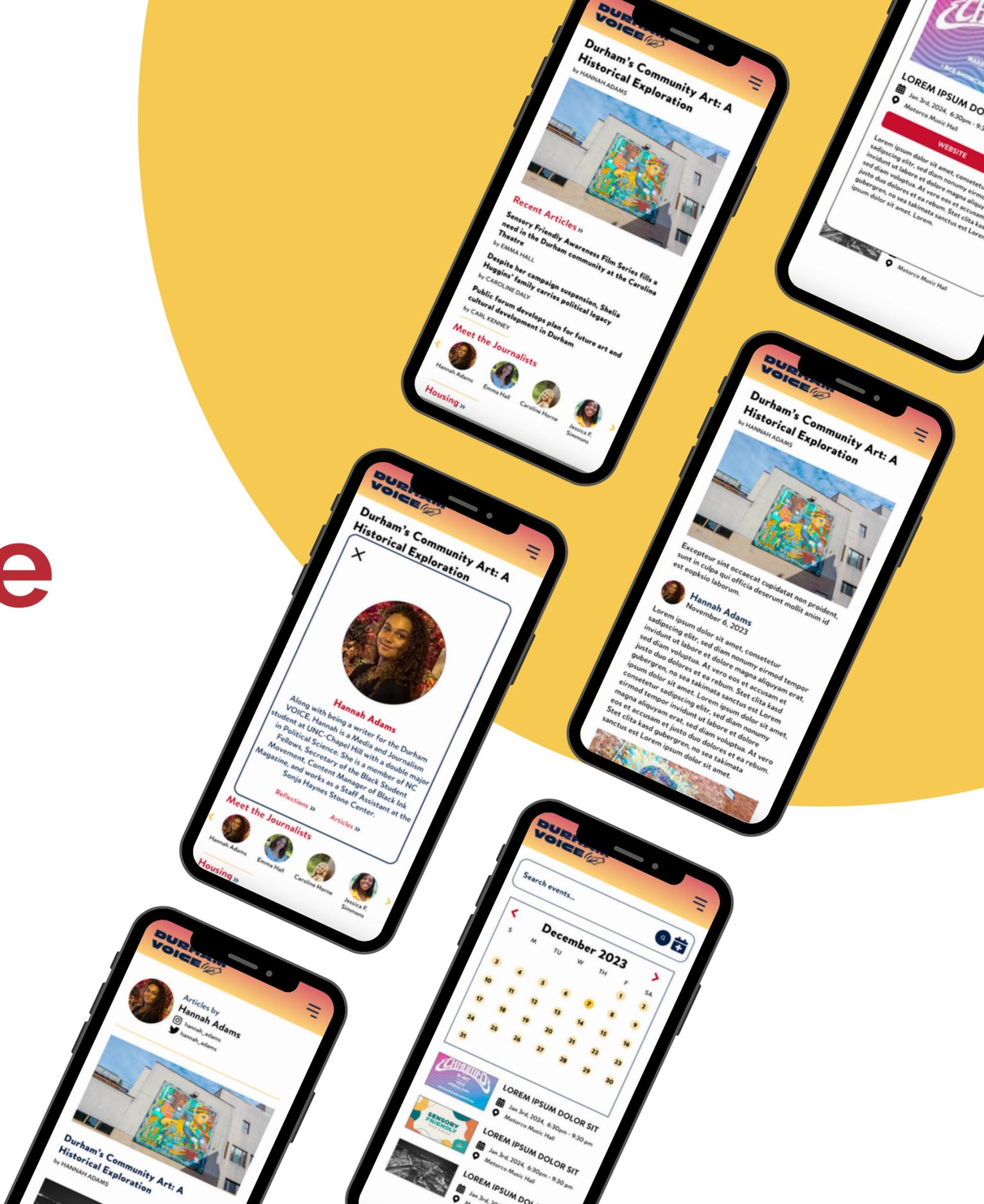


The Durham Voice

Digital Media Experience



Overview + Design Challenge

Durham is a dynamic city located in North Carolina. With art, culture, and history intertwined, the city is constantly changing.

With these changes come challenges. Housing, the environment, politics, etc. The people of Durham need to feel connected to their community by being updated with the necessary information about things relevant to their livelihoods, as well as the city they belong to.

How might we design a website that embraces Durham and reports on Durham citizens' most pressing issues?





Initial Usability Testing

Pros:

- + Quality of articles
- + Labelling of articles

Cons:

- Not user-friendly design
- Confusing hierarchy
- Endless scroll
- No navigation on mobile

Audience Analysis Chart

Demographic	Percentage	Description
Age		
- Under 18 years	23%	Primarily children and teenagers in school.
- 18-24 years	14%	A significant student population from Duke University and North Carolina Central University.
- 25-54 years	43%	A large working-age population.
- 55+ years	20%	A growing population of seniors due to aging demographics.
Gender		
- Male	48%	
- Female	52%	Slightly higher female population.
Education		
- High School or Less	20%	
- Some College/Associate's Degree	28%	
- Bachelor's Degree	29%	
- Master's Degree or Higher	23%	Highly educated population.

