Proposal for Emoji: CITY PARK

Submitter: John Cline (Emojination)
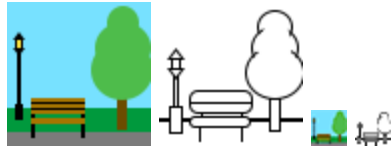
Date: July 24, 2022

1. **Identification**
   A. **CLDR Short name:** CITY PARK
   B. **Other keywords:** park, urban park, parklet, urban green space

2. **Images**
   a. **Zip FIle:** city-park-emoji.zip
   b. **License:** Credit John Cline (Emojination). Created for this proposal, free for use.
   c. **Images**

   (an image of a street lamp, bench, and tree with a gray path in the foreground, green lawn in the background, and a blue sky)

   Category: In the "places-other" category, after HOT SPRINGS

Abstract

We are requesting the addition of a CITY PARK emoji, and using it as the default PARK emoji (rather than NATIONAL PARK). It would complement the existing NATIONAL PARK emoji and other city emojis in the places-other category, but provide a more specific meaning for the 56% of humanity that lives in an urban environment where the nearest or most frequented park looks different than the current PARK/NATIONAL PARK emoji.

Introduction

Parks and green spaces have been part of the urban experience as long as urban centers have existed, from gardens in ancient Mesopotamian civilizations through the long history of Chinese gardens to the modern parks era that started nearly 200 years agos. Urban parks provide health benefits on a number of dimensions, from physical and mental to emotional and social, in addition to being an important part of protection against the effects of climate change. With 56% of the world currently living in cities and nearly 70% expected to be by 2050[1] the majority of humanity will experience a park that looks like the proposed CITY PARK emoji rather than the current NATIONAL PARK emoji.

History

Green space has been an important part of urban planning for nearly as long as humans have lived in urban centers, dating as far back to 3,000 BCE where records indicate early Mesopotamian civilizations had several types of gardens[2]. Ancient Indian and Chinese civilizations also had long histories of gardens, including mentions in ancient Hindu texts like the Rigveda and Ramayana and inscriptions from the Shang Dynasty having three characters for different types of gardens[3]. These early green spaces were generally created as collections of rare plants and animals, or hunting grounds, for nobles or members of elite society.

Some of the earliest public green spaces appeared in Ancient Rome. *Porticus* (small gardens) became a fixture of the urban landscape in the first century CE[4] and the phrase "*rus in urbe*", or "*country in the city*", was coined[5]. For Romans, the countryside was an idealistic setting that evoked peace, leisure, simplicity, and serenity in contrast to the busy city life[6]. To help bring these benefits to urban dwellers, Ancient Romans created park spaces within cities - Augustus transformed Campus Martius into a parkland, Nero created a vast landscaped complex called Domus Aurea, and wealthy Romans sought to include gardens and greenery wherever they could[7].

The modern parks movement started in the late 18th century/early 19th century coinciding with the rise of industrialization. As cities became more dense and polluted, the quality of life suffered. Cities and citizens responded by advocating for more public parks and open space to

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[1] https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview

[2] Dalley Stephanie, (1993) "Ancient Mesopotamian Gardens" Garden History, the Journal of the Garden History Society, v21.

[3] Feng Chaoxiong, The Classical Gardens of Suzhou, preface, and Bing Chiu, Jardins de Chine, ou la quete du paradis, Editions de La Martiniere, Paris 2010, p. 10–11

[4] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01445170.1994.10412494

[5] https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100433825

[6] Frazer, Alfred (1998). The Roman villa: villa urbana. Philadelphia: UPenn Museum of Archaeology. ISBN 978-0-924171-59-8.

[7] https://urbanrambles.org/background/a-brief-history-of-rus-in-urbe-1307

counterbalance the negative health effects of industrialization. Many large notable parks were created during the middle of the 19th Century, such as Regent's Park in London (1835), Central Park (1853) in New York, Chicago's Lincoln Park (1860), and the many parks in Paris created by Napoleon III from 1852-1870[8].

The public parks movement reached a peak at the turn of the 20th Century, with more parks opened between 1885 and 1914 than either before or after this period[9]. As science has found over the last century, the health benefits of urban parks and green spaces has been validated through research with numerous studies confirming the improvements of air quality, mental health, respiratory health, social cohesion, and reductions in mental illness and chronic disease [10].

While parks may vary substantially in design and purpose, common features include walkways, plants, areas to socialize, recreation areas like fields or courts, pet areas, or playgrounds.

