

# Local Politics App/Website

---

**Candice Johnson**



*Candice Johnson*

# Project overview



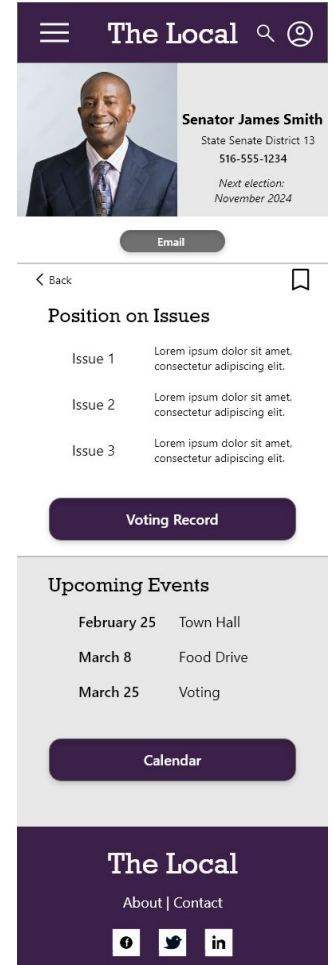
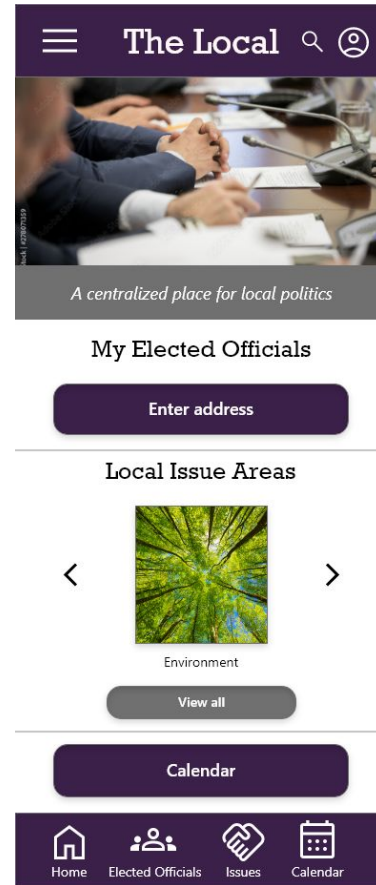
## The product:

The Local is an app and website that educates the public about local politics. Users can find out information about who their elected officials are and information on issues that are important to them.



## Project duration:

January 2023-March 2023



# Project overview



## **The problem:**

Local politics directly impacts everyone's lives, however, many people don't know who their local elected officials are and what legislation is being passed on the local and state level.



## **The goal:**

To educate the public on local issues and local elected officials. With this information, people will make more informed decisions when voting and can better advocate for causes that are important to them.

# Project overview



## **My role:**

UX Designer of the app and responsive web design.



## **Responsibilities:**

User research, paper and digital wireframes, low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototypes

# Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

# User research: summary



I conducted a series of interviews to understand users' needs and what gaps there are in accessing information about local politics. A main issue that came up was that there are no resources that provide a centralized place to get information on who the elected officials are, where they stand on different positions, and information about local issues.

# Persona 1: Juan

## Problem statement:

Juan is a student community activist who needs to know where his elected officials stand on different issues because he wants to better advocate for those in his community.



Photo by [Nicolas Horn](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## Juan

**Age:** 20  
**Education:** BA in Communications  
**Hometown:** Lynbrook, NY  
**Family:** Single and living in dorm  
**Occupation:** Student

*"I want to make a difference in my community"*

## Goals

- To understand the effect legislation will have on his community.
- To know who his local elected officials are and what their stance is on certain issues.

## Frustrations

- "It's easy to find out what's going on with politics nationally, but I can't find any local information."

Juan is a student who has only voted in a couple of elections. He follows national politics, but wants to know more about what is happening locally. He wants to get more involved in community activism and wants to know who he can reach out to advocate for certain legislation.

