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NMDE-302 | Fall 2023

GUI Project 1

Rochester Redesign



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A beautiful city should be reflected in a beautiful site—but the city of Rochester's website is just a bit antiquated and cluttered.

So let's fix that!

Research

Identifying Problems

Header

- navigation has no hover state/dropdown (instead leads to pages with only a lists of sub-pages)
- awkward search bar: squashed icon, horizontally but not vertically centered text despite cursor being left aligned
- old, mis-matched social media icons

Cards

- minimal hierarchy across categories
- all information is out in the open
- takes up a lot of space; visually overwhelming yet repetitive and monotonous
- last row has only one card, weird alignment

Style

- colorful pastels read almost childish, doesn't match content
- feels unserious; friendly but not very "professional" (almost makes you doubt whether you're on the correct site or not)
- drop shadows appear on cards and nowhere else; inconsistent formatting

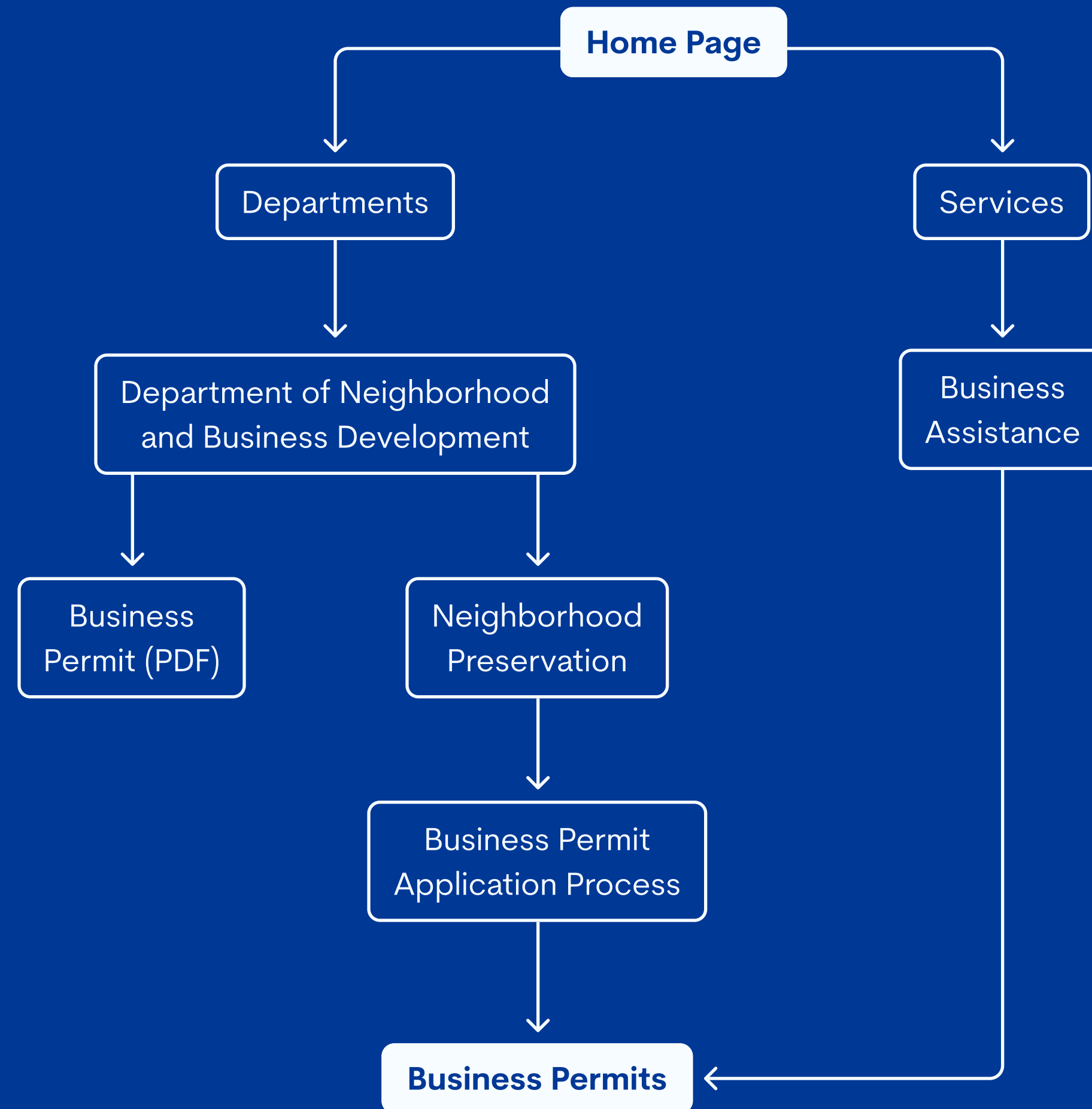


User Flow

THE TASK: find information on the business permit application process

The current user flow has an overwhelming amount of ways to get from the home page to the desired page, information on business permits.

Generally, there is a lot of repeated information in different places, and a confusing amount of redundancy in the site map pathways.



User Interview Takeaways

THE TASK: find information on the business permit application process

The test user began on the homepage and skimmed through all the cards, with no luck. They then looked at the global navigation, selecting "Services." They then found business permits under the "Business Assistance" dropdown.

In total, the user took around six minutes to find the desired information, including time to explain their opinions and experience.

Visuals

- very boring, not very interesting
- the cards are not a fan favorite
- overwhelming to look at
- navigation is hard to see (doesn't attract much attention relative to everything else)

Functionality

- does what it needs to do / communicates what it needs to communicate
- lots of redundant information; many different flows for the same information
- some text treatment (such as linked titles, dropdowns and navigation) do not respond as expected

Boston

boston.gov

The city of Boston has a clean, elegant website with a cohesive color scheme, readable fonts, and a simple yet modern layout. It feels bright, friendly, and welcoming while maintaining it's mature and informative appearance.

The information displayed on the home page is based on popular searches, making the content relevant to the general viewer.

However, if you have something that isn't one of the dozen or so "Featured Resources", it may be a little more difficult to locate upon first glance.

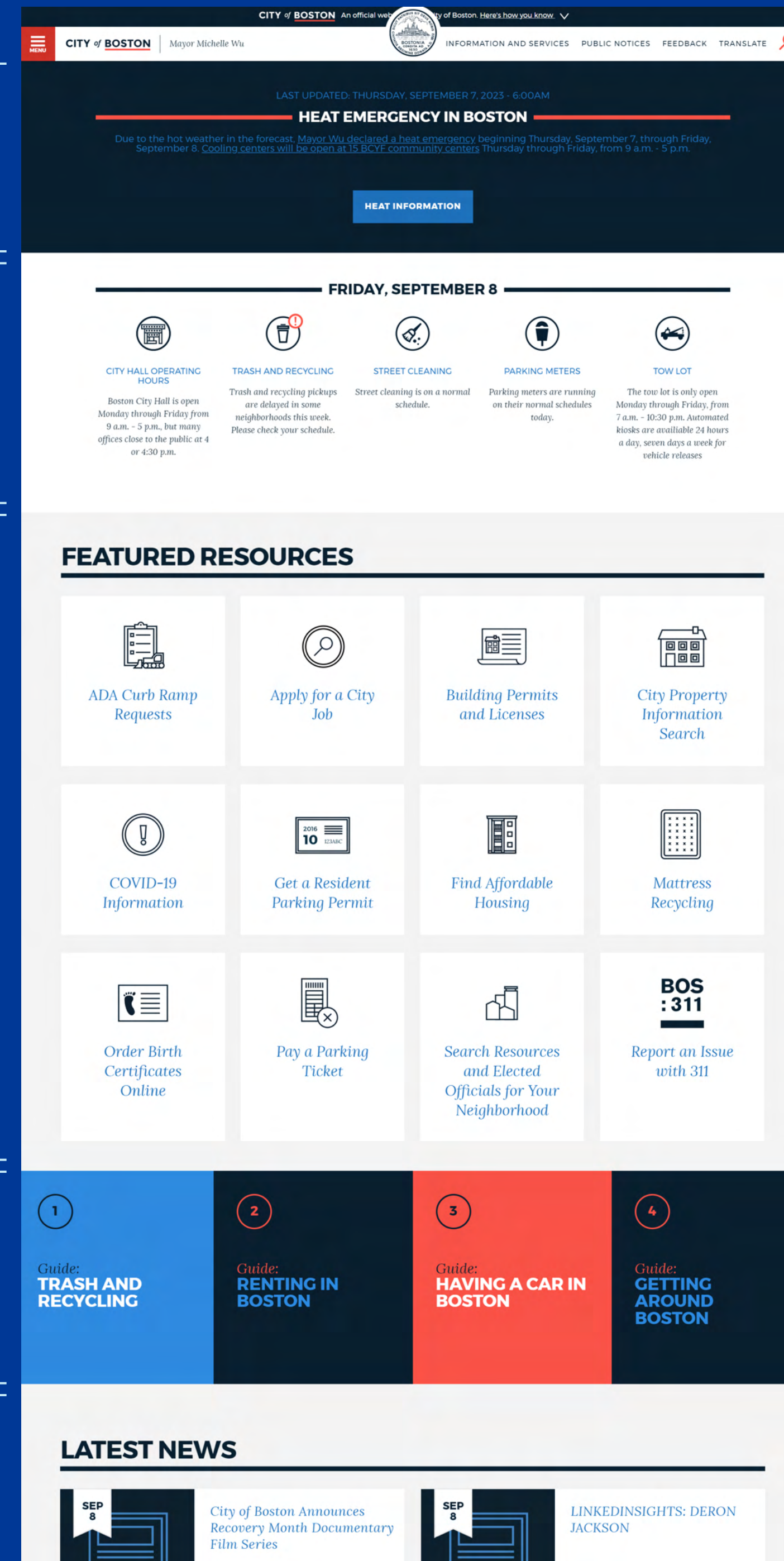
HERO
displays welcome/title or
emergency updates

DAILY
includes updates/
schedule irregularities for
the day

FEATURED RESOURCES
popular resources like
permits and applications

GUIDES
quick tutorials for
popular topics

NEWS
articles from the city



San Jose

sanjoseca.gov

The city of San Jose's website features several more images than Boston, but it remains well organized, unified, and easy to use.

Their information scroll order, similarly to Boston's design, is based on resource popularity. The first thing on the home page are "top requested" resources, followed by a search services function.

