

UX Design Journal 4

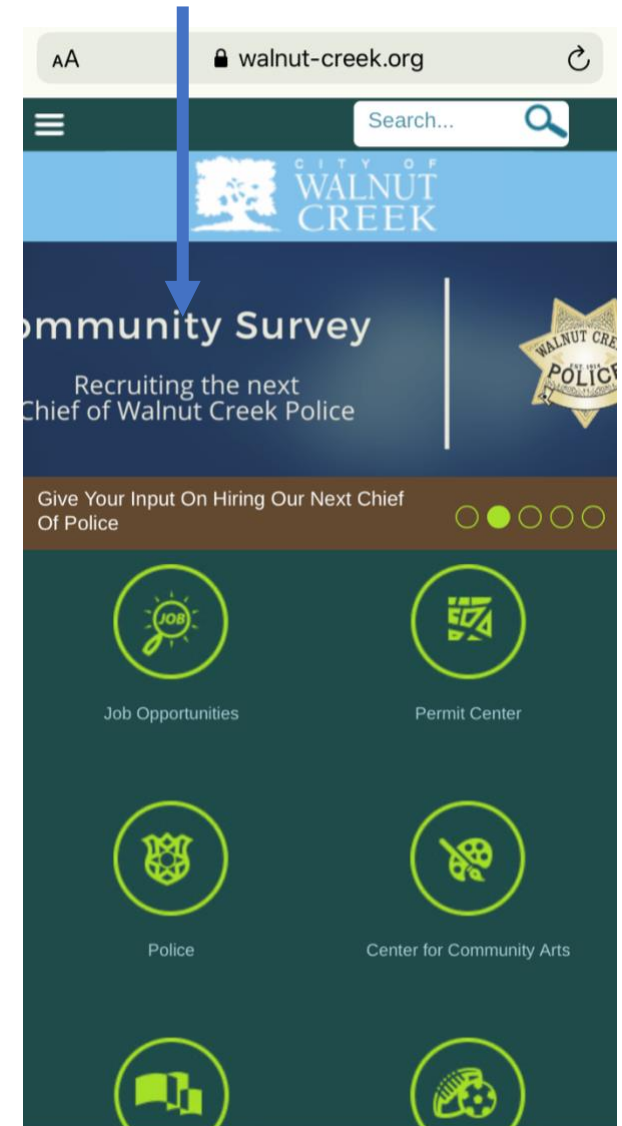
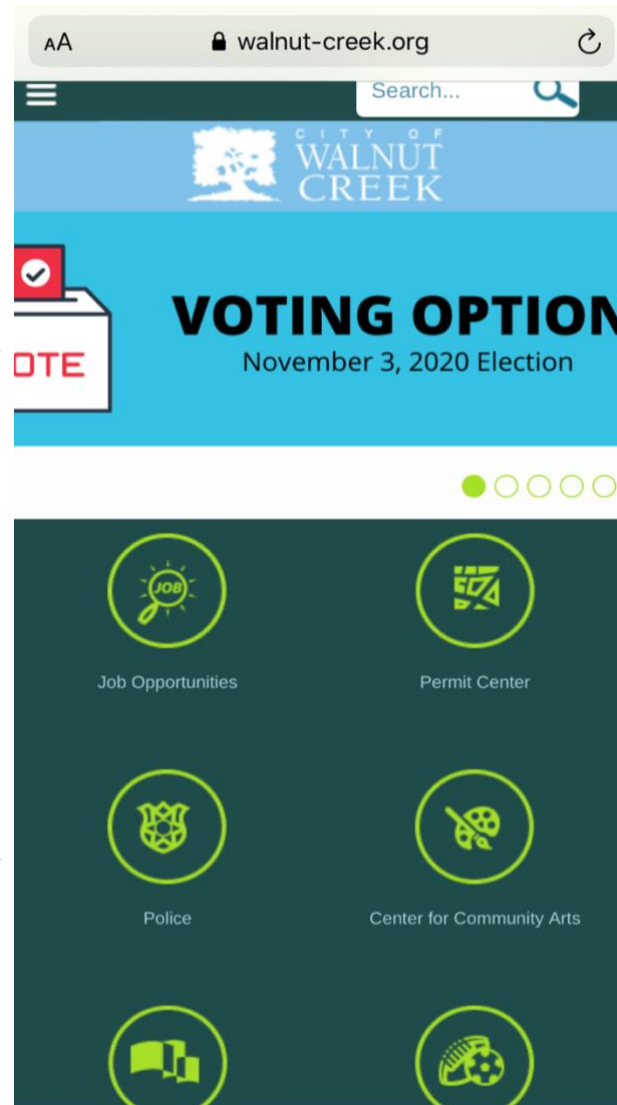
By Nasim Eghlima

City of Walnut Creek Website (Phone version):

The phone version of the website cuts out chunks of text on the homepage (it is not reduced to size). This is not only visually unappealing to the user, but it also cuts out vital texts that have been positioned at the top of the homepage to be the first thing users see.