# Persona 2: Pamela

## Problem statement:

Pamela is a busy working mother who needs a centralized place to view information on local issues and upcoming legislation because she wants to be informed about the issues she cares about with the limited time she has.



Photo by [Eye for Ebony](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## Pamela

**Age:** 55

**Education:** Bachelor's in Marketing

**Hometown:** Baldwin, NY

**Family:** Married with two teenage daughters

**Occupation:** Realtor

*"I want to know what is happening in my community."*

## Goals

- To better understand the effect legislation has on the issues she cares about.
- To balance being informed with here other responsibilities.

## Frustrations

- " I want to know what is happening in local politics but I hate not having a centralized place to learn this information."

Pamela is a busy working mother who lives on Long Island with her two teenage daughters. She wants to know what is happening on issues she cares about on a state and local level She also wants to know where he local officials stand on the issues she cares most about. She has limited time to research this since she is busy with her job and her family.



# Competitive audit

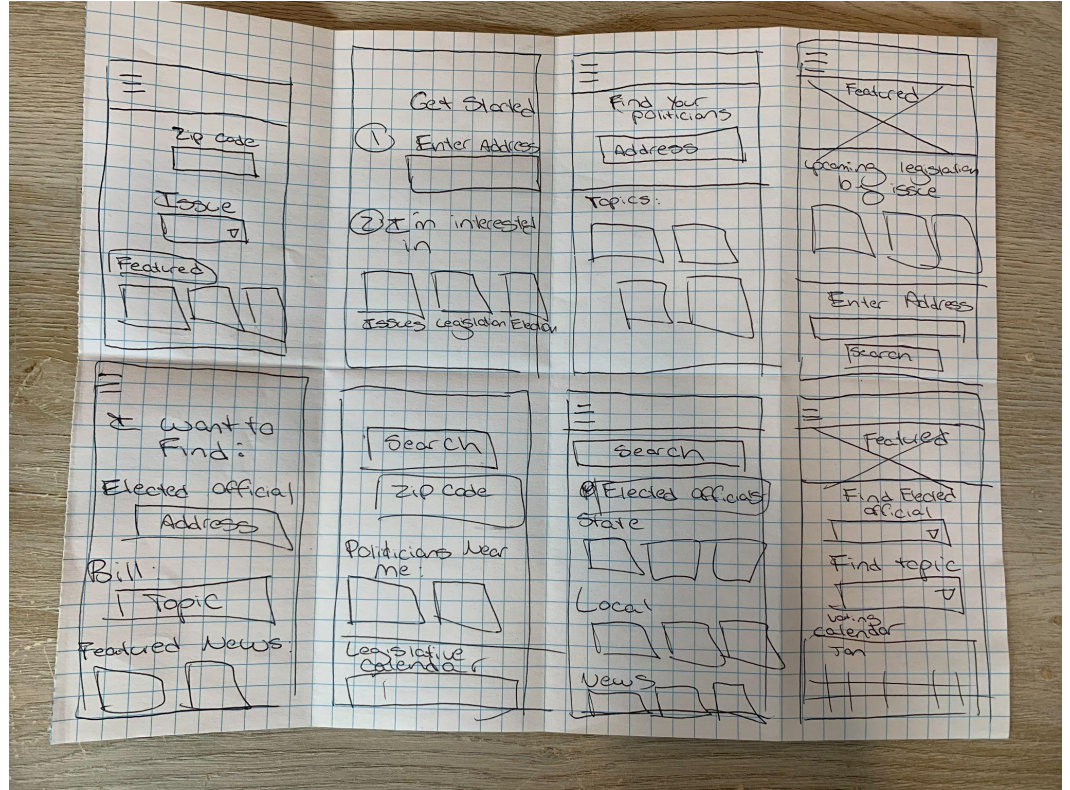
I conducted a competitive audit to understand what the gaps and opportunities were.