Ethnicity		
- African American	39%	A significant African American community.
- White	47%	
- Hispanic	10%	A growing Hispanic population.
- Asian	4%	A small but diverse Asian community.
Technology Type		
- Smartphone Users	85%	High smartphone adoption rate.
- Internet Users	90%	Internet access is widespread.
Community Type		
- Urban	60%	Predominantly urban areas within the city.
- Suburban	35%	Suburban communities in the surrounding areas.
- Rural	5%	Rural areas within Durham County.
News Sources		
- Local Newspapers	30%	The Herald-Sun is a prominent local newspaper.
- Local TV News	40%	Residents watch local news channels for updates.
- Online News	25%	Popular online news websites and social media platforms.

During this process, AI was used to assist generating a somewhat accurate analysis of the Durham population. This chart gives an overview of the population, but did not detail exactly its sources, a full version of the audience analysis can be found [here](#)

As I was unable to travel to Durham at this time, I mainly observed potential users at UNC-Chapel Hill, fitting the student population who is technologically inclined population that overlaps with part of Durham's population

Income Status		
- Low Income (<\$40K)	25%	A portion of residents with lower income.
- Middle Income (\$40K-\$100K)	45%	Middle-class families and professionals.
- High Income (>\$100K)	30%	A significant population with high earning potential.
Housing Status		
- Renters	38%	Residents living in apartments or rental properties.
- Homeowners	62%	People who own single-family homes, condos, or townhouses.

Persona Poster & Empathy Map



Tech-savvy Taylor

Biography

Meet Taylor, a 26-year-old non-binary software engineer at a burgeoning tech startup in Durham. They are not just passionate about coding but also about advocating for LGBTQ+ rights. Taylor's goal is to make a difference in their community and find like-minded friends who share their vision. They attend LGBTQ+ events, volunteer for LGBTQ+ organizations, and engage in online forums to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Goals

- Find volunteer opportunities for LGBTQ+ groups
- Be more engaged with Durham
- Know more community events
- Be aware of local politics

Expectation

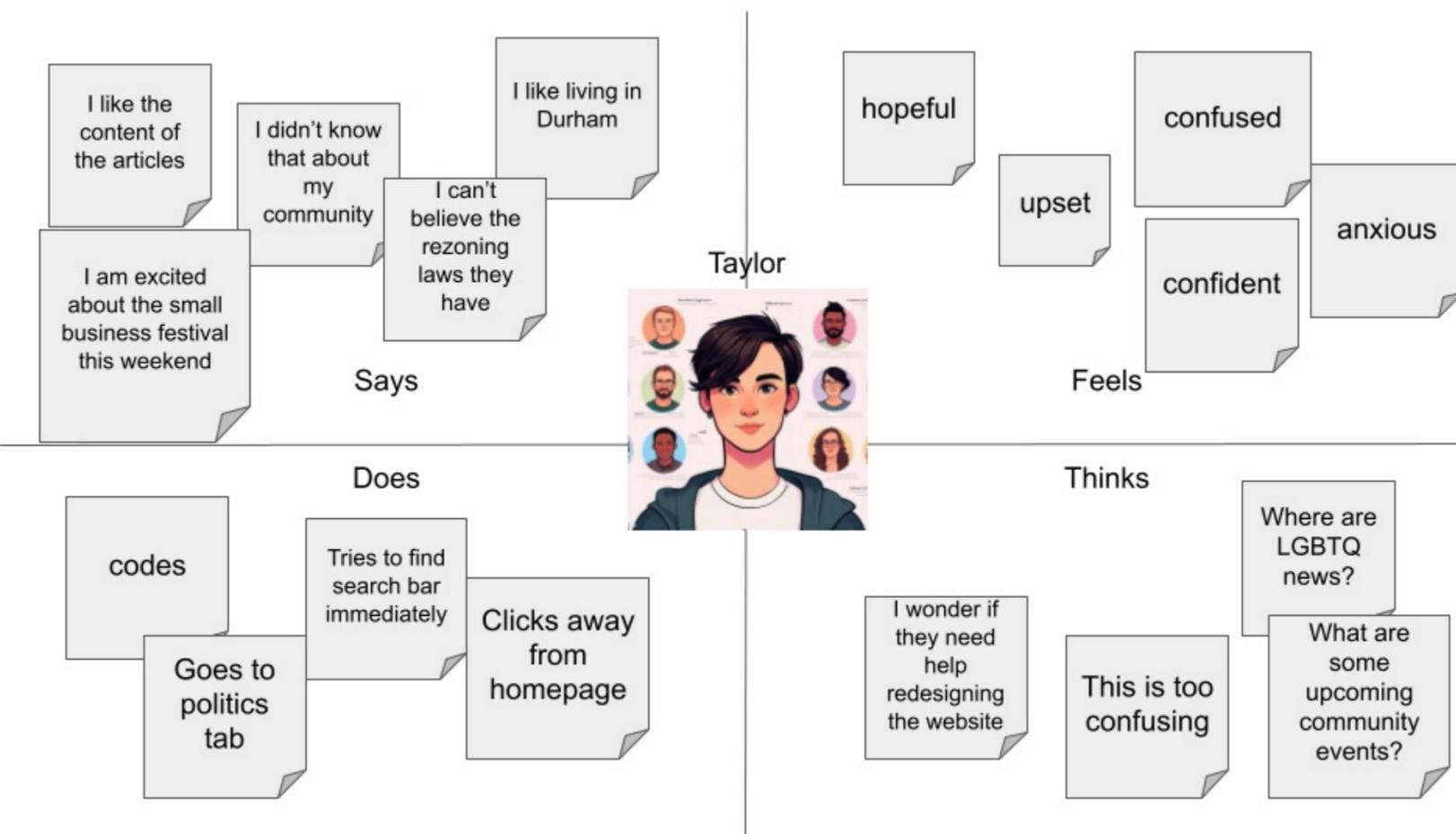
- Newssite organized with tabs
- Unbiased news
- Up-to-date content about events
- Links to ways to help community

