

Strava Map Design

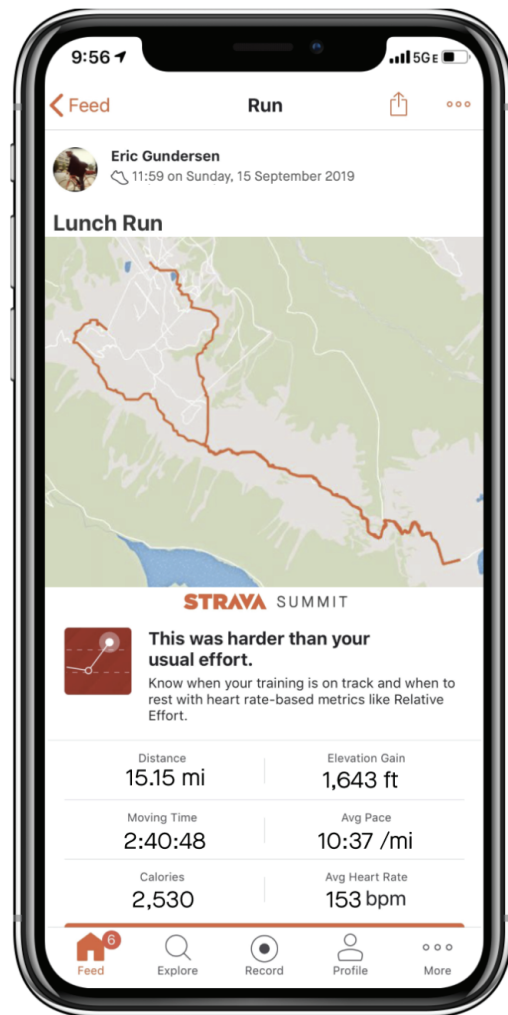
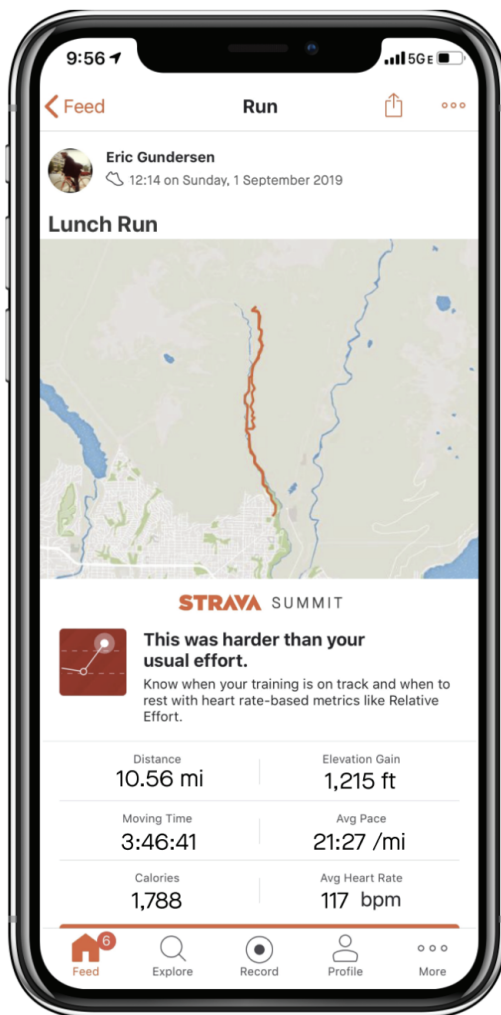
Madison Draper | 2019

Observation

Strava is a fitness app with over 46 million users, and they use Mapbox maps to display the routes of athletes. The Strava map was designed over 4 years ago with old data and base map tile-sets that do not receive updates.