This search services feature is a very useful tool for users because it addresses all possible demands with an open-ended search query (in addition to an alphabetized list).

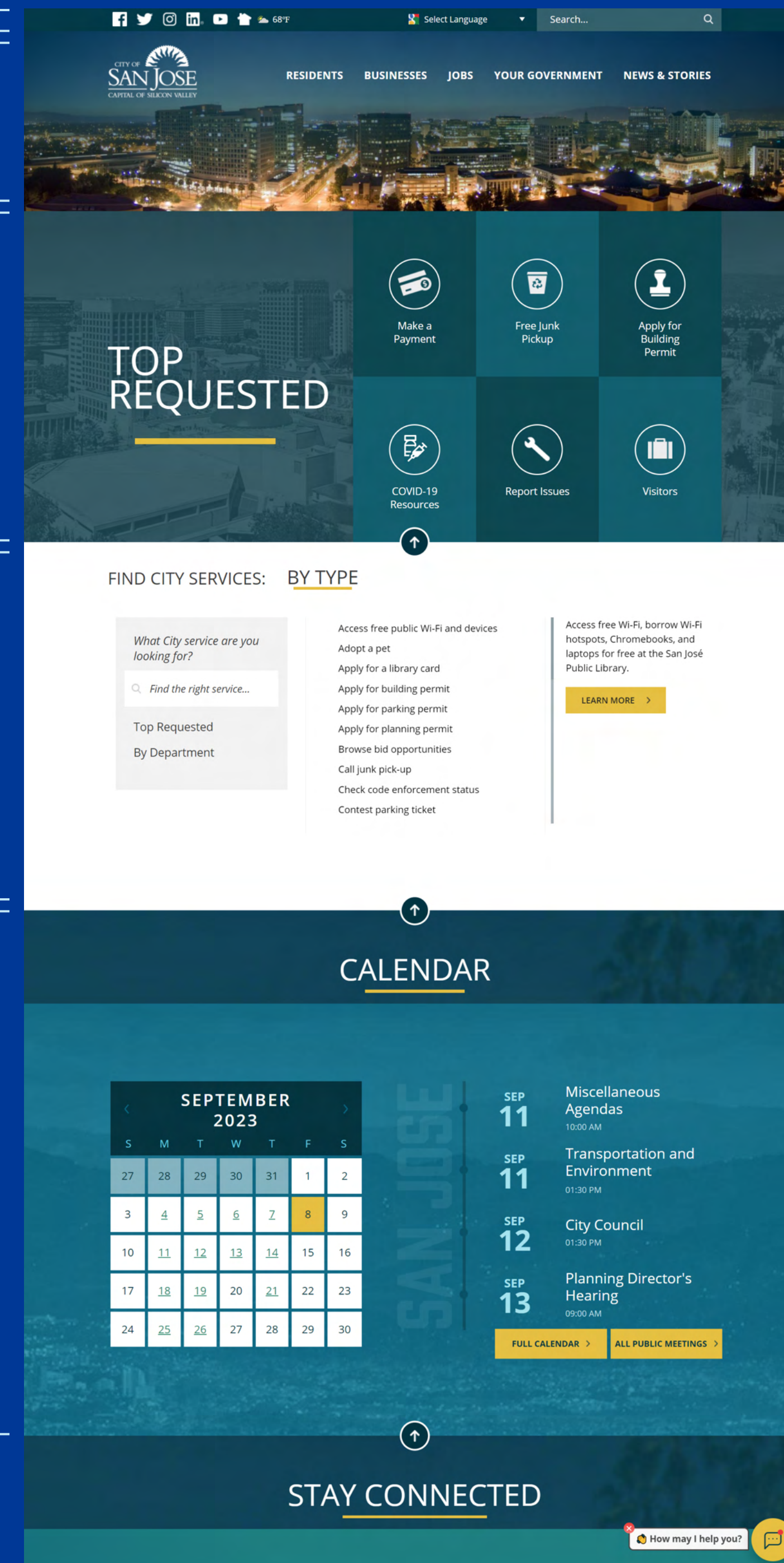
SOCIALS & LANGUAGES

NAVIGATION BAR
categorized by user type

TOP REQUESTED
popular resources like bill payments and permits

FIND SERVICES
search bar and alphabetized list of all functions on the site

INTERACTIVE CALENDAR
view upcoming events/
public meetings by date



San Francisco

sf.gov

San Francisco is the most minimalistic of the three, using grouping and white space instead of colored or outlined cards. Still, the consistency in text treatment and color scheme keeps the site cohesive.

There is, however, a bit of redundancy in the "Services" navigation tab, as it doesn't show anything that the home page doesn't show.

SF also displays the public officials more than the other two, likely out of publicity because it's such a large city.

LANGUAGES

NAVIGATION

LATEST

regularly-updated card featuring ads/info

SERVICES

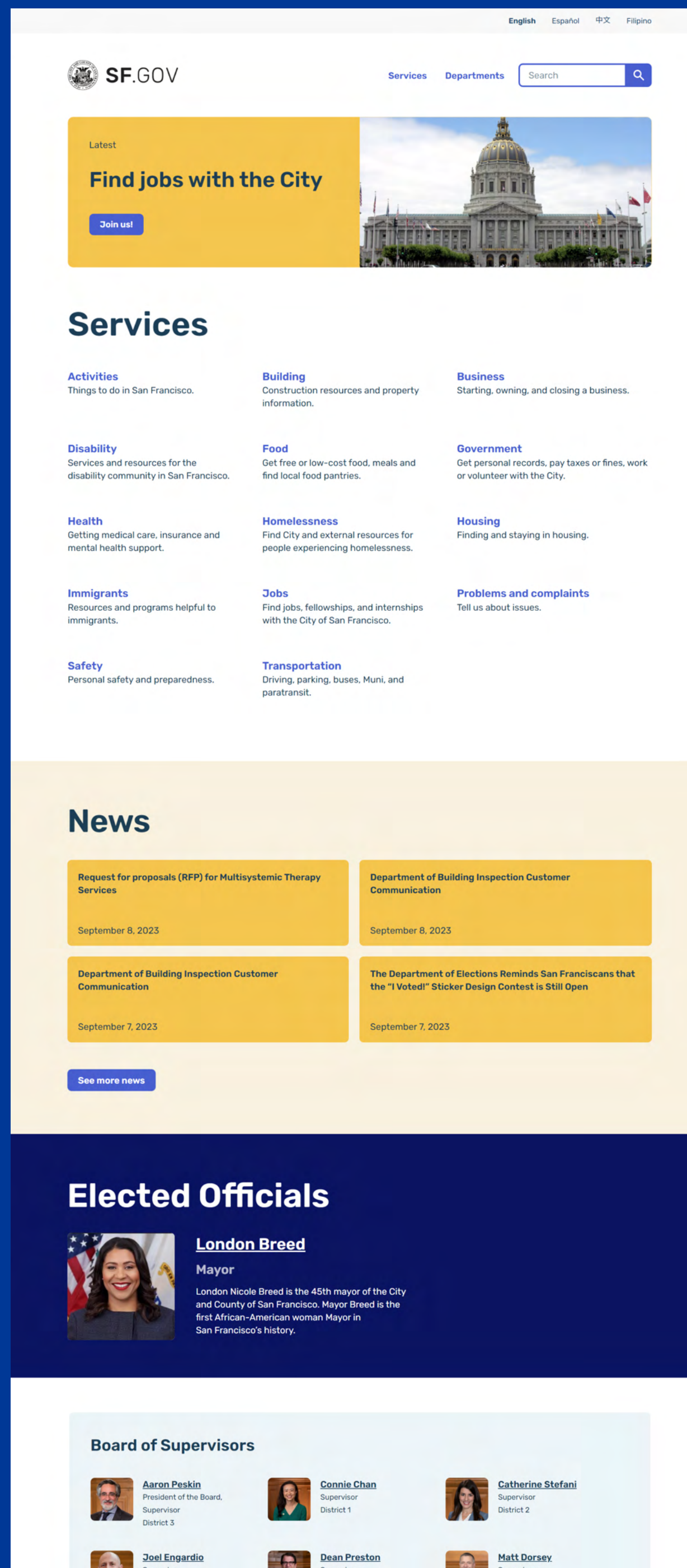
service categories (that link to sub-pages) with short descriptions

NEWS

recent articles

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

profiles for elected officials and board of supervisors



UI Patterns

Popular Resources

Having a "featured resources" or "top requests" section on the home page quickly addresses the needs of most users. Prompted search bars can similarly fulfill this function.

Icons

Utilizing icons in addition to text labels increases scannability (isomorphic correspondence).

Scrolling Sections

Dividing information into clear, contrasting sections with titles helps users quickly differentiate and find information.

Redesign

Defining Goals

Reduce Clutter & Improve Relevance

By reducing the information on the home page to disclude repetitive or generally irrelevant topics, the user will be able to more quickly find what they need. Information will be displayed on a timely need-to-know basis, as opposed to having the home page feature everything at once.

Revitalize the Style

Redesigning the layout, brightening up the color scheme, and increasing white space will help the page feel more unified and more inviting. It will ease the user into the information, as opposed to overwhelm them with boxes and text.

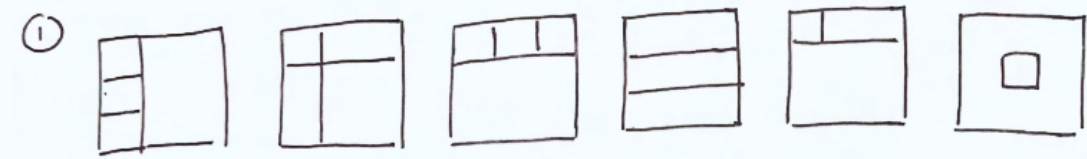
Increase Scannability

Separating information into clear, differentiated sections and using more images and/or icons will help the user more quickly scan the site and find the information they need.