Frustration

- Not being able to keep up with events they are passionate about
- Possible bugs in website codes
- Not enough LGBTQ+ news
- Local politicians not doing enough for community

"It's crucial to be aware of what's happening in the world."

Taylor was a persona created by AI after being asked to generate several personas of the Durham population. I decided to choose Taylor as they represent the person I conducted my listening session with, a young, passionate, tech-savvy, community-forward person living in Durham



My listening session informed me that young people are the driving force that keeps Durham forward. They are extremely driven and eager to give back. They have ideas on how to make the city better and are vocal about social issues.



Card Sorting

Participant 1

Time to complete: 9m 18s

Usability Elements

search bar

scroll bar

thumbnail

date of publication

author of article

social media links

donate button

share button

cookie policy

hamburger button

account

user-generated content

drop-down menus

Written content

sports

health

arts

politics

international

culture

politicians

trending articles

recommended articles

obituaries

breaking news

live coverage

travel

Visual elements

videos

graph

logo

cartoons

ad

photography

daily crosswords

podcast

Additional content

list of accolades

archives

comment section

careers

local events

calendar with upcoming events

privacy policy

subscription

saved article

language options

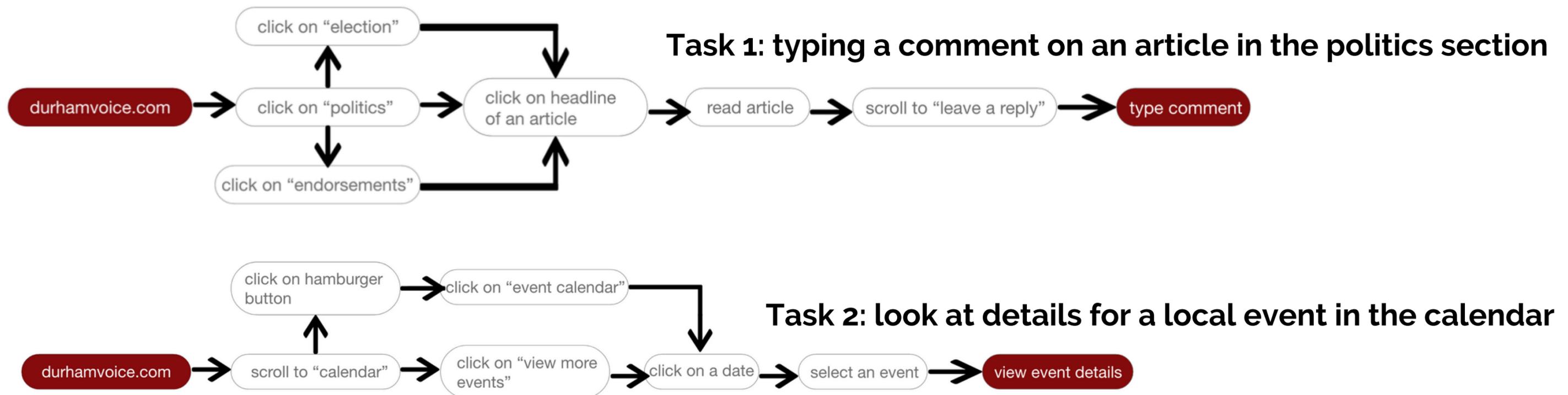
newsletter sign up

corrections

What I learned from the sorting is that there is no one way for all users to categorize everything identically. They can have the same process that yields similar results, but it is ultimately up to the UX designer to put what the users sorted out into tangible products. If I had more time to conduct more card sorts, then I could really verify this belief. This thought came to mind when I was doing card sorting for my partner. But I learned that users require much more than what meets the eye, so I have to keep my design simple enough to users, but also contain enough information for them.

