User Experience in Design
for Southwood Nature Preserve, North St. Paul

During the Fall of 2013, students from the User Experience (UX) class at the University of Minnesota partnered up with Resilient Communities Project and the City of North St. Paul. The goal of the class was to learn and apply UX design principles, and to find new ways of increasing engagement at Southwood Nature Preserve. Students worked in teams throughout the entire semester and came up with different solutions to meet the client and users' goals and needs.

1 Research

Students conducted research to understand Southwood Nature Preserve, North St. Paul, and its surroundings.
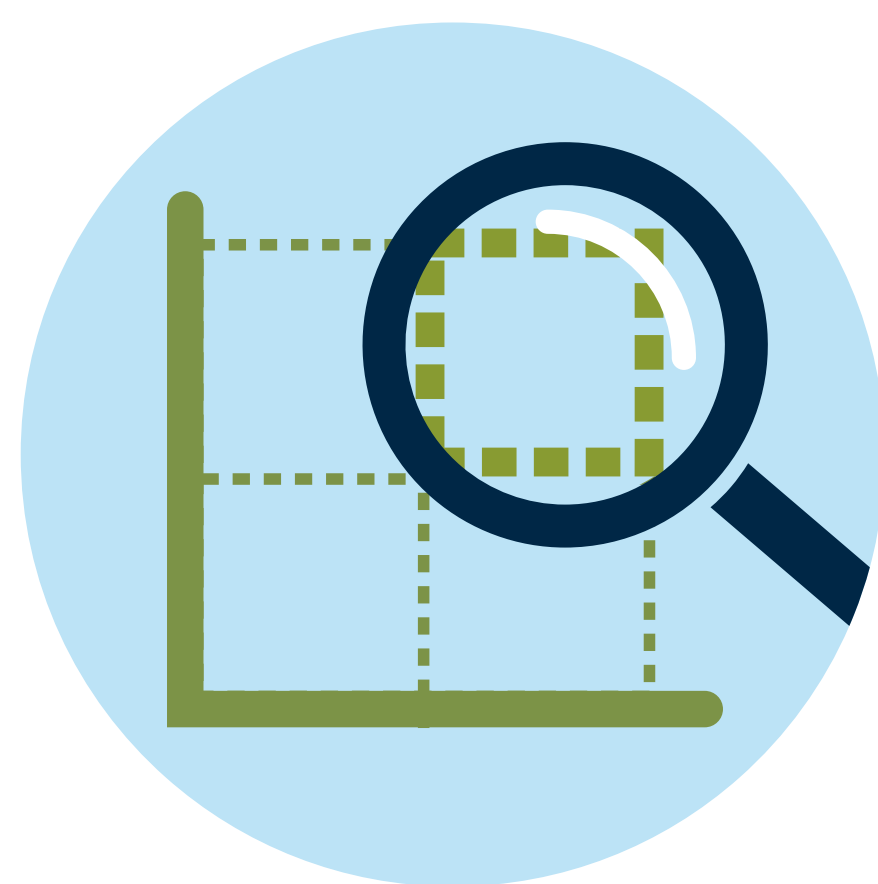
Visit Southwood Nature Preserve