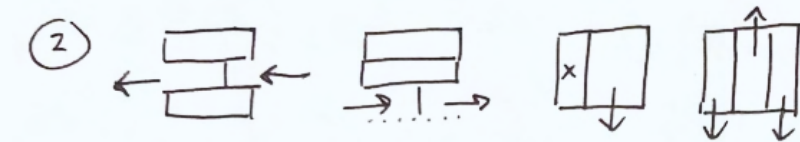
Sketches

RUBIX CUBE

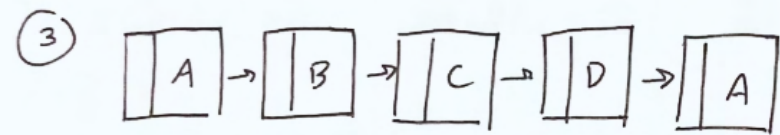
NMDE-302 GUI
2023.09.11



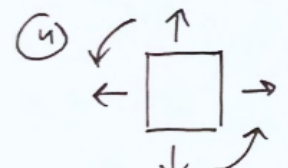
different sectioning / nav placement + visual contrast



* snap scrolling!!
independent section movement / scrolling / static (carousels?)



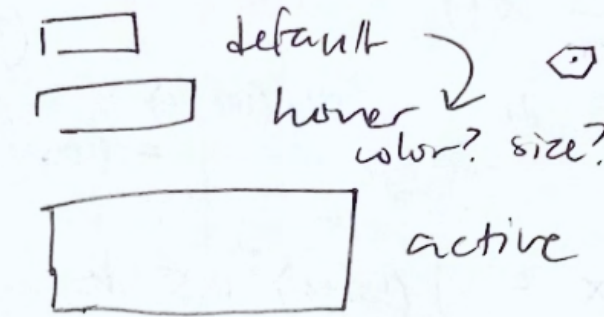
looping content scrolling



changing content in 4 directions
↳ looping along 2 axes
↳ rotation on front plane? around static center

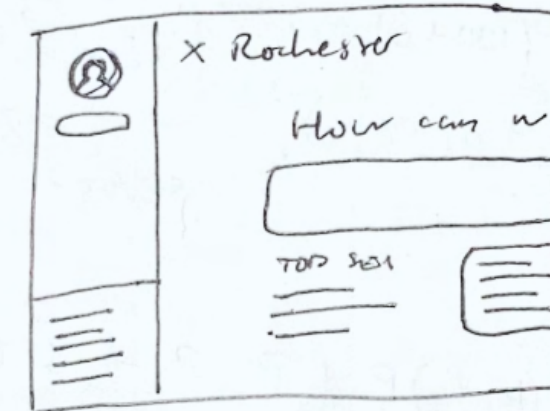
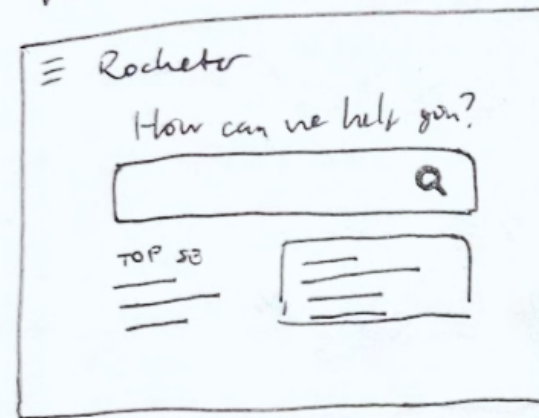
a quick analysis of everyday objects
(in my case, rubix cubes) to see how
physical interactivity can translate
into digital interfaces

SECTIONS + SCROLL-BYS



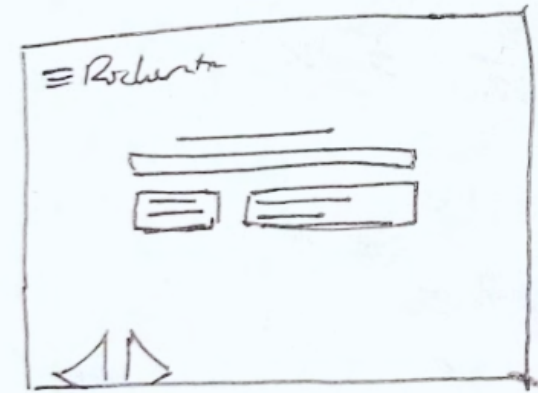
* hover enlarge text

pop-up w/



wanted to have the search services function above-the-fold, so explored layout of search vs popular services vs listing all

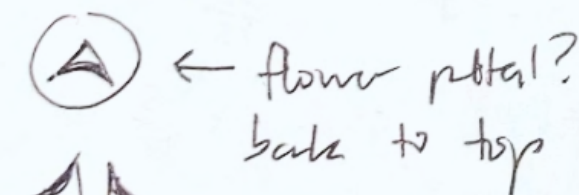
A



SECTIONS

- ① services + search
- ② map of recreation

emphasis on the SSO; functionality is number one priority



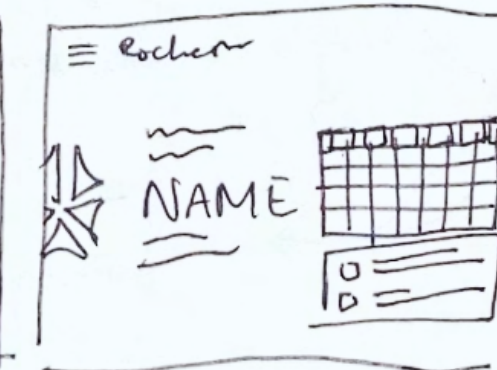
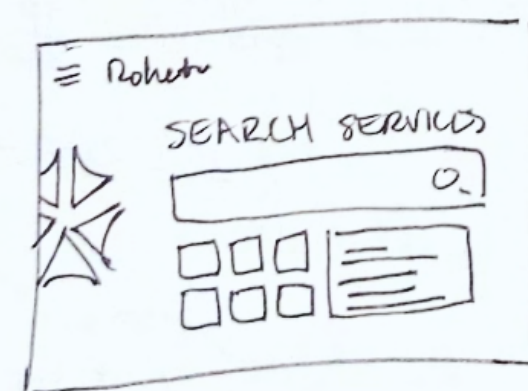
← flower petals? back to top



SIDEBAR

- * my info (SSO)
- * list of dept. / offices

B



playing with column-based sticky navigation versus scrolling sections and experimenting with integrating the logo into the interactions (rotates as the user scrolls)

* save / bookmark

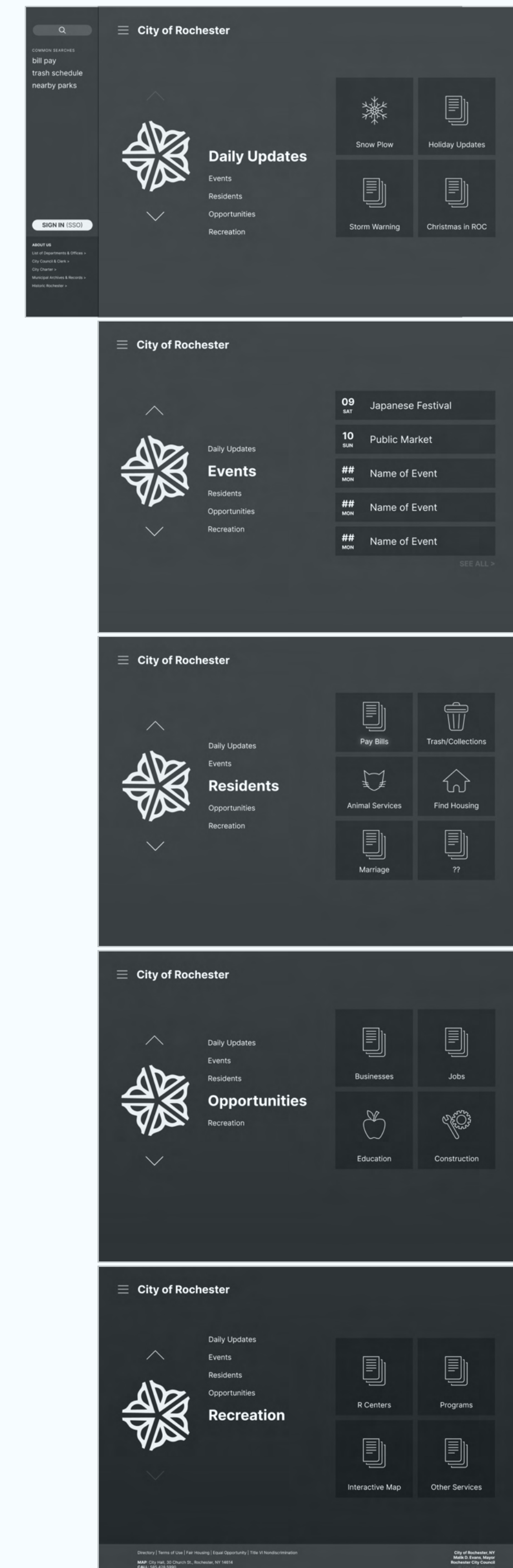
Lo-Fi Wireframes



CONCEPT A

More traditional layout without fixed navigation at the top and clear sections.

Still, I tested different ways of displaying information; events was especially interesting in terms of how much to display at once and how the user could interact with each card.