Competitive audit						
	General information				First impressions	
	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition	Desktop website experience	App or mobile website experience
Ballotpedia	https://ballotpedia.org/	Medium	US citizens looking to make informed decisions	"Latest political news and analysis from a reliable, nonpartisan source."	<b>OKAY</b> + Clear menu, easy to understand options - Cluttered and unattractive - Hard to find local politics	<b>OKAY</b> + Clear menu options - Featured resources took over the whole page - Cluttered and visually unappealing
Nassau County website	https://www.nassaucounty.ny.gov/	Medium	Residents of Nassau County	"Information about your county government, the many services and recreational programs we offer, and different ways we can provide assistance."	<b>OKAY</b> + The intro was ok - Everything else looked cluttered - The top menu options was so close together at first I didn't realize it was a menu	<b>OKAY</b> + The menu was clear and easy to read - The formatting of the page looked off
New York State of Politics	https://nystateofpolitics.com/state-of-politics/new-york	Medium	Residents of NYS that are interested in politics	"State Of Politics covers it all in New York and around the country. The triumphs, defeats and developments as they break."	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + It was visually appealing. The website looked clean and the articles were displayed in a visually appealing way - The navigation menu titles were a bit small	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The website was clean and easy to read on the phone - The menu titles were a bit too small
New York State website	https://www.ny.gov/agencies	Large	Residents of NYS that need information	"The official website of New York State."	<b>GOOD</b> + The homepage was generally clean and attractive - I don't like the yellow used for one of the banners.	<b>GOOD</b> + The website was attractive and formatted well for mobile - The navigation menu would've been clearer if it was a hamburger menu instead of an arrow

UX (rated: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)						
Features	Interaction			Visual design		Content
	Accessibility	User flow	Navigation	Brand identity	Tone	Descriptiveness
<b>GOOD</b> + A centralized place to find information on politics and legislation - A bit cluttered and confusing to understand everything that's offered	<b>NEEDS WORK</b> + The text was large and had high contrast - There is only an English option - It is mostly text so it would be difficult to read if you have trouble reading English	<b>OKAY</b> + The search bar is very prominent and works well. - It was difficult to know what to click on in the website	<b>OKAY</b> + The menu items were clearly labeled + The search function worked well - There is so much information that it is hard to navigate using the menu options	<b>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</b> + The logo was prominent on the page - It was not heavily designed and it was mostly black text on a white page	The tone was clear, informative, and professional	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The content was interesting and descriptive - There weren't any improvements needed for the descriptiveness of the content
<b>GOOD</b> + Clear labels on the homepage to take the user to various sections of the website - The carousel seems a bit awkward and random in the middle of the page	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + They have an accessibility section that describes the steps they took to make the website accessible + They have contact information about how to give feedback - The section on accessibility was a bit hard to find	<b>GOOD</b> + Easy to find out who the legislators are and what they do - A lot of information to sort through	<b>OKAY</b> + There are quick links that take you to the most commonly viewed parts of the website - The top menu is too cluttered. It is very difficult to read the menu options	<b>GOOD</b> + Very clear branding with the use of colors, logo, and images - The homepage was very busy and a lot to look at	The tone was clear, friendly, and welcoming	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The content was clear and descriptive - There weren't any improvements needed for the descriptiveness of the content
<b>GOOD</b> + The featured articles were displayed well. - The about page should've been easier to find	<b>GOOD</b> + There is high contrast with black text on white background - Some of the text is really small and hard to read	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + Easy to navigate to articles based on topic and legislative branch - There were no major drawbacks to the user flow	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The navigation menu is clear and easy to navigate - The menu titles are too small	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The logo was prominent and the accent colors were in line with the branding - There were no drawbacks to the branding	The tone was clear, informative, and professional	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The articles were descriptive and well written - There weren't any improvements needed for the descriptiveness of the content
<b>GOOD</b> + The website is well organized and easy to navigate - It took several clicks to get the government/legislative section	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + There is an accessibility section with information about the website + There is an email address for people to contact with questions + Translations are available - There weren't any negatives	<b>GOOD</b> + It was clear how to find information on legislation and elected officials - It took several clicks to get to the legislative section	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The navigation menu was clear and descriptive - There weren't any negatives	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The website looked clean and the colors and logos were consistent with the branding - There were no drawback to the branding	The tone was clear, professional, and informative	<b>OUTSTANDING</b> + The content was clear and descriptive - There weren't any improvements needed for the descriptiveness of the content

# Ideation

I did a quick ideation exercise to address gaps that I discovered during the competitive audit. My focus was to create an effective way for users to find who their elected officials and view information on various issue areas.



