



UP-GRADE 2024

MPA Collaborative Network

INTRODUCTION

Who is MPA Collaborative Network?

MPA Collaborative Network empowers diverse communities to engage in marine protected area (MPA) stewardship for a healthy ocean.

Together, the team helps oversee **14 MPA Collaboratives** pictured on the right:



INTRODUCTION

What They Do



Connect community members at the local and state level



Operate as MPA resource hub for anyone and everyone



Conduct field work, research, and more!

The Problem:

How might we redesign the MPA Collaborative Network website experience to reduce cognitive overload for its diverse users, thereby ensuring they **understand MPA CN's purpose** and **navigate its resources & services seamlessly?**

01

Research

UX RESEARCH

Surveys

Gathered initial impressions on site usability and user wants/frustrations

Received 27 total responses

- MPA Collaborative Network staff (8 out of 27)
- UCSD students
- Members of the general public

Used affinity diagrams to organize findings and identify trends/patterns

MPA COLLABORATIVE NETWORK

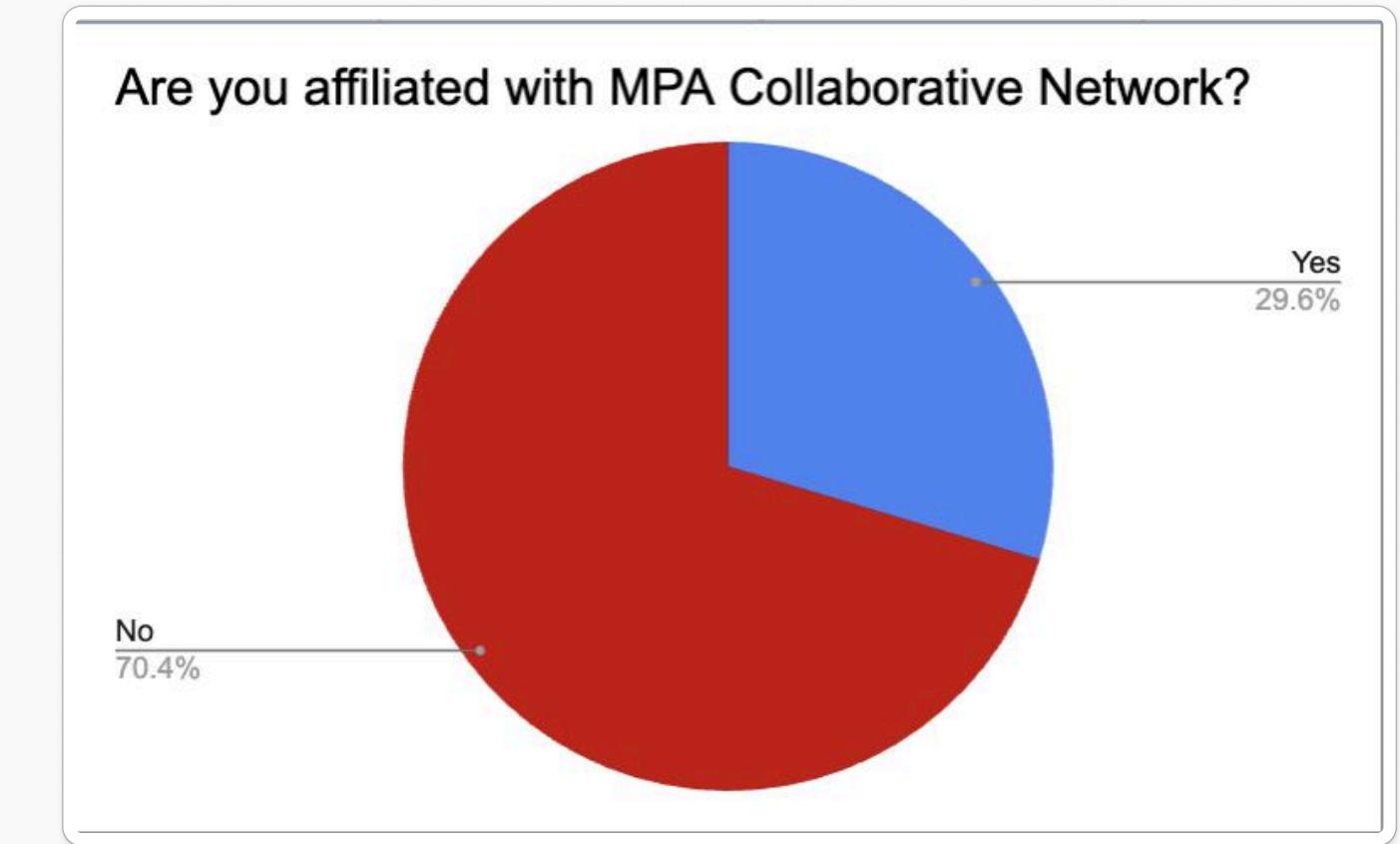
MPA Collaborative Network - Website Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey in order to help us make improvements on the MPA Collaborative Network website. We appreciate all your feedback to implement changes that will create the best possible experience for site users. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING A DESKTOP (eg. Computer or Laptop) TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY.

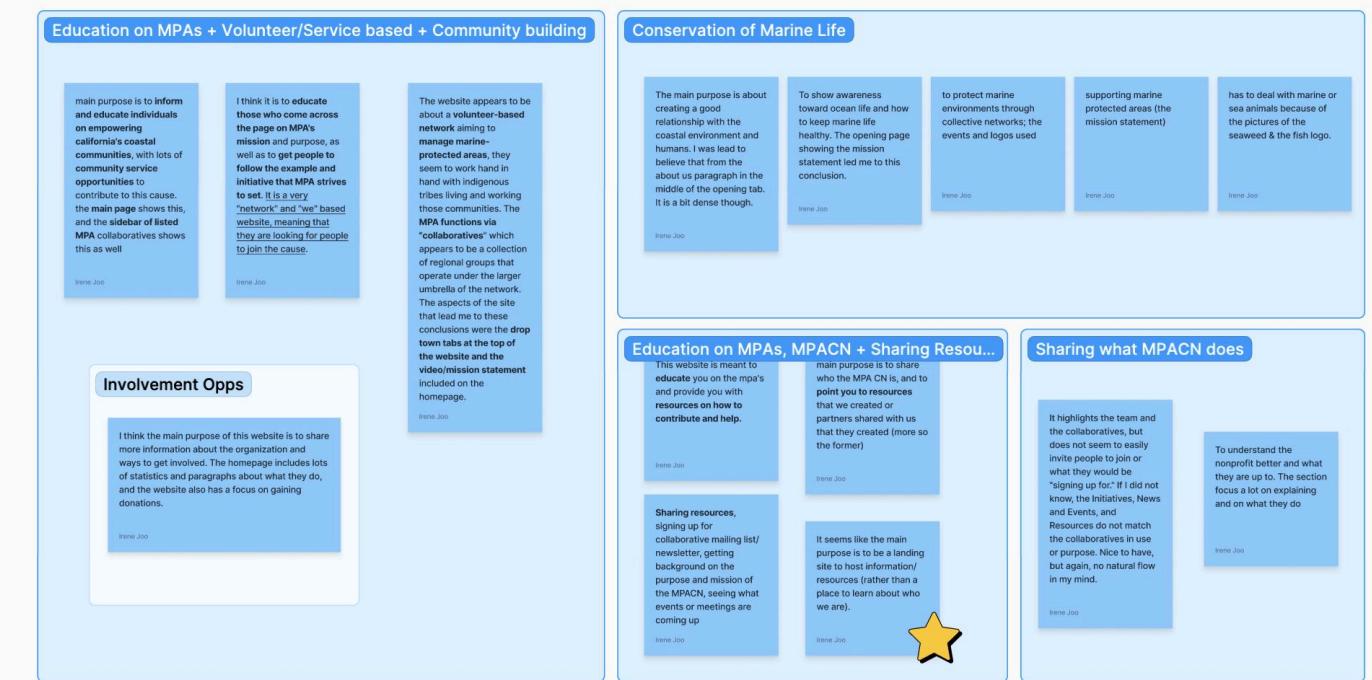
This survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.

Email *
Your answer
Name *
Your answer
Age *
Your answer

Survey preview



Example Background Question



Example Affinity Diagram for a specific question

Interviews

Interviewed 8 total participants, all of which 7 were MPA CN staff members

- Asked open-ended pre-task, task, and post-task questions

Here are our **main takeaways from our interviews:**

Unclear who MPACN is, what they do, how to get involved, and what makes them unique

Pages are **text-heavy** and **are hard to read** for key information/takeaways

Resources are scattered in multiple pages and poorly organized, difficult to find/navigate valuable info

Many pages require unnecessary scrolling to find relevant/important content, causing user fatigue

Site uses **lacks clear visual cohesiveness** and has **inconsistent design/branding** across pages

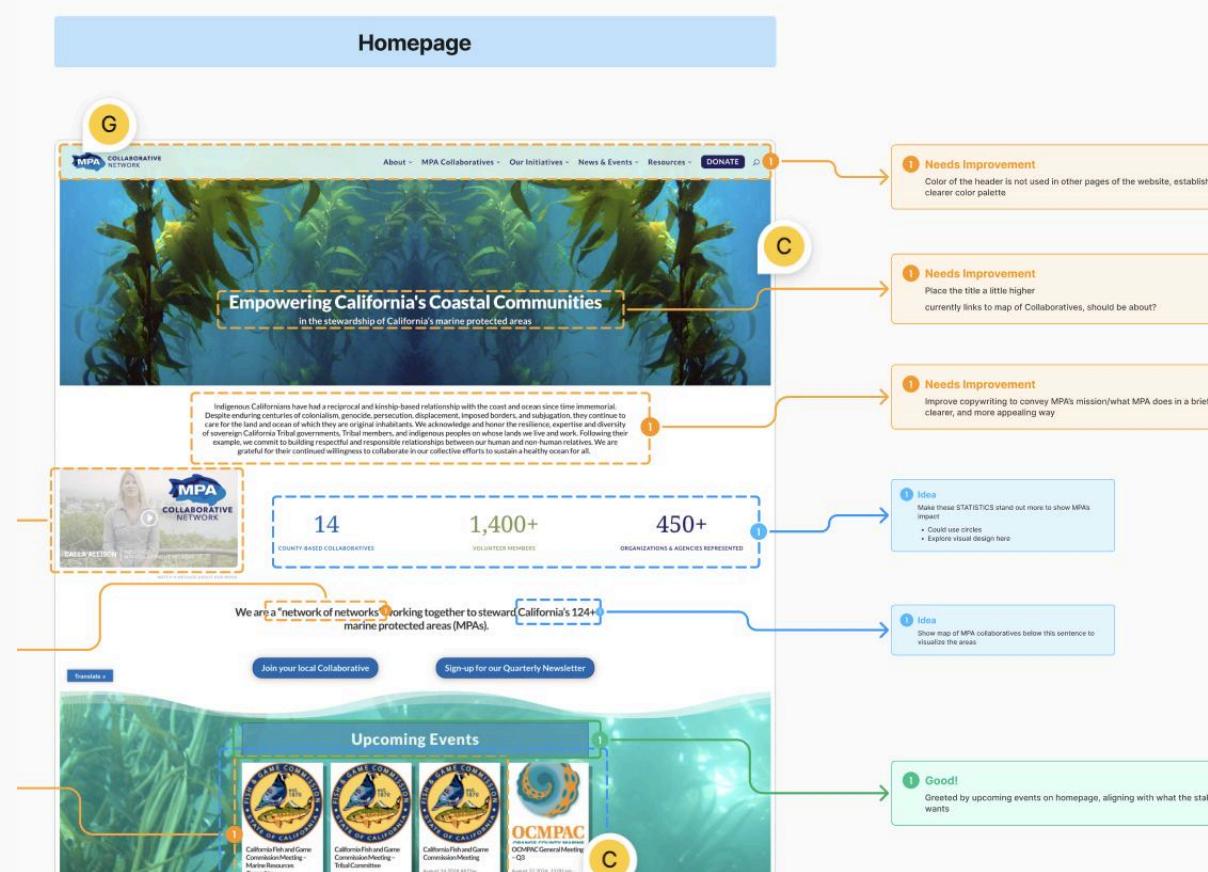
Some **buttons/links are not properly set up** or instead direct to the wrong page/site

UX RESEARCH

Analysis

Website Audit

- Familiarizing ourselves with the website and discovering areas of improvement



Competitive Analysis

- Build understanding by evaluating other similar organizations' websites

Section 1	Fader Foundation	Marine Conservation Institute	The Ocean Rescue Alliance	California MPAs	Heal the Bay
Mission	Dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves, and beaches, for all people, through a powerful activist network.	Marine Conservation Institute is dedicated to securing permanent protection for the ocean's most important places – for us and for future generations.	The Ocean Rescue Alliance International is a marine conservation and restoration nonprofit organization that implements innovative structures to enhance marine environments, build marine habitat, connect communities, protect coastlines, and connect communities through art.	The mission of California's Marine Protected Areas Education and Outreach Program is to enhance MPAs education through training, research, and communication to increase public awareness, appreciation, and love.	Heal the Bay staff work to mobilize LA's diverse communities to protect our coastline, restore our waterways, and speak up for clean air and water.
Target Market					
Key Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Learn Get Involved Volunteer, donate, take action Advocacy Shop Donate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home About Us What We Do How to Take Action Our Work Donate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home About Mission etc. Our Projects Education and Engagement etc. Our Products Stewardship Modules Media Coverage Get Involved Join a Committee Become A Partner Events Shop etc... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Our Guide This site was created to serve as an online library for marine protected area materials. About CA MPA Science & Management MPA Stories Governance Toolkit Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Our Work Our Impact Get Involved Our Research Our Science Our Sea Total Food Volunteer With Us Our Learning Our Impact Our Work Who We Are Our Sea Visit Science Camp Events Shop Our Work
Screenshots					
Strengths					
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear UI Clearly conveys their mission Engaging footer with links, campaigns, programs, ways to get involved, etc. in an organized way Good use of statistics to showcase impact "Shop" tab navigates to a new page, making it a bit hard and confusing to go back to the original site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear problem statement on homepage < 3% of the ocean is effectively protected! Appropriate length of pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear mission statement, wording is concise Highlight on the creation/arts Organized header, users can find specific and appropriate resources in the drop down menu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive hub of resources The mission statement on homepage is very clear to get involved Clear problem statement on homepage Organized header, users can find specific and appropriate resources in the drop down menu The mission statement on homepage is very clear to get involved Clear problem statement on homepage Organized header, users can find specific and appropriate resources in the drop down menu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear mission statement Very clear ways to get involved Clear problem statement on homepage Organized header, users can find specific and appropriate resources in the drop down menu The mission statement on homepage is very clear to get involved Clear problem statement on homepage Organized header, users can find specific and appropriate resources in the drop down menu

SWOT Analysis

- Brainstorming potential opportunities that tackled trends we saw in our research

Marine Conservation Institute Marine Conservation Institute			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities (for MPA)	Threats (for MPA)
Clear problem statement on homepage: "less than 3% of the ocean is effectively protected"	Hard to read text because of background picture on several "Take Action" pages	Clear problem statement engages users from the start	Balance website's design functionality AND visual appeal
Simple and clear categorization of the footer	Visual design and typography lacking appeal and engagement — feels like a newsletter	Page length optimization to improve readability and user experience	Carefully consider background image overlay's impact on text readability
Appropriate length of pages		Clear CTA section	

Who are our Users?

We had to consider several potential users and there are still many more we *did not* include.
These are the 5 main user personas we created:



Sarah M.

South Coast Specialist



Megan L.

Monterey Collaborative
Co-Chair



Laurie C.

MPA Program Manager @
Ocean Protection Council



Greg B.

Middle School Biology
Teacher



Steven R.

Del Norte Fisherman

UX RESEARCH

What our participants had to say

Moving forward to our design process, we kept these user insights in mind:

1

Information Overload

“There is a lot of information packed onto the homepage, which I find overwhelming. **Visually it's just overstimulating.**”

- UCSD Alumni

2

Unclear who MPA CN is

“I like the colorful, visual aspects, but **it could be clearer on what the CN is...it is more important to get the point across about who we are first.**”

- MPA CN Staffer

3

Difficulty navigating the Resource Library

“The Resource Library has untapped potential, there are so many great resources **it can be overwhelming and challenging to navigate and find exactly what you are looking for.** I also tend to forget this is here and available!”

- MPA CN Staffer

02

Design

VISUAL BRANDING

Our Initial Impressions: Visual Issues

Seeing how MPA CN's initial branding translated onto the site, we identified some key visual issues and how we could approach them:

1

Lack of readability → New Typography Guidelines

Their style guide aimed for ADA accessibility and clear legibility, but users faced readability issues on content-rich pages due to inconsistent font sizes, decorative fonts, insufficient spacing, poor text contrast, and misaligned lines.

2

Color disorganization → New Color Palette

The website suffered from inconsistent shades of blue, leading to contrast issues and a visually overwhelming experience. A dominant green background for the UI distracted from the content, and a lack of accent colors further reduced clarity and effectiveness.

3

Confusion with navigation → New UI Elements/Components

The navigation bar and footer lacked content representation, and pages needed better content hierarchy, making key information overlooked. Incorporating accent colors or hover features in components would help highlight important elements, providing clearer visual cues for user interaction.