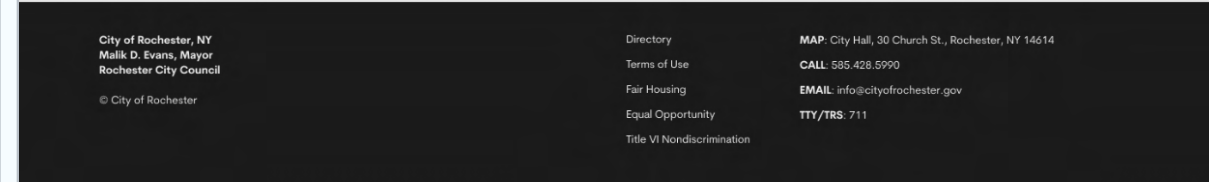
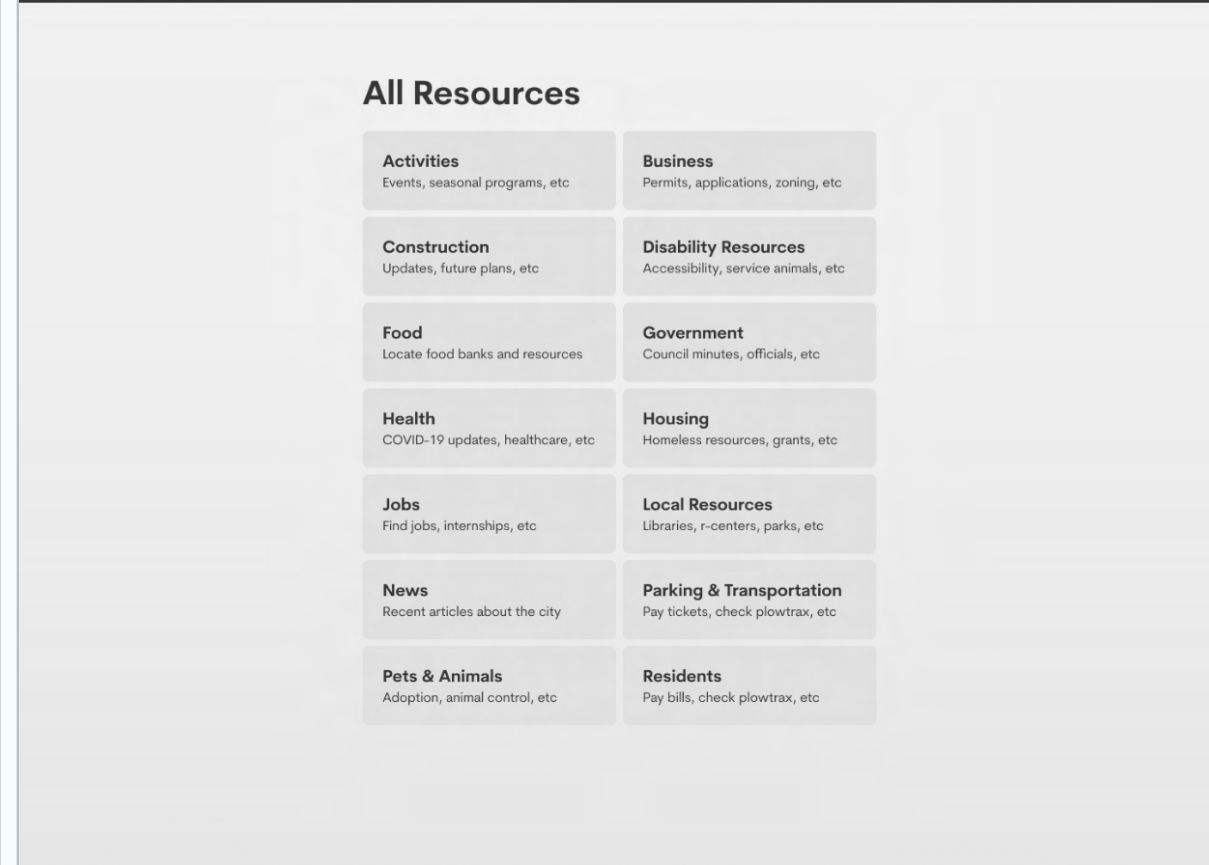
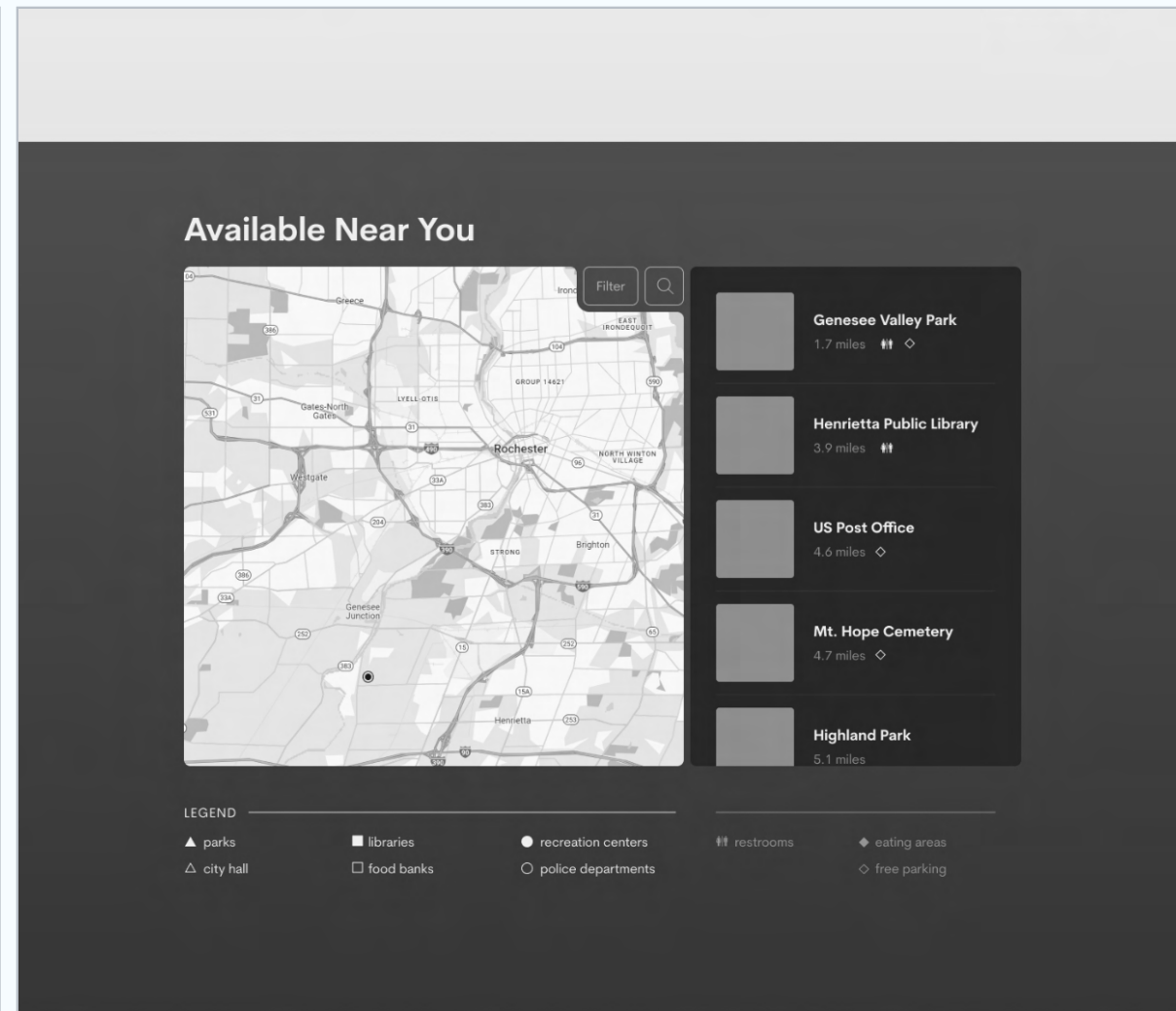
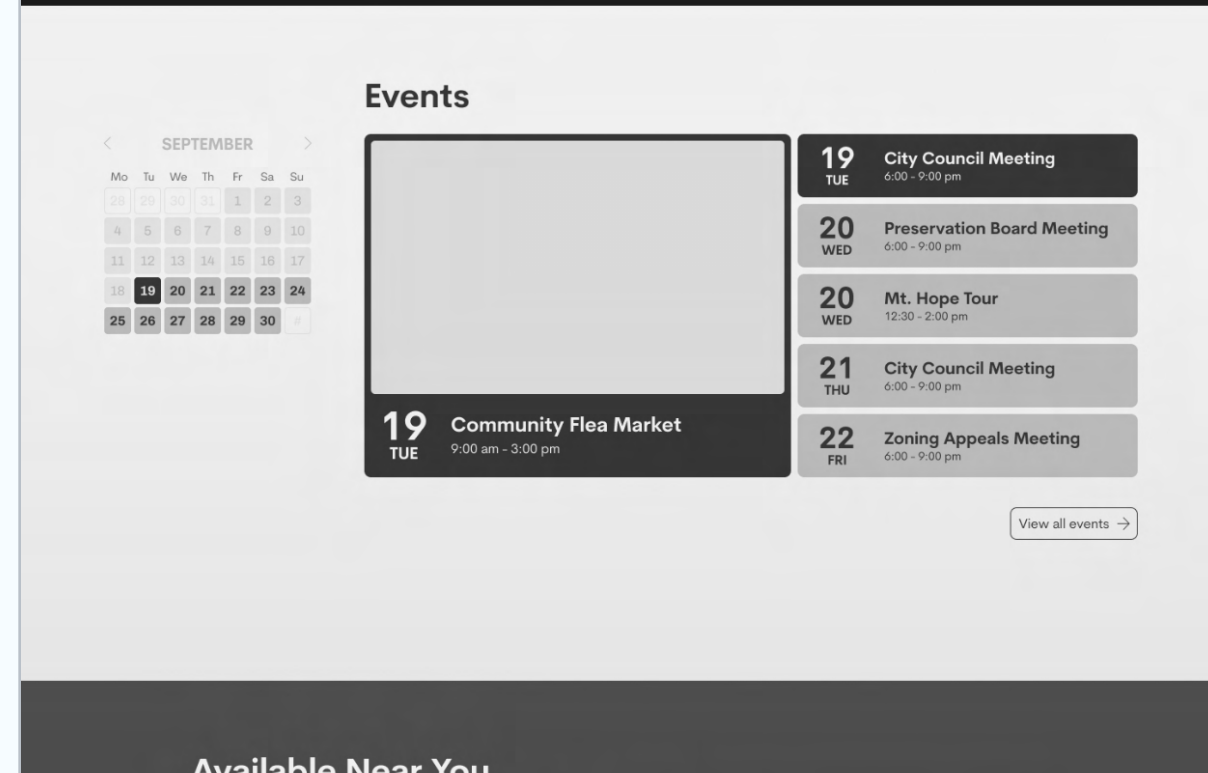
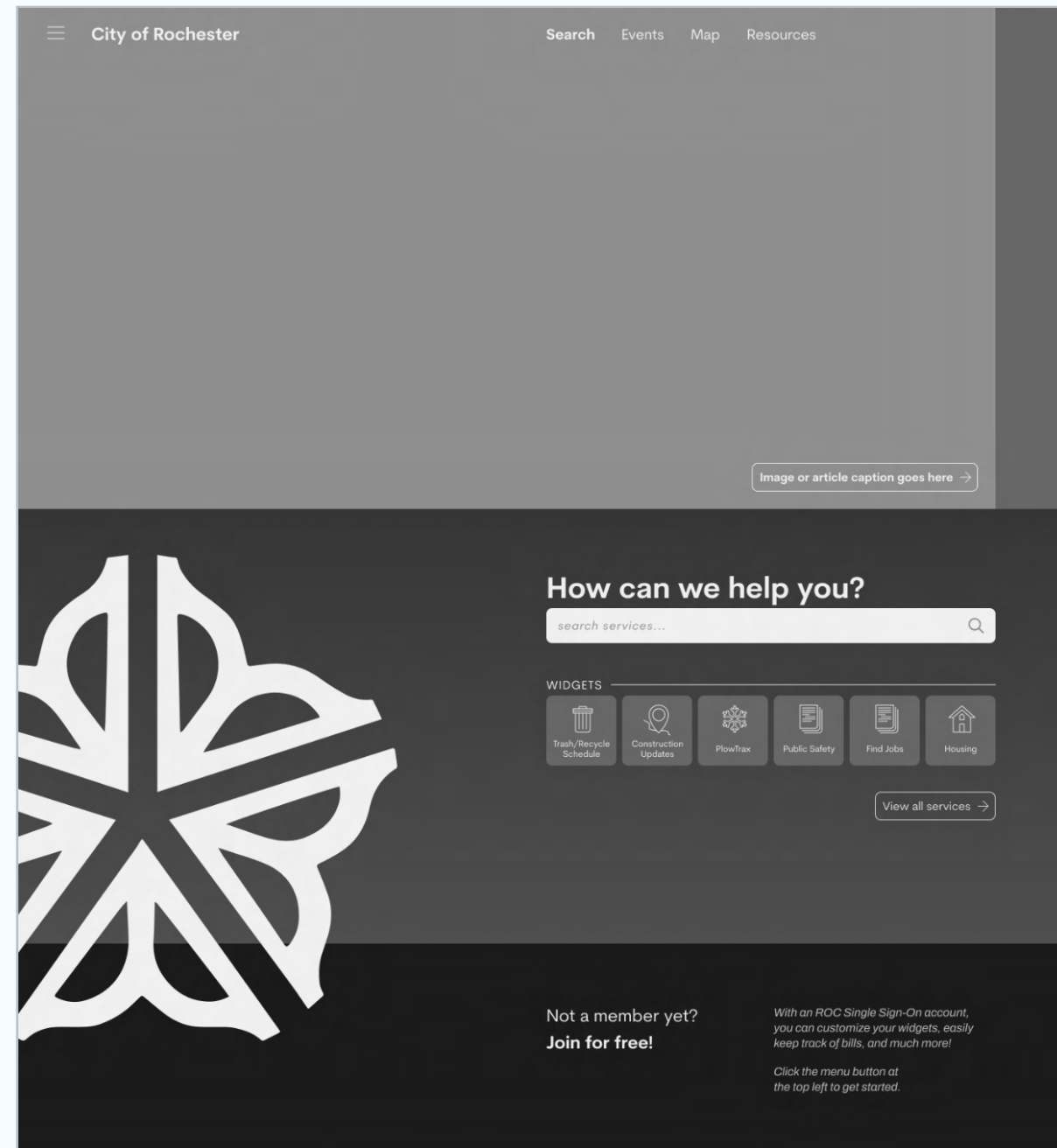


