

DSGN 360 - WINTER 2023

BOOKS FOR PRISONERS

WEBSITE REDESIGN CASE STUDY

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THE BRIEF

Redesign a non-profit website or cultural institution. The website chosen was Books to Prisoners. The goal is to update the visual design and simplify the organization of information for better usability across desktop and mobile platforms.

THE CLIENT

Books to Prison is a non-profit based in Seattle that donates books to prisoners to promote a love of reading behind bars. They believe that through the pursuit of knowledge, the incarcerated can self empower and decrease their chance of recidivism. The site is used for donating books, volunteering, educating, and requesting books for the incarcerated.



THE PROBLEM

Currently, the website has a very simple visual design and weak informational hierarchy. Upon visiting the site, there is a lack of visuals which poorly communicates the non-profits' cause. Navigating the site becomes tasking as the important information is awkwardly placed and doesn't catch the eye, making it easy to miss. This combination decreases the site's likelihood of donations and volunteers as users are more inclined to click away.

THE SOLUTION

Create a new visual design and restructure the site's content for easier navigation and more effective communication of cause. Implementing a new logo and look will increase the amount of time users spend on the site and increase the probability of donations and volunteers. Additionally the simplification and emphasis on links will allow the user to quickly and easily find their desired information.



Welcome to Books to Prisoners

Books To Prisoners is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster a love of reading behind bars, encourage the pursuit of knowledge and self-empowerment, and break the cycle of recidivism. We believe that books are tools for learning and for opening minds to new ideas and possibilities, and engage incarcerated individuals with the benefits of reading by mailing tens of thousands of free books to inmates across the country each year. In 2015, the City of Seattle recognized Books to Prisoners as a Human Rights Leader.

We receive approximately 1,000 requests for books each month. The most popular requests are dictionaries, thesauruses, African American history and fiction, Native American studies, legal materials, genre fiction such as fantasy and horror, and foreign language learning materials (particularly Spanish). Other common requests include vocational-technical manuals, ancient history, scientific textbooks, art and drawing books (including blank notebooks), and books on paranormal phenomena. Books to Prisoners relies on books donated by community members to answer these requests, so please consider making a donation to help a few of the thousands of individuals who request books each year.

Books to Prisoners depends on a dedicated group of volunteers, many of whom have been volunteering with our organization for years—or even decades! Volunteers work five shifts each week to find books in our collection that fulfill prisoner requests, wrap packages of books to be mailed, and sort donations of books. In 2012, our volunteers received a Light a Fire award in recognition of their immense dedication.

Books to Prisoners was founded in the early 1970s and is sponsored by Left Bank Books. As one of the largest and oldest prison book projects in the country, Books to Prisoners works in partnership with other groups that support prisoner literacy and promote social justice. Though our headquarters are in Seattle, we have three associate organizations – Portland Books To Prisoners, Books To Prisoners Olympia, and Books to Prisoners Spokane – who offer opportunities for volunteers and donors outside of Seattle.

Give to Books to Prisoners

DONATE

Join our mailing list

SIGN UP HERE

1973-2021: Our First 50 Years



Left Bank Books

You can purchase BTP t-shirts, copies of Dear Books to Prisoners, general books on prison issues, and other books at Left Bank Books in Seattle, Washington. Left Bank Books has long been a supporter and sponsor of BTP.

