Exploring and Expanding Park Usage Through Pokémon Go

Bringing new audiences to County Parks and extending visits
Outline

• Background and Problem Area
• Key Questions
• Analysis Approaches
• Mapping Park Features
• Results Highlights
• Recommendations for MNCPPC
• Park Feature Highlights
Background and Problem Area

- Parks and open spaces are essential to Montgomery County residents
- Existence of a park does not guarantee high utilization
- Project Objectives:
  - Attract and retain visitors of all ages to the park
  - Develop a data inventory for a Pokémon Go style application
  - A collaborative effort between urban planning and information sciences
Key Questions

- Given that park space and facilities already exist, what would it take to encourage people to use this space?
- How can visitors be engaged to stay longer in parks?
- Are parks prepared to receive all populations, young and old?
Collection & Analysis

- **Data collection**
  - Latitude/longitude coordinates for 3-5 physical features per 19 parks
  - Feature types, specific characteristics

- **Spatial analysis**
  - Location distribution of park features in relation to park entrances
  - Feature Type Distribution of parks
  - Investigation of population density surrounding parks to produce thematic maps
  - Hot Spot Analysis to determine the distance weighted density of all features
Mapping Selected Parks

- M-NCPPC provided 19 parks for the study

- Parks are well spread across the county, and included various types:
  - Regional Parks
  - Conservation Parks
  - Special Parks
  - Urban Parks
  - Local Parks
Population Density
Wheaton Regional Park has something for all ages
Hot Spot Analysis

- Spread of various features in parks
- Concentration of all features are well represented in county
• Performed spatial join of park features collected in the field with park entrance data provided by M-NCPPC

• Plot shows that features are well distributed across the parks
Park Feature Type Distribution

Social
- checkerboard tables, picnic areas, dog parks and fishing piers.

Contemplative
- art sculptures, gardens, and historic buildings/sites

Active
- sports fields, bike racks and playgrounds
Results

- 19 parks and 92 features
  - 12 small parks with 58 features, and 7 large parks with 34 features
  - Large recreational parks typically offer more features than small urban parks
- Some park features are under marketed, our teams were engaged to return after discovering park features for first time
- Duration of stay increases as number and distance between features increases
- Sitting areas for adult/senior population are generally insufficient
Recommendations for M-NCPCC

- Additional seating needed at most park features
- Increased promotion of parks and features
- Connecting historical features across the park system
- Age cohorts usership
- Further feature collections of M-NCPCC park inventory/continual evaluation

The Jumping Pillow at Little Bennett Regional Park
Park Feature Highlights
Agricultural History Farm Park
Wheaton Regional Park

Maria, Rahul, and Elena
South Germantown Recreational Park
Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park

- The Hump Light Station
- Woodlawn House
- Stone Barn Museum
- Pasture
- Underground Railroad Trail

Christine and Sacsheen
Black Hill Regional Park
In Conclusion

• Field investigation: unique features of 19 parks, 92 features
• Data compilation and questions for features
• Resulting products: data spreadsheet, report, park pictures
• Overall visited new parks and learned about area’s history
• Background for future Pokemon Go Park App - Spring 2018
Questions?