CONCEPT B

This version was an experimentation with the logo and section scrolling.

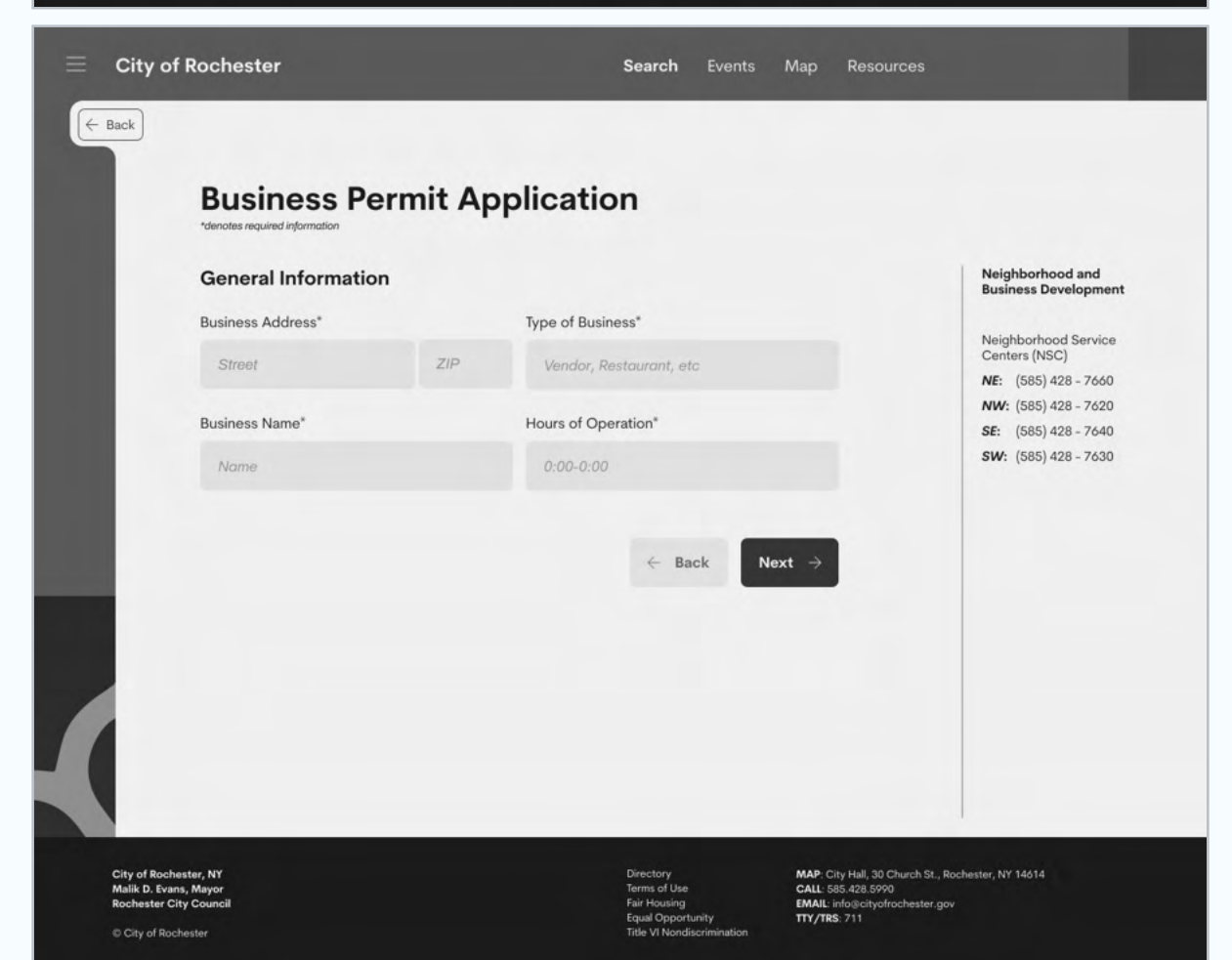
Despite the interesting method of scrolling, it ended up being an inefficient use of space, and was not optimal to easily and readably display image.

Hi-Fi Wireframes



For the home page, I refined the layout, added body copy, and differentiated the sections more through adding background with contrasting values.

I also created subpages including a Business Resources informational page, as well as an interactive application form.



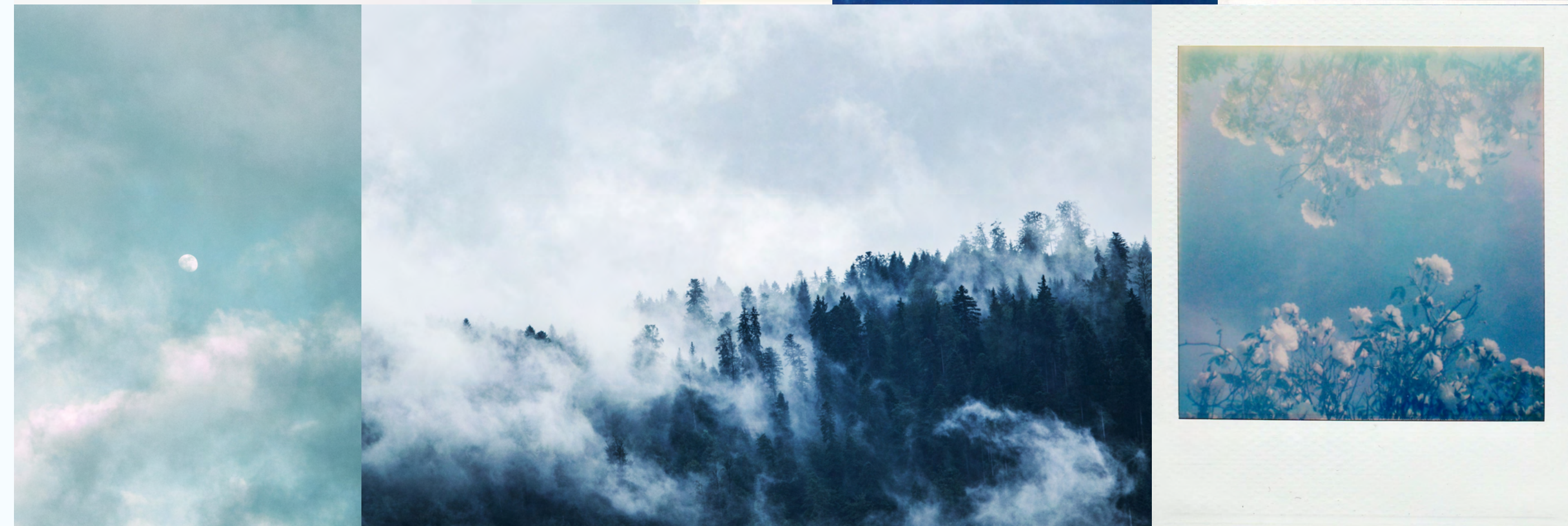
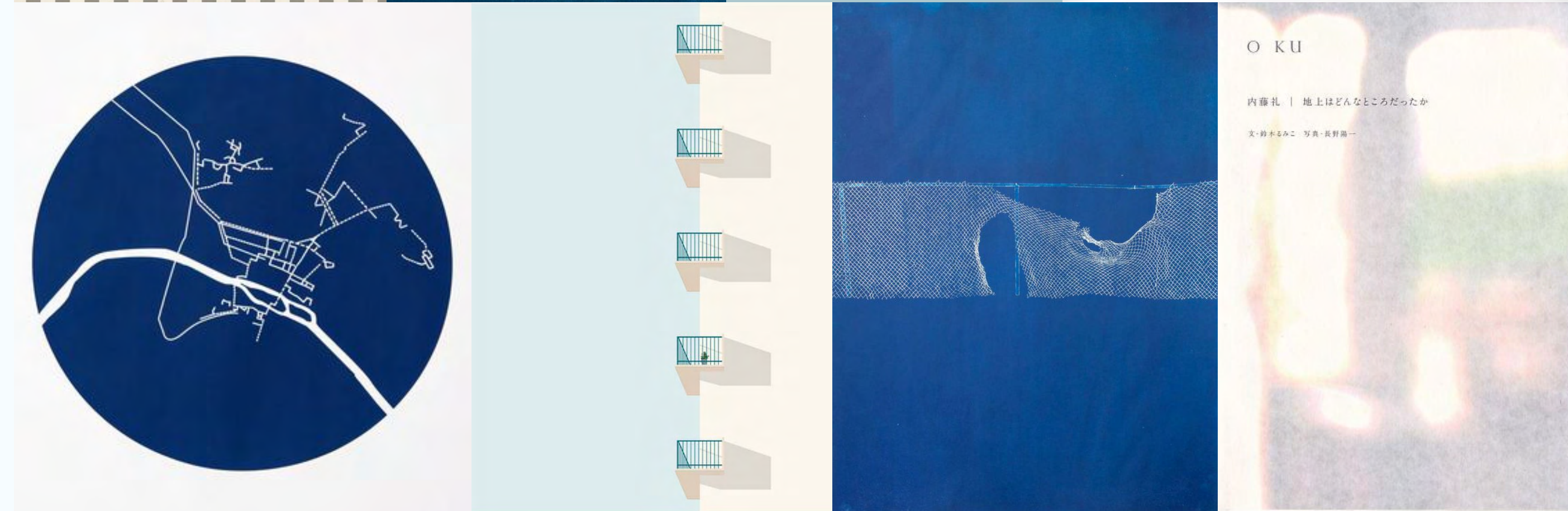
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Moodboard 1

