

Com.unity

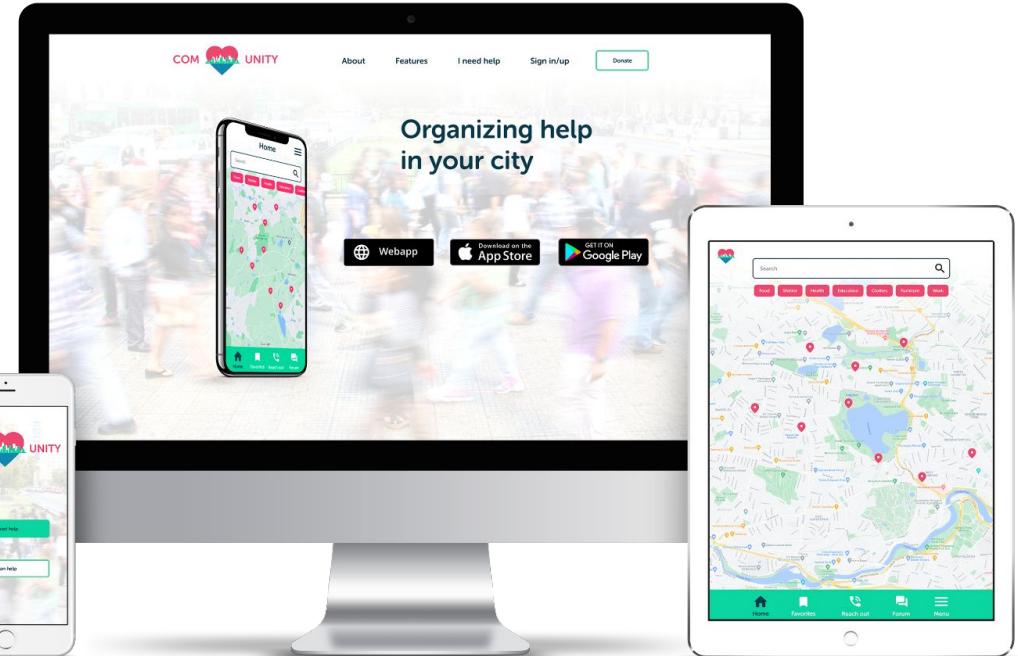
Sylvie Donatien

Project overview



The product:

Social good app for cities to ensure everyone has food and shelter.



Project duration:

October 2021

Project overview



The problem:

How can a city waste so much food when people living in this very same city are hungry or food insecure? How can people live on the streets when there are so many unused empty spaces? Com.unity was born to help cities better organize help to make sure everyone has food and shelter.



The goal:

Organize help in a city by making it easy to ask for help or to help the community.

Project overview



My role:

UX designer leading the app design on mobile, tablet and desktop



Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low- and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, iterating on designs and responsive design.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- Competitive audit
- Ideation

User research: summary



I conducted user interviews and created user journey maps to better understand the target user, their needs and their pain points.

I discovered that it's sometimes difficult to ask for help so the need of being able to use an app anonymously and get the help one needs is very important.

I also discovered that users want to help in very different ways and the more ways an app can accommodate the better for the community.

Persona 1: Paolo

Problem statement:

Paolo is an altruist person with some free time and resources who needs to know what people in their community need, when and where because they want to help people in need during their free time.



Paolo

Age: 42 yo
Education: Master's degree
Hometown: Cambridge, MA
Family: Divorced, 1 child
Occupation: Software engineer

"I'd like to help people in need in my city, I have some free time during the week but I'm not sure what to do to help."

Goals

- Help people in need
- Use his free time for others

Frustrations

- It's difficult to know how to help
- I don't know who needs help in my city
- How can I use my free time to help others?

Paolo feels lucky. He has a great high-paying job and some free time. He knows that a lot of people are not as lucky as he is. He would like to help people in need in his community, homeless people or people who simply have a rough time making ends meet.