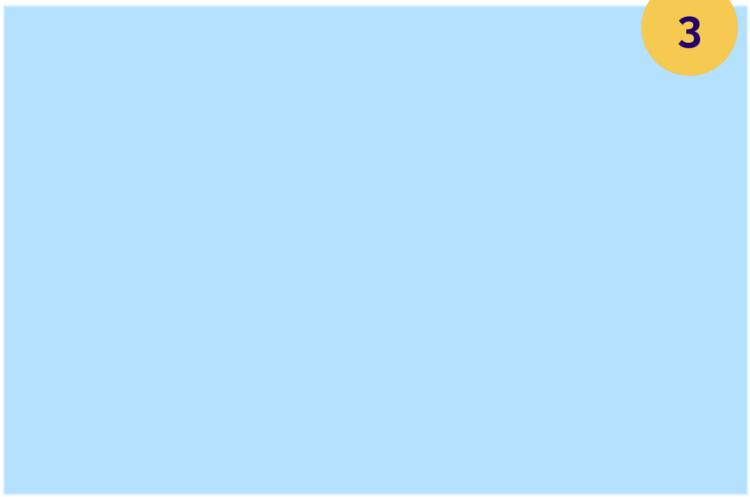
Task Flows

I created two task flows that I feel like users would utilize the most on this digital media experience. There are multiple ways that users could approach either task, depending on how they typically use media sites.





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by adobe.com

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Low fidelity wireframes

Homepage

- 1 The Durham Voice's logo, served as the main navigation to the site's homepage
- 2 Hamburger button opening to the site's full navigation menu
- 3 Link to most recent article - since the Durham Voice's articles are written mostly by journalism students, and not professional journalists, it is impractical to have a "breaking news" article or most important article up first, because they might be outdated, hence organizing it chronologically is more practical and ensures the newness of each article
- 4 Other recent articles for users to easily read what has recently been written about Durham
- 5 Articles organized by topics - as users scroll they will see similar designs, this helps them easily access a specific topic they are interested in while still being on the homepage.

Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)

LOGO

1

2



Search...

3



Support Us

4



Lorem Ipsum



Lorem Ipsum



Lorem Ipsum



Lorem Ipsum

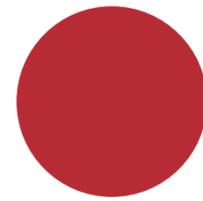


Lorem Ipsum

5



Lorem Ipsum



Low fidelity wireframes

Navigation menu

1

The Durham Voice's logo, served as the main navigation to the site's homepage

2

Hamburger button opening to the site's full navigation menu

3

Search bar that tucked away in navigation tab - makes overall look clean and users still have full capability to use the website

4

A donation button (omitted idea) because I thought as a not-for-profit page, the Durham Voice might need some monetary support to keep running. Soon after Dr. Ruel's comment, I realized that this was not the case, and I chose to focus on other aspects of the Durham Voice that makes it unique that I will discuss later on

5

Topics also serve as drop-down menus for micro-topics.

Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)

LOGO

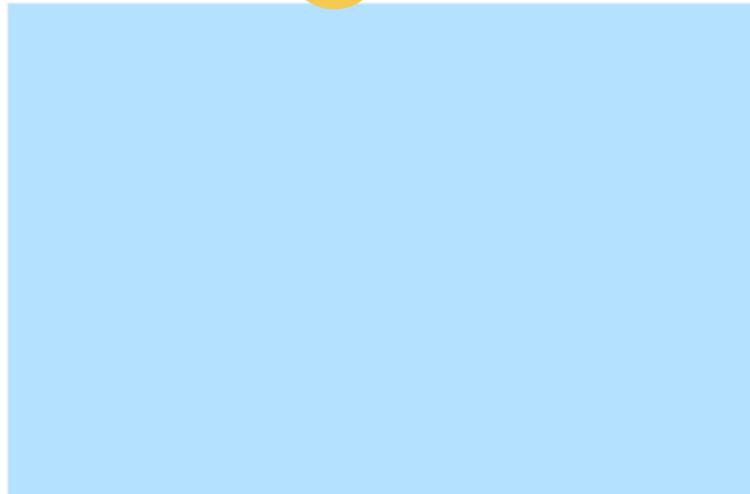
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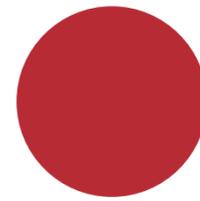