Style Guide

What We Were Given

- A strong marine theme.
- The actual site used teal/turquoise for most of the UI, with blues for minor elements
- The website's typography deviated from branding, using various sizes, padding, and fonts.
- The absence of an accent color weakened the overall color palette.
- Branding missed other elements like social media icons, navigational icons, and main graphics.

The collage includes:

- A large image of a scuba diver working underwater.
- Two versions of the MPA Collaborative Network logo: one with a blue fish shape and one with a white fish shape.
- Alternative logos for the MPA Collaborative Network.
- A Brand Color Palette with four circles: dark navy (#262262), medium blue (#184DAO), light blue (#0882C6), and white (#FFFFFF).
- A Fonts Guide section showing examples of Arial Bold and Arial Regular.
- A Large Heading example with a sub-heading.
- A collage of environmental images: a close-up of kelp, people fishing on a beach, and an underwater scene with coral and sea fans.

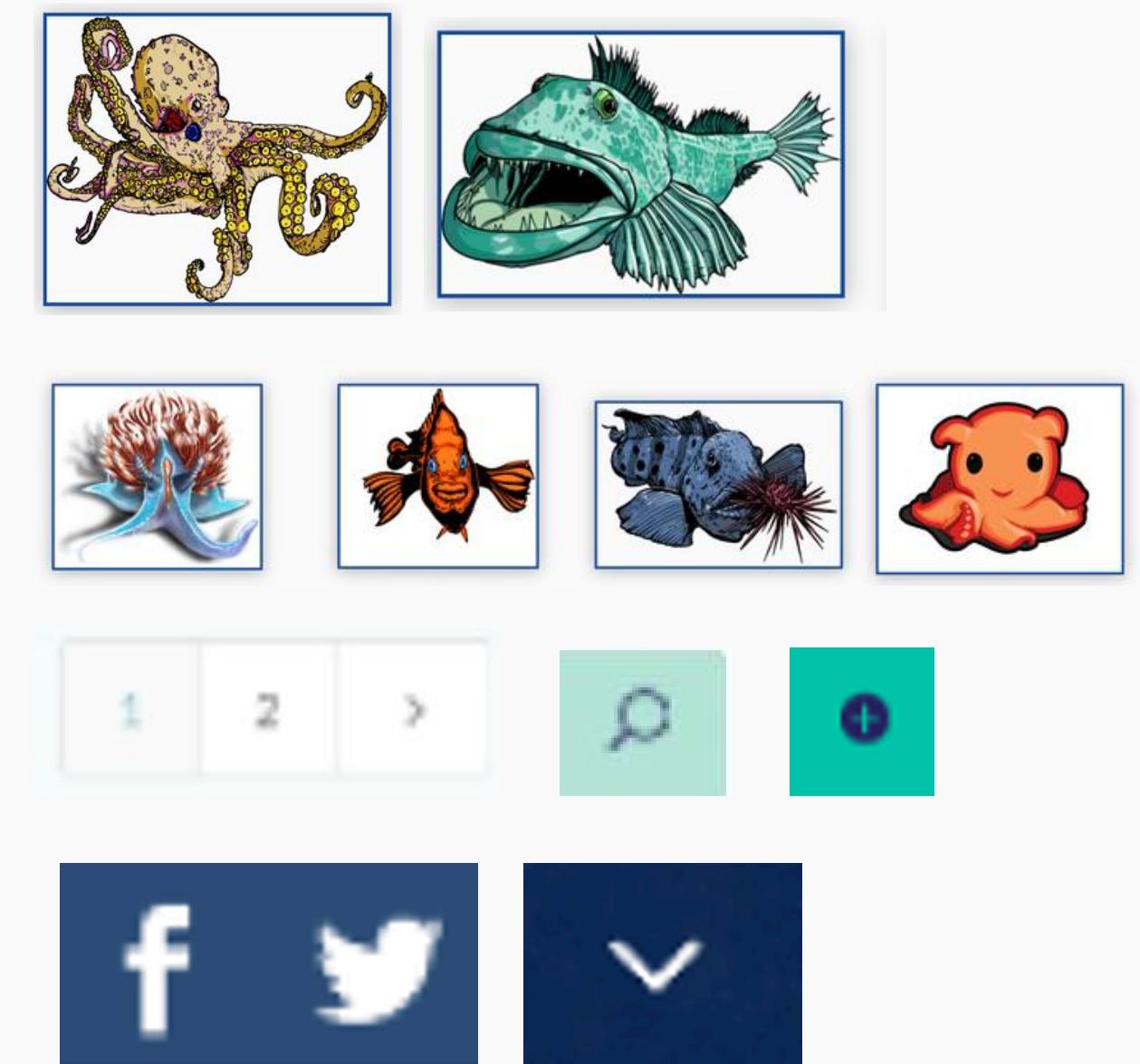
Other Graphics/Icons

This screenshot shows a page titled "San Diego County MPA Collaborative Leadership Team". It contains a list of members and a "Fiscal Sponsor" section.

San Diego County MPA Collaborative Members

- San Diego County MPA, Collaborative Leadership Team
- San Diego Lagoon Foundation
- San Diego Natural History Museum
- San Diego National Marine Park Service - Cabrillo National Monument
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Sea Grant
- California State Parks
- Office of State Assembly Member Tori Holden
- Carlsbad Main Street
- City of Encinitas
- City of La Jolla
- City of San Diego Parks and Recreation
- City of San Diego Parks & Recreation
- City of San Diego Mayor's Office
- City of San Diego Parks & Recreation
- City of Solana Beach
- City of Vista Parks and Recreation
- Coastal Conservation Association - California
- Citizen CTDs - City
- Office of Cancer Survivorship Group Care
- Sea Life Aquarium
- Santa Cruz Sea Lions
- Southern California Vessel Cleanups Association
- Surfrider Foundation - San Diego Chapter
- Swiss Bank of the Americas Horizon
- The Blue Tribe
- Tuna Harbor Coastal Research Institute
- University of California San Diego
- Coastal Data Information Program - UCSD
- UC San Diego National Marine Science Center
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Water Wars Alliance
- NEDCOSAT

Fiscal Sponsor



Style Guide

Initial Iterations

1

01 Typography

Primary Typeface

Poppins Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Poppins is the main typeface used. All header and body text should be in this font. It has somewhat rounded edges that complement the lightbulb logo, but still maintains a degree of professionalism while avoiding a cliche appearance.

To establish hierarchy amongst statements, font sizes will vary. For legibility, set letter spacing to 2% and line height to 150%.

See Applications section for examples of usage

Display Typeface

Alternate Gothic No3 D Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Alternate Gothic No3 D is only used for display text.

See Applications section for examples of usage

2

02 Iconography

Color Palette

Previous



Buttons/popup Buttons/popup Primary Text

Primary Text Secondary

Aa Aa

Primary Buttons

Click here!

Click here!

Updated



Secondary Text

Aa Aa

Primary Text

Aa Aa

Secondary Buttons

Click here! #03396C

Click here! #83C0D0

Primary Buttons

Click here! #011F4B

Click here! #6497B1

Iconography

icons, buttons, popups

Style Guide

TYPOGRAPHY

Display
weight: semibold
font-family: Raleway
font-size: 70
line-height: 150%

USE FOR: Text on Hero Images

h1
weight: bold
font-family: Raleway
font-size: 55
line-height: 150%
USE FOR: Main headings on pages

h2
weight: medium
font-family: Lato
font-size: 40
line-height: 150%
USE FOR: subheadings

h3
weight: medium
font-family: Lato
font-size: 40
line-height: 150%
USE FOR: names on introductions, article titles, anything text preceding body text

H3
SemiBold

body
weight: regular
font-family: Lato
font-size: 16
line-height: 150%
USE FOR: body text, will be used for the majority of the text, articles ...

button
weight: semiBold
font-family: Raleway
font-size: 22
line-height: 150%
USE FOR: most buttons

Body
Regular

Button

Style Guide

COLORS

Primary

Eg. background of website, icons



Secondary

Eg. "about" sections, small buttons



Accent

Eg. footer, hover, icons



Text

Eg. headings, buttons, socials, descriptions



Gradient

Eg. image overlay



Final Style Guide

Style Guide

TYPOGRAPHY

Display

SemiBold

H1
Medium

H2
Medium

H3
SemiBold

body
Regular

Button

Icons

Style Guide

LOGOS

Style Guide

IMAGE EFFECTS

Overlay (Banners)

Overlay on Hero Images

1440 x 600
80% Opacity

Style Guide

COLORS

Primary
Eg. background of website, icons

Secondary
Eg. buttons, "about" sections

Accent
Eg. footer, hover, icons

Text
Eg. headings, buttons, socials, descriptions

Gradient
Eg. image overlay



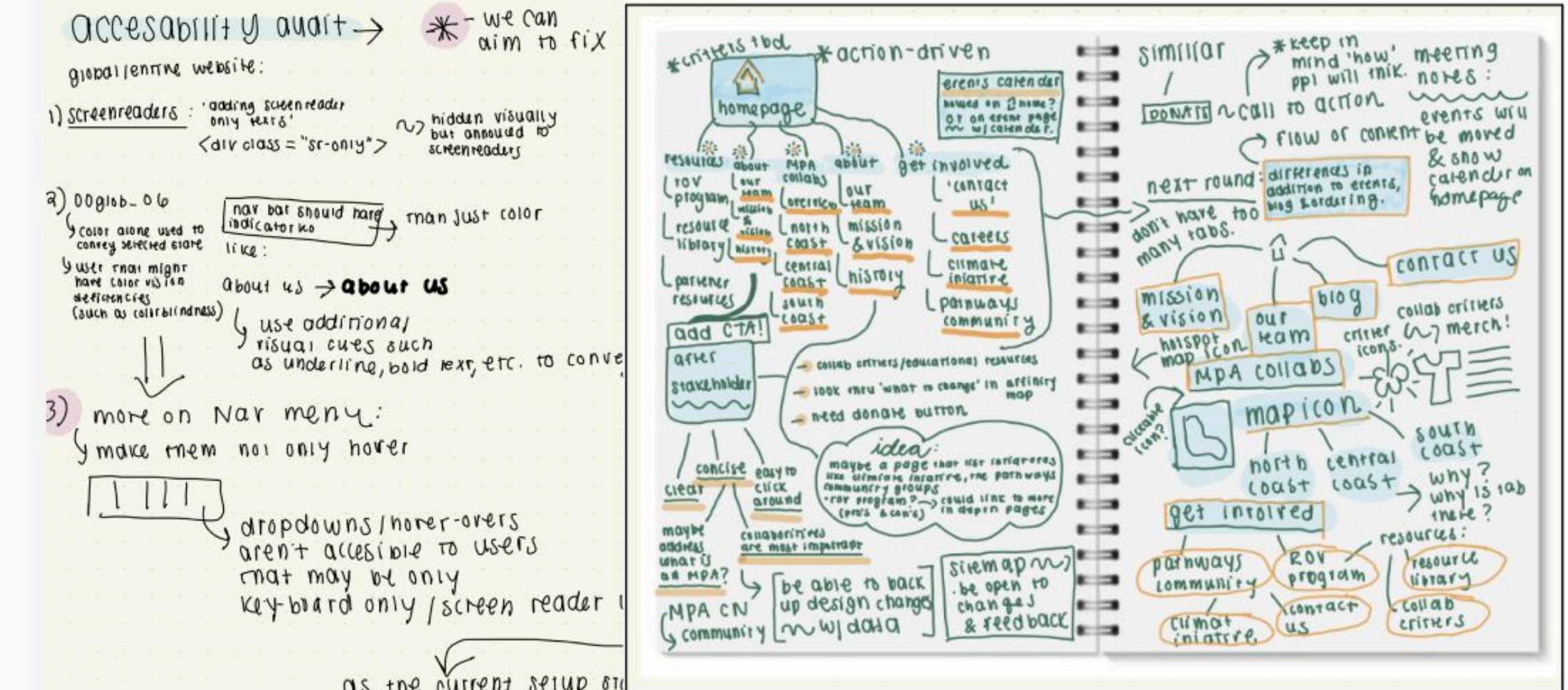
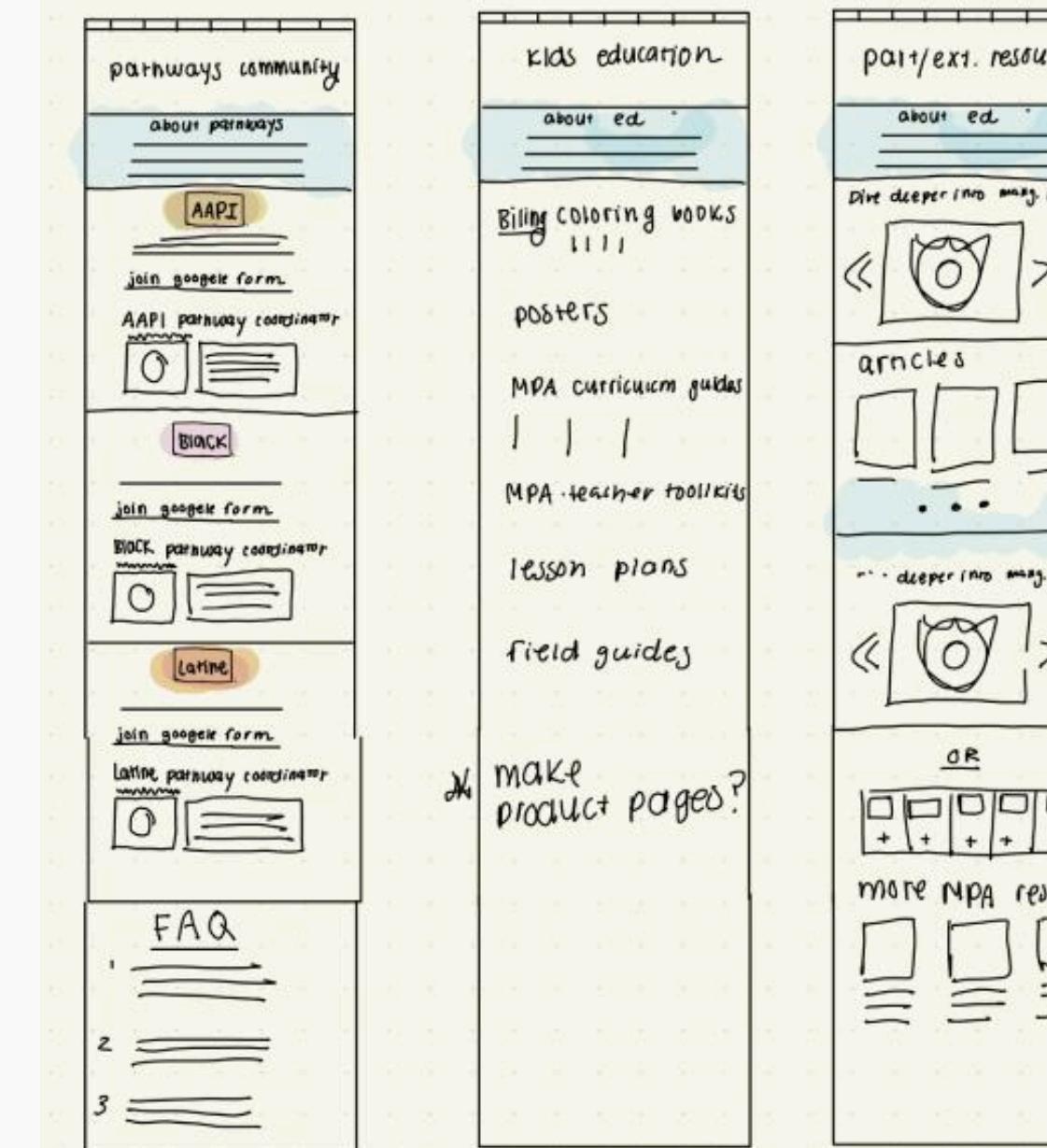
PROCESS

Design thinking off-screen

Before jumping into Figma, we took time to think off-screen to ensure our final designs were thoughtful.

Accessibility audit → * - We can aim to fix global entree website:

- 1) Screenreaders: "adding screenreader only texts" <div class="sr-only"> ~ hidden visually but announced to screenreaders
- 2) D0glob-10 ↴ nav bar should have indicator to convey selected state ↴ than just color like: ↴ user may have color vision differences (such as colorblindness) ↴ about us → **about us** ↴ use additional visual cues such as underline, bold text, etc. to convey ↴ more on Nav menu: ↴ make them not only hover ↴ dropdowns/hover-overs aren't accessible to users that may be only keyboard only / screen reader ↴ as the current setup only keyboard-only users & can't use the nav bar ↴ dropdowns are only revealed when a user hovers over them w/ a mouse.
- 3) ↴



* global [medium & falling criteria]

- ↳ "missing skip link" ↳ right now, there is no way for keyboard-only users to bypass blocks of content (repeated on multiple pages) ⇒ solution: "skip to main content" ↳ this line can always rise/float or positioned off screen for keyboard users
- ↳ high-falling: ex: footer ↳ textual description isn't provided for facebook/twitter & flag image links ↳ result: screenreaders will not understand lines
- ↳ SOLUTION: unique/descriptive text for image links using "aria-label" attribute
- ↳ high → insufficient color contrast for standard text (D0glob-10) ↳ #FFFFFF background ↳ all pages: each foreground/background color should be atleast 4.5:1 for standard text ↳ SOLUTION: find options for background colors
- ↳ FOCUS: white website ↳ no visible indication of which menu item, button or link is currently selected/focused. ⇒ needs to be a visual cue, like c-border, outline, color change
- ↳ SOLUTION: HTML & CSS code ⇒ IMPACT: lack of focus indicator makes it difficult for PPI using a keyboard

Accessibility Overview

Working with acessiBe Audit

Understanding global issues and adopting a phased approach were essential, as full accessibility exceeded the program's scope.