Persona 2: Karen

Problem statement:

Karen is a business owner who hates wasting food who needs to know whether some people from their community need free food because they want to give away unsold food to people in need instead of throwing it away.



Karen

Age: 54 yo
Education: Graduate degree
Hometown: Cambridge, MA
Family: Married, 2 kids
Occupation: Bakery owner

"It's so frustrating to have to throw away food when there are so many people in need"

Goals

- Give away the unsold food to people who need it
- Get her customers to buy food for people in need if they want to

Frustrations

- Cakes, bread or cupcakes that were not sold during the day have to be thrown away
- Lack of time to organize food pickup/reach out to people in need

Karen started as a baker apprentice with a neighbor of her mother's who gave her a chance when she was young. From there, she built up experience and worked hard to finally realize her dream: own a bakery shop! She opened her shop 6 years ago and she's very successful. She would like to give back to her community and people in need.

Competitive audit

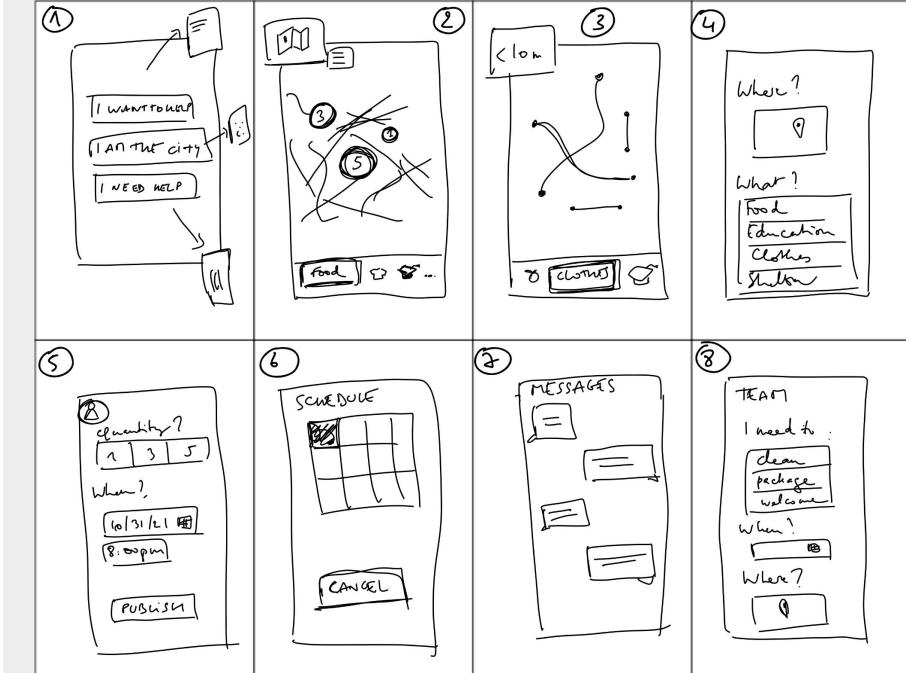
An audit was conducted on 3 direct competitors in order to analyze their strengths, their weaknesses and to identify opportunities.

