Stage 3
COSC 3P94
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Group 3 - HomeBuyer (\underline{\text{https://bit.ly/3qy7bCI}})

Opening up this website, the user is greeted with a navigation bar at the top and a sign in forum with the option to register (figure 1). In terms of design, the first impression gives off a well designed and eye pleasing layout. The navigation bar is minimalistic and has a few options, some working and some not. Starting from the left, there is a home button which takes you to the front page. In terms of design, the home button is self explanatory and offers little room for the user to mistake it for something else. Not only is the home button shaped like a house but also labeled "Home" which is great for first time users and people who are tech illiterate. Next on the navigation bar we have two unusable buttons which would have let you change the country the user is in as well as the language. Although it's not usable, this concept is good as it takes into consideration french speaking Canadians or other language speakers from other countries as well as allow users to see listings from specific countries. The design for these two buttons is typical of one you'd see on other websites, this allows the user to be familiar with it and know how to use it. Next on the navigation bar is a "saved" button that opens up a pop up with two options the user can choose from, being "Saved Properties" and "Saved Searches". While these buttons are usable and designed well, there is an issue. A user can view the "saved properties/searches" page without being logged in which cannot be possible. This is a logical problem that can be solved pretty simply by showing the user a blank page that could say something like "please log in first" instead. Next on the navigation bar is a "sign in" button which does nothing because the user is already on that page, and a "sell" button which sends the user to another page. In terms of design, the buttons fit well with the overall design of the website but there could be more done to make it look more finished, such as adding a highlight when the cursor is on top of the buttons or changing the font color to indicate the cursor is hovering over it. Finally the last component on the navigation bar is a magnifying glass icon which represents the "search" button. This is a good use of the icon, as it is widely used and the user will most likely understand what it is. Instead of using the word "search" the designers used a

recognizable icon which fits well with the rest of the navigation bar. Pressing the "Search" button will open up a pop up with some interactive elements. To begin with, on the pop up, there are two number input fields that are not usable (for show). There is no labeling so what they are supposed to represent is a mystery, one could assume it represents the bedroom and bathroom numbers, but without the labels, this is a poor design choice. Next is a range slider which allows the user to decide what price range the property they are looking for is. But again without labeling, some may not understand that this is for. Next is a text field which says to "Enter keywords" which is unusable, but is straight forward and any user would know to look up the address, street name or city in that section. Next to the textfield is a button labeled "location" which takes you to the search listings page. This is confusing as it looks like something a user would input something or a drop down menu of some sort. Finally there is a "search/enter" button and an unusable "filter" button. Some good aspects in the search pop up is how there are red accents that match the color of the whole site. This concludes the Navigation bar at the top of the page, which is static there throughout the website.
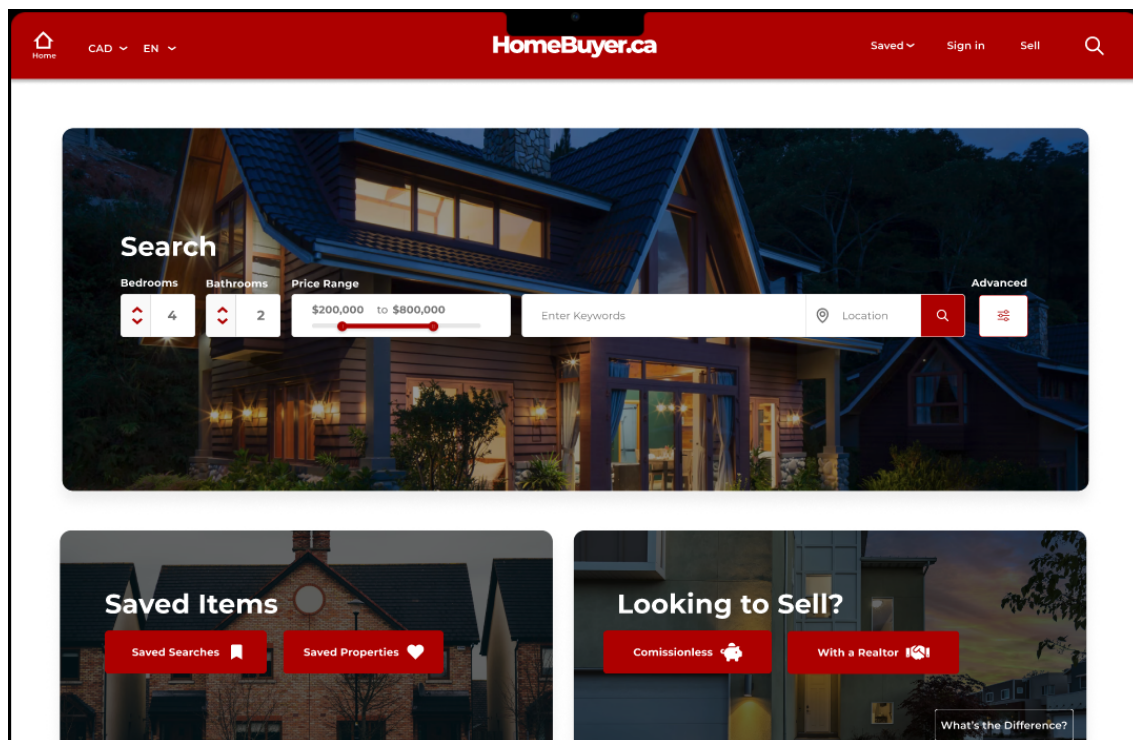