The colors used on the site are visually very unappealing, and the pictures used for the icons are also very basic and unappealing, it would be better to use real pictures here instead of icons and to incorporate a better color template.

The content placed here changes as you are on the page, I would recommend choosing one picture that communicates the site's message to simplify the homepage.



This section is very text heavy and it looks unorganized with numbers and percentages located right next to texts. I recommend using charts and graphs to split up the texts and to display the figures graphically similar to the design on the Dublin City website shown at the end of this report.

This page violates a few heuristics namely, human limitations, aesthetic integrity and simplicity (Sauro, 2011).


walnut-creek.org

About Us »

Demographic Information

Print Feedback

For additional Demographics & Data, click here



2018

POPULATION
70,667 (Source: California Department of Finance)

INCORPORATED OCT. 21, 1914
(click here for history of Walnut Creek)

FORM OF GOVERNMENT
Council/Manager; General Law City

PHYSICAL AREA
Approximately 19.45 square miles - incorporated area

ELEVATION
131 feet above sea level

NUMBER OF HOMES
33,564 total housing units
Single-family dwellings: 36%
Multi-family dwellings: 64%
(Source: California Department of Finance)

REGISTERED VOTERS
Walnut Creek has 46,149 registered voters as of February 10, 2018. [Voter Registration statistics](#) are updated by the Secretary of State's Office quarterly.
(Source: Contra Costa County Elections Office)

PARTY AFFILIATION
21,391 Democrats
10,708 Republicans
1,151 American Independent
185 Green
317 Libertarian
59 Peace & Freedom
12,147 Declined to state
121 Miscellaneous
(Source: Contra Costa County Elections Office - February 2019)

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GENDER (2000 Census)
Male 29,683, or 46.2%
Female 34,613, or 53.8%

AGE (2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census)
Under 18: 16%
18-64: 54%
65 and above: 29%

RACIAL MAKEUP (2017 American Community Survey - US Census)
White, 77% (compared with 80% in 2014; 83.9 % in 2000; 90.8% in 1990)
Black, 2% (compared with 2% in 2014; 1.1% in 2000; 0.8% in 1990)
Asian or Pacific Islander, 15% (compared with 13% in 2014; 9.4% in 2000; 6.7% in 1990)
Latino or Hispanic, 9% (10% in 2014; 6% in 2000; not tracked in 1990)
All others, 2%

EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (Source: 2017 American Community Survey, US Census)

1. Usability issues:

- The home page on the phone is not resized to be readable or visually appealing on the phone screen, therefore the user will find it hard to read the content as some of the text is cutoff.
- The website is not visually appealing, the use of dark colors and non-complementary colors makes the website an unpleasurable experience for the user.
- The user will find it difficult to find the information they need due to the content being poorly organized, therefore violating the user control heuristic (Sauro, 2011).

2. Users Impacted:

These usability issues impact various members of the Walnut Creek community that need to find information about the city, this includes people of all ages and backgrounds that reside in Walnut Creek. It could also impact users that are looking for information about Walnut creek for visiting, business etc.

3. Three (potential) reasons why the usability issue occurs and evidence:

- One of the reasons could be due to cost saving and the budget.
- The website was designed without taking a mobile friendly design into consideration.
- When the site was designed it didn't take a human centered design into consideration. Not enough time was spent on UX design research.
- It is possible that this site was created years ago and an existing employee with limited design experience is working on the website that pre-existed.

4. Explain your recommendation for resolving the issue:

- Establish a color scheme that is more aesthetically pleasing to the user, using complementary colors and staying clear of dark colors.
- I recommend simplifying the homepage, and to only include the important content in the homepage of what the main message is that the city is trying to communicate the users.

- I recommend taking the mobile design into consideration when designing the website, testing the mobile version to see if the site is optimized for the phone and if not to create a design that would support the phone version.
- The pages on the website are very text heavy and lack order and sufficient visuals, I recommend adding visual interest by adding graphs and images to split up the text and to make it for readable and visually interesting to users.