1

Priorities

Low: Minor issues that, while not urgent, still improve accessibility

Medium: Issues with a significant impact on accessibility

High: Critical barriers that require immediate attention to ensure usability

2

The issues

The audit identified 109 accessibility issues across the MPA CN website, covering both site-wide and page-specific concerns.

3

Our Focus

We chose to focus on a few high-priority issues:

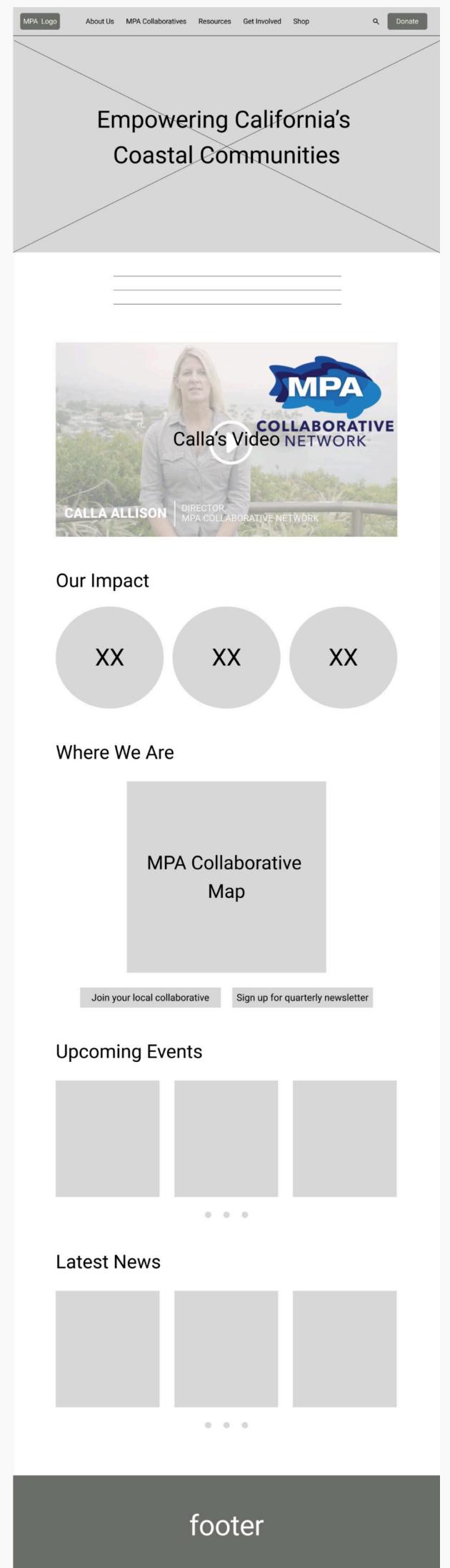
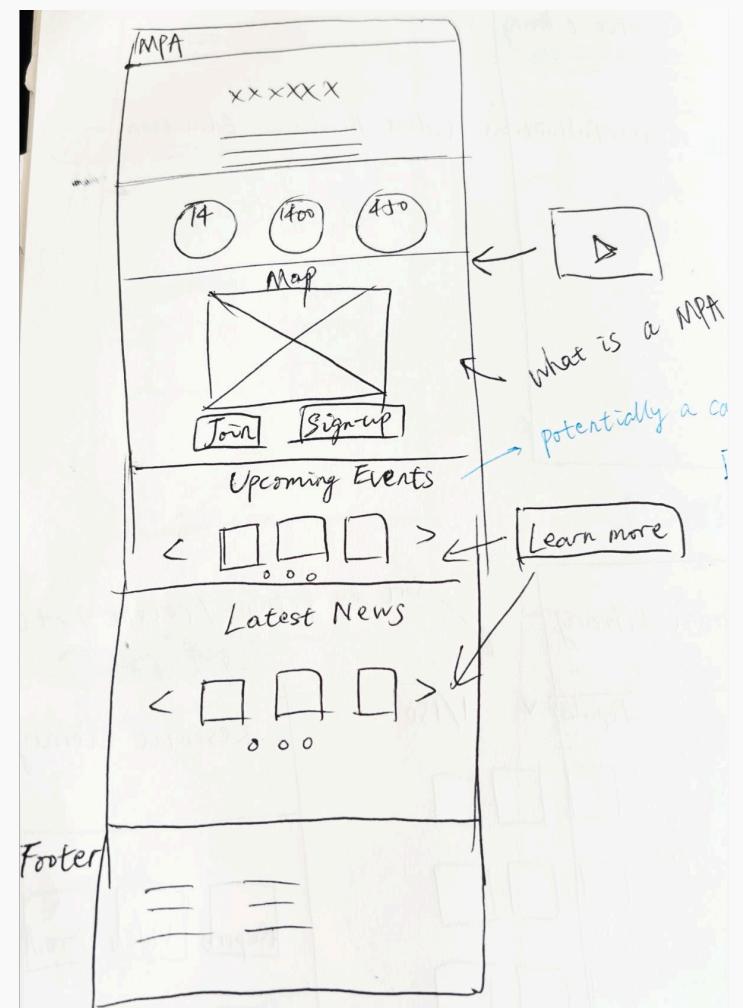
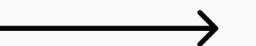
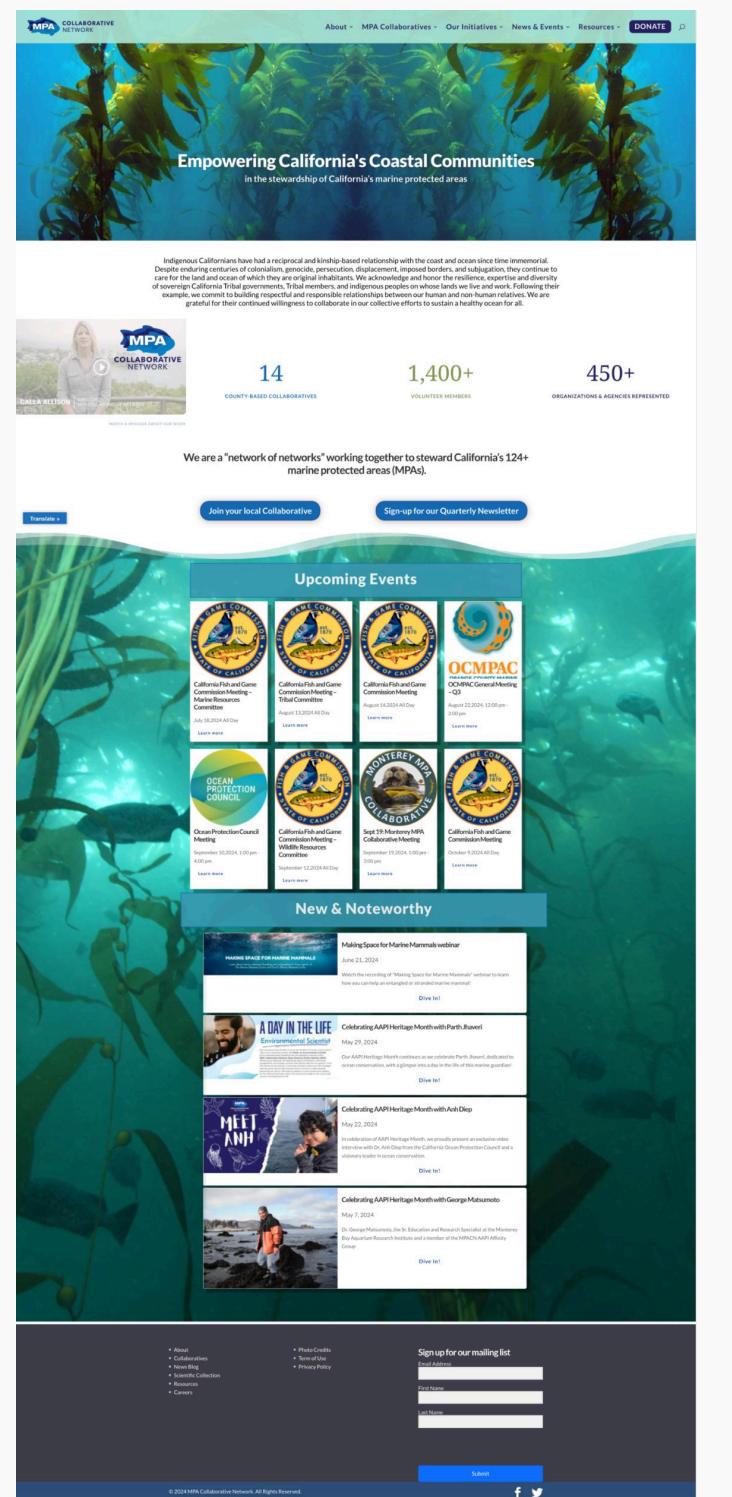
- Global Background Color,
- Navigation Bar
- Color Contrast.

LOW FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Wireframes to Address Existing Problems

1

Rearranging Homepage
to **convey mission**
statement more clearly
and effectively

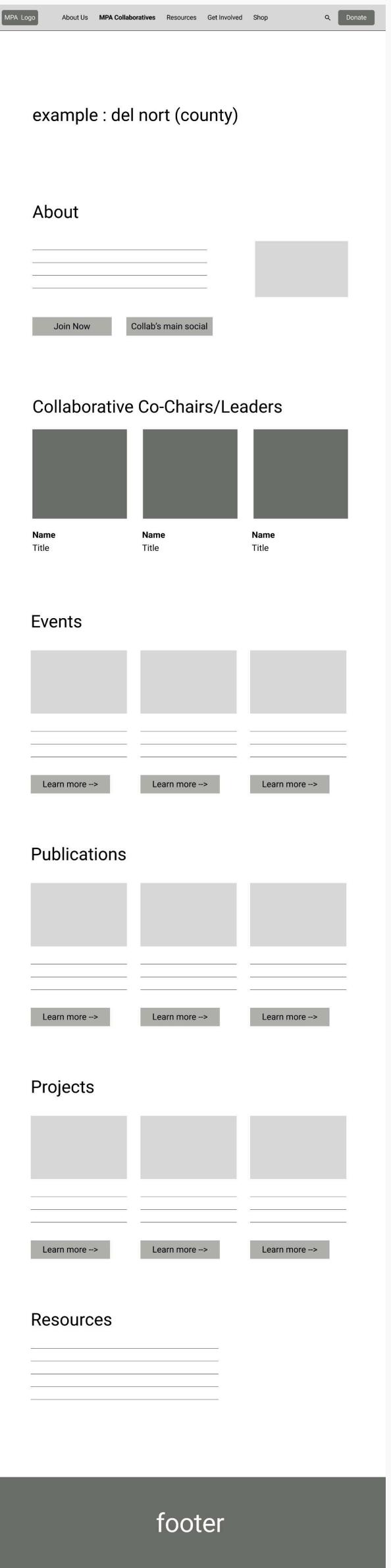
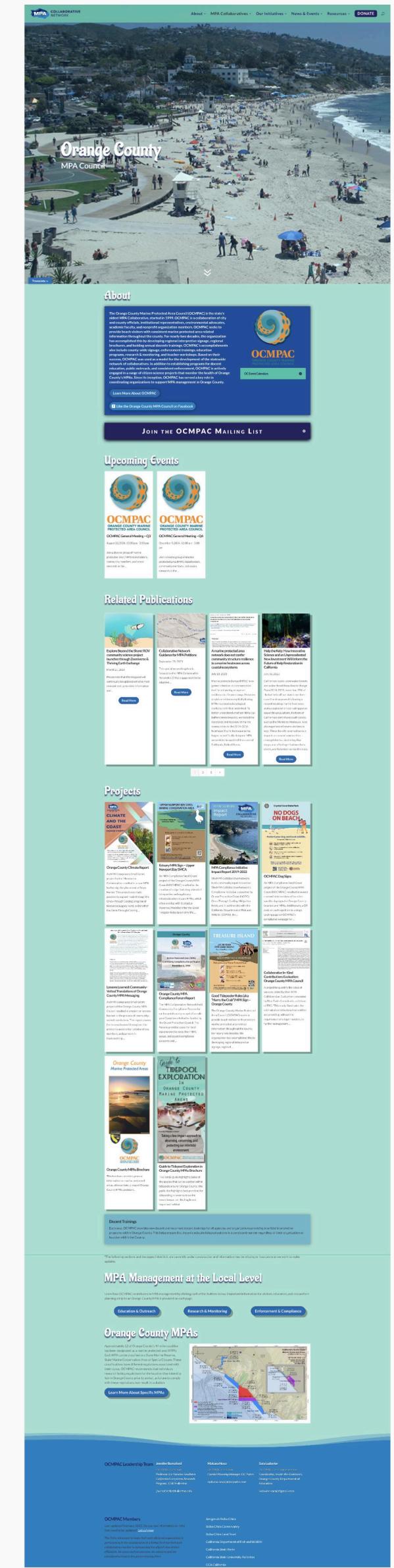
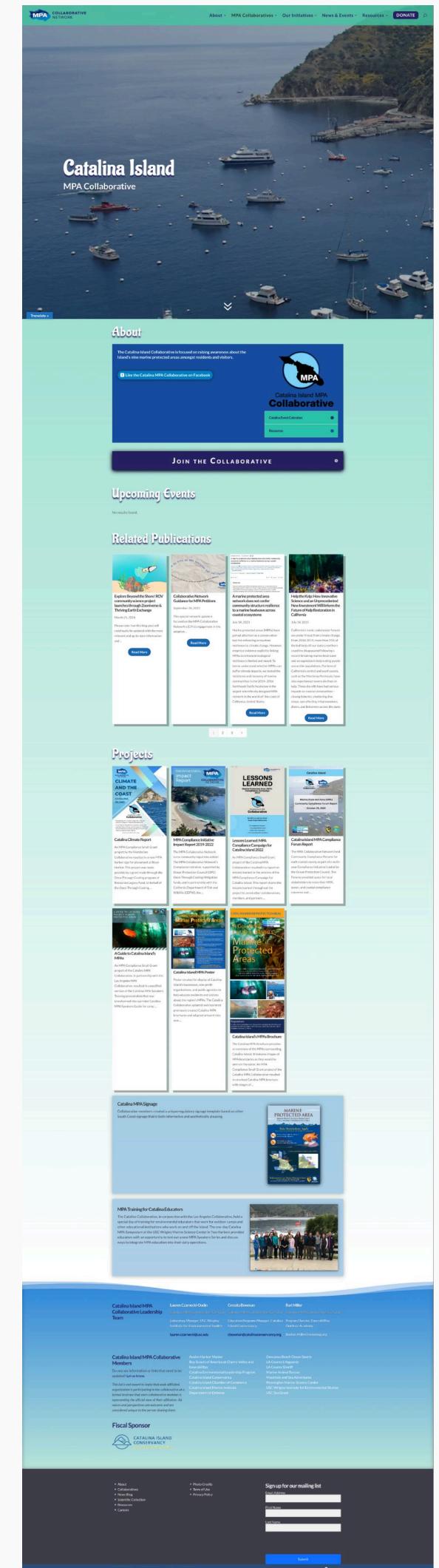


LOW FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Wireframes to Address Existing Problems

2

Reducing scrolling and increasing visual cohesiveness across 14 MPA Collaboratives