Figure 1

The first page the user is greeted with is the sign in page. While it is a good idea to have that as the starting page, a user might want to explore the website features without needing to sign in. Seeing the sign in page can be a turn off for some to most users who visit the website, as they might not want to give their personal info unless they know what your website offers first. The design of the forum field matches with the rest of the website design in terms of color, font and layout. The text fields don't work and the button "log in" works without the need to input anything in the textfield. More on the login button, it takes you to the homepage of the website, one thing that is noticeably incorrect is the option to sign in is still available by pressing the "login" button. In other words the account functionalities are not working. The "register" button works and takes the user to a new page with a similar style forum for inputting personal information needed to create an account.

The second page or the "Home" page is where the user is led too when logging in, after registering, or pressing the "Home" button on the navigation bar (Figure 2). This page features 4 sections, 3 of which are accessible directly from the navigation bar as well. The sections are separated in their own containers with rounded edges and shadows to give a soft 3d effect. The layout of the 3 main sections are consistent, and offer minimalist design and text. The Sections give the website a modern and hip look that resembles other sites and apps today. The first and most noticeable section is the "Search" container. It is a duplicate of the search pop up a user would get if they clicked the "Search" icon on the navigation bar. The only difference is the use of an image as the background of the section, this offers a more pleasing look instead of having a solid color. The next section featured below the first is half the width and contains the same two buttons/options when a user clicks the "Saved" button on the navigation bar, the only difference is the container also has an image as the background. The third section is on the right of the second, same size as the second section and contains two options to sell a home, "comissionless" and "with a realtor". So instead of using the navigation bar, a user can go

directly into which type of selling they want. The third section also includes a third button that takes the user to the "sell" page just like the navigation bar, in case a user wants to access its information. These three sections are symmetrically designed and have proper margins. Although it is repetitive to have the same buttons as on the navigation bar, it's a good use of empty space and outlines all the website's available features clearly to the user. The fourth and final section is a row of listings labeled "Featured Properties", and contains a well designed component that shows the properties most important information as well as the option to "Save" it by clicking on the heart icon. That concludes the front or home page of the website. Next, the functionalities of the buttons and pages will be examined in detail. Starting with how the buttons on the navigation bar compare with the buttons on the front page.

Figure 2

One problem a user can encounter is when wanting to view their saved searches. Selecting the "Saved" button on the navigation bar will prompt the user to select between "saved properties" and "saved searches". When clicking on "saved searches" the user is brought to a

new page with a list of searches and filters saved by the user. The concept is great as it allows users to not waste time when looking for properties at a later time. Unfortunately the scroll bar is non functional and the option to remove the saved searches is not available. Although the design is consistent with the rest of the website and features options to go to the saved search listings as well as edit the filters of your saved searches. The problem here is, if the user wanted to enter this "Saved searches" page through the home page instead of the navigation bar, they would fall into some trouble. Selecting the "saved searches" from the home page will open a new page up (property listing) with a pop up on the top left saying "Saved your search!" and the option to "see all" below it (Figure 3). This is a mistake, it prompts the user the message they would get if they tried saving their search. Instead the "saved searches" button on the home page should have sent the user straight to the "saved searches" page. Next the user can view their saved properties by clicking on the "saved properties" button. The "Saved Properties" page, is a well designed page that features mock properties and a fake map. Other than a few logical and usability issues with the fake elements and unusable buttons, this page is well designed and mapped.
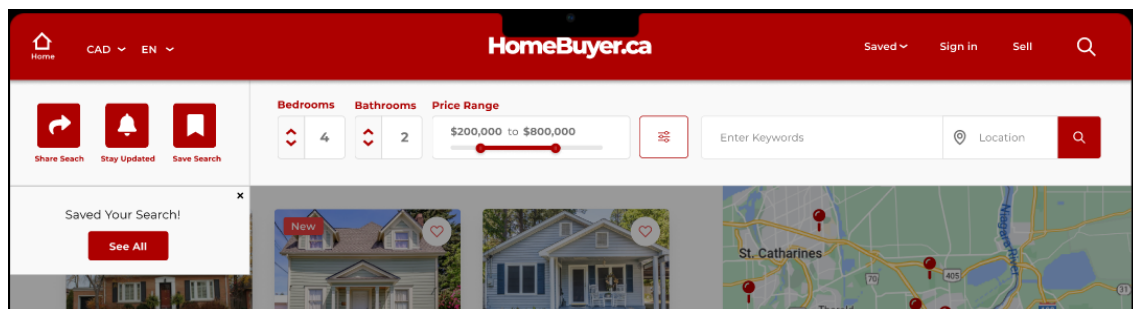
Figure 3