Central Park, New York, USA

([left image](#), [right image](#))

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[8]
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_parks_and_gardens_of_Paris#Parks_and_gardens_of_Napoleon_III_(1852%E2%80%931870)

[9] Jordan, H. (1994). Public Parks, 1885-1914. *Garden History*, *22*(1), 85–113. https://doi.org/10.2307/1587004

[10] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_green_space#Impact_on_health

Hyde Park, London, UK

(left image, right image)

Beihai Park, Beijing, CN

(left image, right image)

Parc Guell, Barcelona, ES

(left image, right image)

Mount Faber Park, Singapore

([left image](), [right image]())

Ibirapuera, São Paulo, BR

([left image](), [right image]())

Why a New Emoji

Urban parks have always been an important part of city life, and the current emoji set doesn't represent them well. The existing NATIONAL PARK emoji (also used for PARK), which features mountains with a river/stream and trees, does not reflect the parks that most people experience day to day. Most people live in cities (56% today, expected to be 70% by 2050), and their local parks are small gardens, basketball courts, a paved walkway through a green space, or maybe just a plain paved area - not something with mountains, and likely not with a river or a stream.

These parks serve many purposes, from a place to gather for recreation, or protest[11], spend time with family or friends, see rare plants or animals (or any plants or animals), or enjoy a spot of nature when you couldn't otherwise. While all of these *activities* can be represented by a current emoji, there isn't one that represents the *place* to do it. There are many other emoji in the places category that represent the other aspects of an urban dweller's day, from going to

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[11] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street

work, to working out, to running errands, but the lack of emoji to represent a city park and the growing importance of them in everyday urban life is a gap that should be addressed.

A new CITY PARK emoji would fill the gap in the current emoji set and provide a broad enough use case to combine easily with other emojis and represent a key missing place. With the growing proportion of people living in urban environments, it also makes sense to have this new emoji become the preferred keyword for PARK as well, as more people will experience a park that looks like the proposal in their day to day than a mountain with rivers and trees.

Selection Factors – Inclusion

## Compatibility

Not applicable.

Expected Usage Level

Frequency

For the frequency information below, I used the following terms:
- City Park - suggested emoji term and most common name
- Urban Park - the second most common name (also the Wikipedia page title for the concept as well as the Google Trends Topic)
- "Park -national" - because a city park is most often referred to as simply a "park" when discussing online, I excluded the phrase "national" from results to give a comparison point

Google Search

"city-park" brings up almost 5 billion results, with "urban-park" at another 1.2 billion. "Park -national" has over 6 billion results.
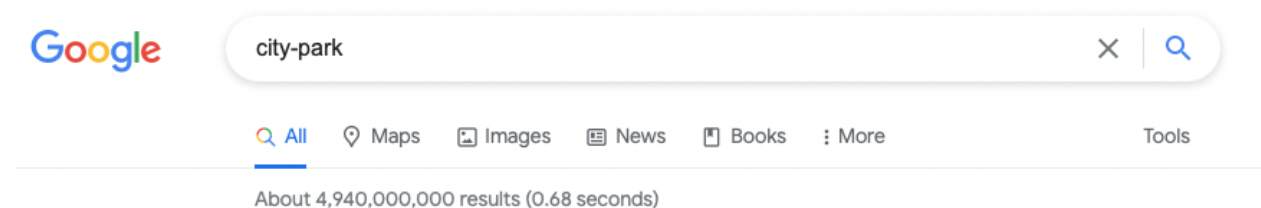
Google   urban-park   ✕   🔍

🔍 All   ⊙ Maps   🖾 Images   📰 News   ▶ Videos   ⋮ More   Tools

About 1,210,000,000 results (0.43 seconds)

Google   park -national   ✕   🔍

🔍 All   ⊙ Maps   🖾 Images   📰 News   ▶ Videos   ⋮ More   Tools

About 6,120,000,000 results (0.56 seconds)

Bing Search

On Bing, both "city park" and "urban park" had approximately 2.4 billion results, with "park -national" having 0.9 billion results.

