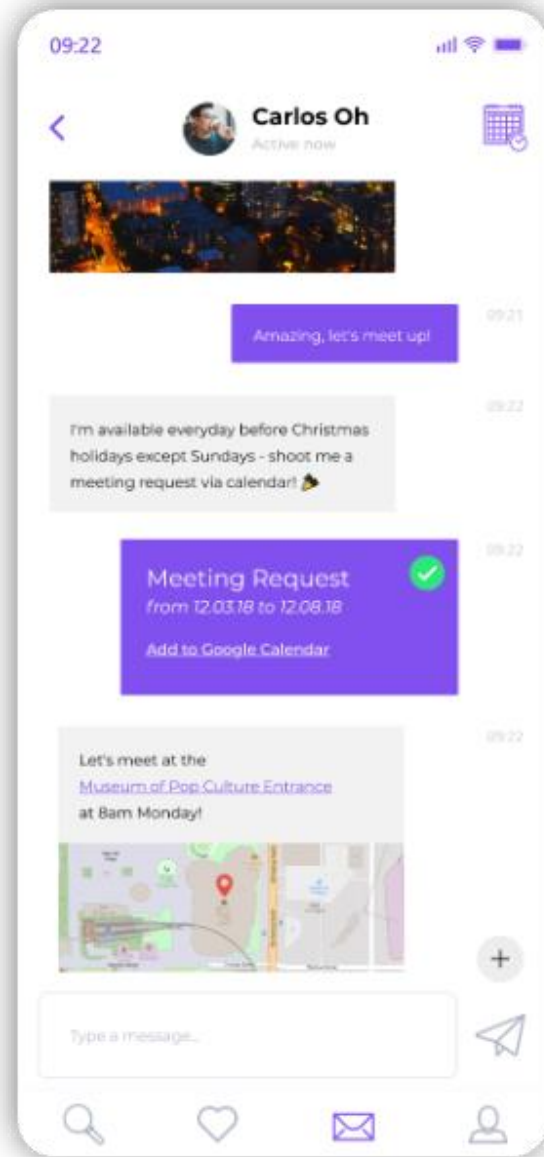
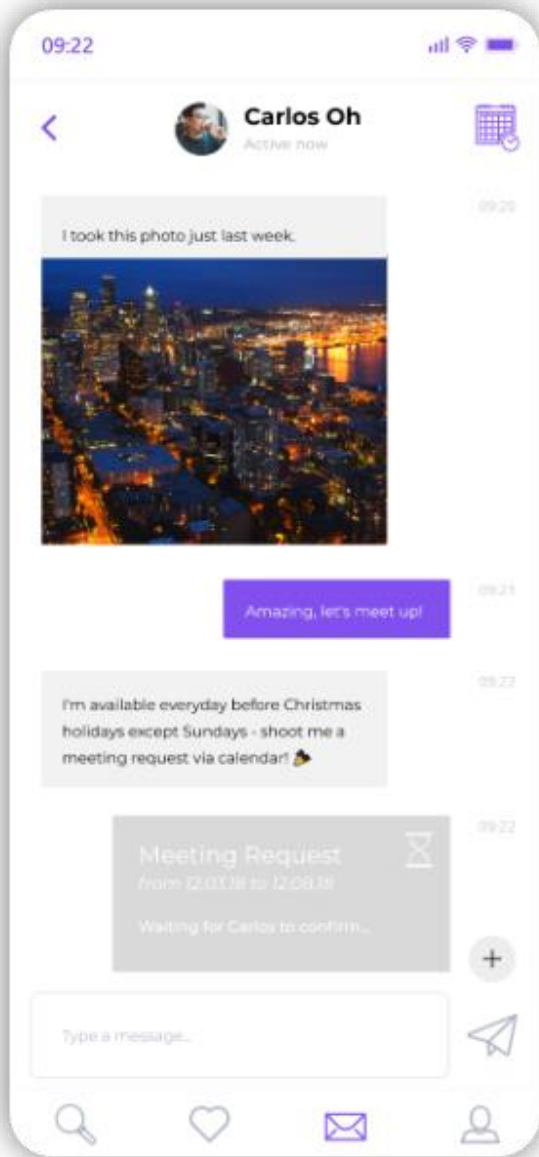
Figures 5.5, 5.6 An itinerary provides a deeper insight for the user as to what meeting with this guide might look like. Even if the guide isn't chosen, users can learn fun things that they can still pursue.

Task 2: Scheduling a Meetup



Figures 6.1, 6.2 Users can message a potential guide and, after verifying mutual interest, schedule a time to meet.

Task 2: Scheduling a Meetup (continued)



Figures 6.3, 6.4 Users then meet at a specified time and place, and off they go to new and more intimate experiences with the local culture.

Discussion

Our process began with ideation and brainstorming. Travel emerged as a potential area of focus for us early on because we all had experience traveling at different times and had ideas of how we could improve the experience, particularly through facilitating interpersonal connection across cultures. We then developed our concept over numerous iterations prescribed in the course structure. With each iteration, we expanded upon our ideas and eventually crystalized the best of what we came up with into a series of prototypes, first in paper, then digital. We learned not to specify our design too early, but to think broadly in the early stages of our design process. The ideation stage led us to consider numerous angles from which to address the problem. We considered designing an app which would act as a guide itself (based on information from locals), or one that would simply connect travelers and locals and let the “guiding” happen offline. Based on our user research, we decided to iterate on the latter idea. We had asked our research subjects about what they were interested in when traveling and what tools they already were using to gather information. We found out that our subjects had a wealth of travel resources which served the purpose of a “virtual guide”, but the experiences that were meaningful were times when they got to connect with a local in the area that they were traveling in.

Once we had our initial prototype, heuristic and usability tests were essential to improving our design. Each round of tests brought to our attention areas of our design we had not fully thought out, as well as important usability issues. Once we addressed specific issues from each test, we would find new areas for improvement in the next round. We learned that in design there is always room for improvement. More iterations in the design process would always be beneficial, as long as time and resources allow. With more time to iterate on the design of Fika, we could flesh out some of our functionality for interactions like messaging and calendar requests, as well as addressing specific user pain points as they came up.