# GOVERNMENT REDESIGN CASE STUDY

Does the Department of Housing and Urban Development want anyone to be able to use their website?

By Meg Ryan Flanigan

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**Overview:** The challenge was to redesign a government website. Which, given the timeline, was a lofty goal. So as a team we decided to research what the main functionality of the Department of Housing and Urban Developments website would be for, and focus on that area. Once it was narrowed down to a specific task flow, we reworked the sitemap and the navigation to make it more approachable to the target users. Afterwards, each of redesigned the UI separately according to our own unique visions.

## Roles & Responsibilities:

Meg Ryan Flanigan (Me): UX/UI Designer
Kristin Bowser: User Researcher
Kanchan Nathan: User Researcher

## Scope and Constraints:

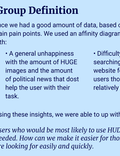
Timeframe was 2 weeks, restricted interview options.

## Tools Used:

Invision, Adobe XD, PSD, AI, Google Slides, Miro,

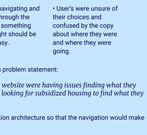
# GROUP RESEARCH

We began by working as a group and focusing on which parts of the website were going to redesign, as there was too much to do in just two weeks. After creating a proto-persona and conducting some user interviews, it was concluded that most user would be visiting the website to find government subsidized housing. This meant we needed to find the optimal task flow many would take to reach their goal, but the results were dismal, for lack of a better word.



Proto-persona: lower income user's who don't know much about housing or the options they have.

User Path of current website: very, very complicated and almost completely undoable a second time around. (based on 6 qualitative



User interview quotes:

*"I just, I mean I don't even know how I got here. I don't know if this is the right place?"*-Katherine

*"I really hate how all these pictures are just here, and in the way, for no reason."*
-Wendall

# Group Definition

Once we had a good amount of data, based on our time constraints, we set about identifying the main pain points. We used an affinity diagram to help us and came up with a good amount to work with:

- A general unhappiness with the amount of HUGE images and the amount of political news that dost help the user with their task.
- Difficulty navigating and searching through the website for something users thought should be relatively easy.
- User's were unsure of their choices and confused by the copy about where they were and where they were going.

Using these insights, we were able to up with a problem statement:

*Users who would be most likely to use HUD's website were having issues finding what they needed. How can we make it easier for those looking for subsidized housing to find what they are looking for easily and quickly.*

There was also a decision to redo the information architecture so that the navigation would make more sense to the users.

Affinity diagram showing the main pain points users encountered trying to find help with subsidized housing.

Card sorting: Since navigation was a huge issue, it was decided to do a full information architecture redesign as well. Card sorting was used to determine the best new option for a sitemap.

# Group Ideation

After deciding our new navigation and sitemap, we did some UI and heuristics analysis's to determine the current pain points of the site, with the goal of fixing them, and not repeating the same issues. From there, we separated and began designing our own style guides and navigation, which was iterated again,, and again... and again... until I decided upon an easily recognizable, well organized form of navigation.

New sitemap based on card sorting.

Variations of navigation UI

# INDIVIDUAL BRANDING

After the research ideation and Information architecture was decided upon, our group split for UI and Prototyping portion of the project, making changes to the previous work as needed.

Individual Style Guide

# PROTOTYPING

Continuing to work individually, we created wireframes of the primary and secondary navigation for web, which was what was required. As a bonus, I also did the mobile versions of each as well. Once those were tested and the issues were resolved, my personal style guide was applied to the wireframes.

Webpage Wire frames (in order): Homepage, About HUD, What We Do, Resources, Press Room

Mobile Wire frames (in order): Homepage, About HUD, What We Do, Resources, Press Room



Webpage Hi-Fi Prototype (in order): Homepage, About HUD, What We Do, Resources, Press Room



Mobile Hi-Fi Prototypes (in order): Homepage, About HUD, What We Do, Resources, Press Room

With the remaining time I was able to plan and conduct a few user tests of the redesign, allowing for a few key take aways:

User testing plan: The main notes had to do with resizing certain things, like making the search icon smaller, some images bigger, and adjusting some text in the footing.

# FINAL THOUGHTS

I believe the redesign helped to solve the problem presented to us, which was to make it easier for those most inclined to use this website to find what they needed quickly and easily.

But in general, based on user interviews, I think the Department of Housing and Urban Development could focus on informing the general public of what they do and who they help. Many user's didn't seem to understand what they were for when initially looking at the current website.

Personally, what I take from this project is an appreciation for information architecture and how it can make or break a website, especially one as complicated as a government organization. It's important to listen to how user's would think because it is very, VERY different than what someone with a background in computers or design would think.

Another thing I noticed in the process of this project was that I super enjoy doing style guides and branding. Setting the tone of a brand and choosing the colors and aesthetics to represent