Problem

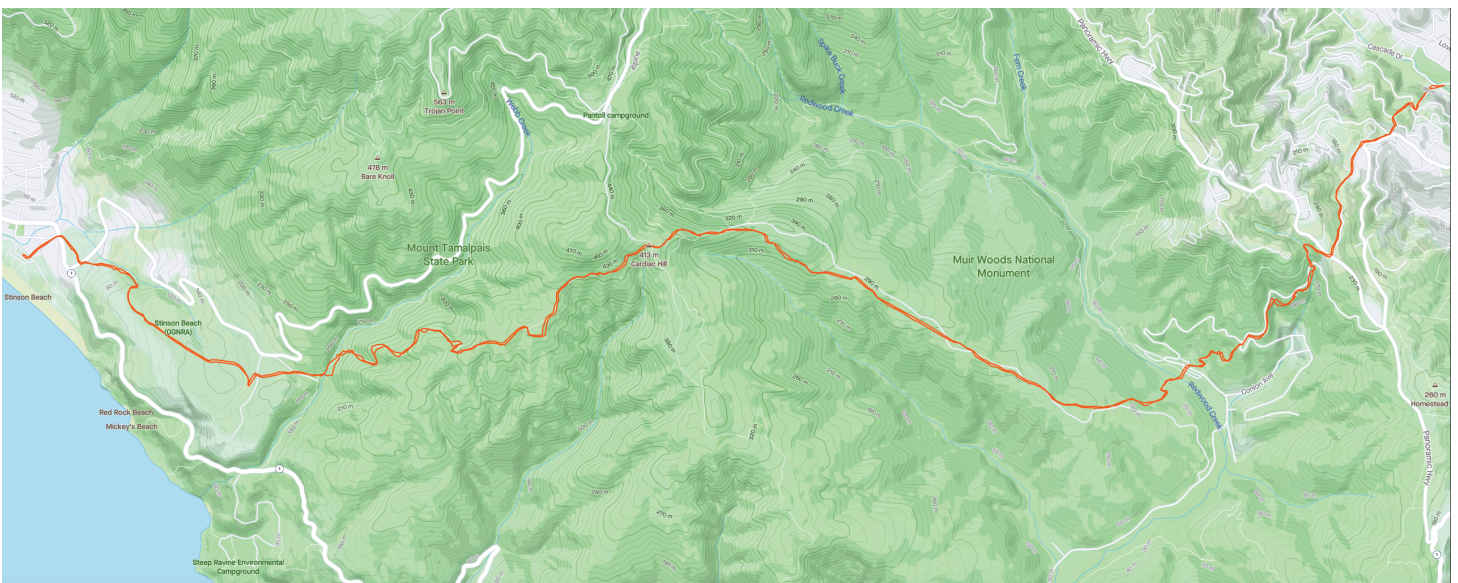
Strava has been preparing for a launch with Mapbox's modern technology stack. We saw this as an opportunity to design a map for them and focus the launch not just on the backend features, but also on the look and feel of the map.