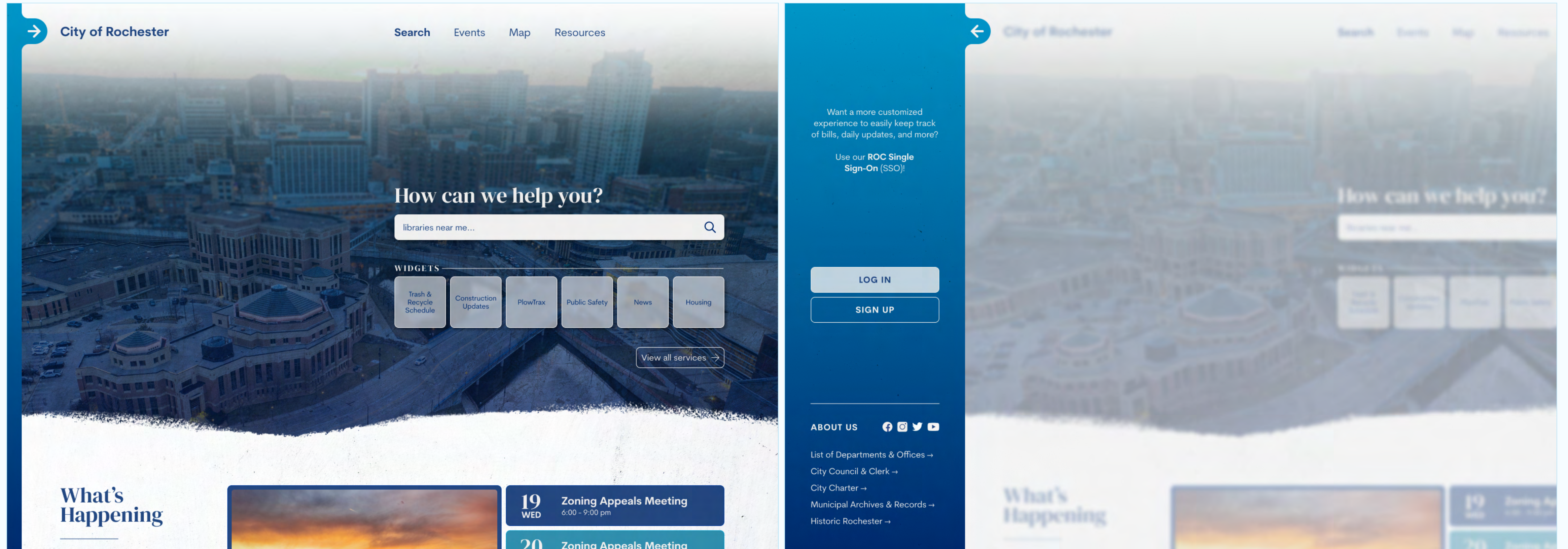
Into the Mist

Elegant type and peaceful imagery are balanced with textured white space. The color palette combines faded grey and beige neutrals with darker, vibrant blues that create visual intrigue.

keywords: wistful, foggy, textured, nostalgic, wanderlust, memories



Above The Fold 1



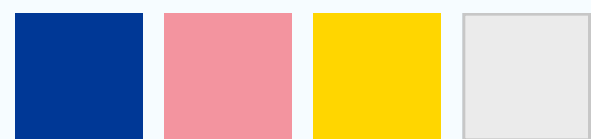
For this mood's above-the-fold, I focused on the contrast between rough textures and smooth, blurry glassmorphism. The color palette was monochromatic with emphasis on Rochester's iconic blue, though it makes the overall appearance feel a bit colder and less friendly.

Moodboard 2

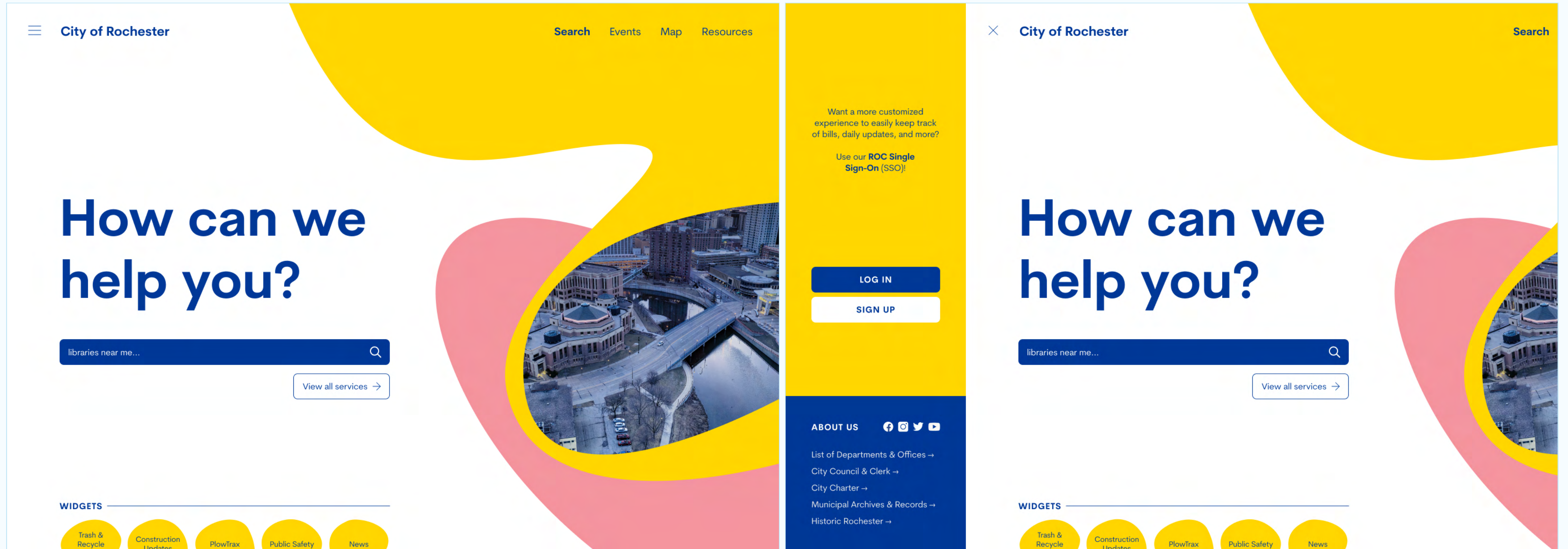
Summertime Poppin'

Flat colors and clean hierarchy guide the eye through content. Shapes and iconography, although abstracted, are representative and functional as opposed to purely artistic choice.

keywords: crisp, colorful, bright, airy, refreshing



Above The Fold 2



This mood was more upbeat and modern, with crisp, sloping lines, bright colors, and lots of negative space. The abstract shapes and lack of a classic hero image makes the overall appearance less traditional, but does not detract from the functionality nor visual appeal.

Final Designs

How can we help you?

libraries near me...

View all services →

Don't have a MyROC account yet? **Join for free!**

With a MyROC account, you can pay bills, manage forms, register for events, create personalized widgets, and more!

Get started →

What's Happening

SEPTEMBER

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1



19 TUE Mt. Hope Cemetery Tour 2:30 pm

Meet some permanent residents who bent, broke, or enforced the law, or whose lives met an unfortunate or grisly end. Guided by Dennis Carr.