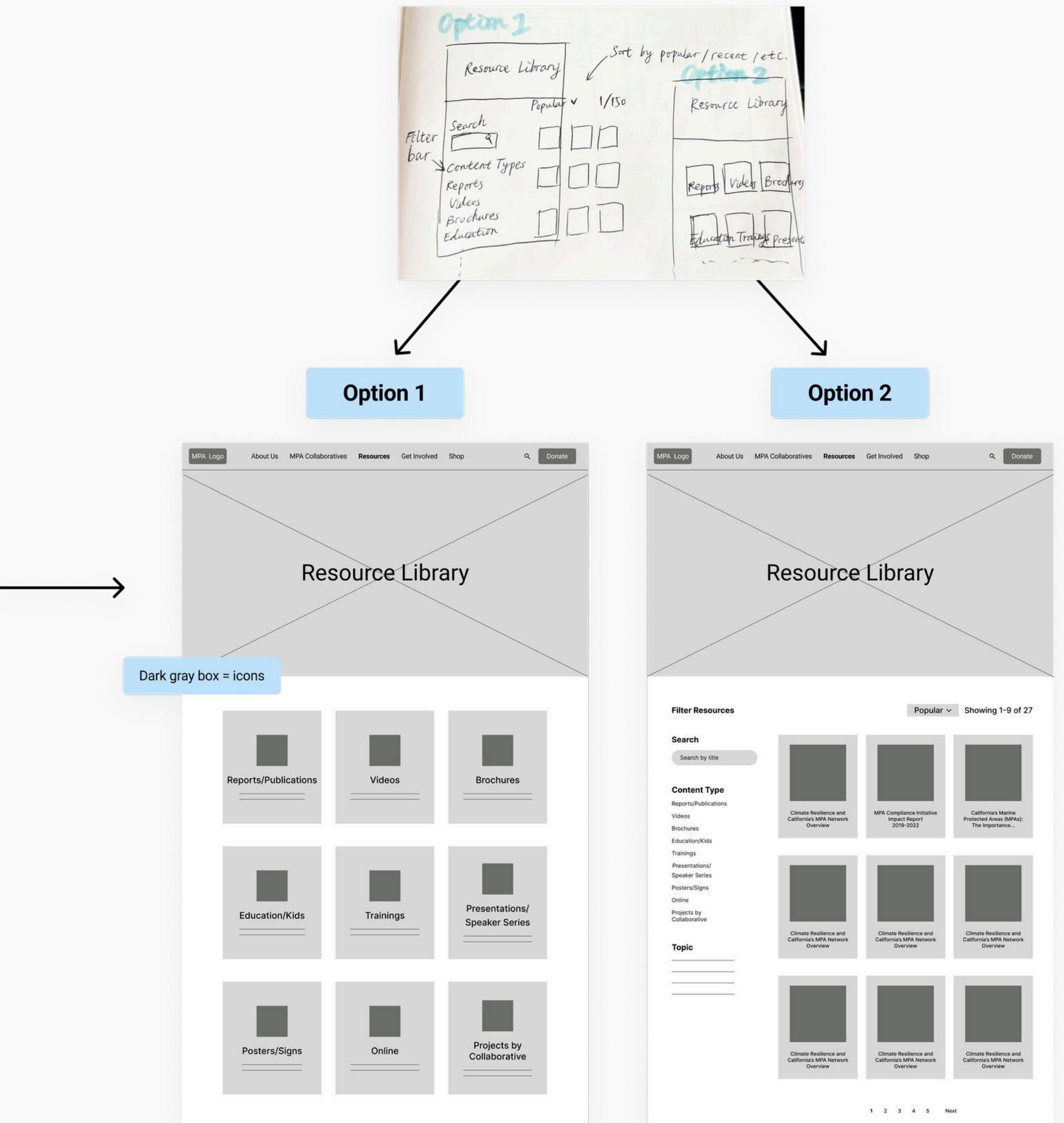
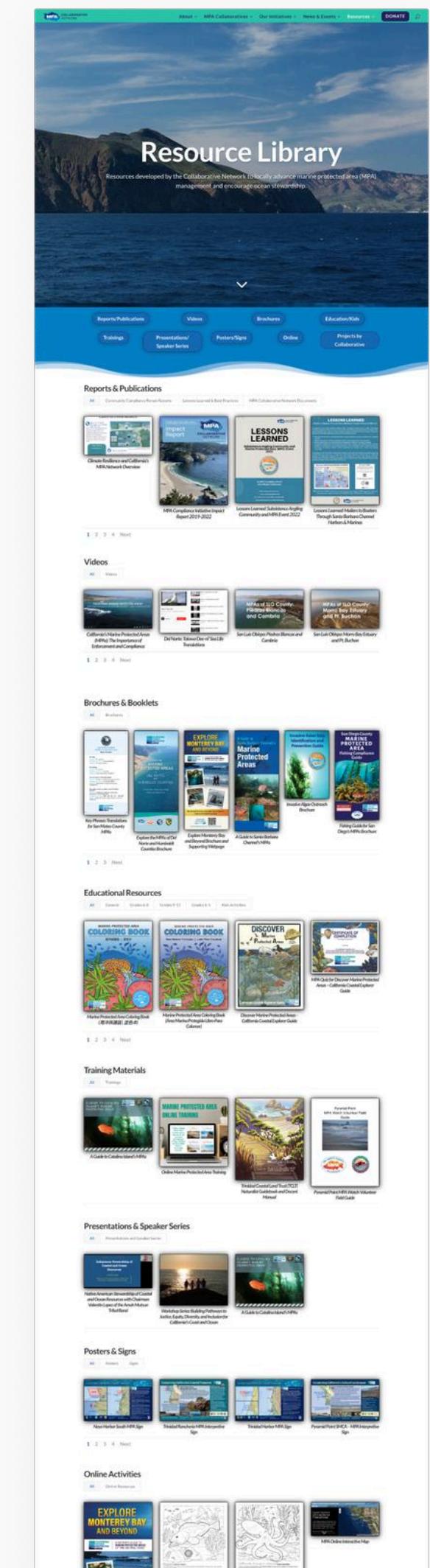


LOW FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Wireframes to Address Existing Problems

3

Adding search and filter options to enhance navigation on Resources Library page



MID-FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Design Strategies

1

Improving storytelling
on homepage after
mentor's feedback

The image shows two versions of a website homepage side-by-side, connected by a horizontal arrow pointing from left to right. Both versions feature a dark blue header with the MPA logo and navigation links: About Us, About MPAs, MPA Collaboratives, Resources, Our Initiatives, and a search bar. The main banner at the top of both pages reads "Empowering California's Coastal Communities" and "in the stewardship of California's marine protected areas".

Left Version (Initial Design):

- Who We Are:** A section describing the organization as a non-profit dedicated to engaging experts and diverse communities in marine protected area stewardship. It includes a link "What is a MPA →".
- What We Stand For:** A section listing five core values with corresponding icons: Local Voices, Diversity, Healthy Ocean, Stewardship, and Inclusion. Below this is a "Learn more →" button.
- Our Impact:** A section showing statistics: 14 County-Based Collaboratives, 1,400+ Volunteer Members, and 450+ Organizations & Agencies Represented. Below these stats is a map titled "Where We Are Along the Coast" showing the locations of various county-based collaboratives across California. It includes a "Join your local collaborative" button and a "Sign up for our newsletter" button.
- Events:** A section showing three circular event thumbnails for the State & Game Commission, Humboldt County, and Del Norte County.

Right Version (Improved Design):

- Who We Are:** A section describing the organization as a non-profit dedicated to engaging experts and diverse communities in marine protected area stewardship for a healthy ocean. It includes a link "Discover MPAs →".
- What We Stand For:** A section listing five core values with corresponding icons: Local Voices, Healthy Ocean, and Inclusion. Below this is a "Learn more →" button.
- Explore Our Network Along the Coast:** A section featuring a map of California with colored regions representing different coastal areas. Overlaid on the map are circular icons representing various local collaboratives. Below the map is a "Join your local collaborative" button.
- Our Impact:** A section showing statistics: 14 County-Based Collaboratives, 1,400+ Volunteer Members, and 450+ Organizations & Agencies Represented. Below these stats is a video player showing a message from Calla Allison, Director of the MPA Collaborative Network. A caption below the video reads: "By uniting tribes, agencies, enforcement officers, environmental networks, fishermen, and scientists, we are transforming the management of marine protected areas. Through this partnership, we harness not only natural resources but also the unique knowledge and expertise each group brings. Together, we aim to preserving the ocean's health for future generations." There is also a "Watch a message about our work!" button.

MID-FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Design Strategies

2

Utilizing components to streamline 14 MPA collaboratives pages

The image displays a mid-fidelity wireframing interface and a design review tool. The wireframing section shows four main components: 'About', 'Events', 'Projects', and a detailed 'Other Ways to Engage' section. The 'About' component includes a 'Join Now' button and a 'Our Facebook' link. The 'Events' and 'Projects' components show a grid of items with 'Title', 'Date, Time', and 'Learn more' links. The 'Other Ways to Engage' section contains 'Calendars', 'Resources', and 'Involvement Opp' sections. The design review tool on the right shows a 'Golden Gate MPA Collaborative Members' page with a logo, member list, and fiscal sponsor information. A yellow box highlights the 'About' section, which includes a mission statement, member logos, and social media links. A color palette and contrast checker are also visible.

MID-FIDELITY WIREFRAMING

Design Strategies

3

Simplifying text-heavy sections on About Us page



The wireframe shows a landing page with a header 'about us' and a navigation bar with links for 'About Us', 'MPA Collaboratives', 'About MPAs', 'Resources', 'Our Initiatives', a search icon, and a 'Donate' button. The main content area features a large image of a person walking on a beach under a cloudy sky. Overlaid on this image is the text 'About Us'. Below this, there are two columns: 'Our Purpose' and 'Mission & Vision'. Each column contains a heading, a descriptive paragraph, and a smaller image related to the section. A large black arrow points from the text 'Simplifying text-heavy sections on About Us page' to the wireframe.

Our Purpose
The purpose of the MPA Collaborative Network is to ensure and support a cooperative and just structure that encourages participation in decision-making processes, grounded in the values of respect for differences and the interconnection between humans and nature.

Mission & Vision
The mission of the MPA Collaborative Network is to empower diverse communities to engage in marine protected area stewardship for a healthy ocean. The vision of the MPA Collaborative Network is to ensure the health and sustainability of our natural and social environments through civic engagement in local marine management and stewardship.

New UI Elements

Navigation Bar

We streamlined the user experience by reducing and reorganizing the tabs into more intuitive categories, making it easier for users to find important sections quickly. The navigation bar colors were also darkened to enhance contrast and align with the site's overall design.

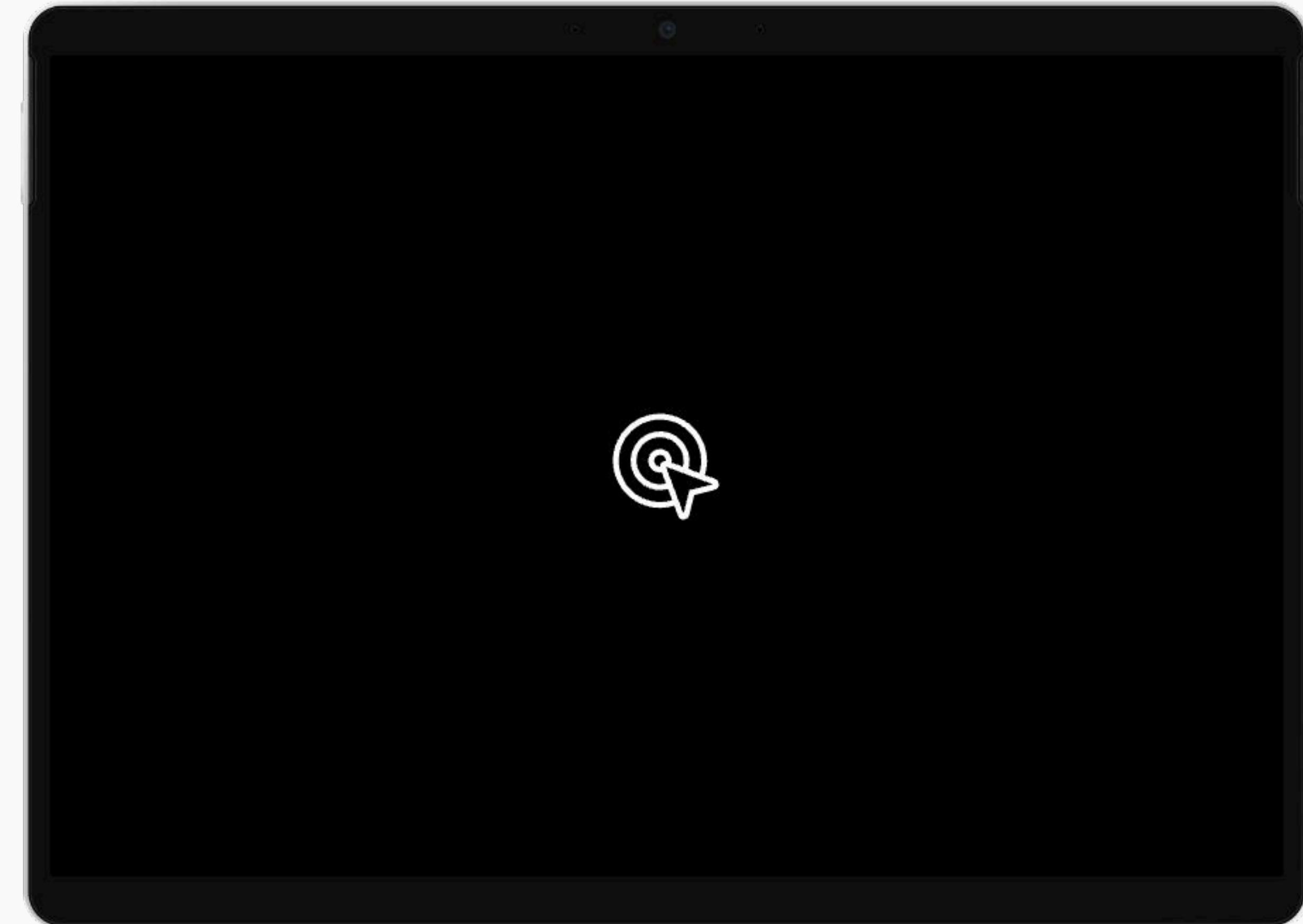
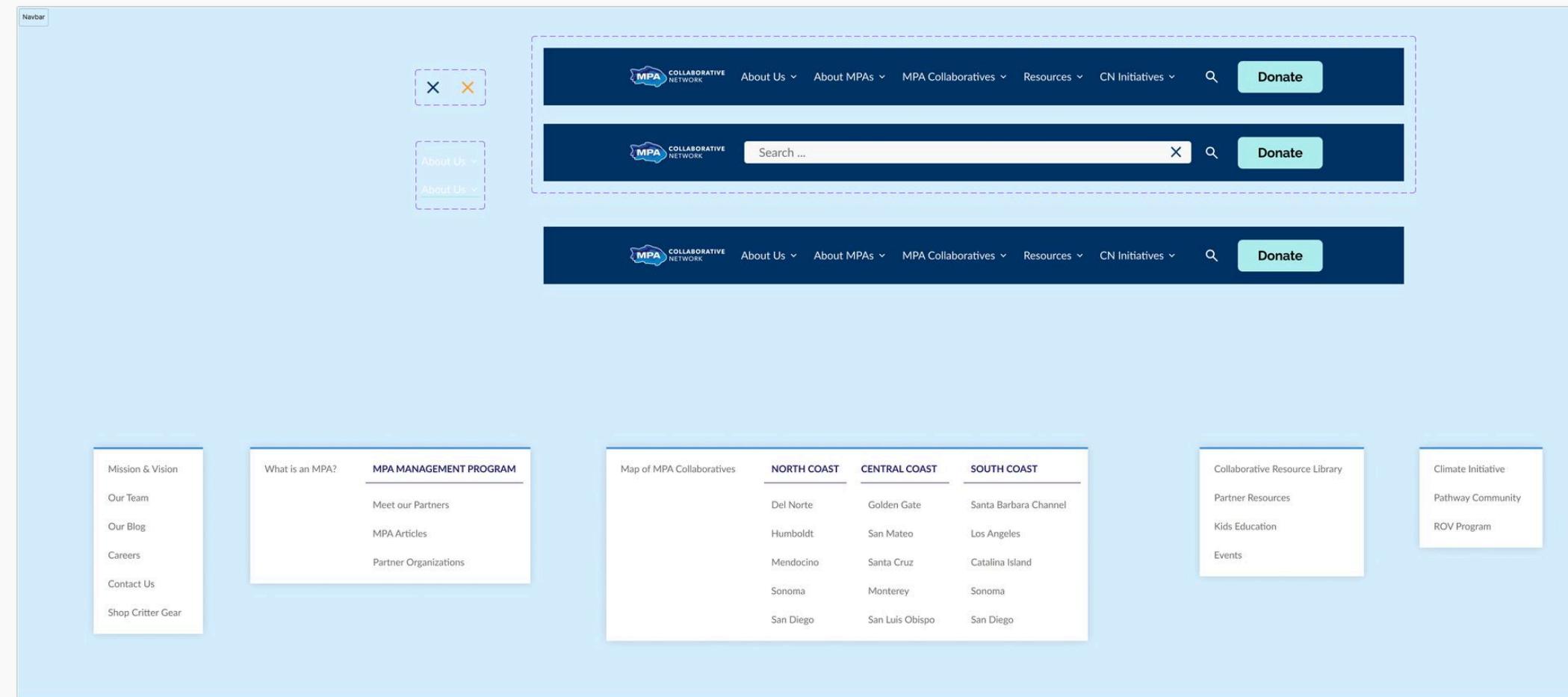
Old Bar