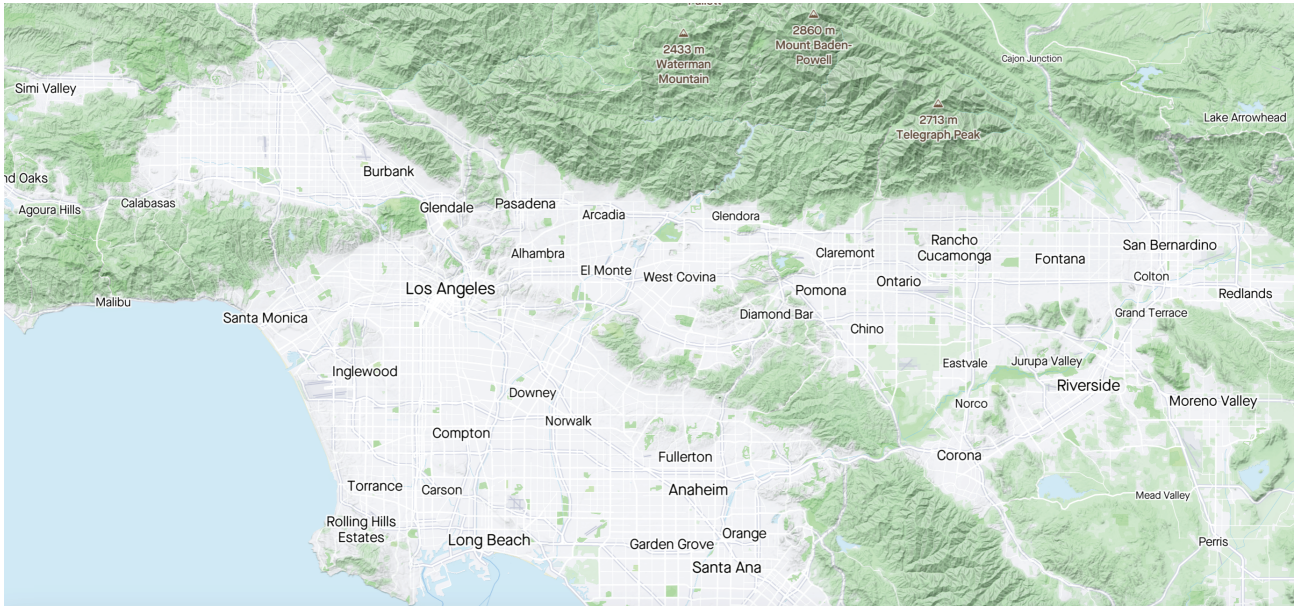


Scope of Project

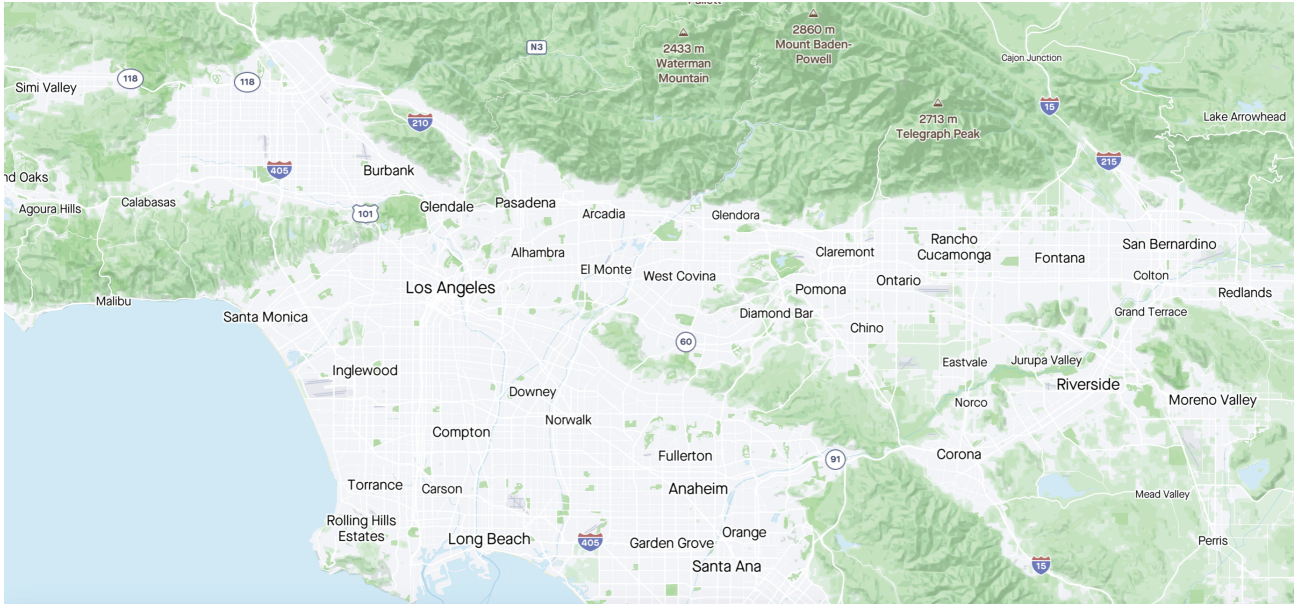
Part of the older technology stack Strava was using involved raster tiled maps, while our company now uses vector maps. Part of the transition to using the updated map tiles also meant using a new map style. We took this as an opportunity to co-brand and co-market with Strava.

