about our app.

With an environmental and local focus, Village acts as a hub for finding available resources, discovering events, and meeting like-minded people nearby.

Users simply search for nearby “Pins” on a map to see what’s available! Any user can create a Pin as well—so whether it be a community garden, a place to recycle batteries, or a food collective, the user can tap into and share nearby resources. Village can also reveal what resources may be lacking in the area for those who wish to contribute to their communities but don’t know how.

original goals.

● Help people find environmentally-conscious resources.
● Encourage people to make eco-friendly choices.
● Create an app that can be used by the broader community.

how our goals changed.

● Became more focused on community.
● Removed gamification in favor of a resource-driven app.
● Emphasized ease-of-use instead of expanded functionality.
● Instead of customizing the app for each user, we focused on creating a universal product to which all users can contribute.

future goals.

● Expand to areas outside of Philadelphia.
● Foster a user-base to grow our database of resources.
● Get in touch with environmental groups and organizations.
● Get involved with businesses and provide local advertising.
● Integrate relevant Craigslist data to make the app more dynamic.
● Add a Time-Bank system for exchanging services.

ui development.

● User interface heavily modeled after Google maps.
● Started with multiple, specific activities and merged them into the home screen (Figure 2) to improve UI “flow.”
● More information about a particular Pin can be accessed by selecting a specific Pin on the map (Figure 3).
● Users may search for certain Pins or filter by certain types of Pins using the action bar.
● Added additional features to the overflow menu to avoid clutter.

ux research.

To test the usability of Village, we asked users to complete a set of tasks of varying difficulties that covered all the app’s uses. As we are targeting a wide audience, we sought out people of various ages and backgrounds to avoid biasing our results.

● Data displayed in Figure 1 are normalized such that higher numbers (max of 7) are “positive,” lower numbers (minimum of 1) are “negative,” and 4 is the “neutral” value.
● According to these results, the majority of the test-users felt that Village was usable.
● Most users agreed that the app was consistent, used sensible colors, would be quick to learn, and would not require the support of a technical person.
● However, users perceived Village’s ease-of-use to be somewhat below average and user confidence was relatively low compared to other results.

technical issues.

● Integrating Facebook’s API proved difficult and created external bugs we cannot fix (e.g.: sharing takes a long time).
● Users expected the search bar meant for keywords to instead act as a universal search.
● Parse created problems as it requires a consistent internet connection which was difficult to get “on the go.”
● Despite our best efforts, the logo continues to shift to the right rather than snapping to the left side of the action bar.
● We made the decision to incorporate a “handlebar” to mimic Google Maps’ navigation and search.
● Village’s initial design was confusing and hard to navigate. We decided to implement a One Activity Schema modeled after Google Maps in order to make Village more streamlined.

contributors.

Developed by Casey Falk, Derek Roth, Julie Ta, and Nora Tien.

With special thanks to Sorelle Friedler, Joshua Moses, Mac Smith, and the many participants who contributed to the UX research process.

Haverford College CS395 (Spring 2015)