19 TUE City Council Meeting 6:00 - 9:00 pm

20 WED Community Flea Market 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

20 WED Mt. Hope Cemetery Tour 2:30 pm

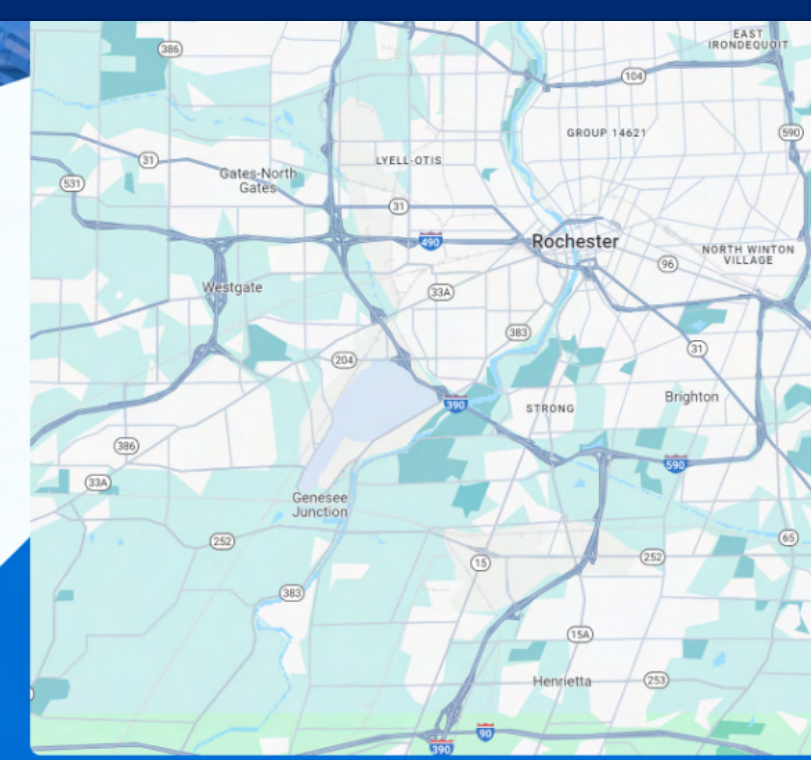
20 WED Preservation Board Meeting 6:00 - 9:00 pm

21 THU Public Market 8:00 - 11:00 am

View all events →

Available Near You

View Map View List



All Resources

Activities
Events, seasonal programs, etc

Business
Permits, applications, zoning, etc

Construction
Updates, future plans, etc

Disability Resources
Accessibility, service animals, etc

Food
Locate food banks and resources

Government
Council minutes, officials, etc

Health
COVID-19 updates, healthcare, etc

Housing
Homeless resources, grants, etc

Jobs
Find jobs, internships, etc

Local Resources
Libraries, r-centers, parks, etc

News
Recent articles about the city

Parking & Transport
Pay tickets, check plowtrax, etc

Pets & Animals
Adoption, animal control, etc

Residents
Pay bills, etc

City of Rochester, NY
Malik D. Evans, Mayor
Rochester City Council



ABOUT US
List of Departments & Offices
City Council & Clerk
City Charter
Municipal Archives & Records
Historic Rochester

CONTACT
City Hall, 30 Church Street
Rochester, NY 14614
(585)-428-5990
info@cityofrochester.gov
TTY/TRS: 711

First Look

language options at the top
(immediately visible, accessible,
and legible to everyone)

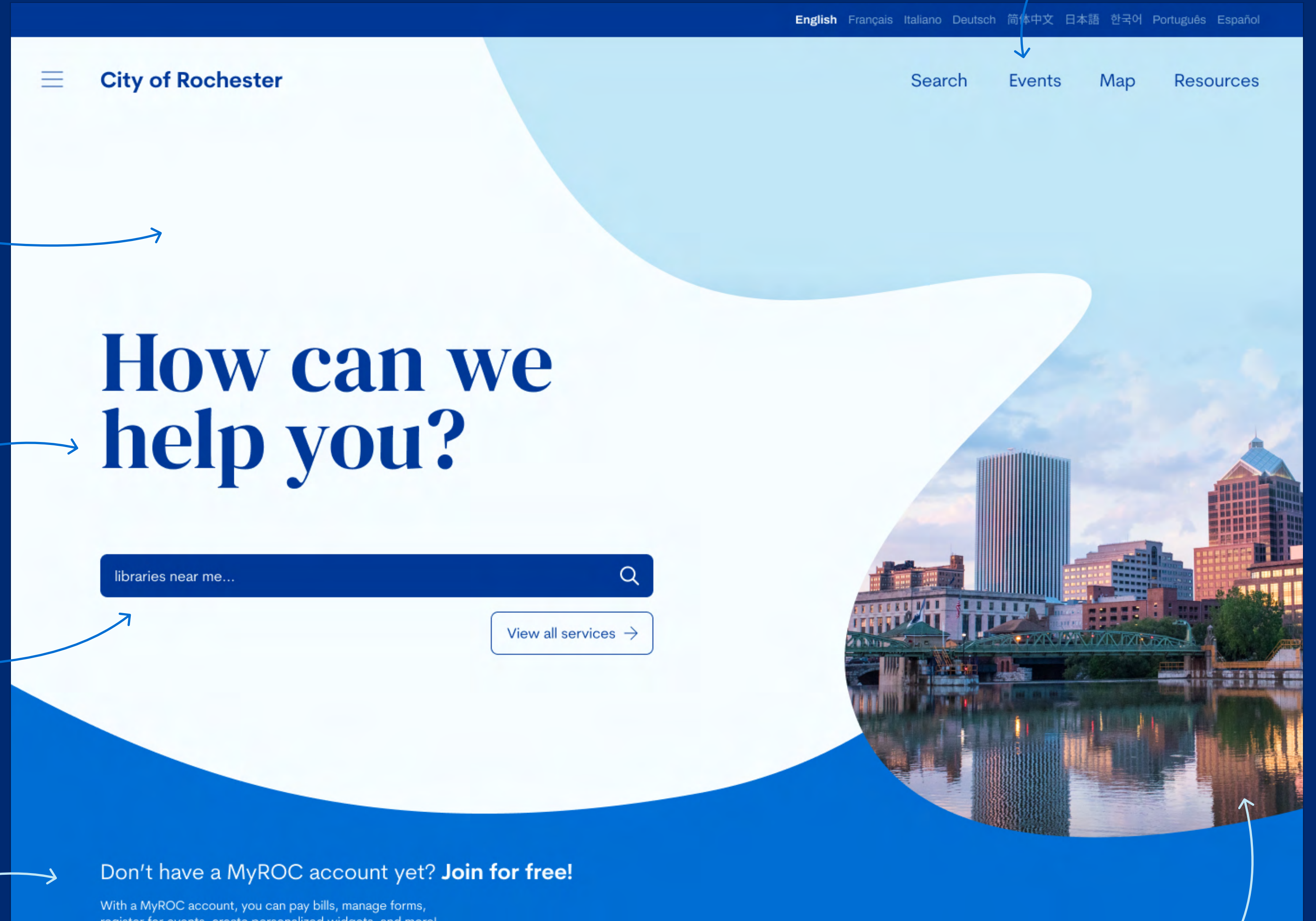
navigation elements
jump-scroll to the
corresponding section

visual impact through use
of shape, negative space,
and monochromatic palette
with contrasting value

large serif font
stands out against
sans serif body

search function prompts
the user with a cycling
list of popular questions

banner cleanly separates
content, informs the user on
new information, and leads the
eye to scroll down the page



images integrated
seamlessly into smooth
vector shapes via gradients

Subpage

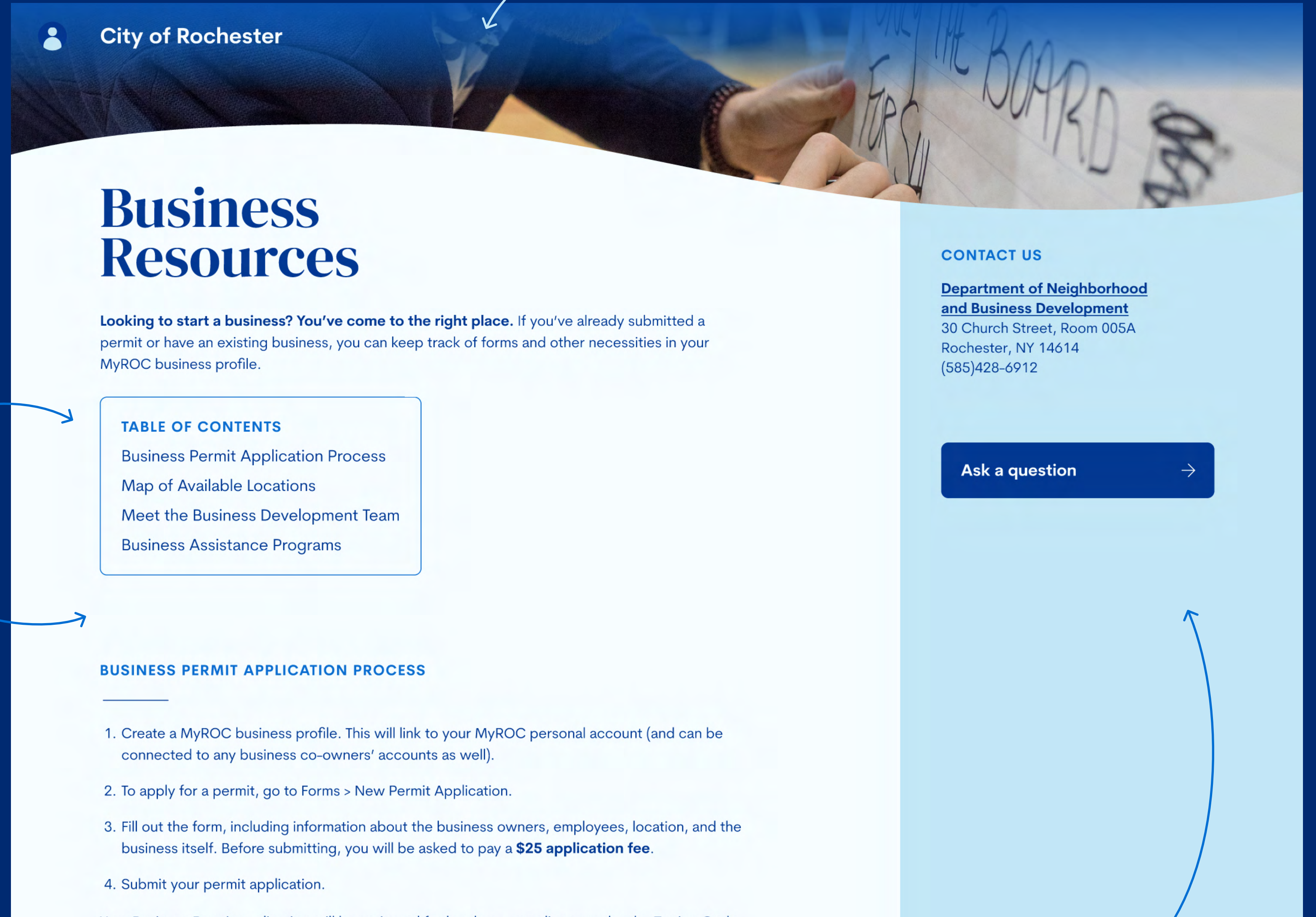


jump-scrolling table of contents lists article sections

plenty of white space for the eye to breathe

capture of the entire page

hero scrolls until only a bit is left, at which point it sticks (to maintain navigation legibility)



Business Resources

Looking to start a business? You've come to the right place. If you've already submitted a permit or have an existing business, you can keep track of forms and other necessities in your MyROC business profile.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Business Permit Application Process
- Map of Available Locations
- Meet the Business Development Team
- Business Assistance Programs

BUSINESS PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Create a MyROC business profile. This will link to your MyROC personal account (and can be connected to any business co-owners' accounts as well).
2. To apply for a permit, go to Forms > New Permit Application.
3. Fill out the form, including information about the business owners, employees, location, and the business itself. Before submitting, you will be asked to pay a **\$25 application fee**.
4. Submit your permit application.