1. Learn about Strava's brand and their design vision
2. Create mocks and prototypes of the map
3. Communicate with our internal Customer Success Manager for Strava
4. Design Review
5. Create a complete map and present it to the Strava Head of Product and the static feed team
6. Recreate the style
7. Design review
8. Communicate with internal Engineering, Product and Project Managers
9. Communicate with Strava's Marketing department
10. Prepare co-marketing materials
11. Ship with Strava map and co-marketing materials

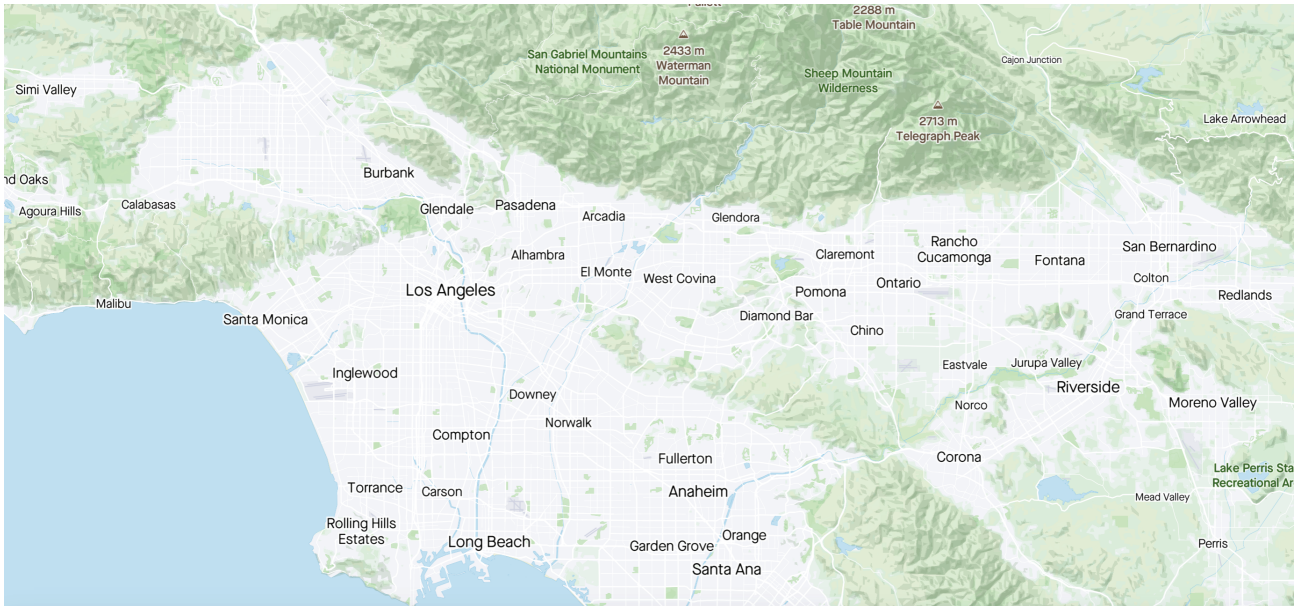




version 1



version 2



version 3

Label density and relevance

The map's primary function is to provide context about the route. This map shouldn't be generic or tailored for navigation uses. Rather, the map should only provide relevant information that matches with the user groups' relevant features of interest. Using x-ray mode (left), density was assured for legibility. Checking the collision boxes (right) informs what features are visible at each zoom.