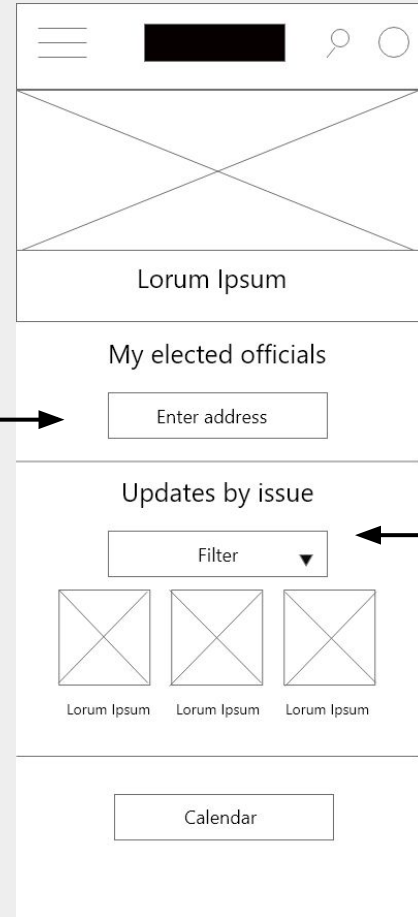
# Starting the design

- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

# Digital wireframes

After ideating and creating paper wireframes, I created digital wireframes for this app. These designs focused on helping users find the elected officials in their district and guiding users to pages that spoke about specific issues.

A button prominently displayed that prompts users to search for their local elected officials



Ability to easily search for more information about a specific issue area

# Low-fidelity prototype

In order to prepare for a usability study, I created a low-fidelity prototype. The user flow was focused on users looking up their local elected officials based on their address.

View the [low-fidelity prototype here.](#)



# Usability study: parameters



## Study type:

Moderated usability study



## Location:

Long Island, NY



## Participants:

5 participants



## Length:

30 minutes

# Usability study: findings

These were the main findings from the usability study:

1

## Issue area page

It's confusing to include submenu items for issue areas. There should be a landing page with this information instead.

2

## Bookmarks

It is frustrating to search for the same thing every time. There should be a way to save search results.

3

## Footer menu

There should be a menu on the bottom of the app to navigate to the most important pages of the app.

# Refining the design

---

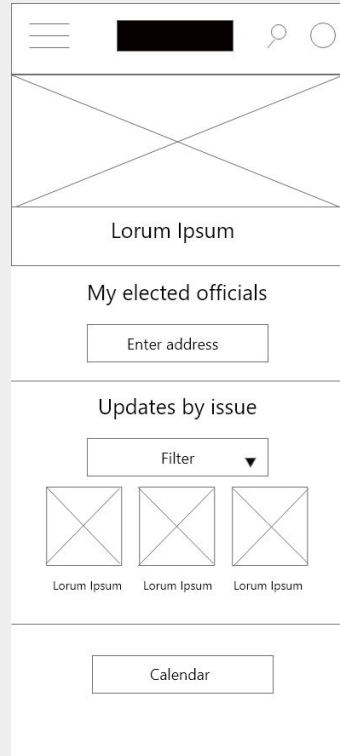
- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility



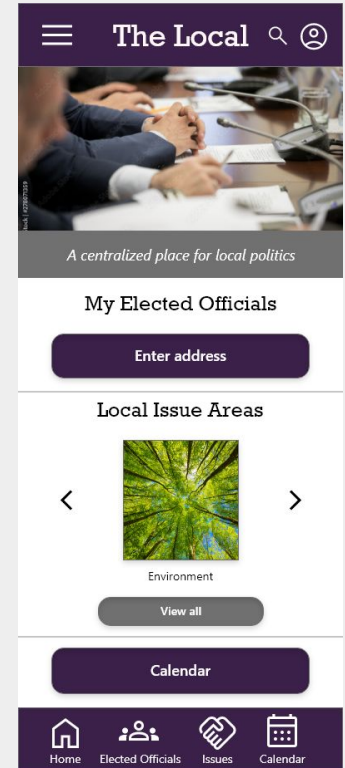
# Mockups

Based on the insights of the usability study, I applied changes to my mockup. This included adding a footer menu with icons to the most important pages.