John Doe

San Francisco, CA
Month, date year

4

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Low fidelity wireframes

Article page

1

The Durham Voice's logo, served as the main navigation to the site's homepage

2

Hamburger button opening to the site's full navigation menu

3

Headline of article presenting hierarchy - easy to read & content of article being smaller and more detailed. Any assisting images will take up the width of the page to ensure mobile users are able to view them clearly

4

Some details about journalist writing the article

Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)

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1

Read all comments

3

Leave a comment...

2

Sort by: newest ▾



John Doe | 6h
San Francisco, CA

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[Reply](#) | [Read more](#)

4



John Doe | 6h
San Francisco, CA

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5



John Doe | 6h
San Francisco, CA

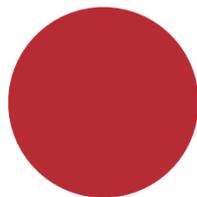
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[Reply](#) | [Read more](#)



John Doe | 6h
San Francisco, CA

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Low fidelity wireframes

Accessing & leaving comments

1

At the bottom of each article, users can access comments left by others by clicking on this button, which opens up a tab for them to view all comments

2

Text box for users to leave comments in

3

Button to close tab

4

Sorting options for comments

5

Comments include information about users, including where they are reading from, to entice a sense of community

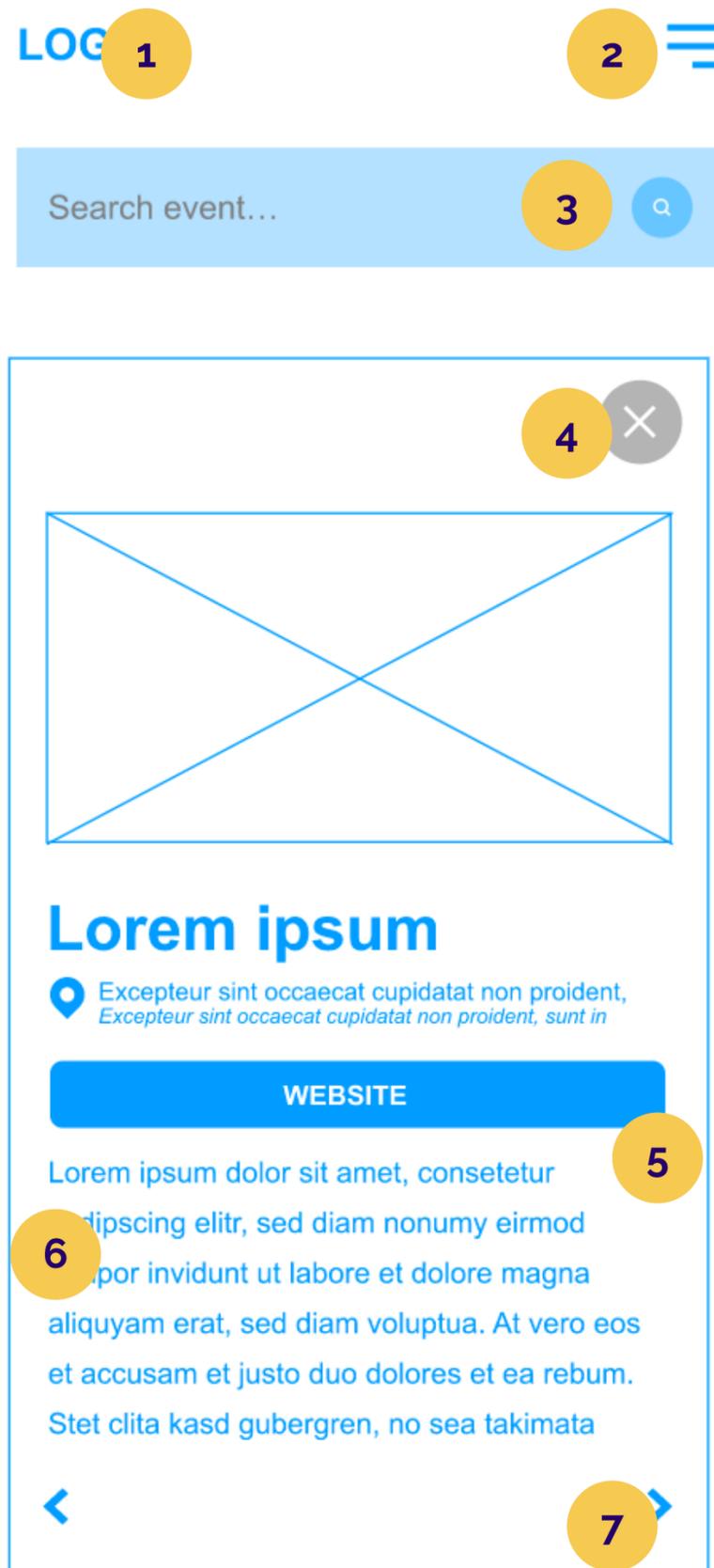
Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)