New Bar



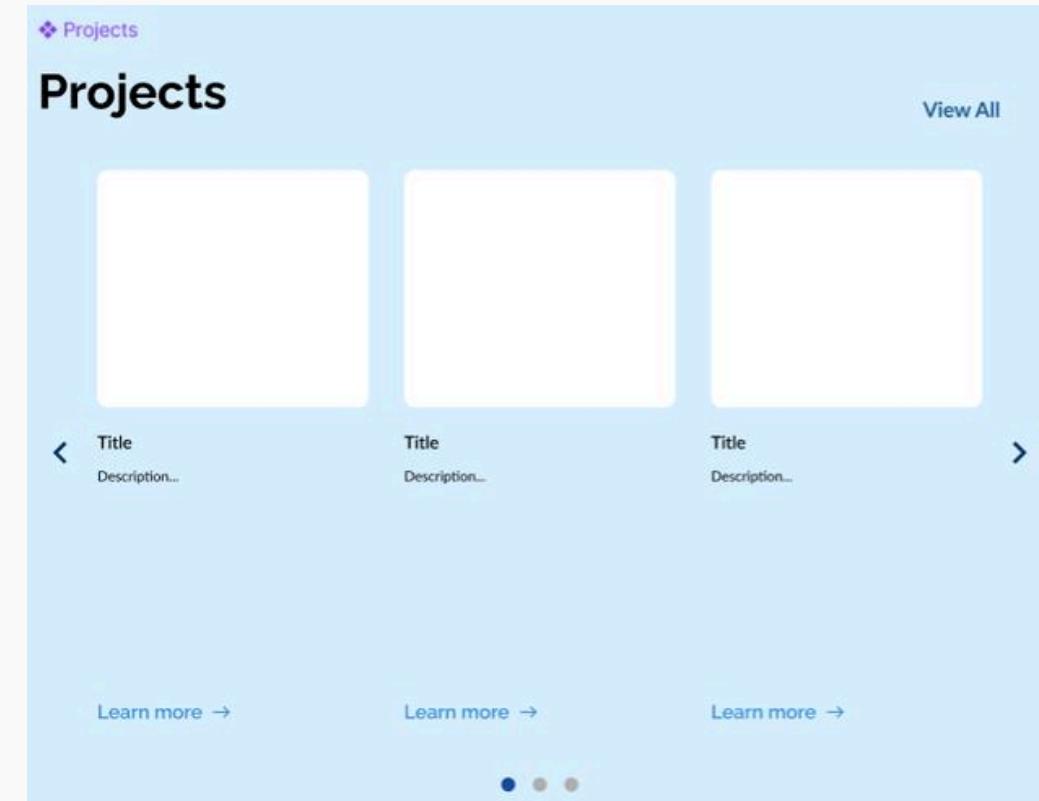
1



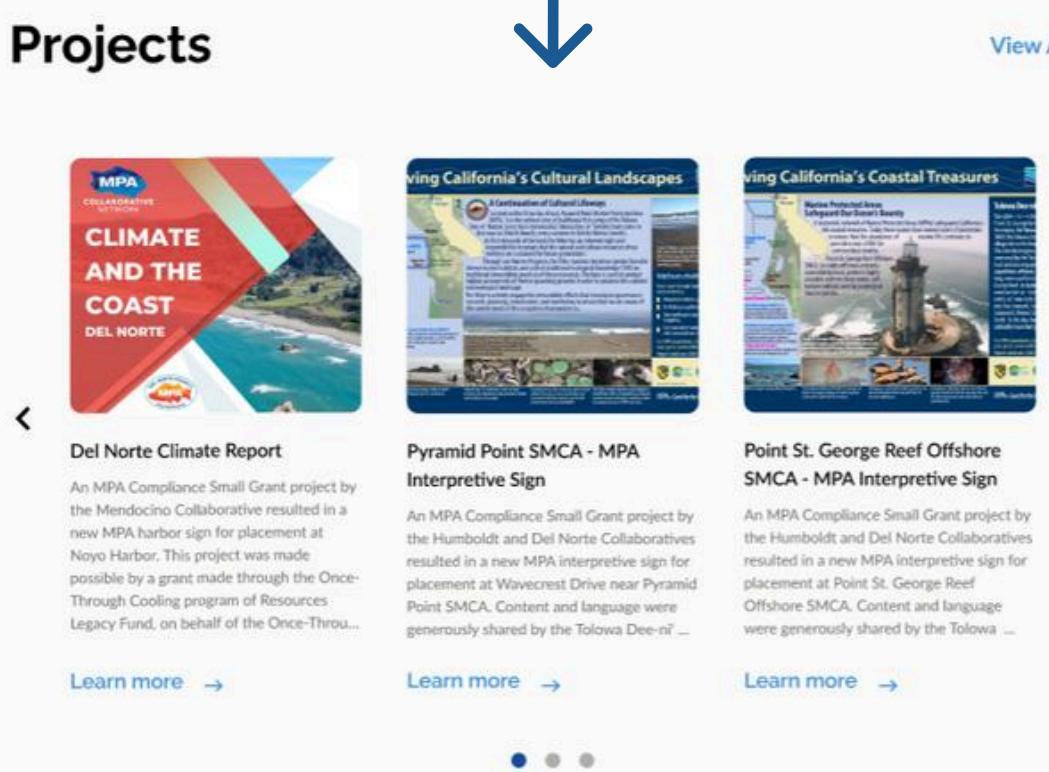
New UI Elements

Carousel Integration

2

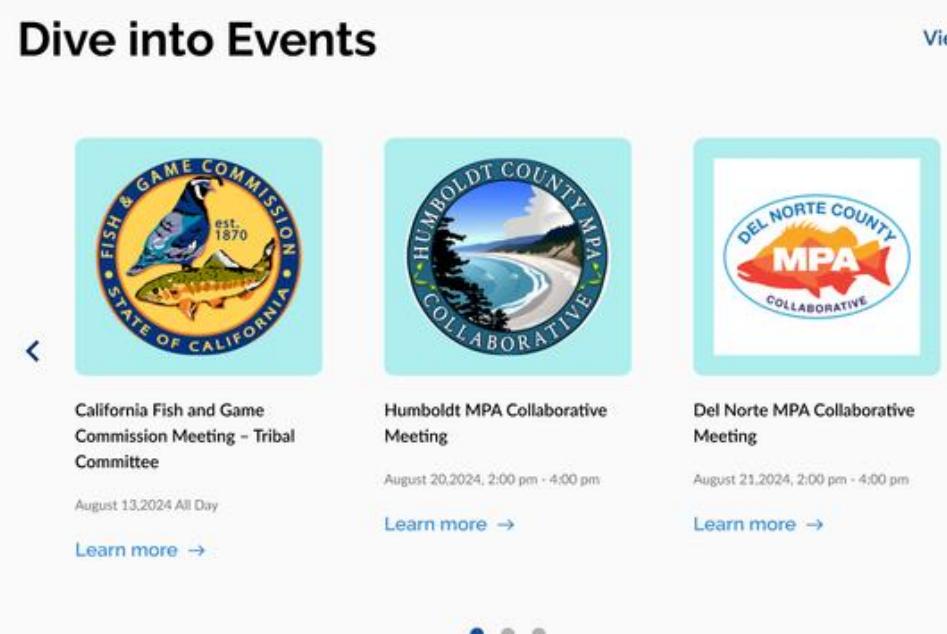


A screenshot of a mobile application interface showing a "Projects" section. At the top, there's a header with a purple icon and the word "Projects". Below it is a title "Projects" and a "View All" button. The main area contains three cards, each with a placeholder image and fields for "Title" and "Description...". Each card has a "Learn more →" button at the bottom right. A blue arrow points down from this section to the "Projects" section below.

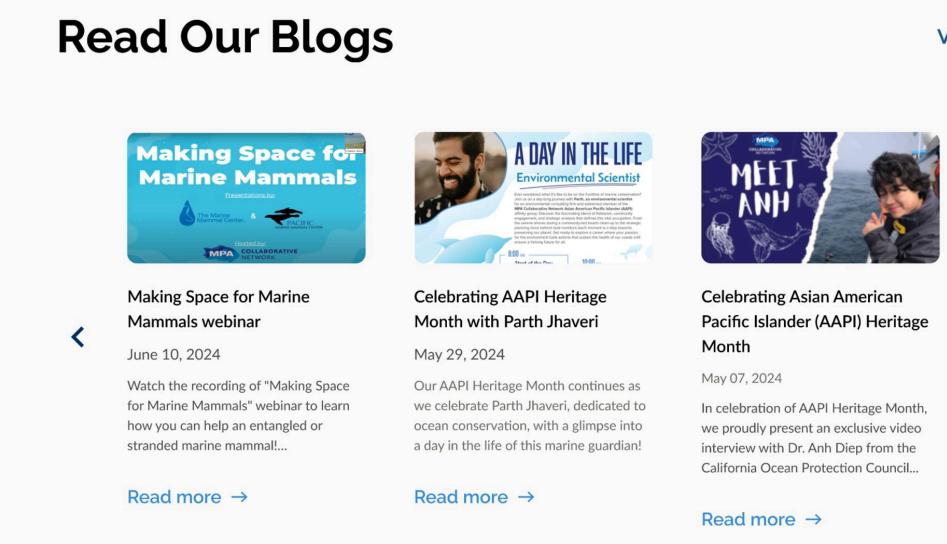
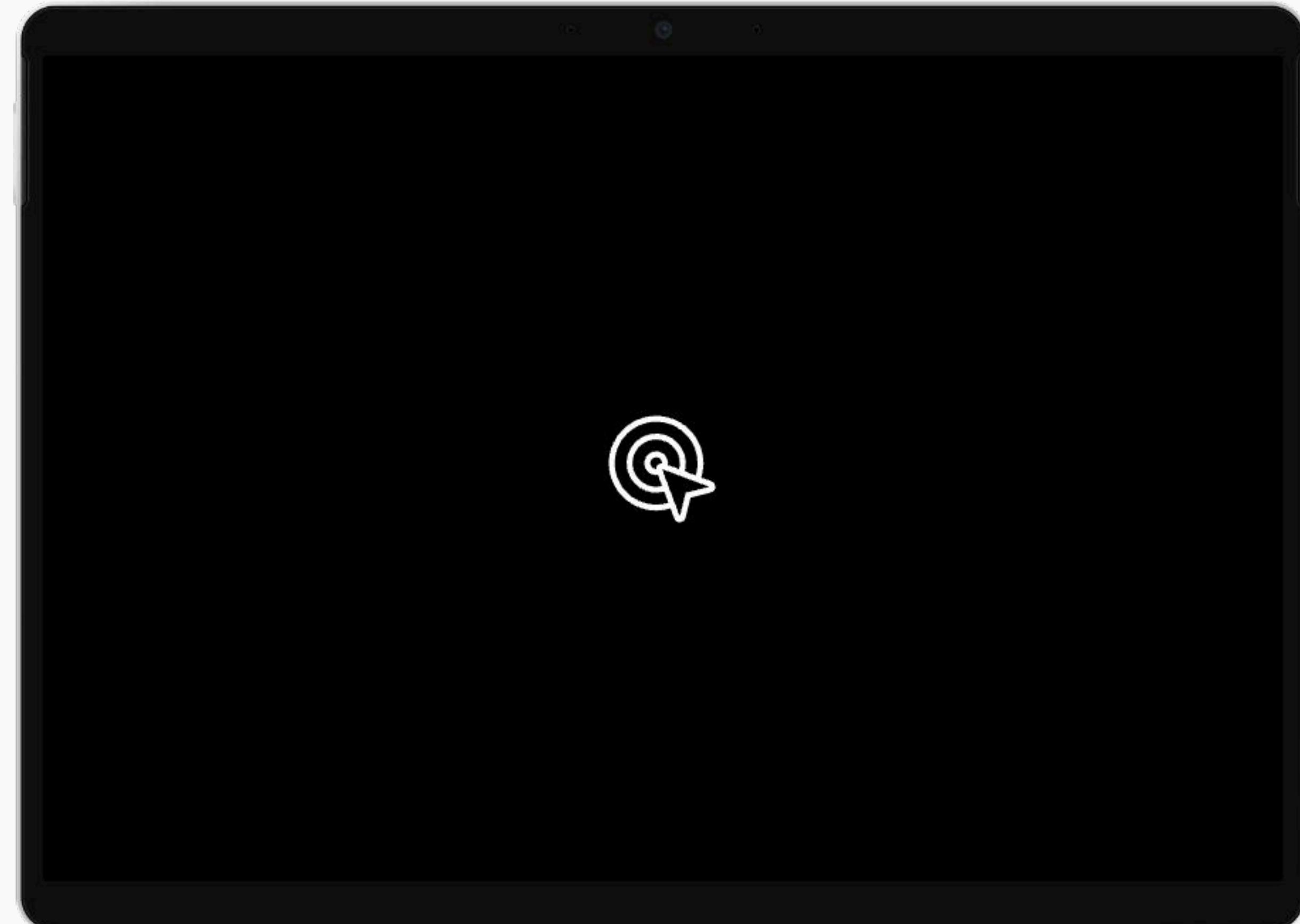


A screenshot of a mobile application interface showing a "Projects" section. At the top, there's a title "Projects" and a "View All" button. Below it is a grid of project cards. The first card is titled "Del Norte Climate Report" and features a red and white graphic with the text "CLIMATE AND THE COAST DEL NORTE". The second card is titled "Pyramid Point SMCA - MPA Interpretive Sign" and shows a map of California. The third card is titled "Point St. George Reef Offshore SMCA - MPA Interpretive Sign" and shows a lighthouse. Each card has a "Learn more →" button at the bottom right. A blue arrow points down from the "Projects" section above to this one.

To reduce scrolling and cognitive overload, we added carousels for events, blogs, and projects, allowing users to access key information more efficiently. Each carousel features progress-tracking ellipses and a "View All" option, enabling easy access to full content within each category.



A screenshot of a mobile application interface showing a "Dive into Events" section. At the top, there's a title "Dive into Events" and a "View All" button. Below it is a grid of event cards. The first card is titled "California Fish and Game Commission Meeting - Tribal Committee" and features the logo of the Fish & Game Commission. The second card is titled "Humboldt MPA Collaborative Meeting" and features the logo of the Humboldt County MPA Collaborative. The third card is titled "Del Norte MPA Collaborative Meeting" and features the logo of the Del Norte County MPA Collaborative. Each card has a "Learn more →" button at the bottom right. Ellipses at the bottom indicate more items in the carousel.