Microsoft Bing   city park   🎤 ⊡ 🔍

ALL   MAPS   IMAGES   VIDEOS   NEWS   SHOPPING   ⋮ MORE

2,440,000,000 Results   Any time ▾   ⊙ Results near New York, New York · Change

Microsoft Bing   urban park   🎤 ⊡ 🔍

ALL   IMAGES   VIDEOS   MAPS   NEWS   SHOPPING   ⋮ MORE

2,330,000,000 Results   Any time ▾

Microsoft Bing   park -national   🎤 ⊡ 🔍

ALL   IMAGES   VIDEOS   MAPS   NEWS   SHOPPING   ⋮ MORE

5-18 Of 936,000,000 Results   Any time ▾

Google Video Search

"city-park" returned 600 million results, with "urban-park" at 51 million and "park -national" at 835 million.
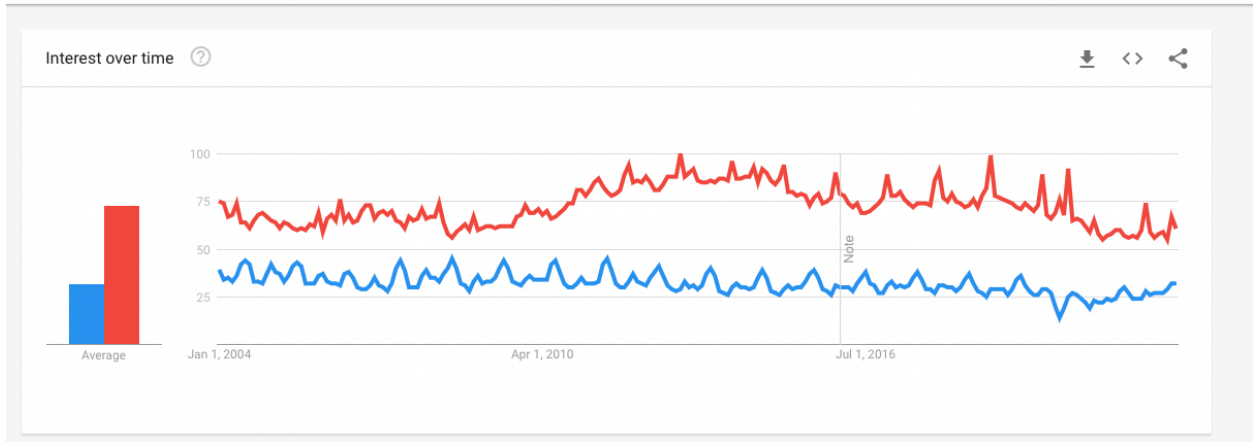

Google | city-park | × | Q

Q All   ⊙ Maps   ▣ Images   ▤ News   ▶ Videos   ⋮ More   Tools

About 602,000,000 results (0.46 seconds)

Google | urban-park | × | Q

Q All   ⊙ Maps   ▣ Images   ▤ News   ▶ Videos   ⋮ More   Tools

About 50,700,000 results (0.38 seconds)

Google | park -national | × | Q

Q All   ⊙ Maps   ▣ Images   ▤ News   ▶ Videos   ⋮ More   Tools

About 835,000,000 results (0.41 seconds)
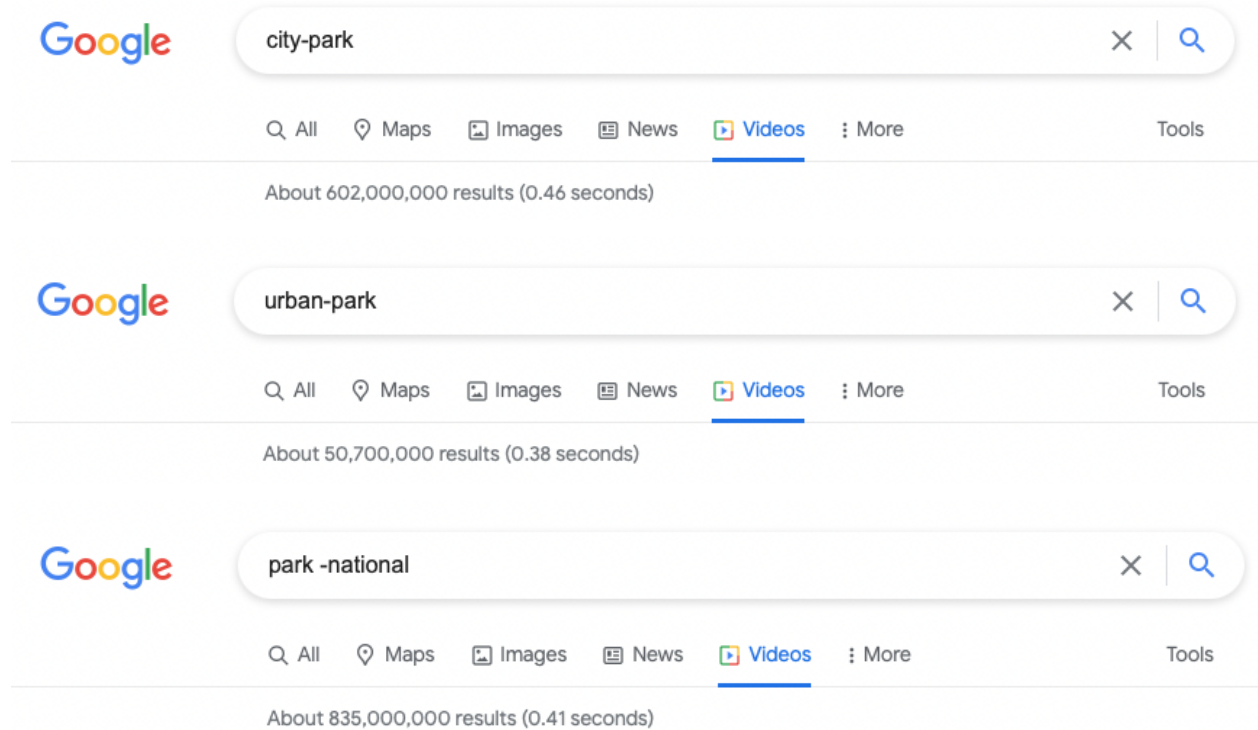
Google Trends: Web Search