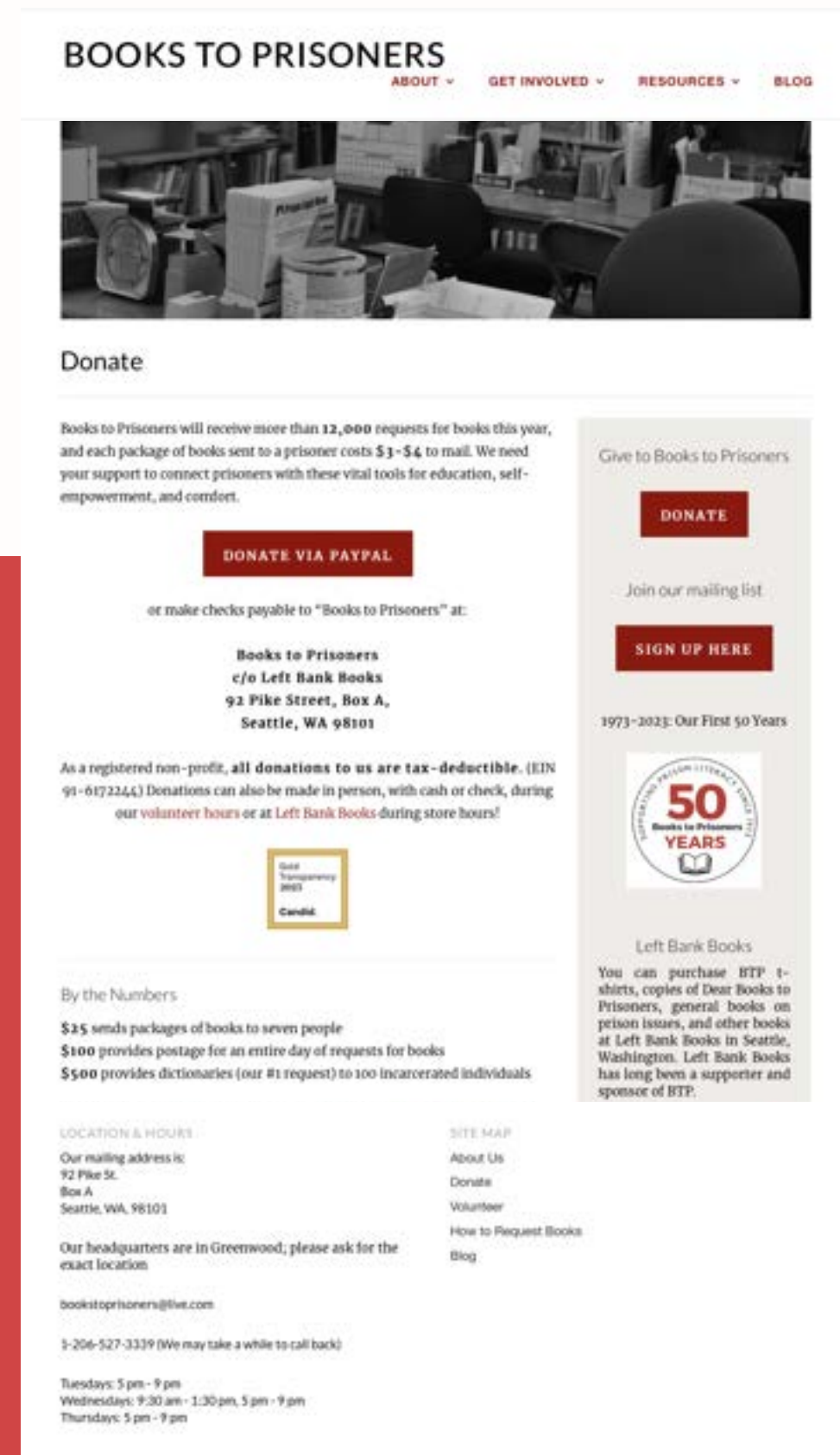
VISIT LEFT BANK

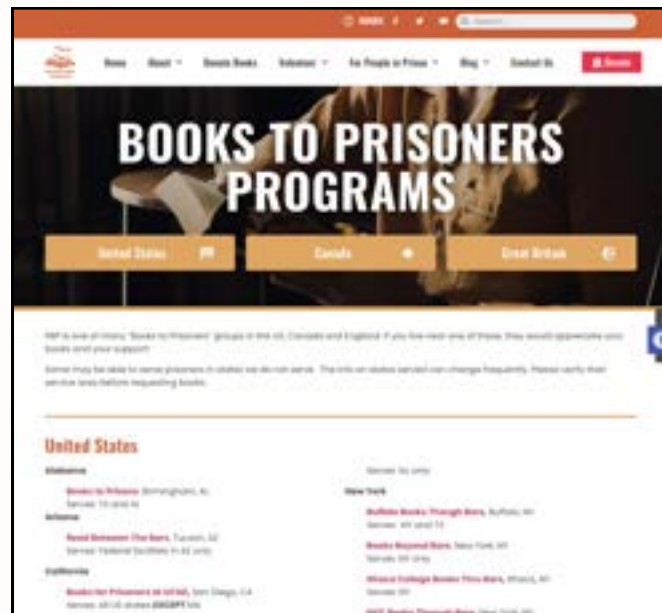
WEBSITE RESEARCH

A significant part of my research was done through dissecting the site's current structure of information. Thankfully, I found that their drop down tabs were not cluttered however information was improperly organized.