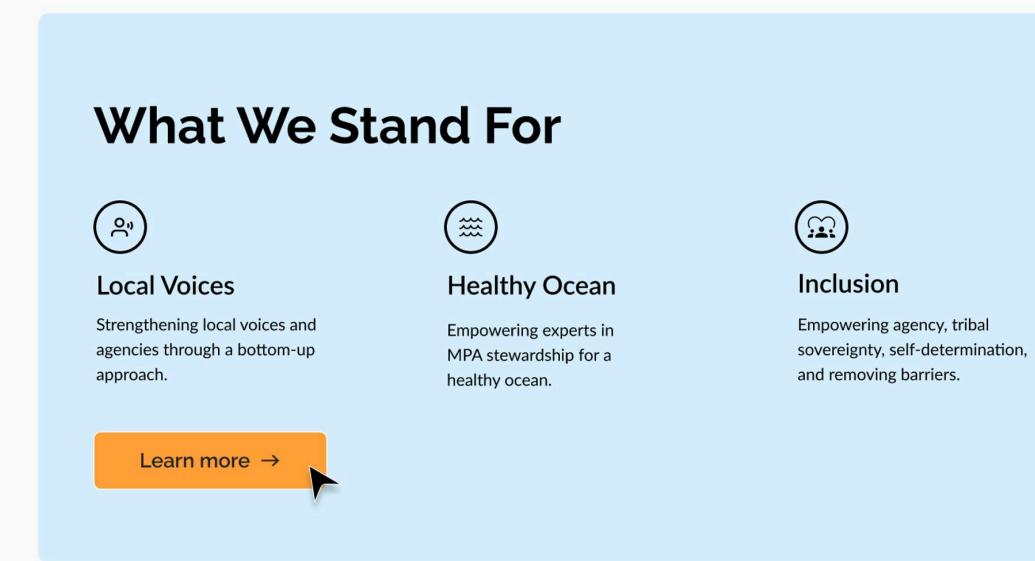
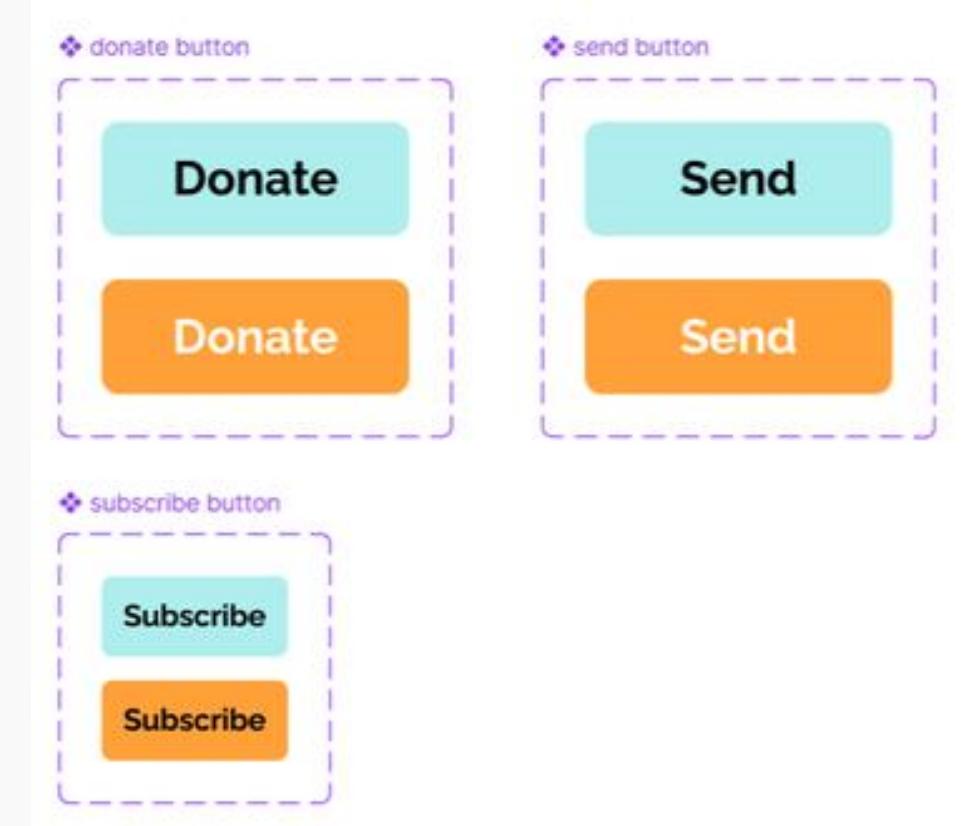
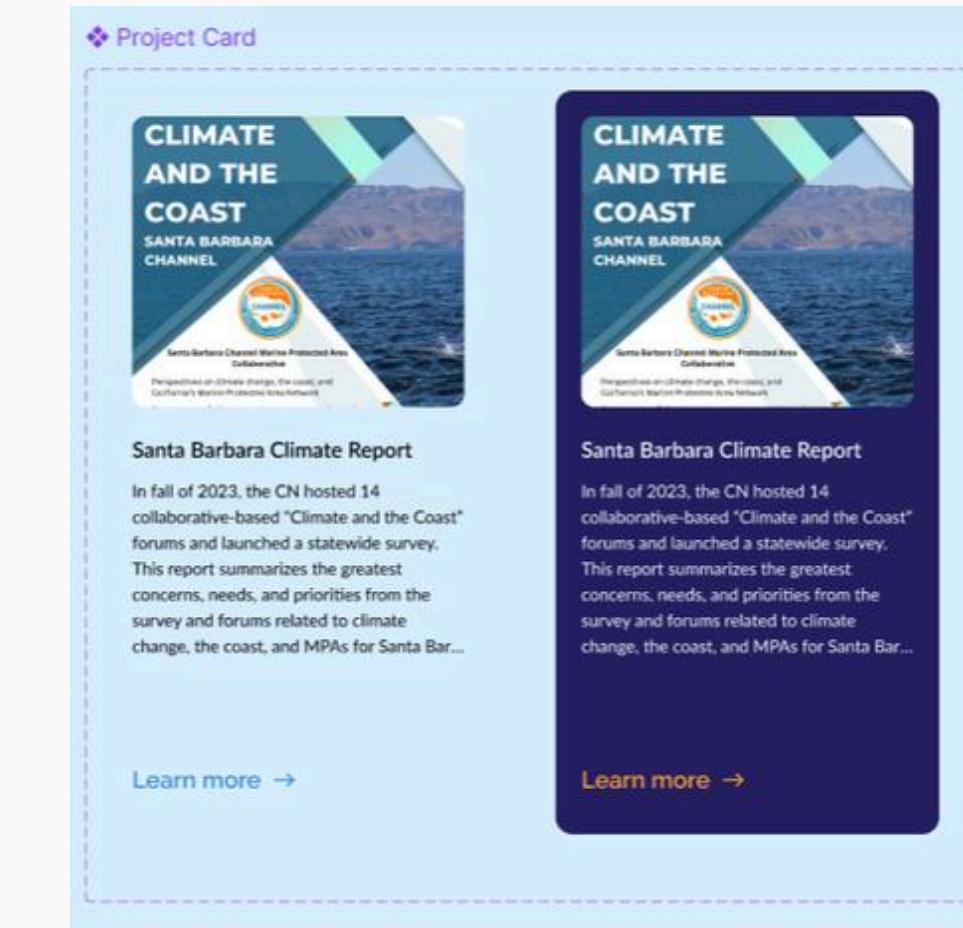
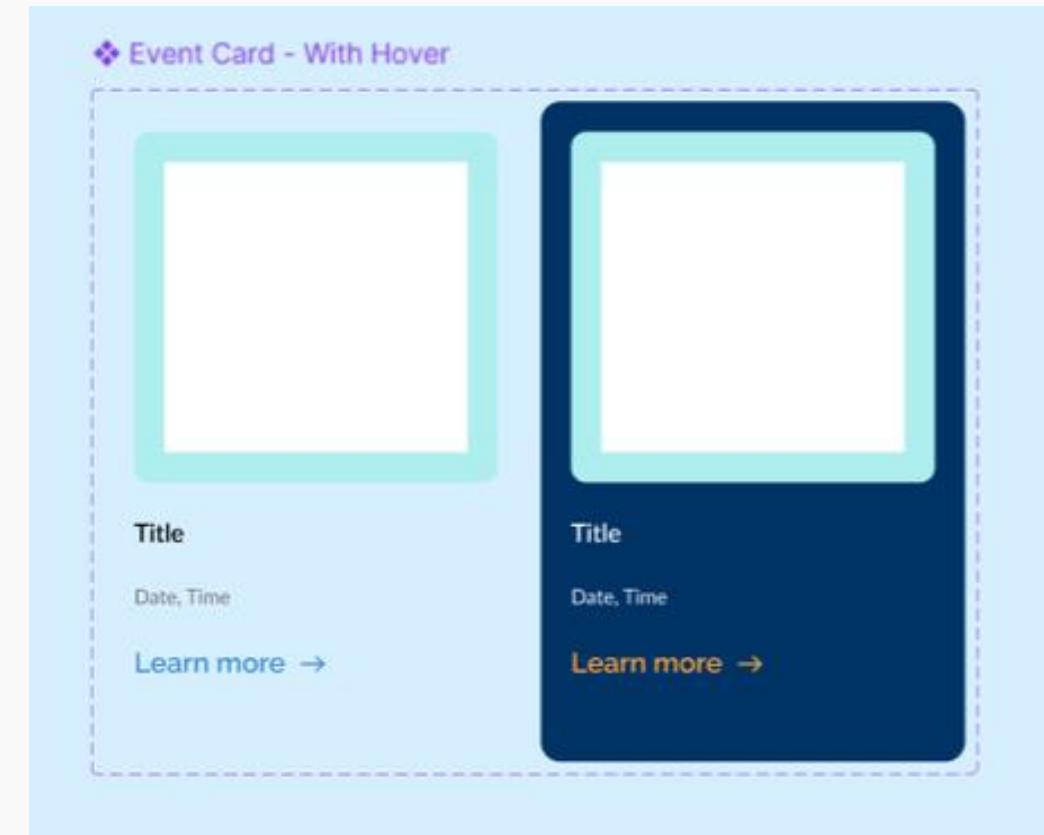


A screenshot of a mobile application interface showing a "Read Our Blogs" section. At the top, there's a title "Read Our Blogs" and a "View All" button. Below it is a grid of blog cards. The first card is titled "Making Space for Marine Mammals" and features a photo of marine mammals. The second card is titled "Celebrating AAPI Heritage Month with Parth Jhaveri" and features a photo of a person. The third card is titled "Meet Anh" and features a photo of a person. Each card has a "Read more →" button at the bottom right. Ellipses at the bottom indicate more items in the carousel.

New UI Elements Hover Effects

3

We introduced hover effects for pages like the Critter Gear, information cards, Meet the Staff sections, enhancing interactivity and user engagement. Buttons are also given this hover effect by turning into the accent orange, granting visual cues to users.



New UI Elements Footer

We redesigned the footer to highlight essential links, simplifying navigation and ensuring critical resources are easily accessible. The new layout organizes links into clear categories and we also added a redesigned newsletter signup and updated social media icons to enhance user connectivity.

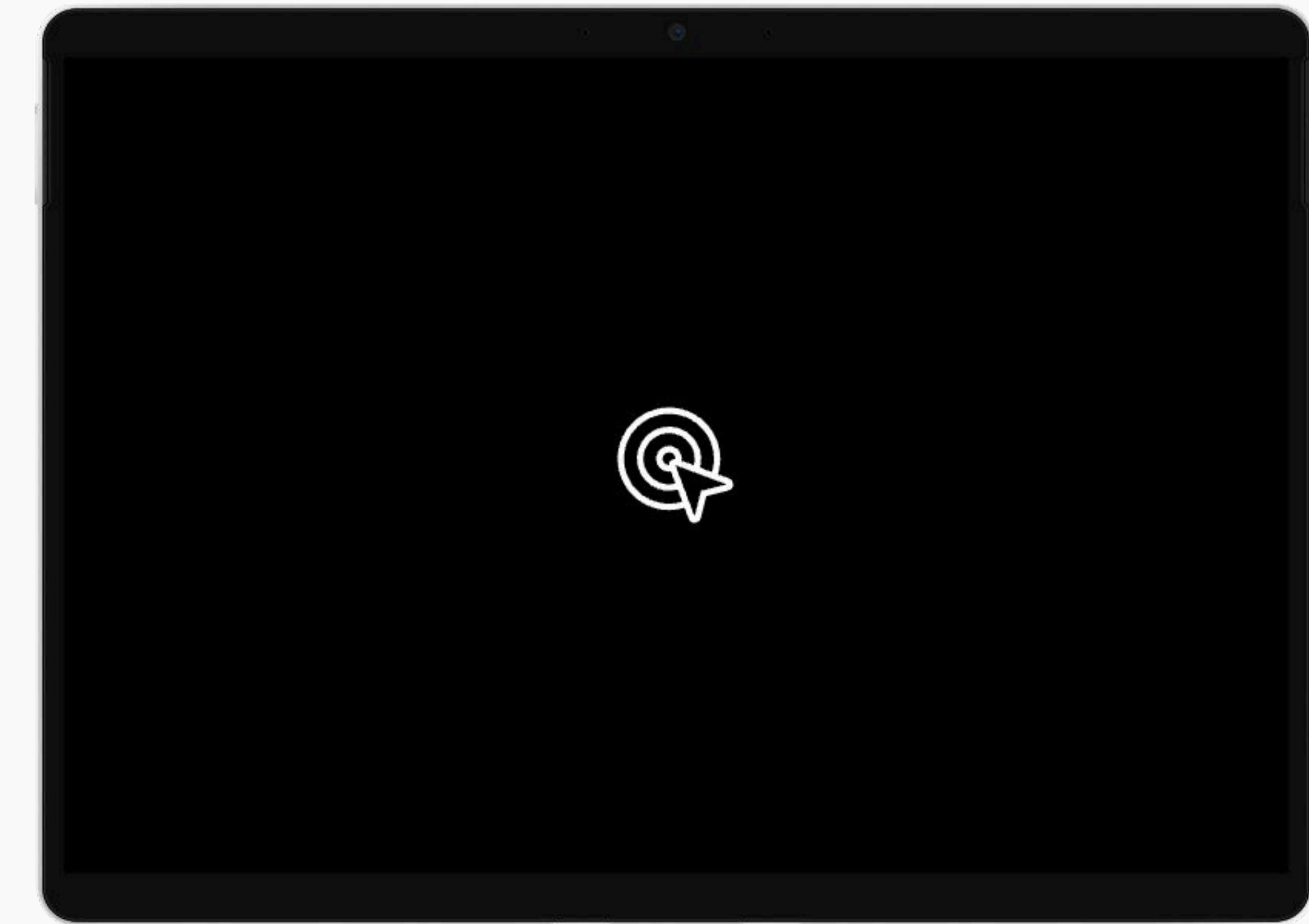
Old Footer

4

The old footer design features a dark gray background. On the left, there are two columns of links: one for general information like About, Collaboratives, and News Blog, and another for legal and specific resources like Photo Credits, Term of Use, and Privacy Policy. In the center, there's a "Sign up for our mailing list" form with fields for Email Address, First Name, Last Name, and a reCAPTCHA checkbox. Below the form is a blue "Submit" button. At the bottom, there's a dark blue footer bar with the text "© 2024 MPA Collaborative Network. All Rights Reserved." and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter.

New Footer

The new footer design has a dark blue background. It includes the MPA Collaborative Network logo at the top left. To the right, there are four main sections: "ABOUT" with links to About Us, About MPAs, Our Team, Our Blog, and Careers; "EXPLORE" with links to Collaboratives, Resources, CN Initiatives, and Shop; "FOLLOW US" with social media icons for Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram; and a "Sign up for our mailing list" form with fields for First name, Last name, and Email address, plus a "Subscribe" button. At the bottom, there's a copyright notice "© 2024 MPA Collaborative Network. All Rights Reserved."



USABILITY TESTING

Positive Feedback Overall



4.44



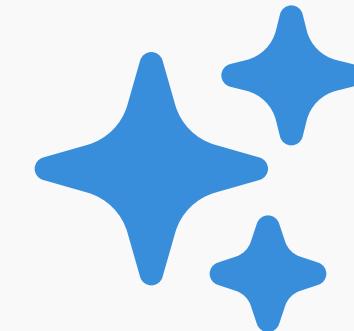
4.83

9 Participants:

- 3 MPA CN members
- 6 new users

Ease of completion
(+0.40)

Information Organization
(+1.42)



Method:

- Task and post-task questions
- 30-60 min each
- Encouraged users to think aloud and took notes on their steps and whether they succeeded or failed in completing the tasks

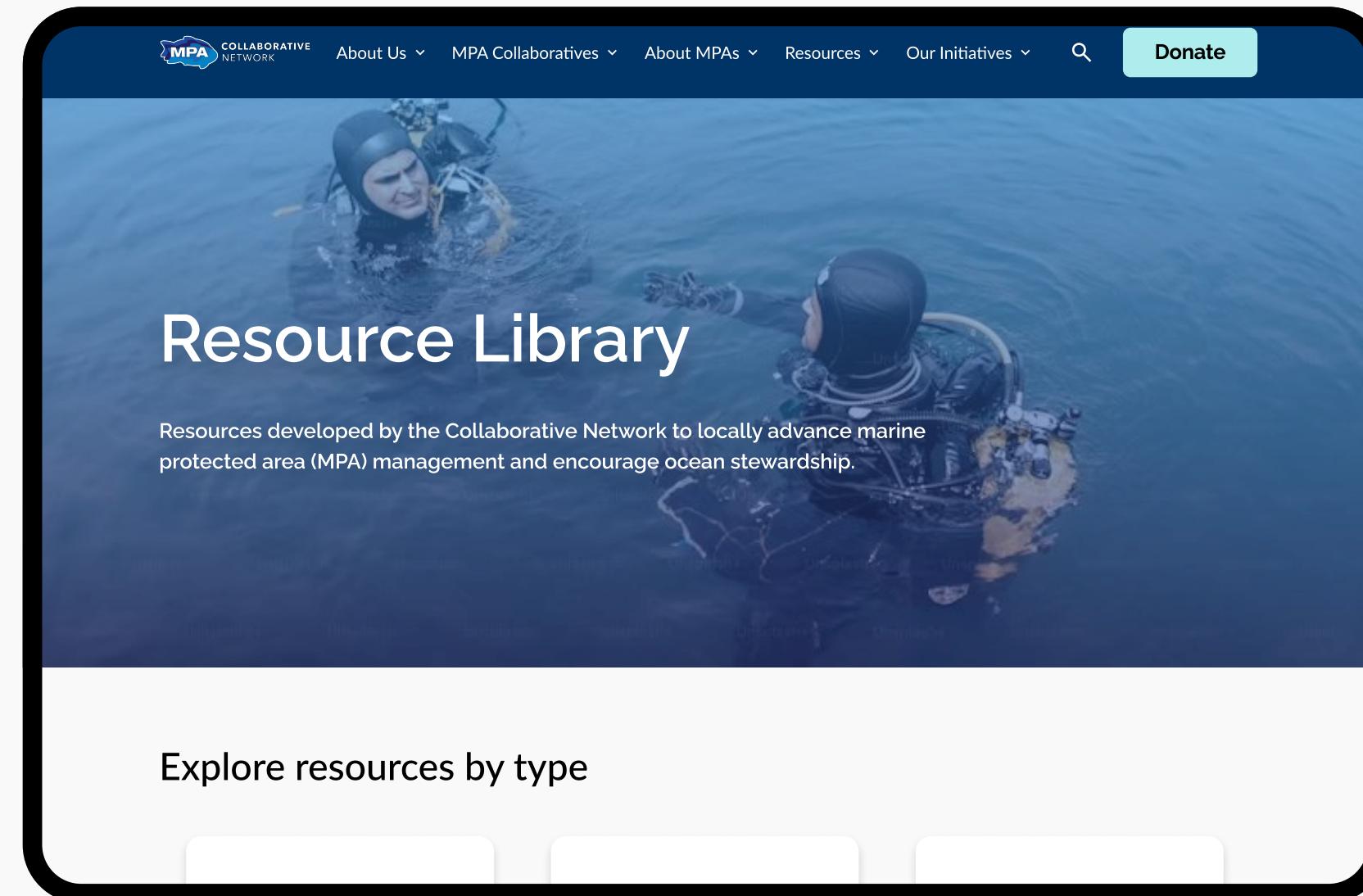
4.03

Visual Appeal
(+0.51)