"City park" as a search term was ranked below "elephant" as the reference for the entire duration of time, with "urban park" well below. "park -national", however, was well above "elephant" with seasonal peaks matching summer in the northern hemisphere.
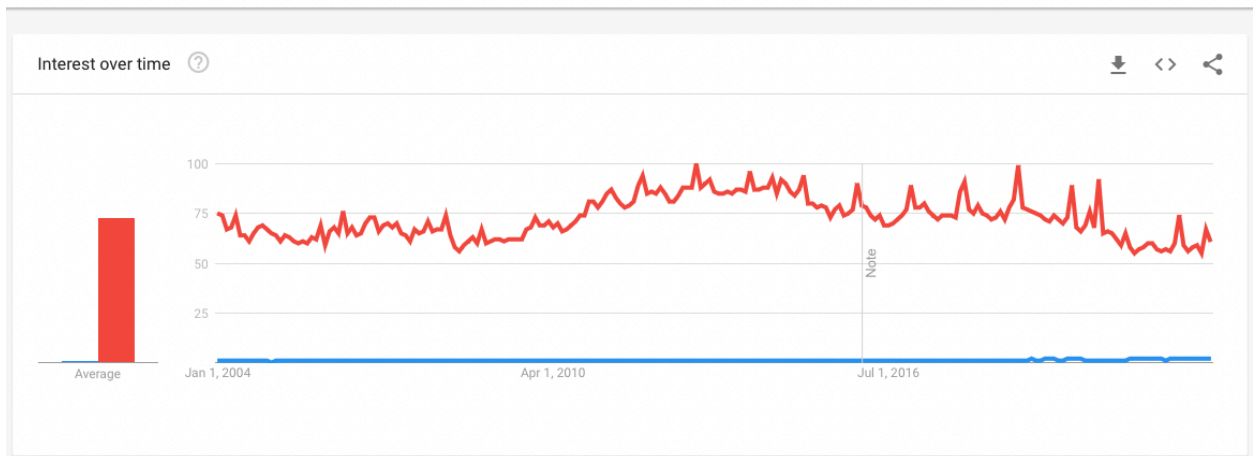
city park — Search term
elephant — Search term
+ Add comparison