Competitive audit goal									Visual design	Tone	Content
	Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition	Brand identity	Descriptiveness	
Olio	direct	Worldwide	A food-sharing platform, connecting people with neighbors and local shops all over the world	Free, in-app donations	https://olioexp.com/	Small	Neighbors, local businesses	Transform the 'throw-away society' into a 'give-away society'	OUTSTANDING	Very friendly, positive and fun tone	OUTSTANDING
412 Food Rescue	direct	Pittsburgh, PA	Connects users with nonprofits who serve those who are food insecure.	Free	https://412foodrescue.org/	Small	Nonprofits, individuals	A rescue schedule flexible enough to accommodate daily, weekly or once-only rescues — and each rescue takes as little as 30 minutes.	GOOD	+ badges + food distance, availability, newest, closest, highest	GOOD
Shelter App	direct	A few cities in the USA	Help homeless and low-income families connect to services and resources using web and mobile app platforms.	Free	https://www.shelterapp.org/	Small	Homeless and low-income families, nonprofits/charities	Charities/nonprofits can add their services after signing up All-volunteer nonprofit organization	NEEDS WORK	+ Goals + Forum + Messages - No Facebook login possible on the mobile app	GOOD
GOOD + Responsive - No features, only info				RATING + Multiple sign-in options - Too much personal information required by the app on first launch				NEEDS WORK - Layout is like mobile one but bigger, not really responsive			
NEEDS WORK - Layout is like mobile one but bigger, not really responsive				GOOD + Great navigation, items in menu are helpful - Layout is a bit too condensed, more space needed between elements - Some filtering options are hidden in the burger menu				GOOD + 3 platforms: web, Android and Apple + Map or list view + Contact info for each service/location + Chatbot for support + Crisis lines are listed + Add service/location to my favorites			



Ideation

The Crazy 8 method allowed me to have a lot of ideas flowing. The more ideas the better. Then I reflected on which ones were good and which ones could be improved and how.

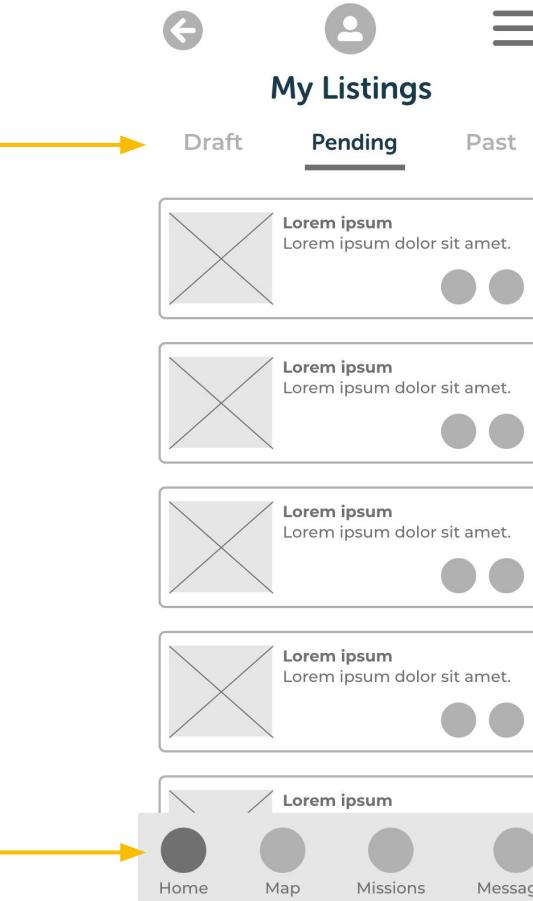


Digital wireframes

After ideating and drafting some paper wireframes, I created a first version of the digital wireframes in Adobe XD.

The wireframes focused on the 2 use cases: *I need help* and *I can help*.