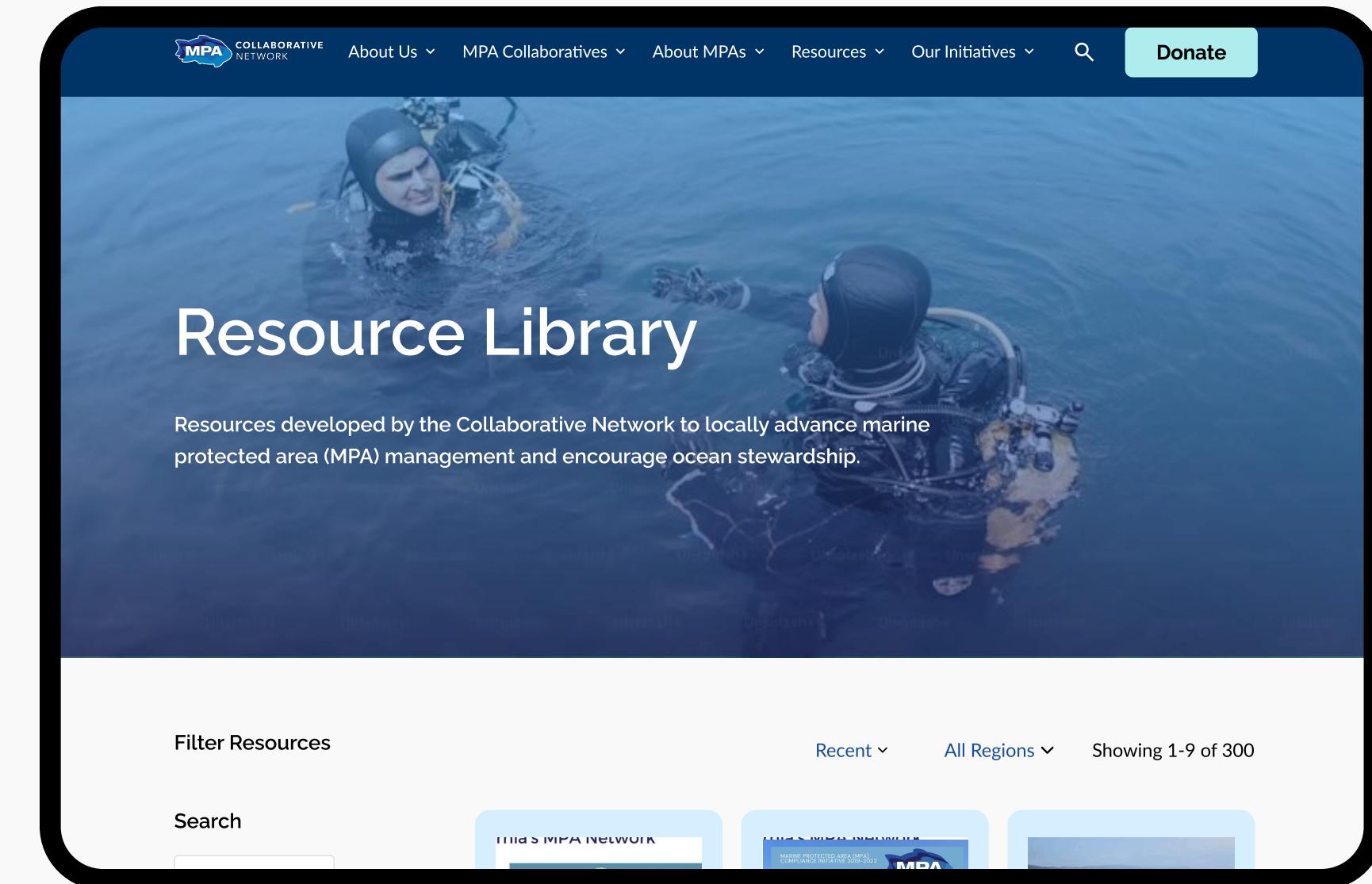
USABILITY TESTING

Resource Library A/B test results

A



B



- Preferred by 4/9 users
- 2 of them were MPA CN staff who had a clearer understanding of where each category belongs

- Preferred by 5/9 users
- Allowed for a complete view at once, eliminating the need to navigate between categories
- More effective and user-friendly for the general audience ✓

USABILITY TESTING

How Testing Informed Final Design Decisions

1

Improving site structure clarity

8/9 users had difficulty finding the Shop function immediately.

- ➡ Moving “Shop Critter Gear” to “About Us” tab to enhance visibility

5/9 users were confused on where “About Us” info would be, mixing it up with “About MPAs” or searching elsewhere.

- ➡ Renamed “About Us” to “About MPA CN”
- ➡ Moved the “MPA Collaboratives” tab before “About MPAs”



USABILITY TESTING

How Testing Informed Final Design Decisions

2

Highlighting “Joining a Collaborative” on Homepage

As **6/9** users expressed uncertainty about what it means to join a collaborative, we added a “Why Join a Collaborative” section to Homepage explaining its meanings and benefits.

Explore Our Network Along the Coast

Our 14 Collaboratives lead local efforts to care for and protect California's Marine Protected Areas. These partnerships ensure transparency, resource sharing, and community involvement along the entire coast.

Explore the map to find your local collaborative, and join us in making a difference!

[Explore the map →](#)



Why Join a MPA Collaborative?

Everyone is welcome to join their local Collaborative and contribute to managing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) at the local level. After joining, you'll receive occasional emails about upcoming meetings and locally-relevant updates from Collaborative leaders.



Learn About Your Local Marine Protected Areas

Discover the unique marine ecosystems in your community and how they are preserved for future generations.

Contribute Your Voice to Your Community

Collaborate with others who share your passion for ocean stewardship. Your input is vital in shaping the future of our MPAs.

Support Ocean Stewardship

Play an active role in advancing MPA management and fostering a healthy ocean that is vital to all life on Earth.

[Join your local collaborative now →](#)

03

Development

DEVELOPMENT

Implementing our design!

The original website for MPA CN is hosted on WordPress. After completing our hi-fi designs, it was time to move onto implementation!

Currently...

Due to time constraints, we weren't able to fully implement our redesign WordPress. But we plan to continue working with MPA CN to bring them a completed redesign!

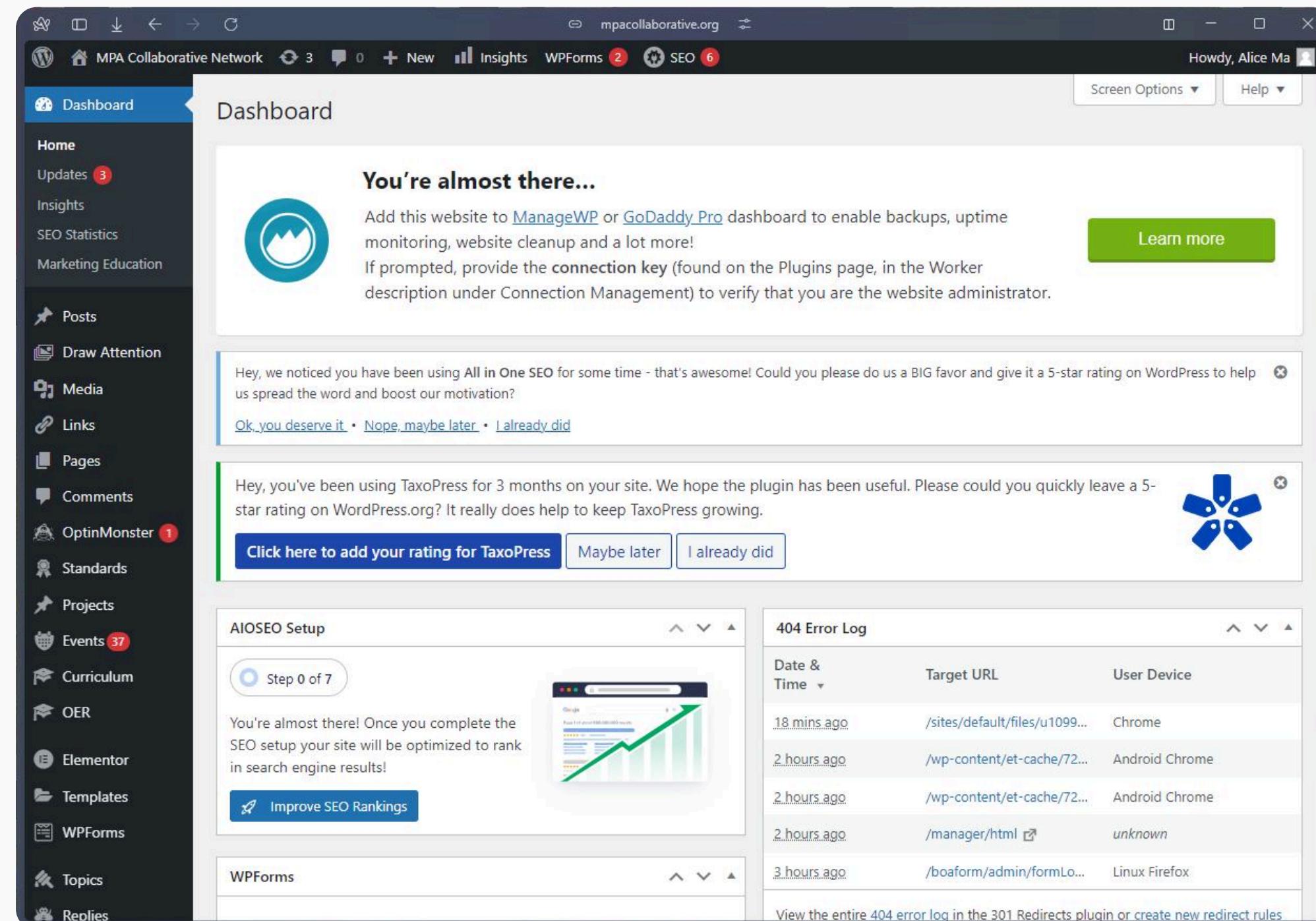


DEVELOPMENT

Challenges

Learning how to navigate WordPress

- WordPress has a steep learning curve!
- Compiled WordPress guidelines on relevant features to ease process



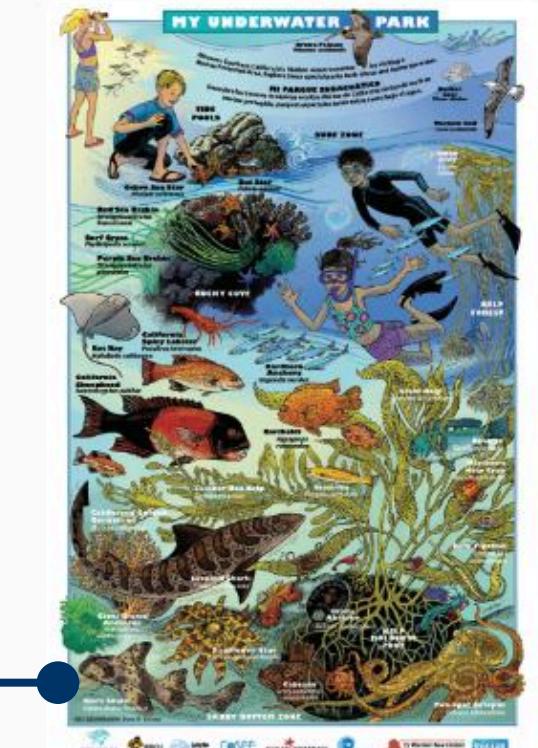
DEVELOPMENT

Challenges

Replicating the Figma design

- Basic Wordpress features could not make website resemble the final design exactly
- Utilized custom CSS coding to refine visual design and interaction details

Projects



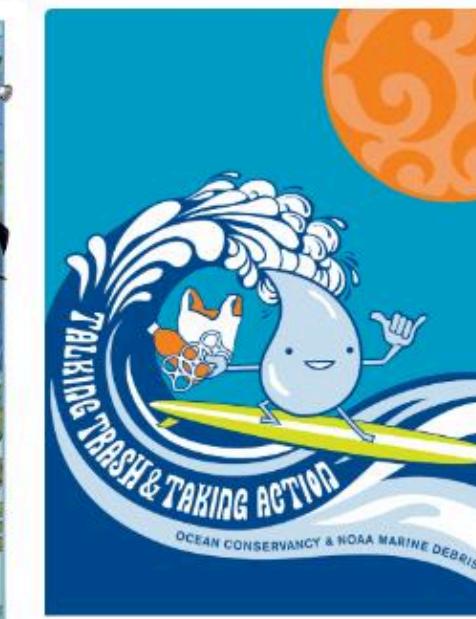
Inconsistent
thumbnail sizes



Underwater Parks Posters

One part of a complete MPA Outreach Toolkit featuring conveniently packaged MPA curriculum, materials, and related activities for educators.
...

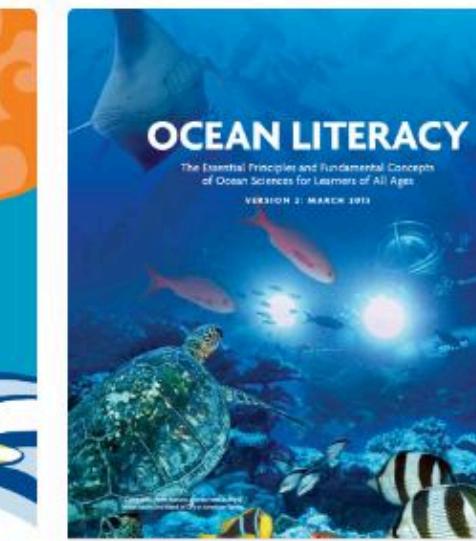
[Learn more →](#)



Talking Trash and Taking Action Guide

One part of a complete MPA Outreach Toolkit featuring conveniently packaged MPA curriculum, materials, and related activities for educators.
...

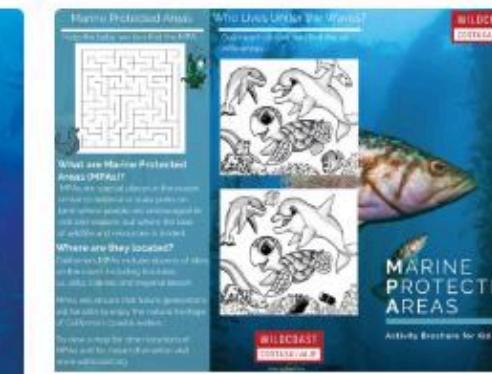
[Learn more →](#)



Ocean Literacy Guide

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...

[Learn more →](#)



MPA Activity Brochure for Kids

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...

[Learn more →](#)

Learn more
button not
anchored

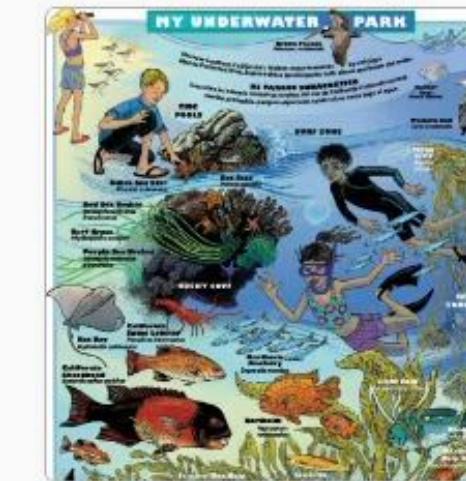
DEVELOPMENT

Challenges

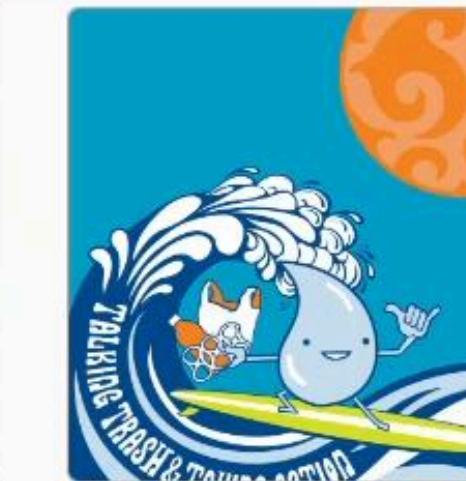
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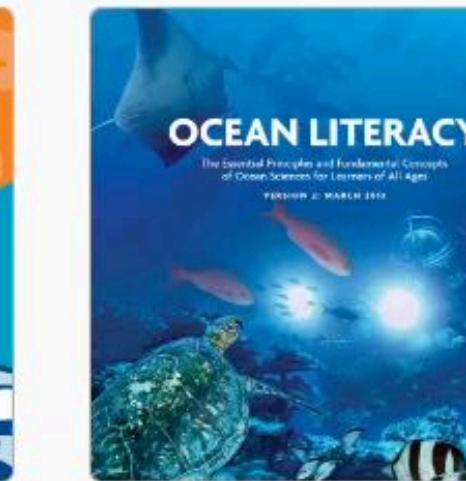
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DEVELOPMENT

Our progress so far

Home Page

The screenshot shows the homepage of the MPA Collaborative Network. At the top, there's a large banner with the text "Empowering California's Coastal Communities" and "in the stewardship of California's marine protected areas". Below this, there's a section titled "Who We Are" with a paragraph about the organization's mission and a "Discover MPAs" button. Another section titled "What We Stand For" lists three pillars: Local Voices, Healthy Ocean, and Inclusion, each with a brief description and a "Learn more" button.