Worldwide ▾   2004 - present ▾   All categories ▾   Web Search ▾

Interest over time ⓘ

100
75
50
25

Average

Jan 1, 2004   Apr 1, 2010   Jul 1, 2016

urban park — Search term
elephant — Search term
+ Add comparison

Worldwide ▾   2004 - present ▾   All categories ▾   Web Search ▾

Interest over time ⓘ

100
75
50
25

Average

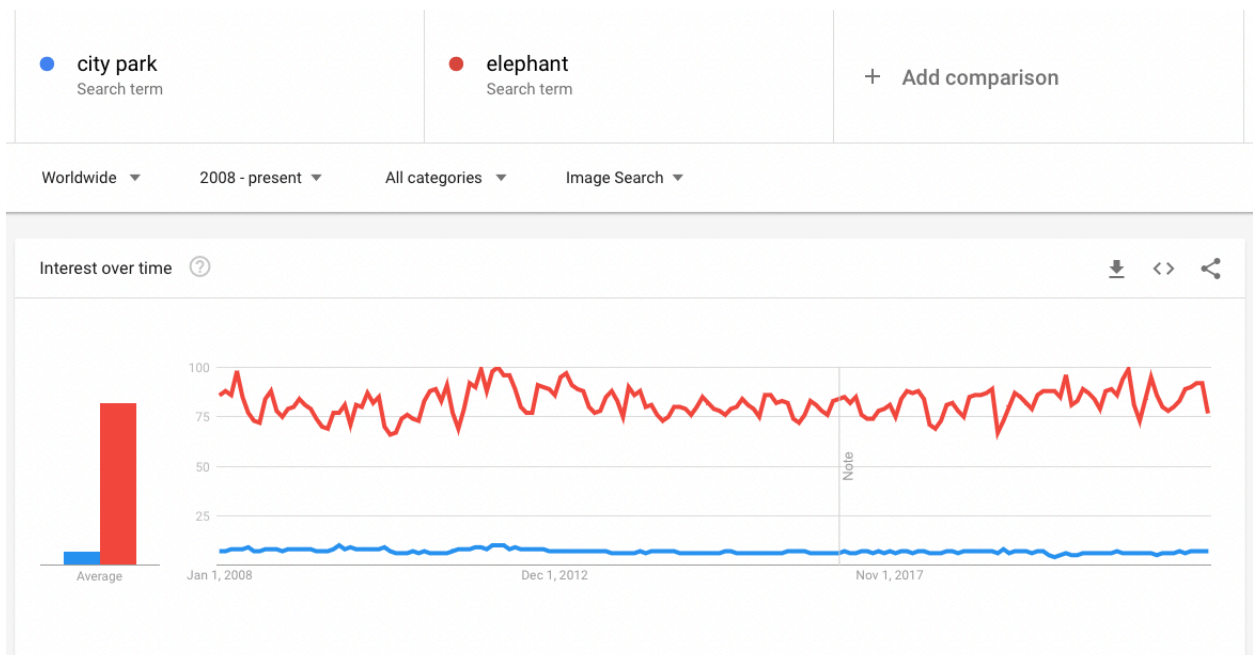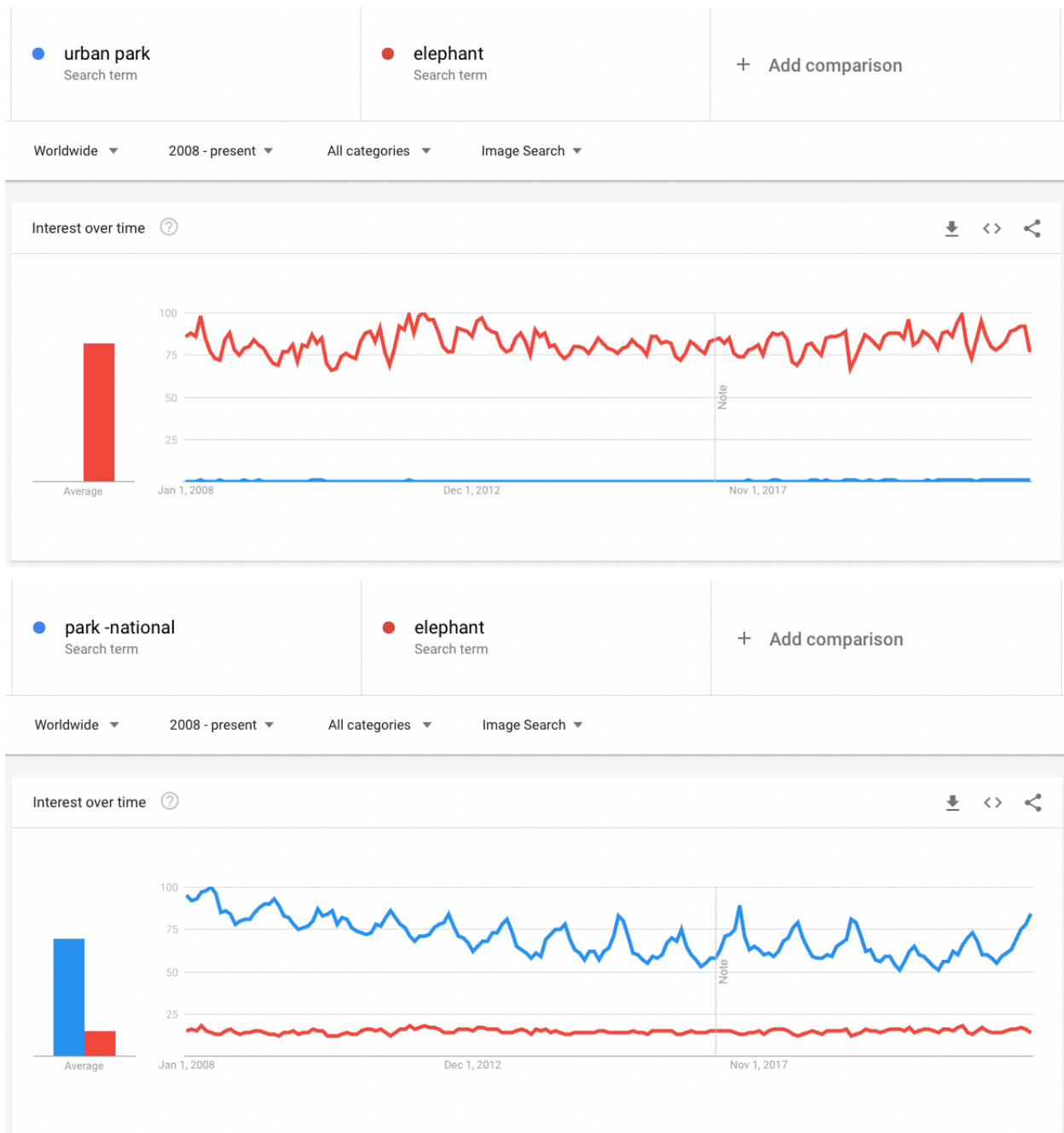Jan 1, 2004   Apr 1, 2010   Jul 1, 2016