MAIN GOALS

- RE-INVENT THE WEBSITE VISUAL STYLE
- EMPHASIZE DONATION AND REQUEST OPTIONS
- RE-ORGANIZE THE DROP DOWN INFORMATION





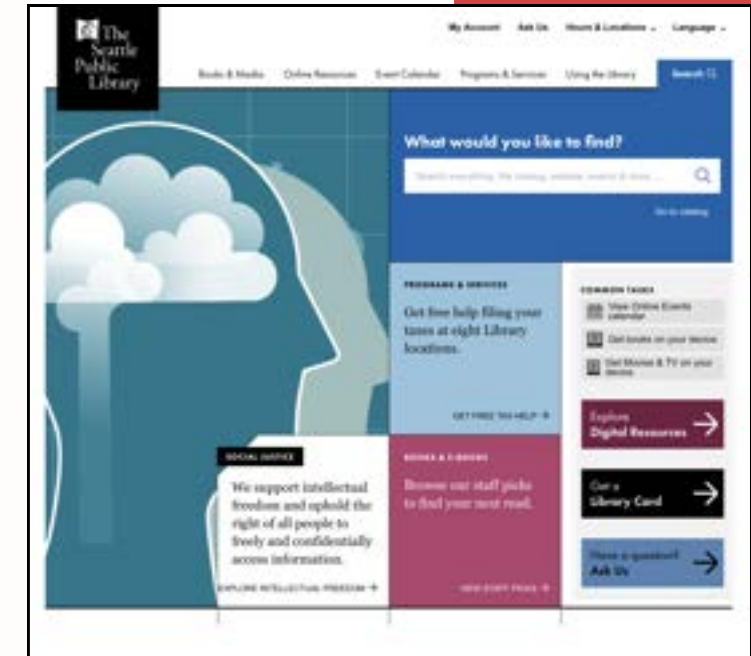
PRISON BOOK

- Provides links to users desired donation locations
- Website includes a tab for those in prison requesting books
- Clear volunteer hours for those interested.



LGBT BOOKS

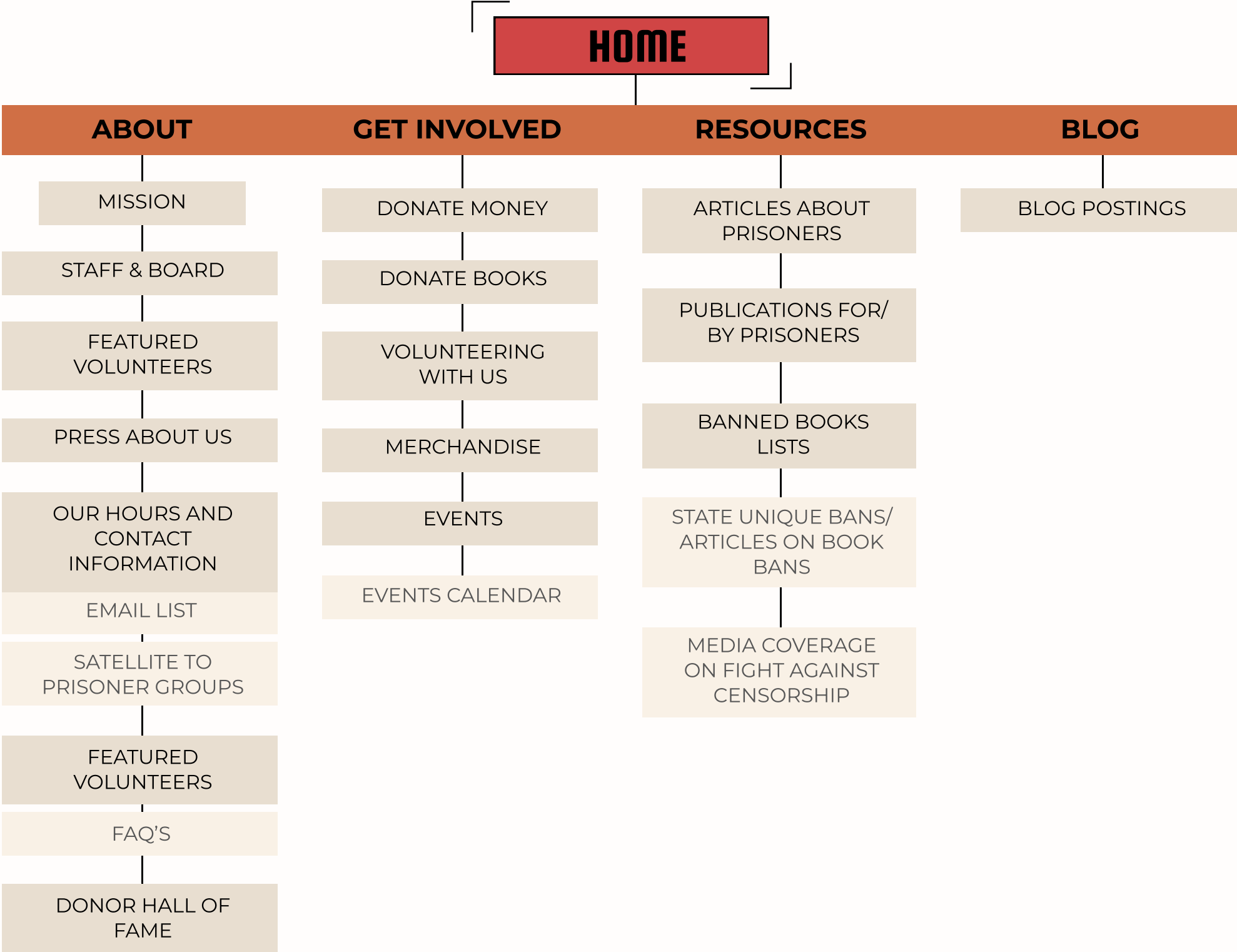
- Detailed information section on impact of the cause and reason for the service.
- Section for volunteer information
- Typography is consistent but the website lacks visuals.
- Strong advertisements on the impact they have made across the U.S