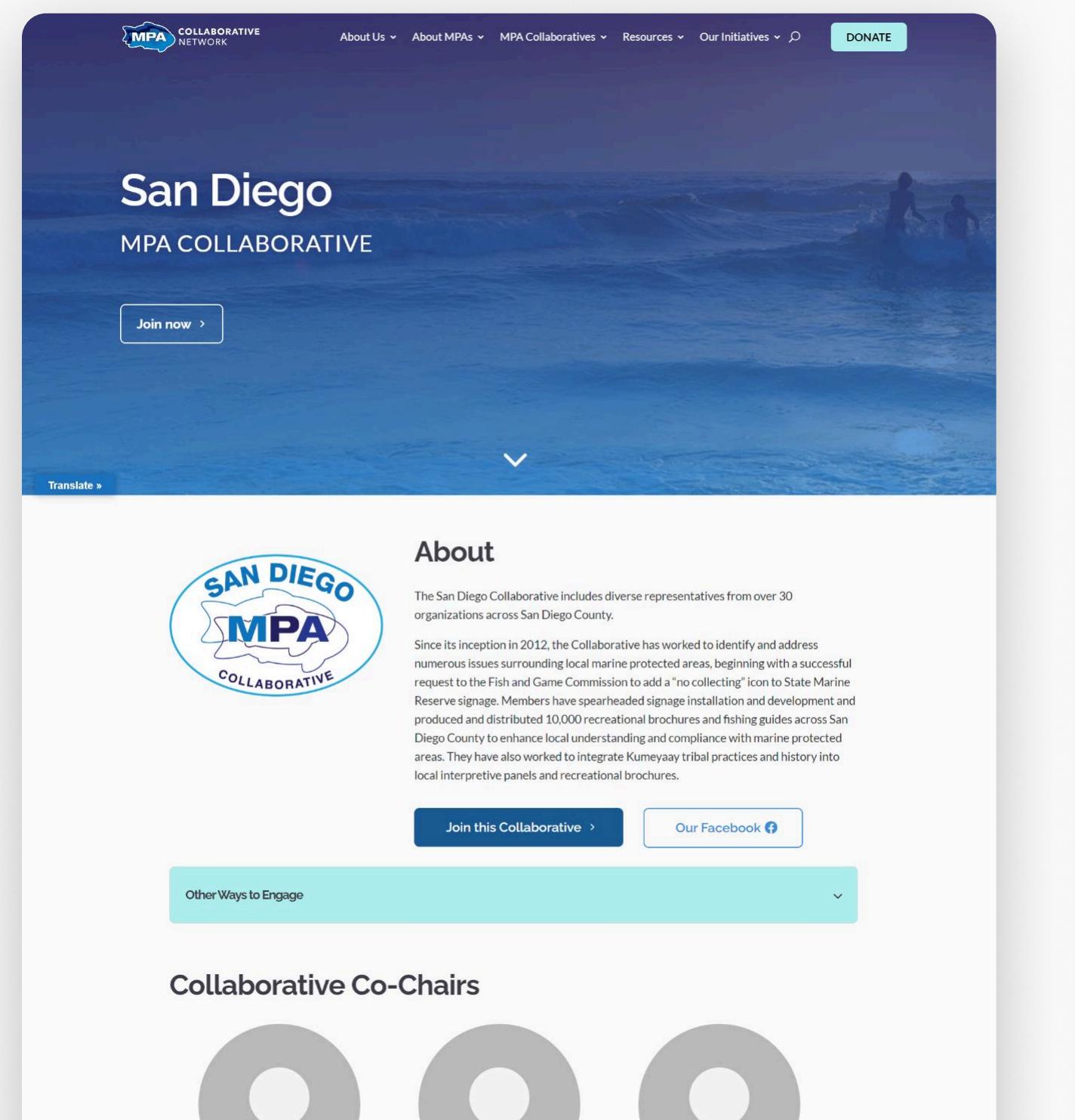
This screenshot shows a map of California with various regions highlighted in different colors. Overlaid on the map are circular icons representing different MPA collaboratives. A call-to-action button "Explore the map →" is located at the bottom left of the map area.

The screenshot displays a grid of event cards. At the top, there are three summary statistics: "14 County-based Collaboratives", "1400+ Volunteer Members", and "450+ Organizations & Agencies Represented". Below this, the "Dive into Events" section features four rows of event cards, each with a logo, title, date, and a "Learn more →" link. The events include meetings for Los Angeles, Santa Barbara Channel, San Luis Obispo, and the Ocean Protection Council, as well as a Catalina MPA Collaborative meeting and a California Fish and Game Commission meeting.

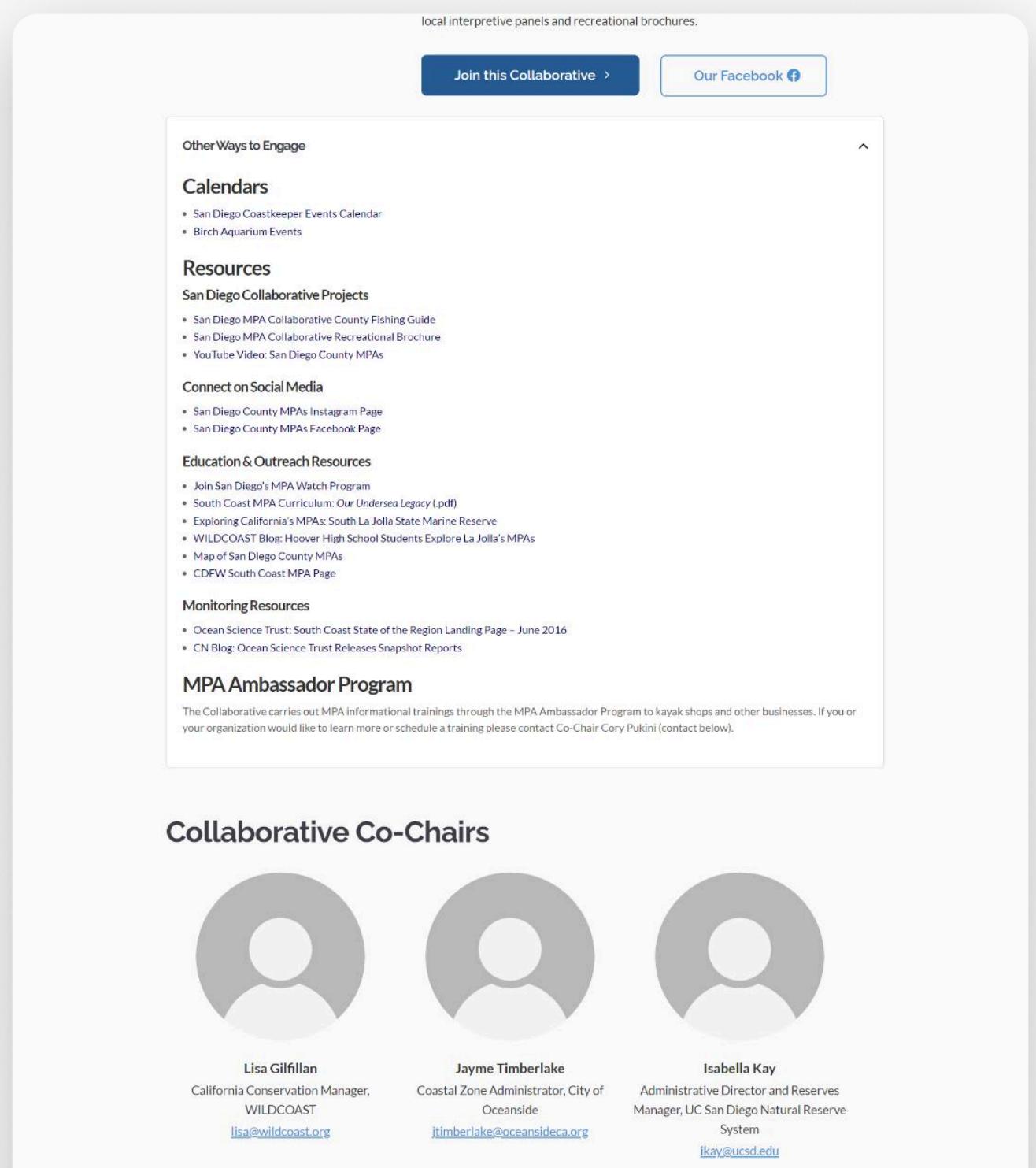
DEVELOPMENT

Our progress so far

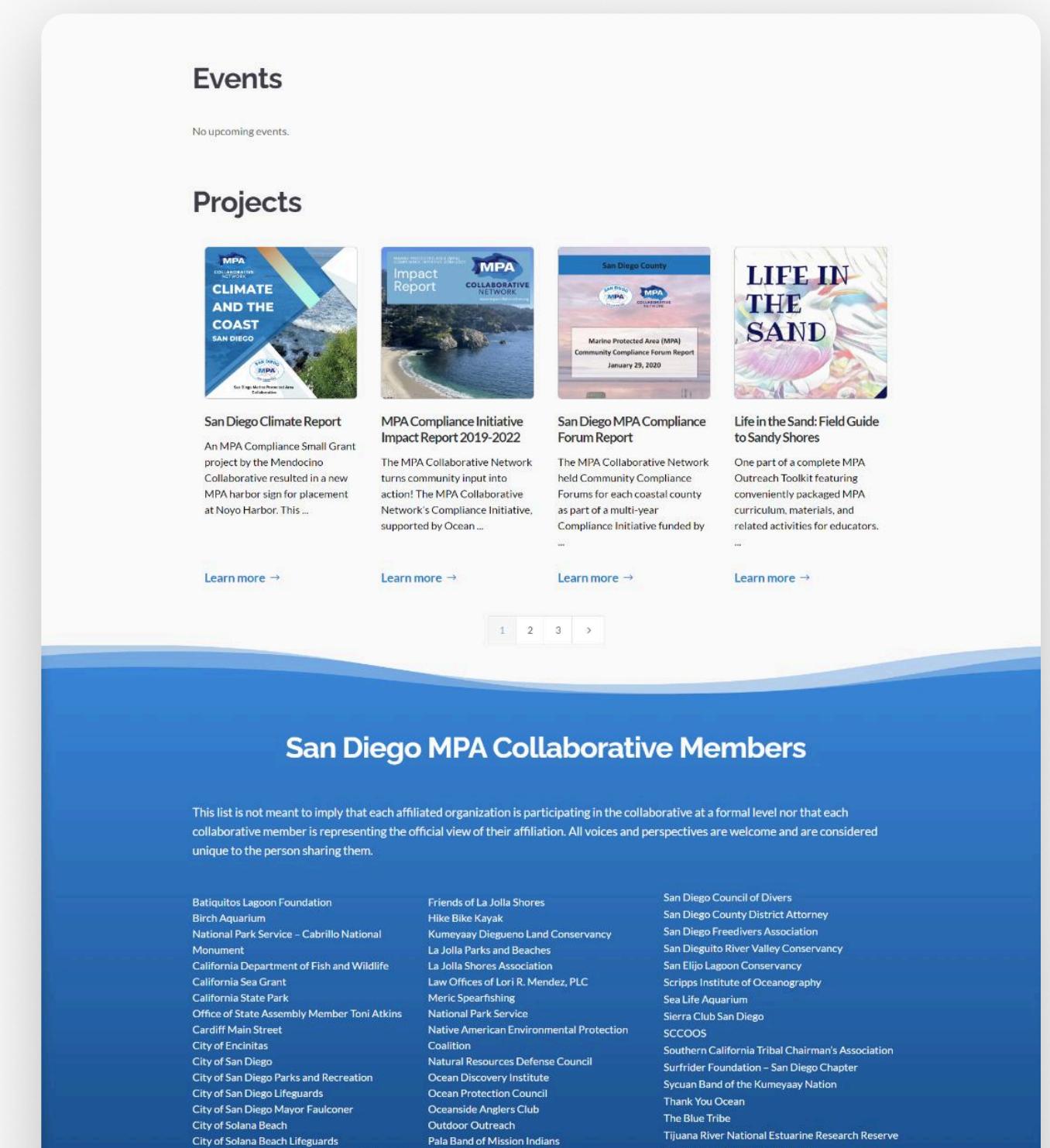
Collaboratives Page



The screenshot shows the San Diego MPA Collaborative homepage. It features a large blue header image of people surfing. Below the image are two main sections: 'About' and 'Collaborative Co-Chairs'. The 'About' section includes the San Diego MPA Collaborative logo and a brief description of their work. The 'Collaborative Co-Chairs' section lists three individuals with their names and titles.



This screenshot shows a 'Other Ways to Engage' page from the San Diego MPA Collaborative website. It contains several sections: 'Calendars', 'Resources', 'Connect on Social Media', 'Education & Outreach Resources', 'Monitoring Resources', and 'MPA Ambassador Program'. Each section lists specific resources or links for users to engage with.



This screenshot shows the 'Events' and 'Projects' pages from the San Diego MPA Collaborative website. The 'Events' section is currently empty. The 'Projects' section displays four reports: 'San Diego Climate Report', 'MPA Compliance Initiative Impact Report 2019-2022', 'San Diego MPA Compliance Forum Report', and 'Life in the Sand: Field Guide to Sandy Shores'. Each report has a 'Learn more' link.

DEVELOPMENT

Our progress so far

Team Page

Our Team

Collaborative Network staff work to make it easier for local experts to partner with the state, strengthening connections and facilitating the flow of information between these local MPA professionals and managing agencies, and working closely with California's Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Parks, Ocean Protection Council, and Ocean Science Trust.

Calla Allison (she/her)
Founder & Executive Director
calla@mpacollaborative.org

Claire Arre (she/her)
Program Manager
claire@mpacollaborative.org

Aubrie Fowler(she/her)
South Coast Specialist
aubrie@mpacollaborative.org

Krystle Ramos (she/ella)
Central Coast Specialist
kristy@mpacollaborative.org

Jamie Blatter (she/her)
North Coast and Climate Specialist,
Tribal Liaison
jamie@mpacollaborative.org

Michael James
Geospatial Mapping and Innovation
Specialist
michaeljames37@gmail.com

Michelle Chuang
AAPI Community Coordinator
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Cianna Carrillo Walker-Flom
Black Community Coordinator
cianna@theavamaroun.com

Kayleigh Wade
Latine Community Coordinator
wade.kayleigh@gmail.com

Collaborative Network staff work to make it easier for local experts to partner with the state, strengthening connections and facilitating the flow of information between these local MPA professionals and managing agencies, and working closely with California's Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Parks, Ocean Protection Council, and Ocean Science Trust.

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cianna@theavamaroun.com

Kayleigh Wade
Latine Community Coordinator
wade.kayleigh@gmail.com

Biography

Calla Allison, Chief Executive Officer of the MPA CN, has nearly two decades of experience effectively integrating social collateral with localized marine resource management. In 2008, while working as the City of Laguna's Marine Protection Officer, Calla was selected to represent Orange County MPA Council (OMPAC) as a member of the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative's (MLPA) South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group. After the MLPA process, Calla took on the role of OMPAC Director. Seeing the benefits of this collaborative approach to local coastal resource management inspired Calla to approach the California Natural Resources Agency, CDFW, and RLF about applying the OMPAC model to the rest of the state. In 2012, a pilot project was initiated under OPC and the MPA CN was born.

04

Marketing

Introduction and Goals

- MPA CN aims to increase its social media presence, follower count, and website traffic while raising awareness about its mission. Current social media platforms include Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, with plans to expand to TikTok and enhance content consistency.
- To begin tackling the marketing upgrade for MPA CN, I dove into the structure of the non-profit: identifying the market, what the organization stands for and can offer, and their current marketing model. Next, I conducted a SWOT analysis for their Instagram and inquired about their marketing objectives to come up with a marketing strategy. Finally, I made a Marketing Plan for the organization.



Future Suggestions

Instagram	Facebook	YouTube	Other Suggestions
Create a set templates for different categories, such as webinar/meeting announcements, call to action posts, fun informational posts, etc for a clean and aesthetic feed	Facebook is in alignment with Instagram, so as they post on Instagram, Facebook automatically follows. Instagram suggestions are applicable for Facebook as well.	Create a template for thumbnails so that the channel is cohesive.	I would suggest the expansion to TikTok, which is how MPA CN can reach the goal of growing their follower demographic base to more than just what they're currently at, which is fairly specific. Take note of the last Instagram suggestion box for TikTok.
Create cohesive highlight covers and reorganize them for more useful topics (suggestions: ABOUT, FAQ, UPDATES, FUN STUFF)			Continue the use of mailing list to update and reach out the active MPA CN members.
Update the links section for a quick and easy way to get to popular pages (homepage of website, collaboratives page, shop page, YouTube channel)			
Brainstorm content ideas that will interest and engage new demographics. This includes following trending sounds and video ideas but twisting them to be relevant to MPA CN. Reels are an especially popular way to grow an account recently.			

05

Reflection

REFLECTION

What We Learned



Consistent stakeholder communication

Allow for alignment in goals through sharing weekly progress, asking for feedback, and making sure our changes reflect MPA CN values and objectives.



Cross-functional collaboration

Being a team of 9 students, all with the same project objectives but with different areas of expertise may simulate industry when needing to work with different roles.



Accessibility Design & Guidelines

Accessibility guidelines when working with webpages - whether that be increased contrast, text size, etc.

REFLECTION

Next Steps

- Further implementation of our wireframes into Wordpress
- Wrap up communications with MPA CN stakeholders to ensure we met program expectations in delivering changes and updates into their website

REFLECTION

Special Thanks



Design Co for creating this program, UP-Grade, to instill industry project experience in design students!



Stakeholders at MPA-CN, specifically Krystle, for their constant communication and feedback throughout our research and design process!

Thank You!



♥ MPA-CN Team