Tabs allow the user to easily navigate between categories of listings



Navigation bar at the bottom allows for an easy navigation

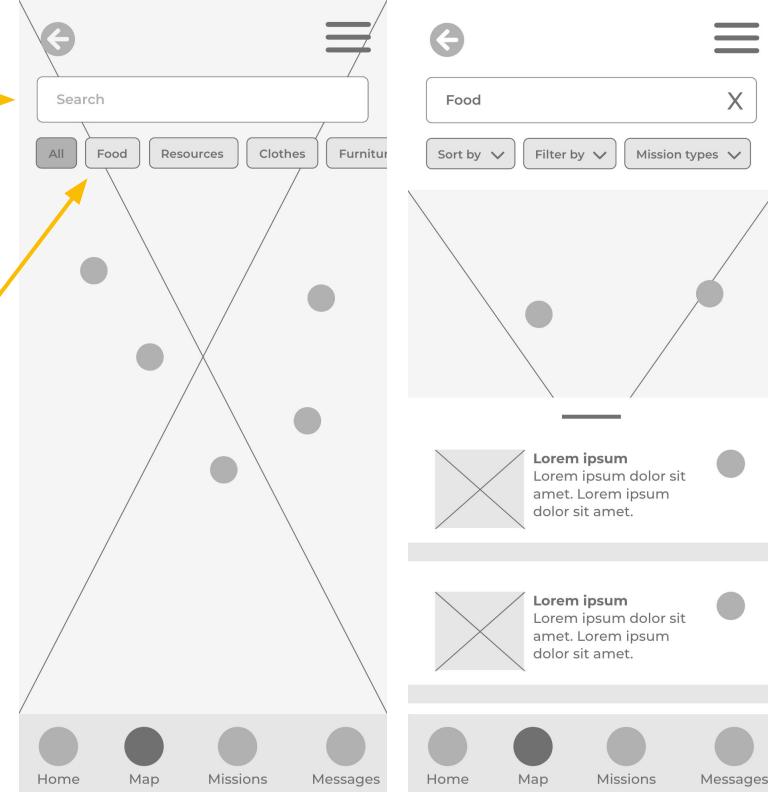
The user can scroll on their listings and click on a listing to view its details

Digital wireframes

One of the challenges was to make it easy for the user to help. The search for missions is critical and must be easy to use.

Users can search for missions around them

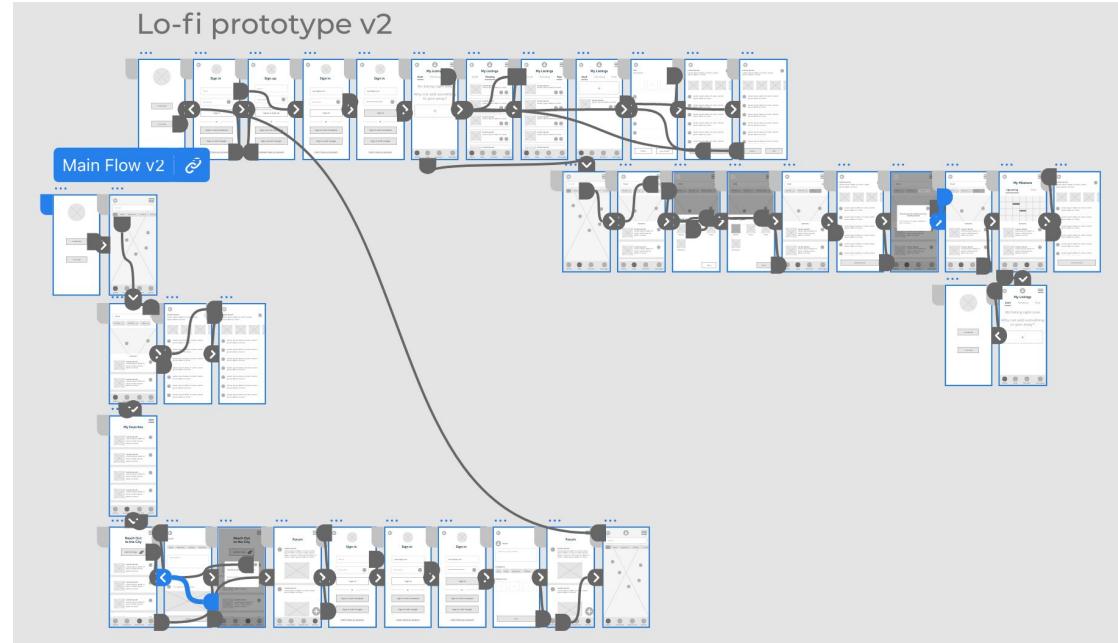
And filter on relevant categories



Low-fidelity prototype

I created a low-fidelity prototype that connected the user flow of searching for help, creating a listing and accepting a mission of food delivery.