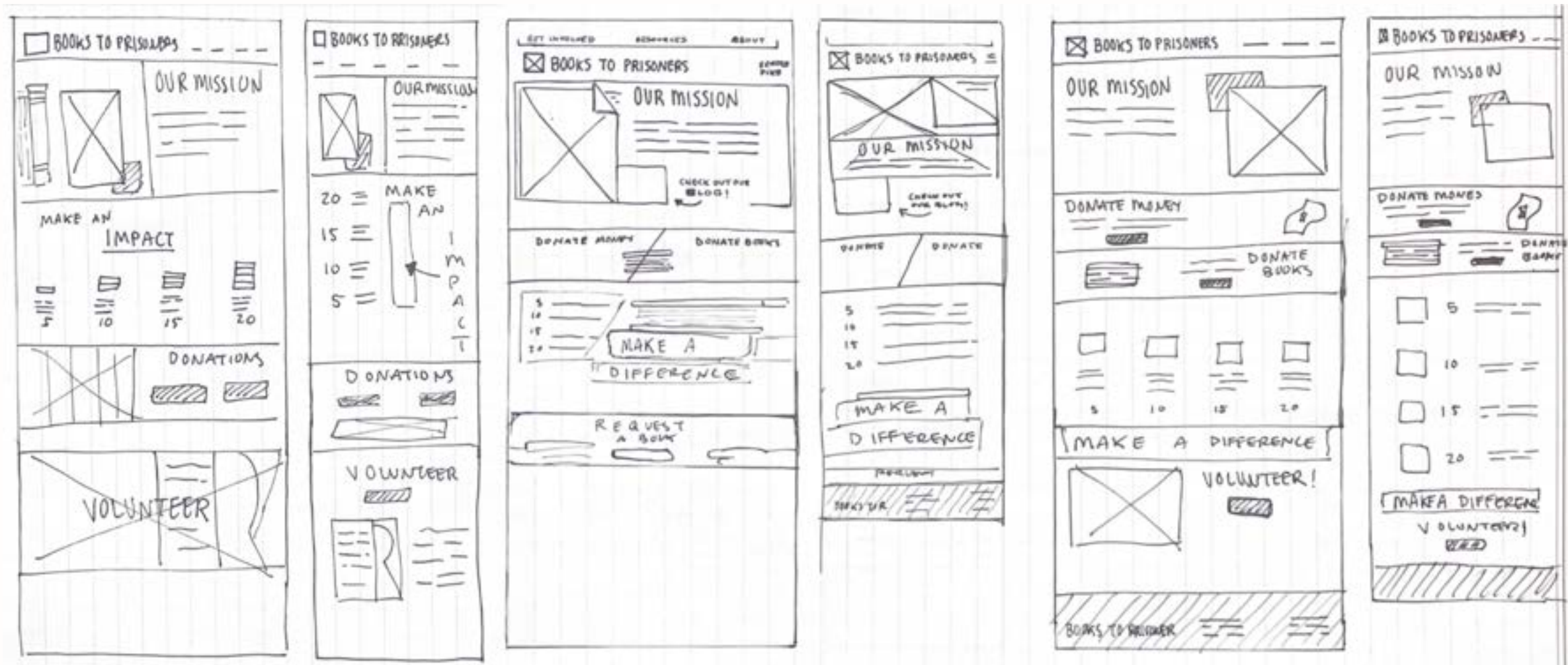


SEATTLE LIBRARY

- Appealing and relatively modern website style.
- Large quantity of information which can be a bit overwhelming but manageable.
- Consistent color scheme and typography.
- Indirect competitor, the library does take donations as does our client.

CURRENT WEBSITE SITE MAP





WIRE-FRAMING; SKETCHING

After breaking down the current flow of information the website has. I took into consideration my goals with the redesign and began brainstorming formats.