Low fidelity wireframes

Local Events Details

- 1 The Durham Voice's logo, served as the main navigation to the site's homepage
- 2 Hamburger button opening to the site's full navigation menu
- 3 Search bar option if users want to look for a specific event happening in Durham
- 4 Interactive calendar that allows users to move through months and select a specific date to read what events are happening on that day
- 5 List of events happening on the day of user's choice

Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)

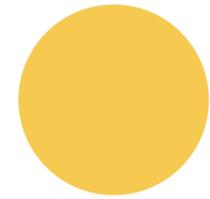


Low fidelity wireframes

Local Events Details

- 1 The Durham Voice's logo, served as the main navigation to the site's homepage
- 2 Hamburger button opening to the site's full navigation menu
- 3 Search bar option if users want to look for a specific event happening in Durham
- 4 Closing tab to return to calendar
- 5 Link to website of host entity
- 6 Details of event, including poster, location, time, and description for users to know more without leaving the site
- 7 Button to navigate between events happening close to each other

Full interactive link can be accessed [here](#)



Website Venture & Professor's Comments

All of the steps presented before were done before I did a full head dive on the Durham Voice website. Simply put, I did not read all of the articles that were written in the Fall 2023 semester that were on the site. After finally sitting down and looking over all of the articles, as well as listening to feedback from Dr. Ruel, I realized that there are some issues I failed to address in my original wireframes, those being:

- Student journalists are an integral part to the Durham Voice website & experience
- Specific categorization of articles on the Durham Voice website
- No need for any donation – focus more on the user's experience when navigating through articles



Hi-fidelity mockup

With that said, I made some new additions and changes to the first interactive mockup to reflect my new finding as well as Dr. Ruel's feedback

I created a logo and UI Kit & color palette to reflect Durham alongside some test UI Elements that enhances readability.

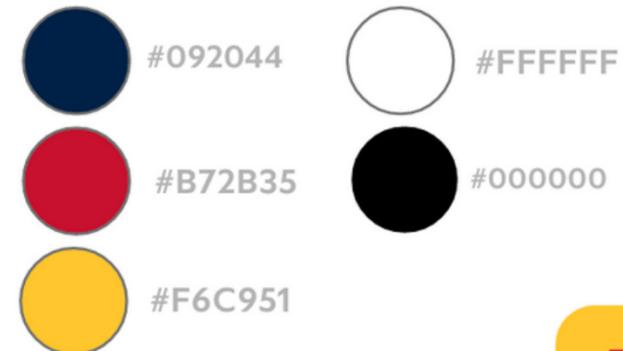
Full prototype can be found [here](#)

UI Kit

STYLE GUIDE

The Durham Voice website utilizes a sleek and modern design, with Navy, Red, and Gold as its main accent colors, simulating the city's flag. The site mainly uses the sans-serif Merel font for heading, sub-heading, and body text, as it is both modern and easy to read. The logo uses the Gabriella Heavy font to encapsulate the site's loud, edgy and vibrant vibe, with the icon being a pen and echo symbols, channeling The Durham Voice's role for passionate local journalism.

COLORS



LOGO



UI ELEMENTS



FONTS

Heading

Sub-heading

Body text: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat

Hi-fidelity mockup

Homepage

1

Most of the layout stayed the same as my wireframes, with the addition of a “meet the journalists” tab to emphasize the student journalists who are reporting about Durham, and is made interactive so that users can learn more about them.

Full prototype can be found [here](#)



Durham’s Community Art: A Historical Exploration

by HANNAH ADAMS



Recent Articles >>

Sensory Friendly Awareness Film Series fills a need in the Durham community at the Carolina Theatre

by EMMA HALL

Despite her campaign suspension, Shelia Huggins’ family carries political legacy

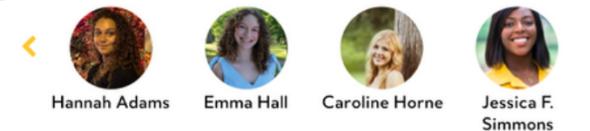
by CAROLINE DALY

Public forum develops plan for future art and cultural development in Durham

by CARL KENNEY

1

Meet the Journalists



Housing >>



Carl Rist hopes to appeal to voters with affordable housing and climate action policies

by AVA DOBSON

Gentrification’s Toll on Durham’s Environment

by HOLLAND BODNER

Nate Baker turns away real estate developer campaign donations, endorsed by two Durham PACs

Hannah Adams

Along with being a writer for the Durham VOICE, Hannah is a Media and Journalism student at UNC-Chapel Hill with a double major in Political Science. She is a member of NC Fellows, Secretary of the Black Student Movement, Content Manager of Black Ink Magazine, and works as a Staff Assistant at the Sonja Haynes Stone Center.