Google Trends: Image Search

Google Trends Image Search followed similarly as regular trends, with both "city park" and "urban park" well below "elephant" but "park -national" above.
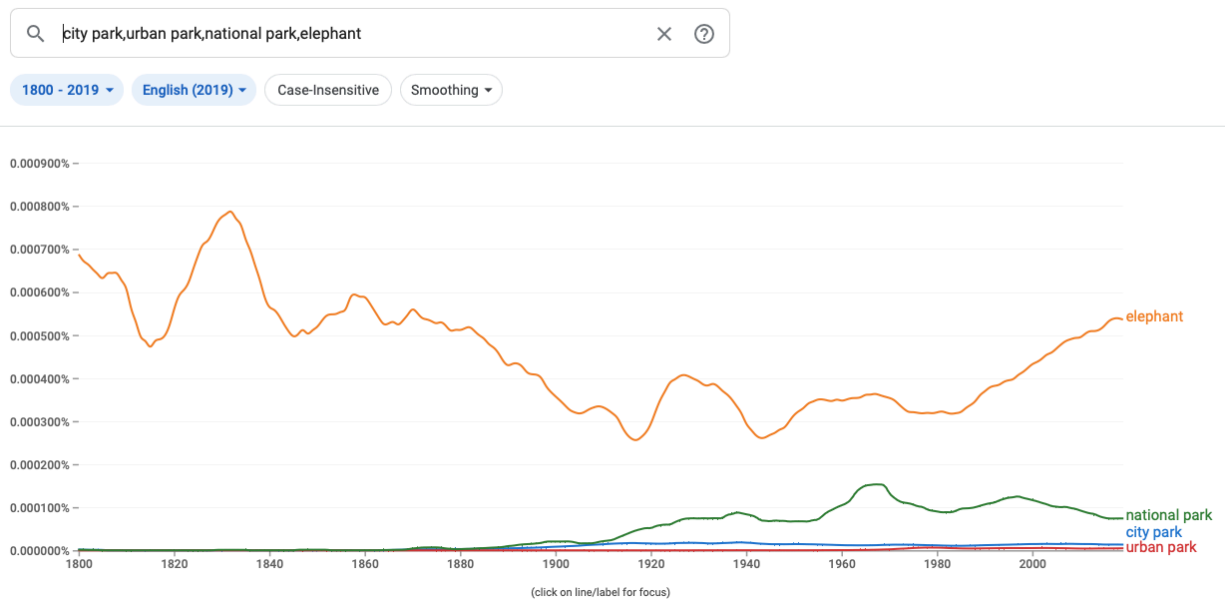
NGram Viewer

"City park" and "urban park" were also well below "elephant" on the NGram Viewer (and you can also see an increase in frequency for park starting around the turn of the 20th century as parks grew in popularity".

However, when including "park_NOUN" the NGram viewer is much higher than elephant over the time period (also showing the rise in frequency during the 19th century as parks grew in popularity).
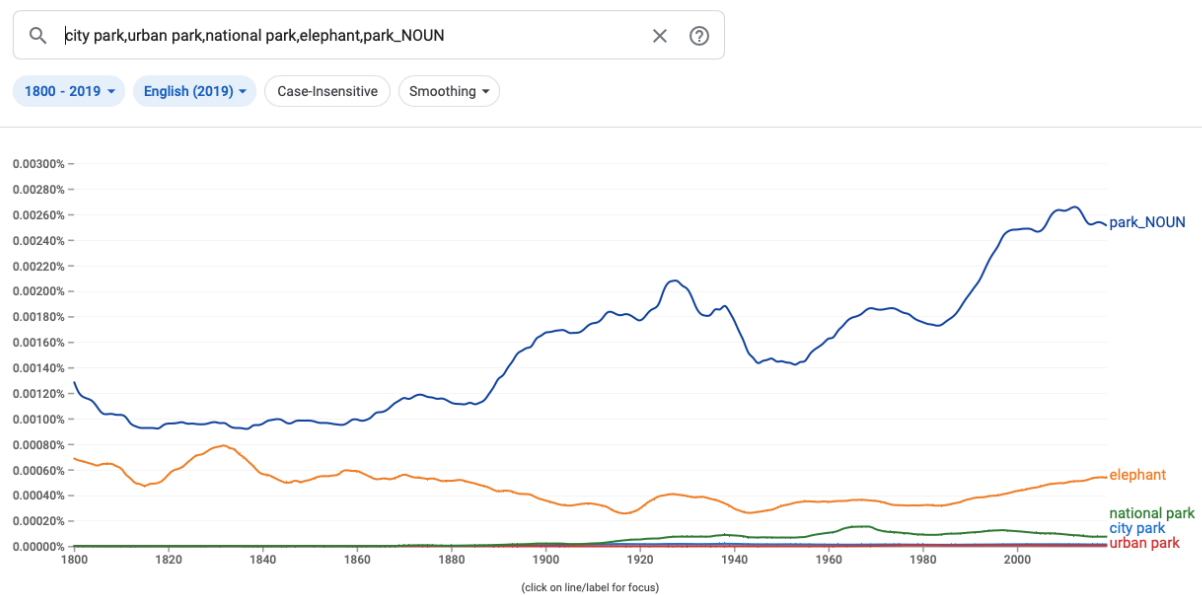
Instagram Search