Uncertainties

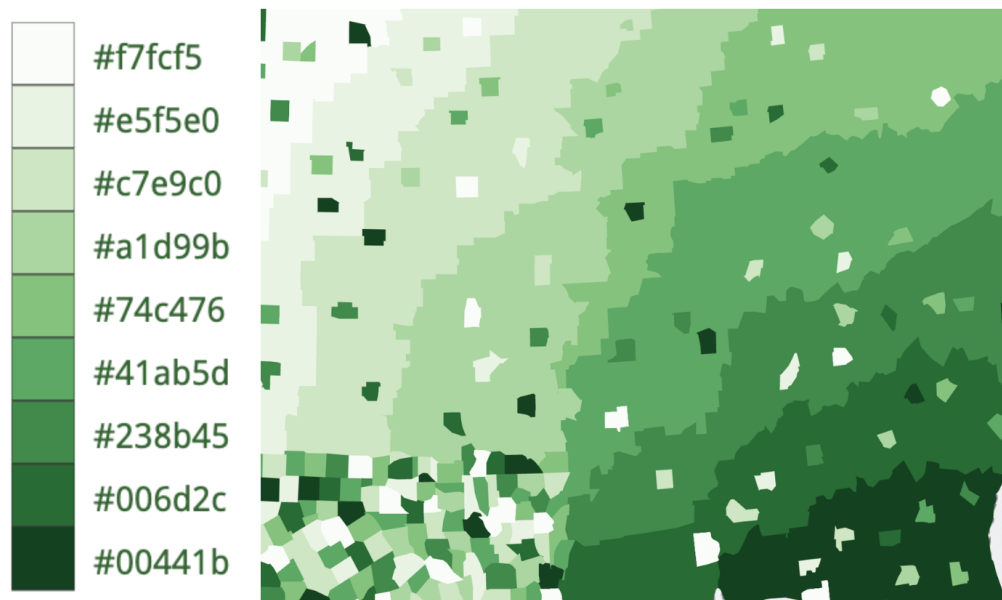
- The interactive map on mobile and web are not being changed to their map style, which may cause confusion
- Using lower resolution data for a performance increase
- The map style change is large, which may be jarring to users who take the same routes regularly
- Non-internal user feedback was not collected prior to update

Goals

- Provide a terrain-heavy and athlete-oriented map for Strava
- Aid in a smooth launch for Strava
- Create co-marketing materials
- Continue to foster a relationship with Strava to identify further collaboration in interactive mobile and web maps