Before usability study



After usability study



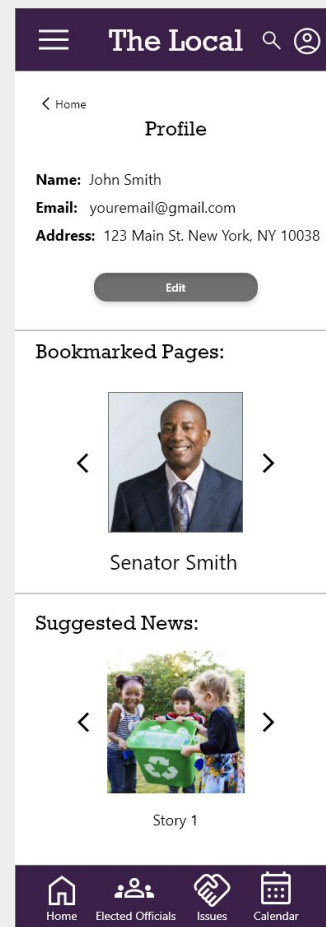
# Mockups

Another change I added, was the ability to bookmark search results and pages. Users can view those pages by clicking on their profile.

Before usability study



After usability study



# Mockups

**The Local**

[Home](#)

**Elected officials for:**

123 Main St.  
New York, NY 10038

[Edit Address](#)

---

**Senator James Smith**  
State Senate-District 13

[View](#)

[Email](#) [Call](#)

---

**Senator Maria Johnson**  
State Senate-District 21

[View](#)

[Email](#) [Call](#)

---

**Assemblywoman Jane Doe**  
NYS Assembly-District 28

[View](#)

[Email](#) [Call](#)

---

[Download Search](#)

Home Elected Officials Issues Calendar

**The Local**

---

**Senator James Smith**  
State Senate District 13

Next election: November 2024

---

[Back](#)

**Voting Record**

Issue 1 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Issue 2 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Issue 3 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Issue 4 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Issue 5 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Issue 6 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

---

Home Elected Officials Issues Calendar

**The Local**

---

**News Story**  
By John Doe

---

[Back](#)

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

---

Home Elected Officials Issues Calendar

**The Local**

---

**Environment**

---

[Home](#)

**News**

[Story 1](#)

---

**Legislation**

Bill 1 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Bill 2 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