[Reflections >>](#) [Articles >>](#)

Meet the Journalists



Housing >>



Articles by Hannah Adams

hannah_adams
 hannah_adams



A reflection of Durham Voice

Hannah Adams
November 16, 2020

Reflecting on my time re... community has been the... me yet. Not because I do... because I feel unqualified

I believe the most signific... provide is the least obvi... often portray Durham as... of revitalization, it is glar... haven't experienced its h...

Durham isn't strictly crim... terms that could be used... town in America: it's vibr... unlike so many cities. Tak... speak with anyone who li... observation becomes mo...

Having interviewed both... and Durham locals, the p... described the city displa... beyond what a place alor...

Carl Rist's dedication an... with the people of Durha... the Carolinas Youth Men... desire to interact with ar... Durham youth, displayed... media outlets neglect.

Hi-fidelity mockup

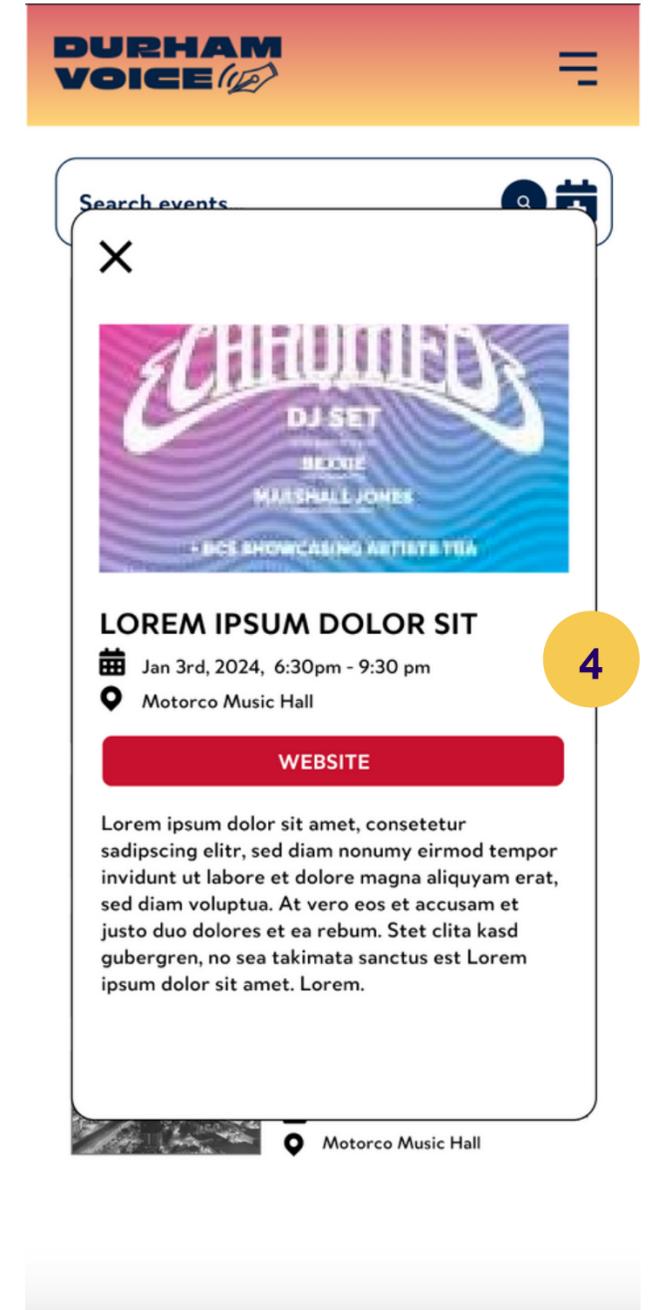
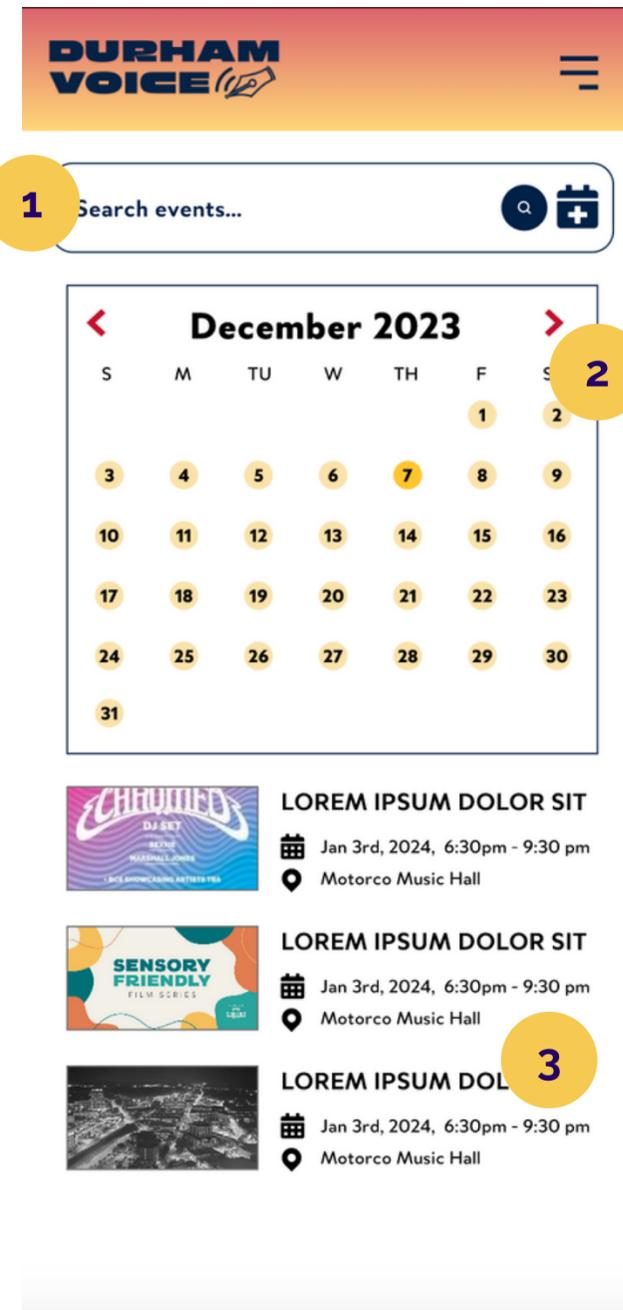
Events calendar page