Tour residential areas and businesses in North St. Paul

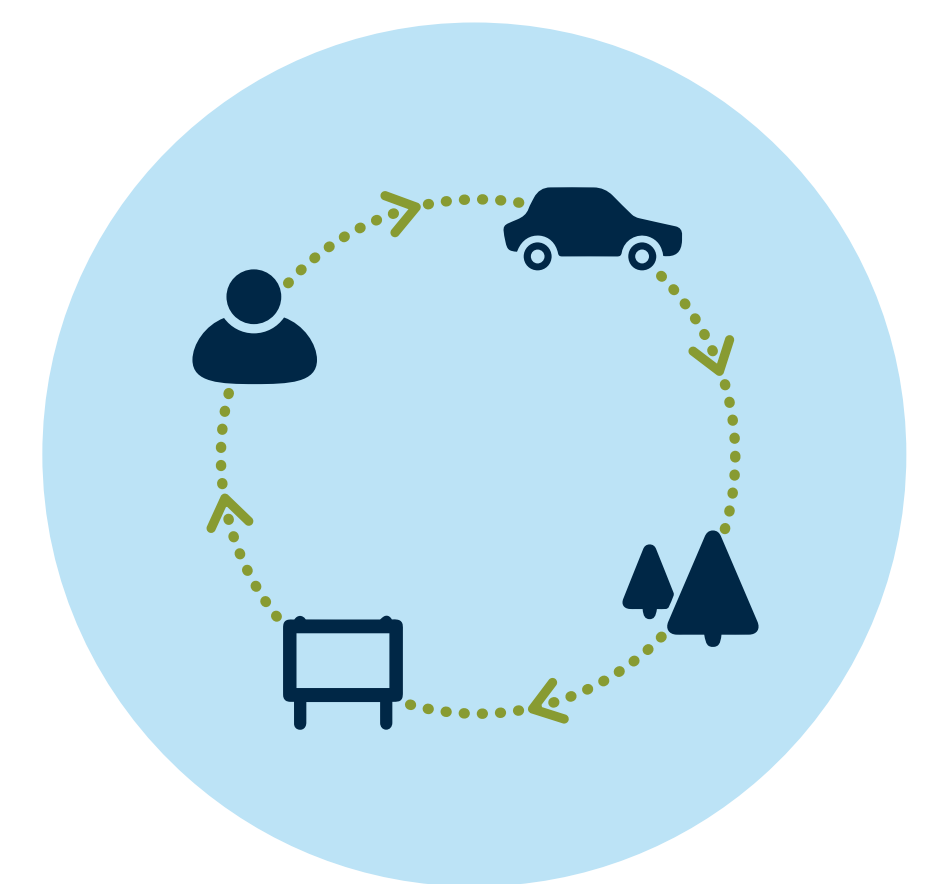Interview residents of the city and users of the preserve

2 Analyze

Through observation and interaction with the clients and residents of North St. Paul, students were able to identify their target audience.

Conduct stakeholder analysis to identify key stakeholders

Many teams identified teachers and families as their target user/audience

Create user journey to understand how users interact with the preserve

3 Prototype

The next step was to come up with solutions that would meet the client and users' goals.

Brainstorm prototypes that would eventually become self-sustainable

Present ideas to clients and users

Revise ideas based on feedback

4 Recommend

After receiving feedback from clients and users, students refined their prototypes and presented their final solutions. The following are examples.

Rebrand Southwood Nature Preserve

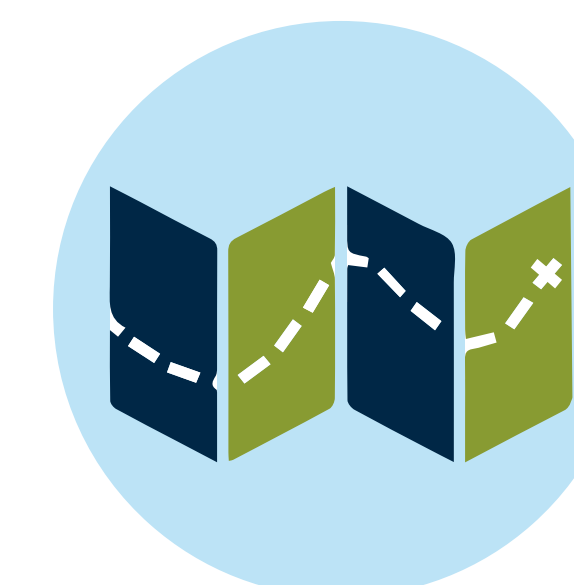Redesign City of North St. Paul's website

Use social media to engage users

Build interactive signage at preserve

Incorporate Southwood into educational programs

Create customizable adventures and activities for children

Resilient
Communities Project