---

**Elected Official's Positions**

**Senator Smith**  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

**Senator Johnson**  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

**Assemblywoman Doe**  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

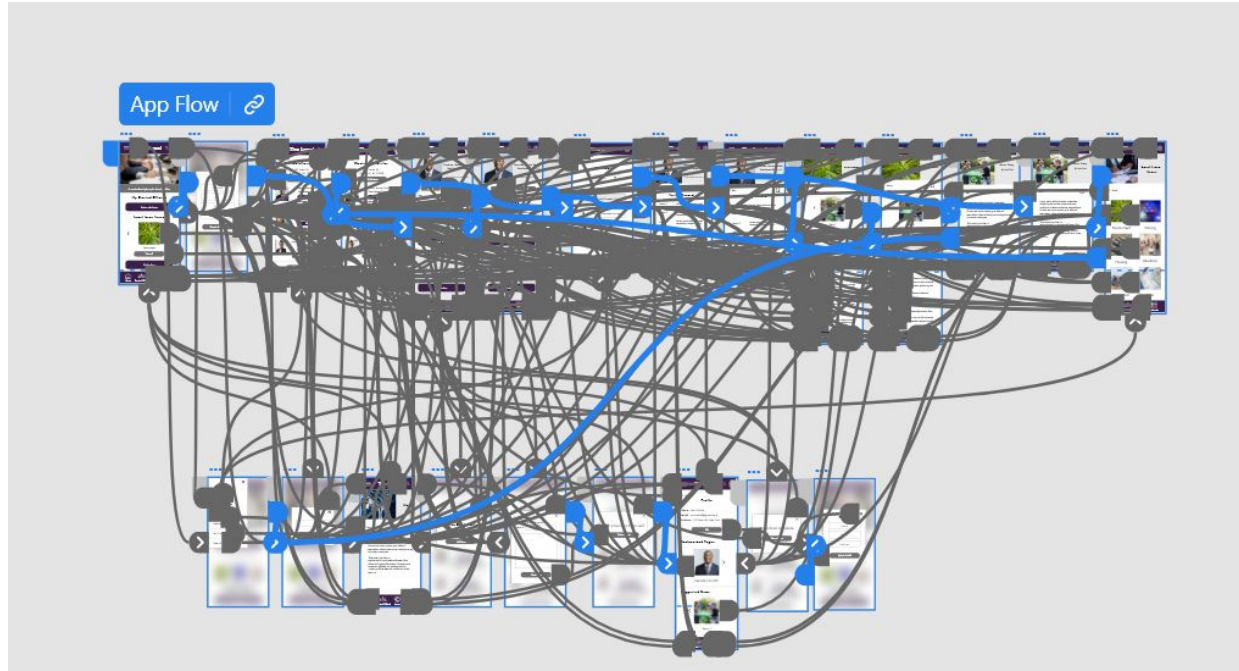
---

Home Elected Officials Issues Calendar

# High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype followed the same user flow as the low-fidelity prototype. I incorporated observations from my usability study, including the ability to bookmark pages.

View the [high-fidelity prototype here](#).



# Accessibility considerations

1

High contrast of text, with black text on a white background or white text on a dark background.

2

Icons are in the footer menu for those whose first language is not English.