DAHLIA



AGE

65

OCCUPATION

High School Teacher

INCOME

Middle - Class

FAMILY

Married, 1 kid, 1 grandkid

GOALS

Send books to her son who is currently incarcerated.

Dahlia is doing her best to support her son Joshua who is currently incarcerated. Her son was always interested in music and poetry.

She is an older woman and finds technology confusing at times.

FRANK



AGE

48

OCCUPATION

Construction

INCOME

Lower Middle - Class

FAMILY

No family

GOALS

Volunteer and donate money as thanks for helping him during his sentence.

Frank received books from Books to Prisoners during his sentence. Currently, he is earning a stable income at his work at the construction site and has free time on the weekends to volunteer.

PRIMARY COLORS



SECONDARY COLORS



TYPE CHOICES

SQUADA ONE

• TITLE

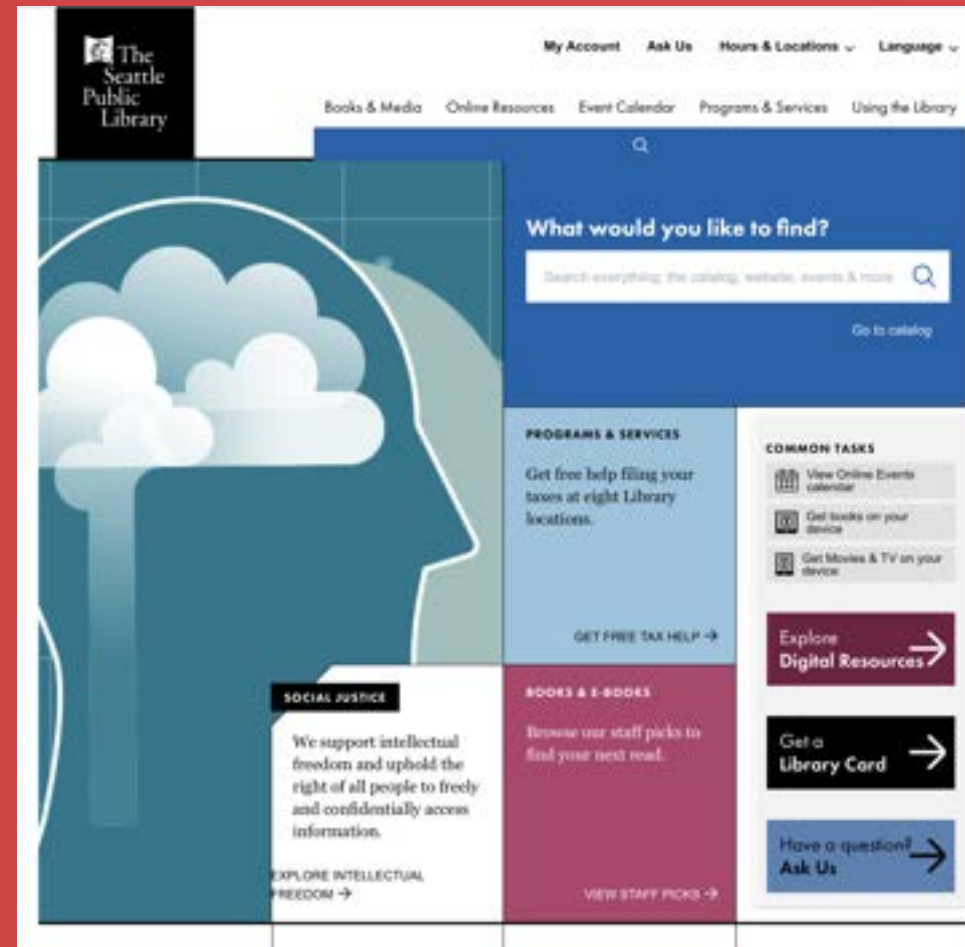
MONTSERRAT

• MAIN TEXT

MONDA

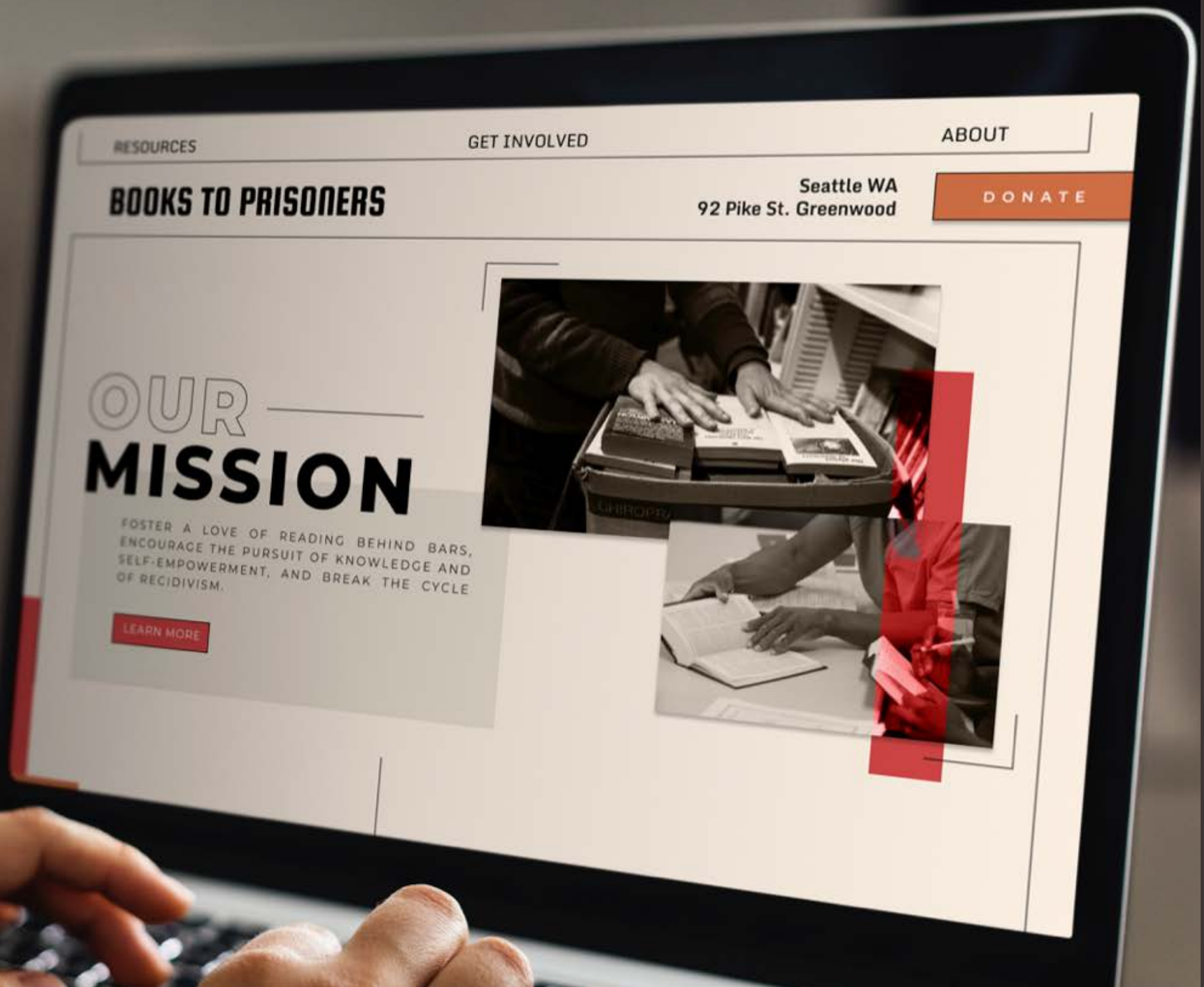
- DETAIL TEXT

LAYOUT INSPIRATION



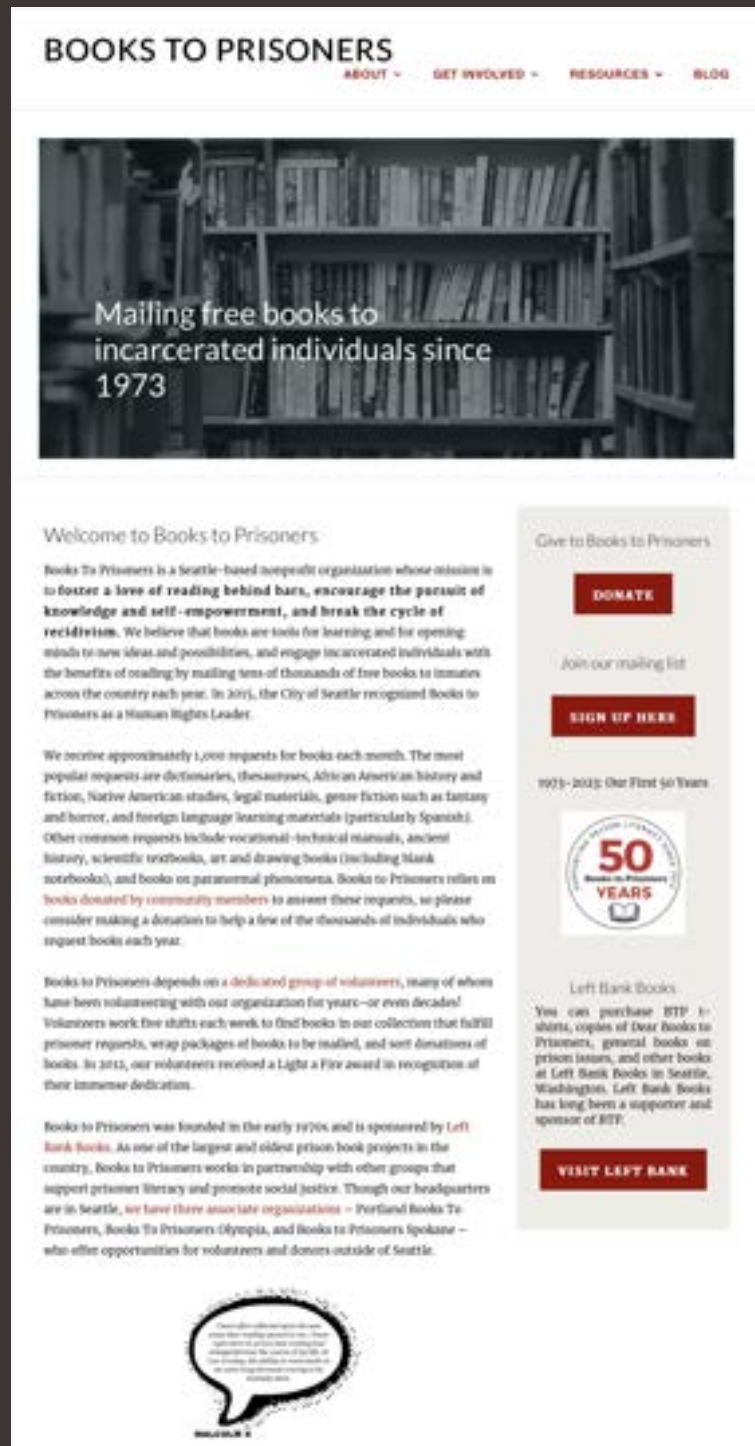
FINAL OUTCOME

DESKTOP & MOBILE



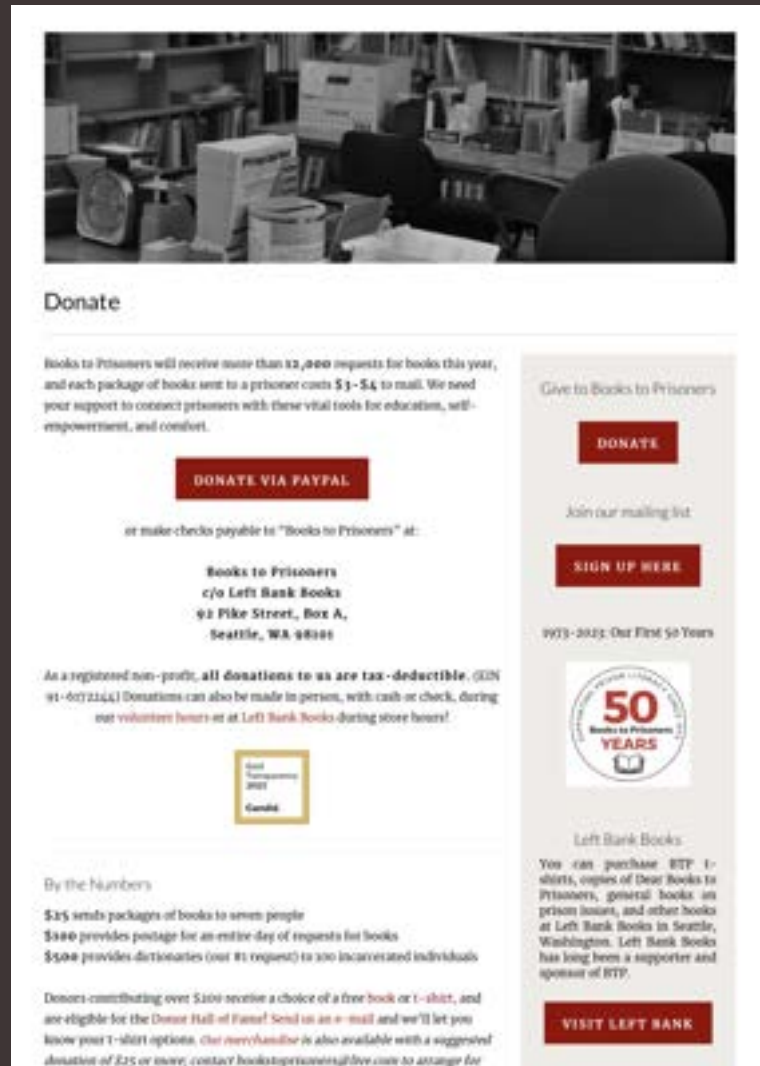
PRIMARY COMPARISON (HOME)