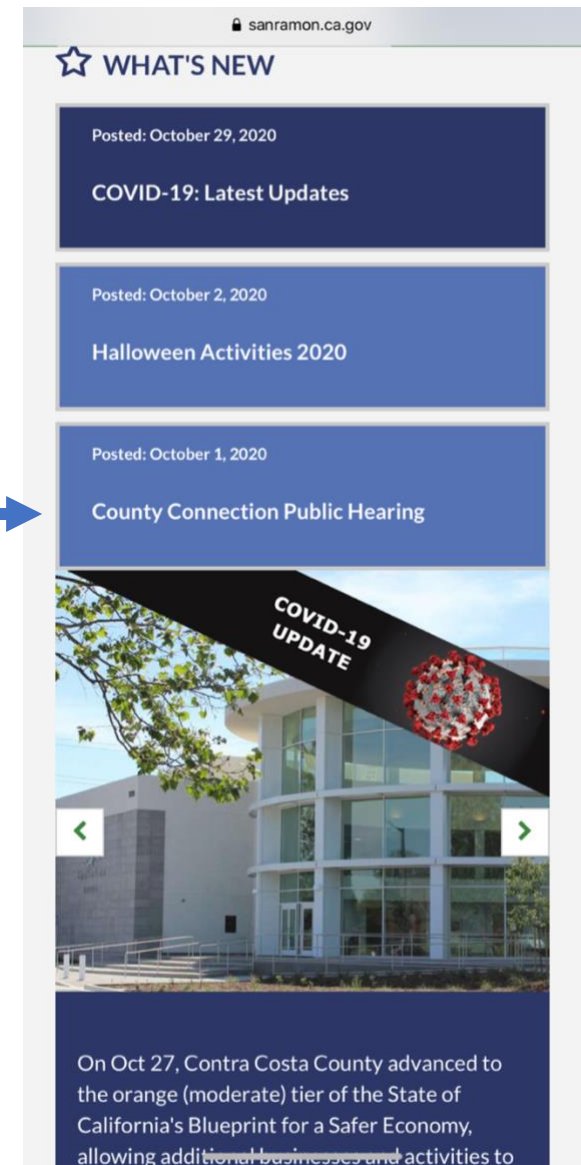
5. Provide your insight on which of the three challenges might be most feasible to address and why:

I think simplifying the homepage maybe the most feasible to address as it requires for the designer to only choose one picture and message for the top of the homepage and to remove any unnecessary information on the homepage. They could also pay attention to the picture and message they are including to ensure its optimized to be used on the mobile version of the site.

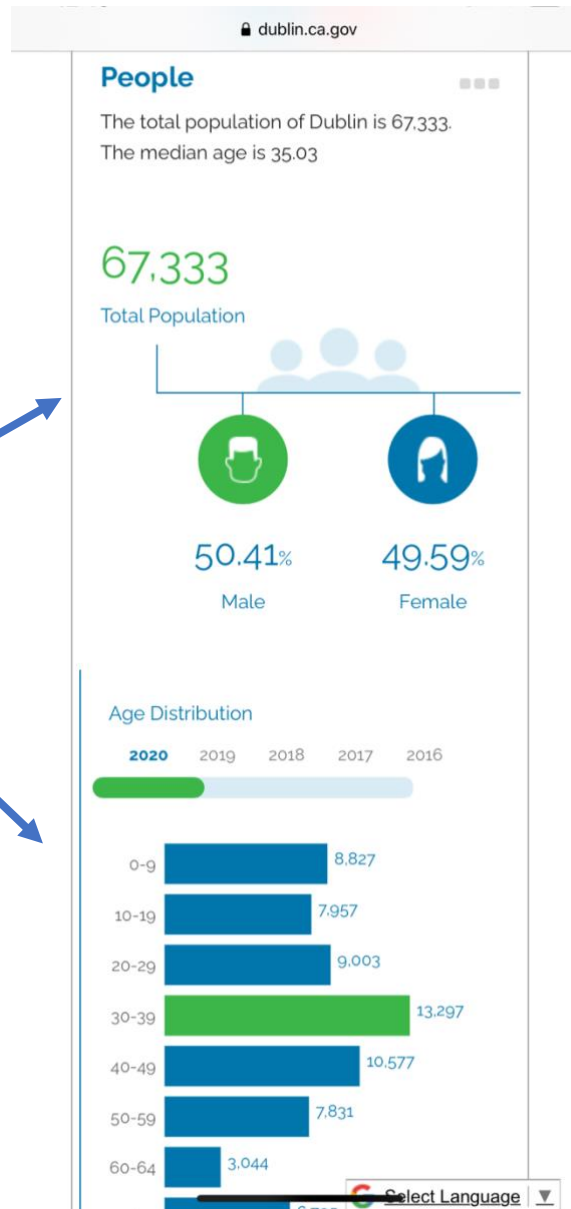
This is an example of a simplified and visually appealing homepage. The use of one picture and branding of the city plus a clear signifier to click here for more information makes it easy for users to follow along. Also, at the top of the homepage, inside the search bar, it clearly signifies that this is where you can get more help by including the phrase “how many we help you today?”. I recommend for the City of Walnut Creek to use this as an example of how to simplify their homepage and to send a clear message to their users.



This is a good example of organization and clarity. I recommend for the city of Walnut Creek to use this as an example of how to include recent events or news on their homepage as opposed to the current icons they are using that seems dated and is visually unappealing.



These two screenshots show how the use of graphics and infographics makes the demographics page more visually appealing and easier to read for the user. I recommend for the city for Walnut Creek to add visual interest by adding graphs and images to split up the text in their demographics page to make it readable and visually interesting to users.



Sources:

Sauro, J. (2011, Aug. 2). *What's the difference between a heuristic review and a cognitive walkthrough?* U Measuring U. Retrieved from: <https://measuringu.com/he-cw/>