Included below is a reference of hashtag posts on Instagram, where #park shows up more frequently than #elephant. Because several actual parks are named "City Park", the #citypark hashtag has much lower usage (as well as #urbanpark). I included #nationalpark as a reference.

Platform	Hashtag	Number of Posts	Source
Instagram	#park	35,547,402	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/park/
Instagram	#elephant	8,302,400	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/elephant/
Instagram	#elephants	2,925,157	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/elephants/
Instagram	#nationalpark	8,519,608	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/nationalpark/
Instagram	#citypark	611,717	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/citypark/
Instagram	#urbanpark	108,598	https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/urbanpark/

Wikipedia Search

Since September of 2015, the "elephant" Wikipedia page has been much more popular than any major park related pages (including "Park" and "National Park"). This makes sense as people are more likely to be looking up information about elephants than a generic park or the history of parks.

Note: data does go back to Jul 2015, but "elephant" had a large view spike in August that made the graph difficult to scale to see the park pages.
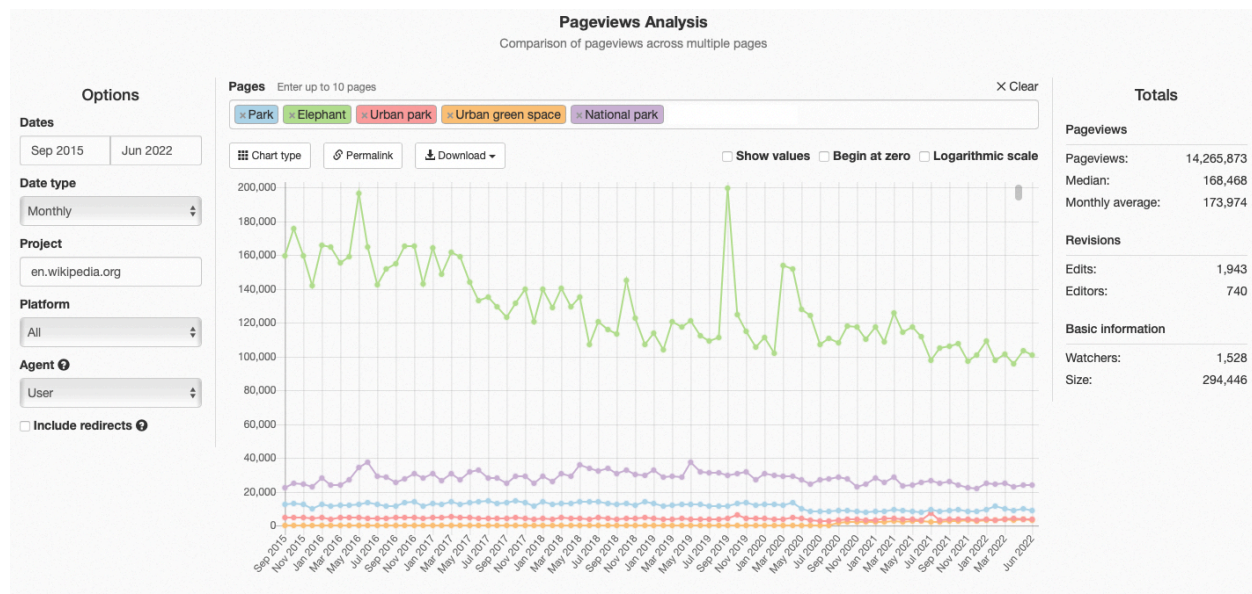
Multiple Usages

Not applicable.

Use in sequences

While unlikely to be added in the future due to being overly specific, it could be possible to combine with other emojis to provide for more specific kinds of CITY PARKs. For example:
- SKATEBOARD + CITY PARK → SKATE PARK
- MOAI + CITY PARK → SCULPTURE PARK
- DROP + CITY PARK → WATER PARK
- BOUQUET + CITY PARK → GARDEN

Breaking new ground.