DESKTOP & MOBILE



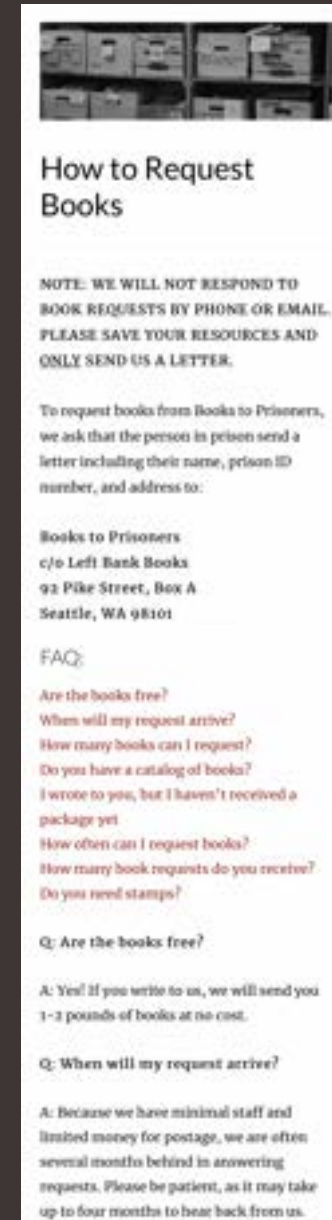
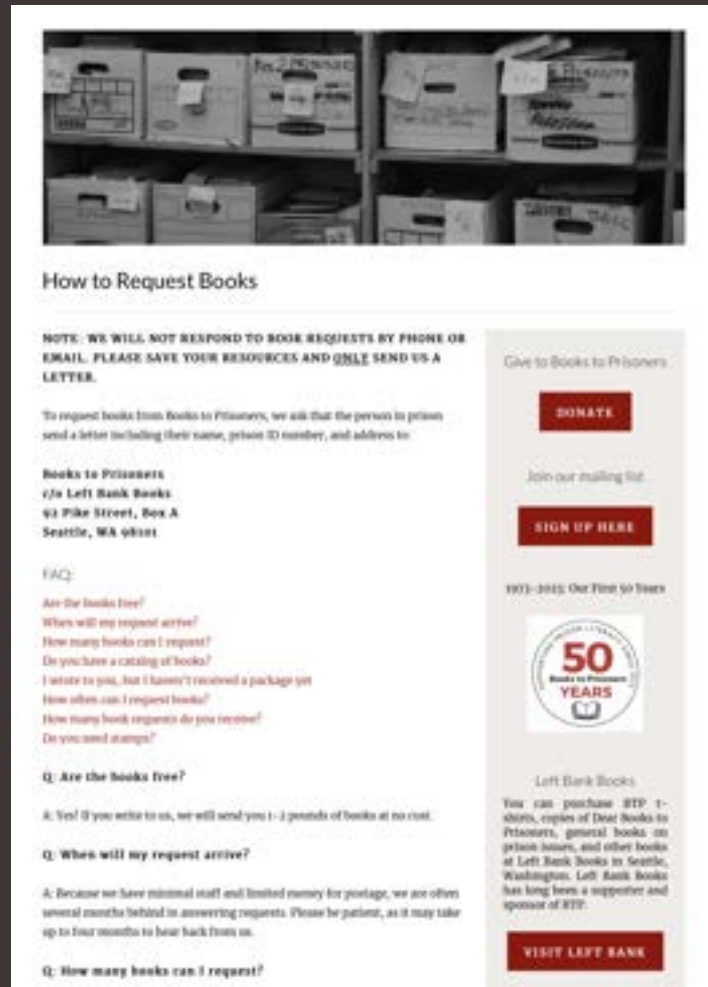
SECONDARY COMPARISON (DONATION)

DESKTOP & MOBILE



TERTIARY COMPARISON (REQUEST)

DESKTOP & MOBILE



CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge was creating a visual style for the website with little to nothing to go off of. It was difficult creating something when you had countless possibilities. It pushed me to restrict myself to a certain style and keep it consistent throughout the website.

REFLECTION

After finishing the re-design, I realized the importance navigation has on the users experience. It was fun problem solving and creating features that helped fulfill the users goals. All users are coming to the site with interest however each user has a unique goal with the site.

FUTURE GOALS

If I were to ever redesign a site again, I think I would spend more time blocking out wire frames in Figma before starting to design my final website. Dumping all the information on the page relatively loosely and then later cleaning it up made the process much easier and quicker than placing thing in their final place right off the bat.