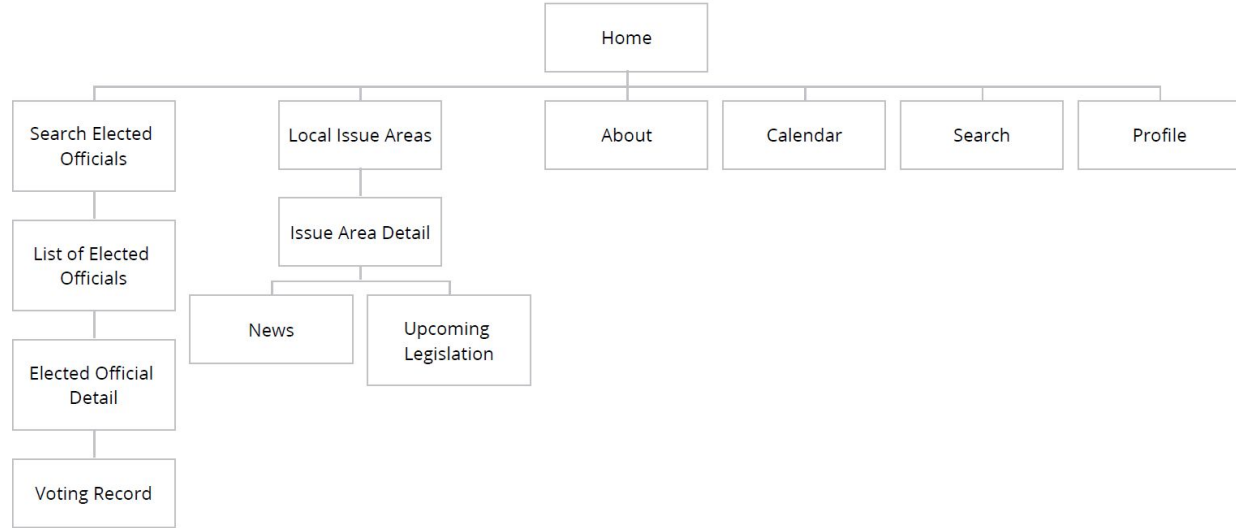
# Responsive Design

---

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

# Sitemap

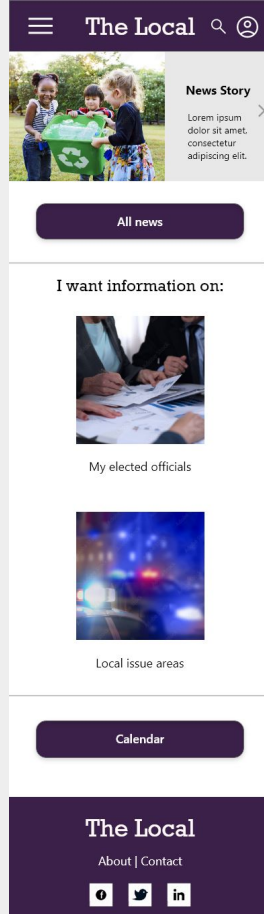
When I completed the app, I worked on the responsive website. I created a sitemap to create a cohesive experience between devices.



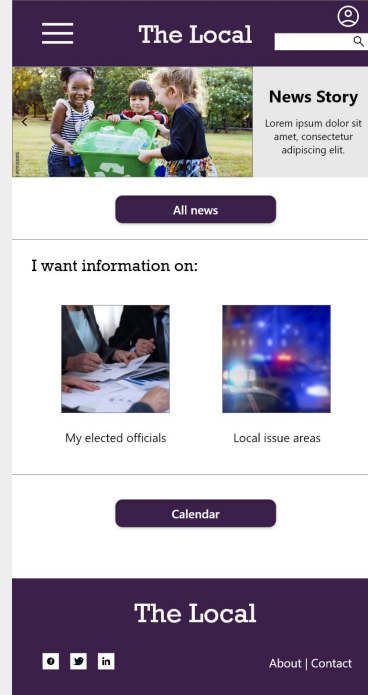
# Responsive designs

I created designs for mobile, tablet, and desktop, focusing on how the user would use the website on each device.

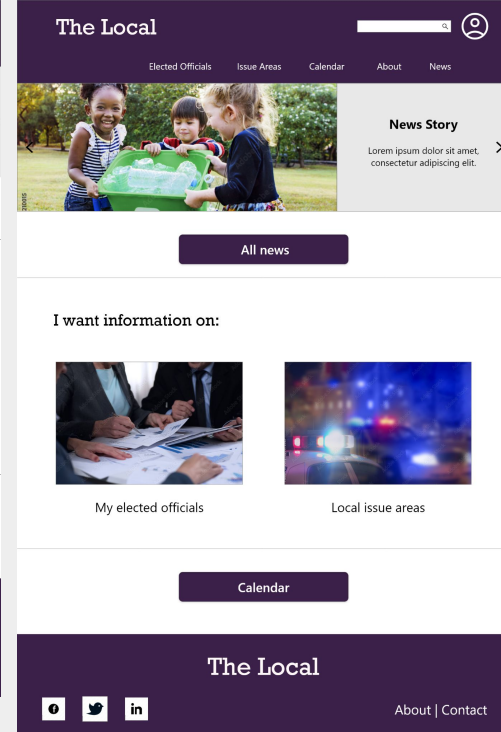
## Mobile



## Tablet



## Desktop





# Going forward

---

- Takeaways
- Next steps

# Takeaways



## Impact:

Users responded positively and found that this app/website helped inform them about local politics. One user stated, "I had no idea who my elected officials were until now!"



## What I learned:

I learned that designing with users in mind makes a big difference. Users were easily able to navigate to the information they needed and were satisfied with the product.

# Next steps

1

Survey a select group of users 6 months after the app download to see if they became more engaged in local politics.

2

Broaden the reach of the app so it covers additional regions.

3

Look at app reviews for recurring issues and makes updates and adjustments.

# Let's connect!



Thank you for reviewing my work! My contact information is provided below:

[candicejohnsonux@gmail.com](mailto:candicejohnsonux@gmail.com)  
candicejohnsonux.com