CONTACT US

Department of Neighborhood and Business Development
 30 Church Street, Room 005A
 Rochester, NY 14614
 (585)428-6912

Ask a question

"Contact Us" section is sticky as well; always visible to user as left column continues to scroll

Style Guide

Ag

DM Serif Display

Ag

Cerebri Sans Pro



#F6FCFF #C1E6F6 #006ED3 #003896 #002A71

HOME PAGE

Title

DM Serif Display, 96px, 90% leading

Heading

DM Serif Display, 40px, 90% leading

Subheading

Cerebri Sans Pro Bold, 20px

Caption

Cerebri Sans Pro Regular, 14px

SUB PAGES

Title

DM Serif Display, 64px, 86% leading

SECTION TITLE

Cerebri Sans Pro Bold, 16px, 8% tracking

Body

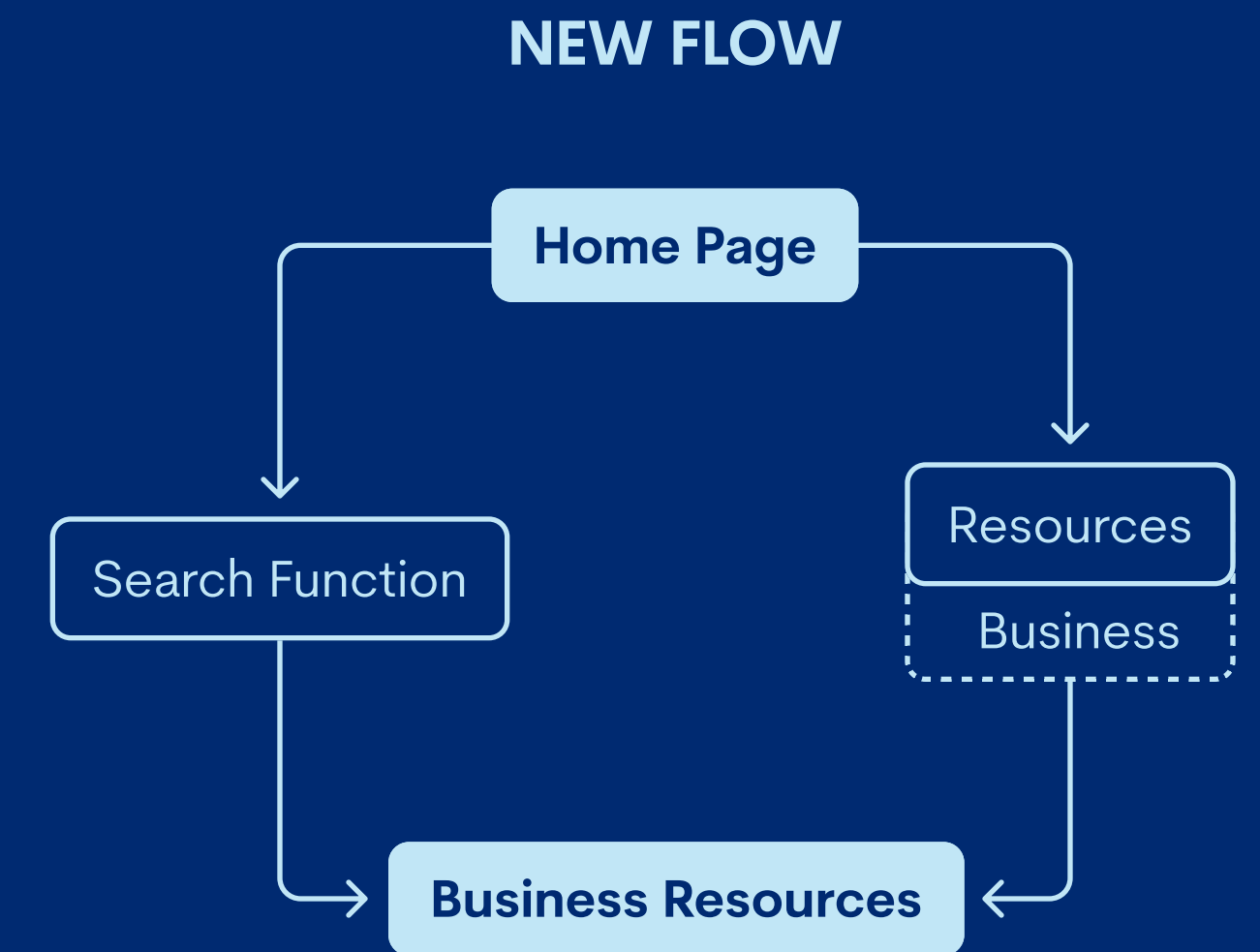
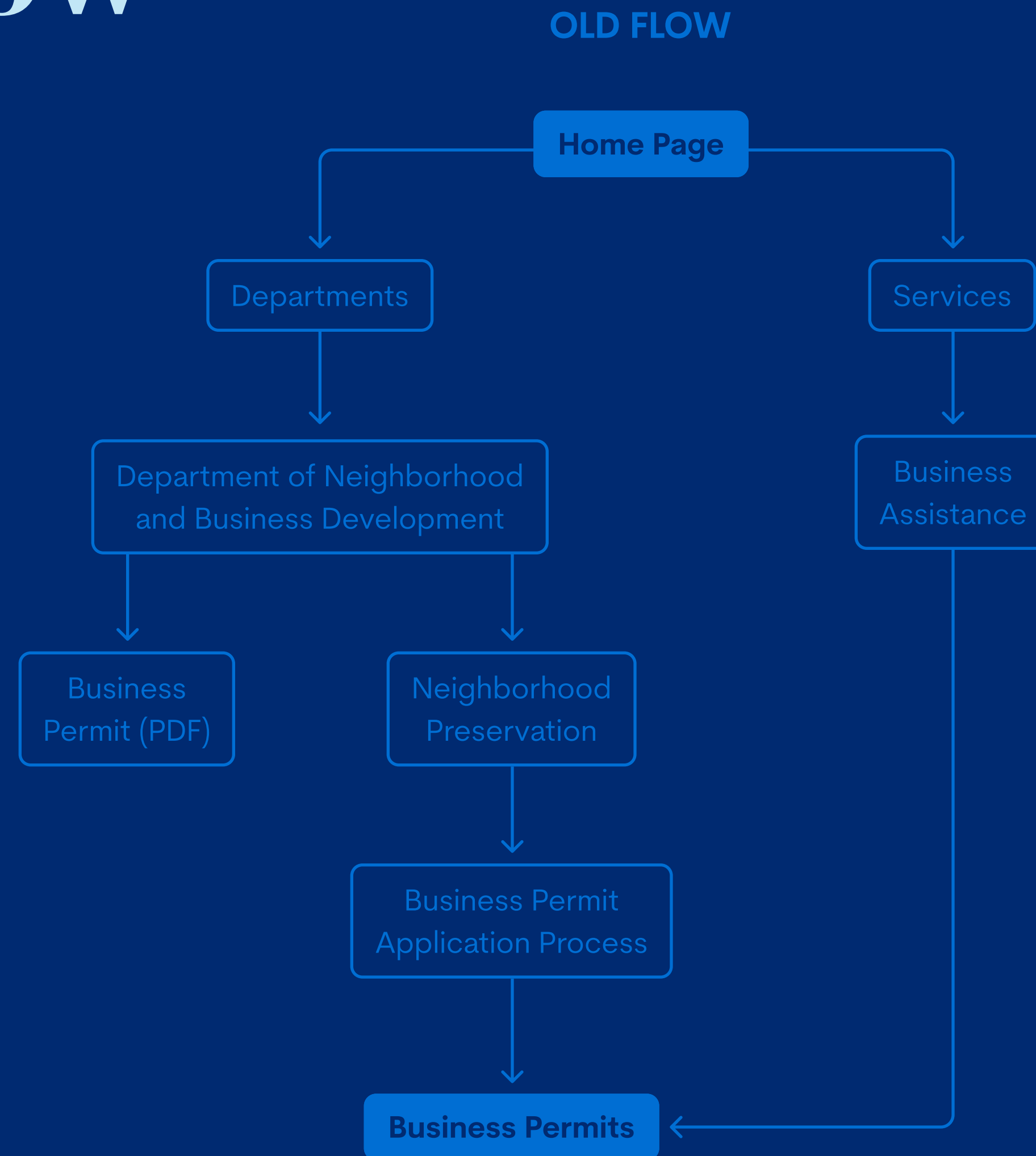
Cerebri Sans Pro Regular, 16px, 24px leading, 16px between

New User Flow

THE TASK: find information on the business permit application process

The old flow was overcomplicated, unfocused, and a generally confusing experience.

With this new flow, the user deals with significantly less redundancy, and all the desired information is centralized in one concise, all-encompassing, easy-to-navigate page.



Conclusion

After many iterations, I opted for a final design that felt fresh, welcoming, and friendly, yet maintained both functionality and professionalism. A monochromatic color palette and gradient-faded photos create visual intrigue, while well-balanced negative space and composition of content eases the eye through the page.

While my intended user flow targeted people looking to start a business in Rochester, I created a home page that simplified and unified all resources, allowing for anyone of any background to easily navigate to their desired information.

Thank you!