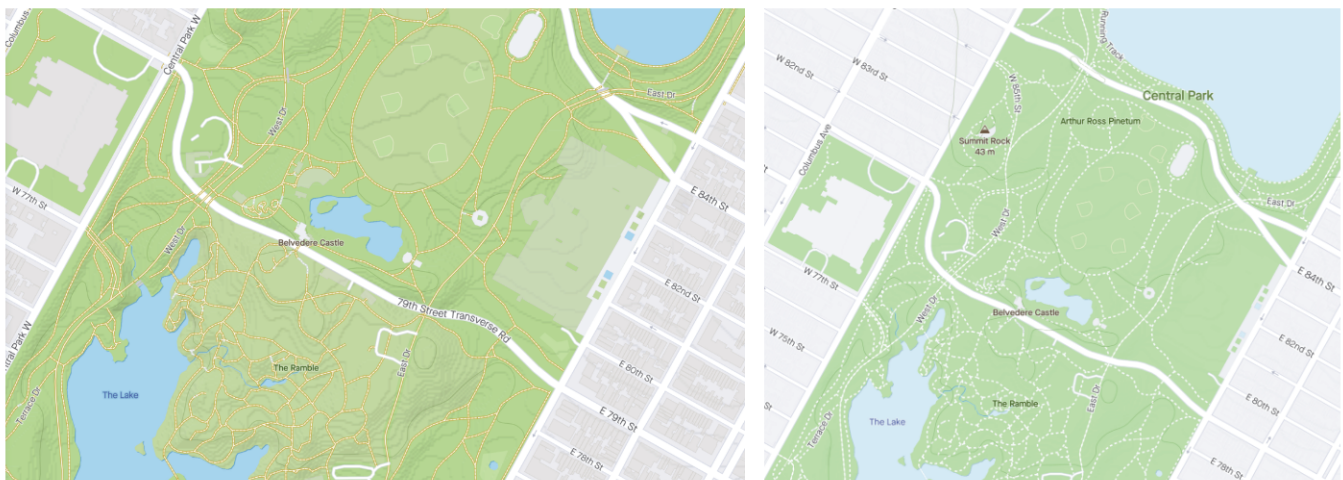
Color

To keep to our original theme of minimalistic and athlete focused, the colour bolder colours in the Outdoors palette were simplified by increasing lightness. Specifically, the blue water and background were lightened most significantly. Text halos were also changed accordingly. The orange line of the athlete's path will be far more apparent on our version. The greens in our palette were also condensed to a similar hue and different lightness for cohesivity among generally grassy areas.



Paths & Trails

The yellow paths conflict with the orange strava lines, so we went for the minimalist approach again to ensure the athlete's orange journey is the priority and doesn't have to compete for attention against the yellow.



User Profile

While there are over 50 different types of activities on Strava, the 3 primary users are hikers, runners and cyclists. It is fair to claim that Strava users care about their health. The feed is similar to other social sites with sharing, liking and commenting features. While users can add photographs and captions to their post, the primary content is the route map.

Claim: Athletes want a map that accurately reflects their route.

Strava has users internationally, so providing regional context, like language, meters & local highway signs are significant details.

Hikers are most common in rural areas, though there are urban hikers who walk urban trails through areas such as large parks. Hikers who visit national parks or other mountain ranges may take multi-day trips.

- Map features: Summits, elevation, terrain, vegetation
- Map zoom range: Mid to high zoom levels

Runners can be further categorized into urban and trail runners. Since the trail runner's landscape is similar to the hikers, the runner profile focuses on urban runners.

- Map features: Road names, roads, elevation
- Map zoom range: Mid to high zoom levels

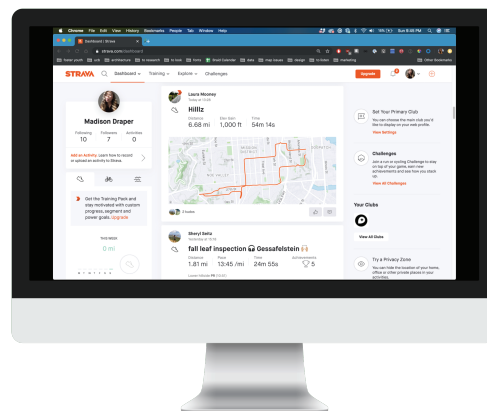
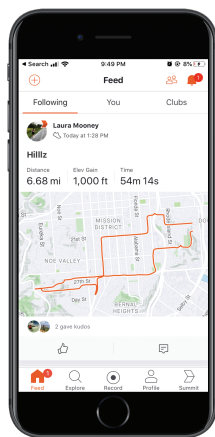
Cyclists are common in urban and rural areas. They tend to traverse more land than hikers or runners. To fit the entire polyline in the static feed map, the map is typically more zoomed out for these users.

- Map features: Cycleways, road names, roads, elevation, terrain
- Map zoom range: Low zoom levels

User Journey

Users can view the static map feed on mobile and desktop. Users can review their routes and share them on Strava's social platform. Users can also view the routes and statistics of other users they follow.

There are two primary differences between the mobile and desktop versions of the map. Firstly, the size of the map design will depend on the viewport. For mobile users, the map is constrained to smaller screen sizes. The map was designed on a desktop screen, but tested on mobile screens via prototype apps. Secondly, upon clicking for the map for more information about the route and activity, the mobile app turns users to Apple Maps and the web map turns users to the older raster map.



Results

- A successful launch of Static API and new map for Strava
- User feedback was mostly positive, though our uncertainties were confirmed especially with users who take the same routes and with the dissonance between the static and interactive maps
- Most read blog post in Mapbox history at over 161k views