CITY PARK conveys something new that the current emoji set doesn't completely represent, but it is conceptually similar to the existing NATIONAL PARK emoji. The addition of CITY PARK would support more use cases with other emoji than NATIONAL PARK can, particularly around activities that make sense in a CITY PARKs (or areas within a CITY PARK) that wouldn't make sense for a NATIONAL PARK. For example, the following sentences either don't make sense with NATIONAL PARK or would have a very different meaning:

- Meet me at the 💧 in the CITY PARK
- Are you going to the 🛹CITY PARK later?
- How was 📷🦉 CITY PARK?
- 🧺 in the CITY PARK later today if you can make it
- We're playing ⚽ in the CITY PARK near me
- 🐐🧘🏿‍♀️CITY PARK!! So much fun!
- ✊🏾 at the CITY PARK, bring your signs

Image Distinctiveness

The proposed CITY PARK emoji aims to be distinct while still keeping the theme of other emoji in the places category. It uses the full square design, similar to the NATIONAL PARK emoji and the cityscape/sunset/bridge emojis. However, the distinctive elements (lamp, bench, tree, green space, sky) give the emoji a visual distinctness that is easy to tell from a quick glance due to the colors and visual break between the top and bottom, relative to the two other emoji that are square and have a blue sky (FOGGY and NATIONAL PARK).

Completeness

CITY PARK does help in completeness for various general locations one may visit in a city, such as the emoji in the place-building/religious categories, or the BARBER POLE emoji in the place-other category.

Further, it completes the two large concepts of natural spaces with the current NATIONAL PARK emoji. NATIONAL PARK can be used for several outdoors concepts (rivers, lakes, mountains, rural outdoors), which are not often shared in the same context of urban parks and green spaces. While some parks may feature a FOUNTAIN or PLAYGROUND SLIDE, they don't always. CITY PARK gives a better general use for urban green space that doesn't imply or connote leaving an urban area.

Selection Factors – Exclusion

Petitions or "Frequent Requests"

The author of this proposal is not aware of any existing petitions or requests to add a CITY PARK emoji (or similar concept).

Overly Specific

CITY PARK is not overly specific, as it represents a broad category of parks that can be found in urban settings and complements the existing NATIONAL PARK emoji. The proposed image consists of the core identifying features of most urban parks, without proscribing a particular design aesthetic or suggesting a specific type of urban park (such as a skate park).

Open-ended

The proposed CITY PARK emoji is relatively general, and doesn't belong to a category that could not already be represented with existing emoji. For example, NATIONAL PARK can represent more natural concepts, or combining CITY PARK and the SKATEBOARD emoji could represent a skate park.

Already Representable

NATIONAL PARK, FOUNTAIN, and PLAYGROUND SLIDE could all be used in some contexts to communicate an urban park, but each falls short in some way. Additionally, FOUNTAIN and PLAYGROUND SLIDE are more specific than CITY PARK, which can support a broader usage due to it being a more generic concept.

The graphic depiction of NATIONAL PARK on most vendors has mountains and rivers/lakes, which aren't common in cities. Suggesting a friend to meet in a NATIONAL PARK may be confusing if you meant to go to your local neighborhood park.

FOUNTAIN is also not sufficient, as some fountains exist without a park, or are a prominent feature of a park. For example, suggesting to a friend who lives in lower Manhattan in New York

City to meet at the FOUNTAIN would likely imply meeting at Washington Square Park, which has two notable features of a large arch and a large fountain - not Union Square Park, Tompkins Square Park, or several of the smaller parks nearby that do not have a prominent fountain.

PLAYGROUND SLIDE also implies a playground, which may just have equipment but not a natural area.

Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, specific landmarks, deities

There are no logos, brands, deities, specific people or landmarks represented by this image.

Transient

CITY PARKs have been a part of urban living for thousands of years, and that is unlikely to change for the next 50 or 100 years. The representation of CITY PARK could be adapted as design trends change.

Faulty Comparison

We believe that the CITY PARK proposal is sufficiently novel and can stand on its own.

Exact Images

This proposal suggests an image distinct enough from other emoji using features common to the large majority of parks, but the design elements or arrangement could vary drastically. Similar to the differences implemented by vendors in the NATIONAL PARK emoji today, the CITY PARK could allow for further variation while still being distinct.

Region Flags

Not applicable.

Lack of Required Rights

As indicated in the attached Emoji Proposal Agreement and License, we affirm that the images included in our proposal are the original work of John Cline and were provided to Emojination as a work for hire. Emojination owns all copyright and interest in these images and grants permission to the Unicode Consortium use, distribute and sublicense the image as per the broad rights defined in the agreement.

Variations on Direction

Does not apply.

Includes Text

Does not apply.

Author Biographies

John Cline (clinejj@gmail.com) is an emoji enthusiast, pastry enthusiast, and resident of New York City where he spends much of his time in his local neighborhood park, Tompkins Square Park.