Next on the menu is the sell button on the navigation bar. This will send the user to a page where they have information on "commissionless" and "with a realtor" features are presented. The user also has the ability to click on either option and fill out a form. Both pages for commissionless and full service are well designed and consistent with the rest of the site. Compared to the home page, the user can pick between two buttons that send them straight to

either page (commissionless or with a realtor) where they fill out a form. The user also has the option to view the page that shows both features information as if they were to access it from the nav bar. Finally the magnifying icon on the navigation bar or the "search" component on the front page, allows the user to look for certain properties listed on the site. The difference is clicking the search button on the nav bar will open a pop up while the same contents in the pop up are on the front page. When pressing the search button, the user will be sent to a new page which shows a gallery of listings and a map on the left of the page (figure 4). There are only 6 listings and a non-functional map (image) so this page is just a mock up, but in terms of design, everything is well made and fits well with the rest of the site.
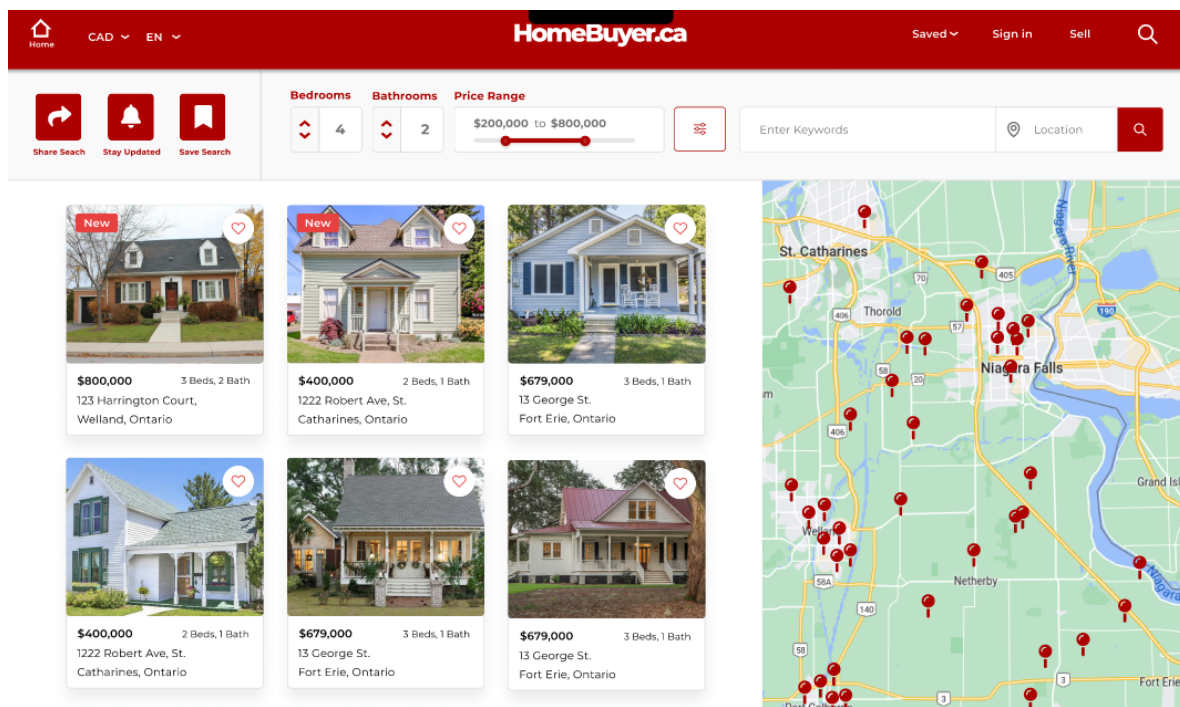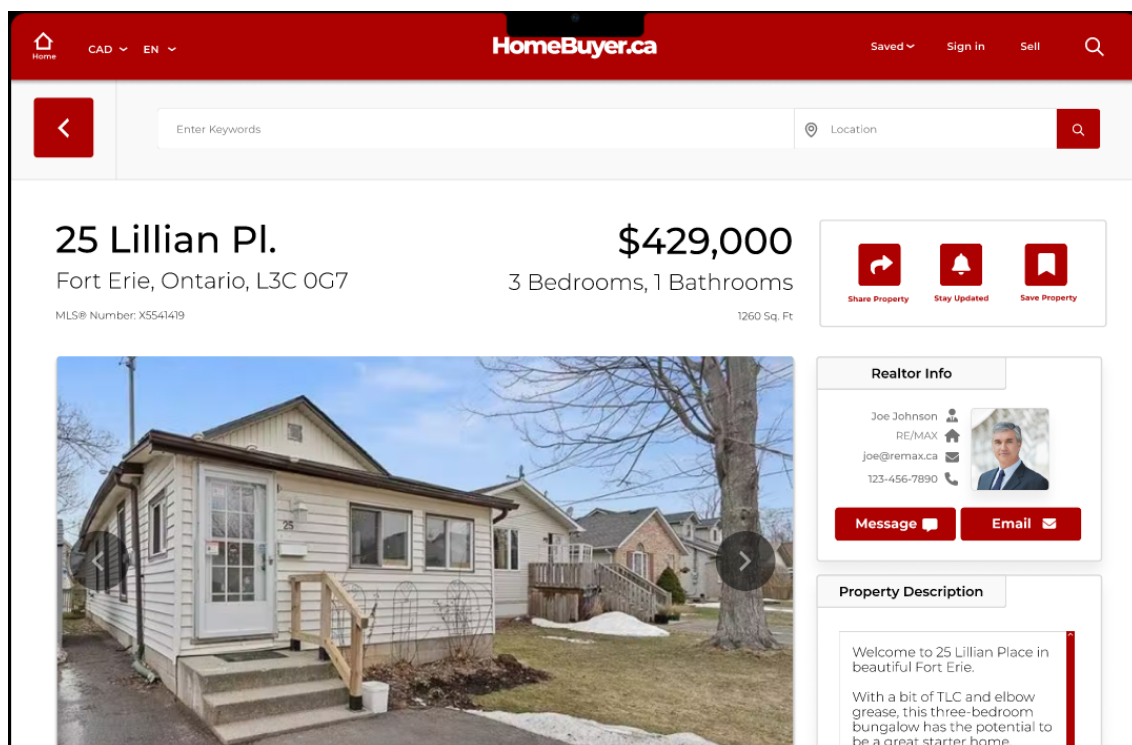