1 Events search bar if users wanted to look for a specific event, and an “add event” button if any event organizers wanted to promote their event

2 Fully interactive calendar with navigation from month to month and users can choose a specific date to view events

3 List of events happening on a certain date & information about them

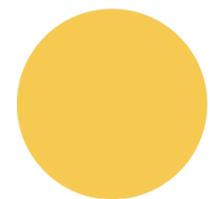
4 Pop-up element that allows users to view full details about an event of their choosing, including a website button that will take them to an external site to learn more about an event



For user testing, I gave them three tasks:

1. To look for an article in the Arts section
2. To look for details of an event happening on December 7th
3. To find Hannah Adams's reflection

The full test can be found [here](#)



User Testing & Results

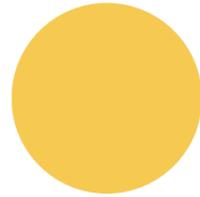
Overall, the three user tests I ran came back with positive results. No one took too long to do any tasks, and all three said that the site was easy to navigate and it took them little time to complete the tasks.

However, the site is not without flaws. One user said that they wished the site had a footer to cease the endless scroll, and all three couldn't find exactly what I wanted for the second task. Additionally, only one was able to find Hannah Adams's reflection

With those things in mind, I did some minor changes to my design.

Deliberations & Changes

Full prototype can be found [here](#)



Durham's Community Art: A Historical Exploration

by HANNAH ADAMS



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Hannah Adams
November 6, 2023

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Adjusted event dates to accurately represent calendar choices to help users easily navigate and learn more details

CHROMED
DJ SET
BY BEYONCE MARSHALL JONES
SHOWCASING ARTISTS YEA

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT
Dec 7th, 2023, 6:30pm - 9:30 pm
Motorco Music Hall

Hannah Adams
November 6, 2023

Changed the color of journalist name from navy blue to red to signify that it is clickable

Despite receiving feedback about the endless scroll, I decided not to add a footer to this prototype. I feel like it is not an integral part that I wanted to emphasize during my design, and its purpose can be figured out after the digital experience is figured out.



Search events...  

December 2023						
S	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
					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
31						

CHROMED
DJ SET
BY BEYONCE MARSHALL JONES
SHOWCASING ARTISTS YEA

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT
Dec 7th, 2023, 6:30pm - 9:30 pm
Motorco Music Hall

SENSORY FRIENDLY
FILM SERIES

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT
Dec 7th, 2023, 6:30pm - 9:30 pm
Motorco Music Hall

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT
Dec 7th, 2023, 6:30pm - 9:30 pm
Motorco Music Hall

Thanks for listening!

**DURHAM
VOICE** 