Figure 4

Another flaw was found on the search page, on the top left where it says "share search" if the user clicks it, they are prompted with a pop up that says "Saved your search!" which is the wrong response. Only when the user double clicks the "share search" button does the option of social media show up which is the correct response to that button. The same thing happens with

the "stay updated" and "Save search" button. Besides the logical mapping of the buttons on this page, the page is a great concept of something that could need more time to work on.

The final page up for analysis is the actual listing page for each property. When clicking on a property for sale, a user is brought to this page (figure 5). This page is packed with information and makes sure not to waste any free space. Although many of the buttons, input fields, sliders, and images are static and unusable, the page is a great design, featuring elements that match with the rest of the site.

Figure 5

To summarize the interaction problems of this group's website, most of the buttons and text fields don't work. The way the group submitted the website on a website builder called figma also restricted the group from making their website responsive, so at this moment the website would probably not look good on a phone. I would suggest the group try to code more of the components so they are real and not mock ups. One last point I would like to point out is the lack of animations, something as simple as loading or button highlighting animation can

really help put the design all together nicely. Besides the flaws, the website interface addresses the needs of the user and offers a dynamic layout that users can bring prior domain knowledge to the interface.The site had a good contrast in their design because of their color choice as well as good consistency with the designs of the components/sections. Some logical problems encountered were some buttons sending the user to the wrong page, for example the home page has a button labeled "Saved Searches" which should send the user to the page with all their pre saved filters, but instead sends them to the buy page with the wrong pop up. Another thing was the sign in and account function was not present even though they designed the input fields for signing in/up. Also having the sign in page as the first page or "front page" is a poor choice, I'd suggest having the home page as the index page. In terms of design principal misuse, the website has no issues. If I were to award a mark to the project on a scale of 1-10, I would rate it an 8/10, because besides a couple of mapping flaws and unusable components, the necessary steps to having a really well put together website is there. The design of the website is really well done, a lot cleaner and more content filled than a site like our groups. I would say in terms of design, their group did a much better job, but overall I would say our group created a more complete and responsive design.