[View Com.unity's low-fidelity prototype](#)



Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Unmoderated usability study



Location:

USA, remote



Participants:

4 participants



Length:

15 minutes

Usability study: findings

Insert a one to two sentence introduction to the findings shared below.

1

Floating buttons

Floating action buttons (FAB) were confusing to users: either their placement on the screen or their meaning confused most of users

2

Forum

Most of users were frustrated to have to create an account in order to access the forum in read-only

3

Search filters

The label of some search results filters were confusing

4

Favorites

Users had trouble adding a place to their favorites.

Refining the design

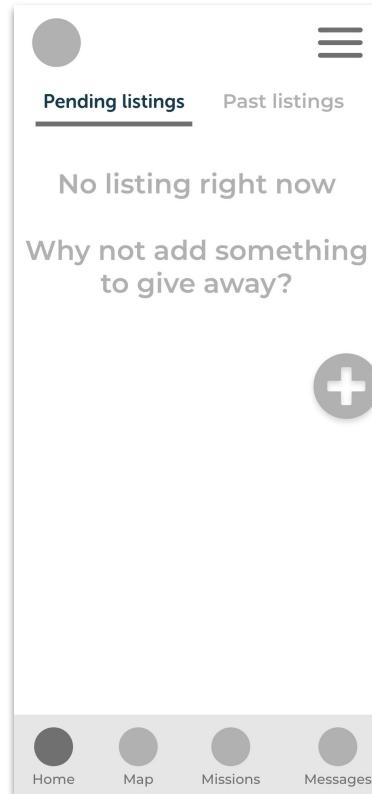
- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

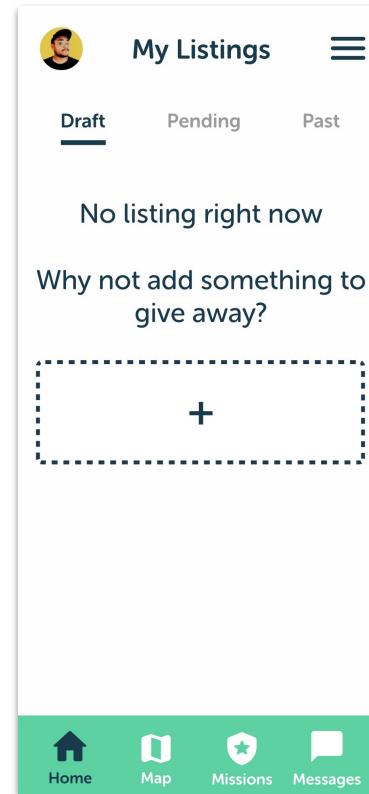
Based on the insights from the first usability study, I proceeded to solve users' pain points.

I replaced Floating Action Buttons with an action area at center stage, way more meaningful.

Before usability study



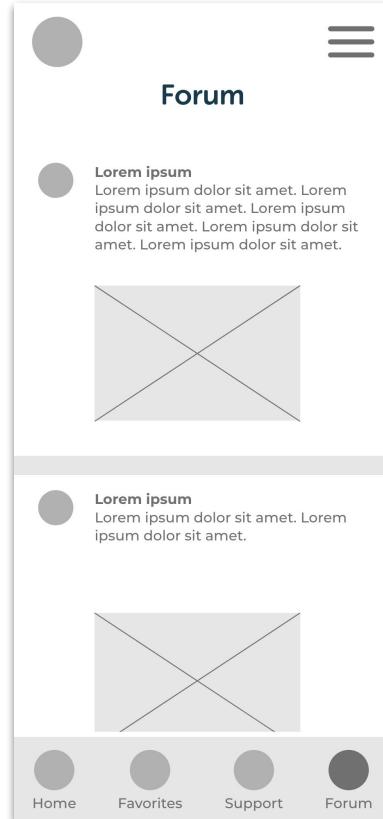
After usability study



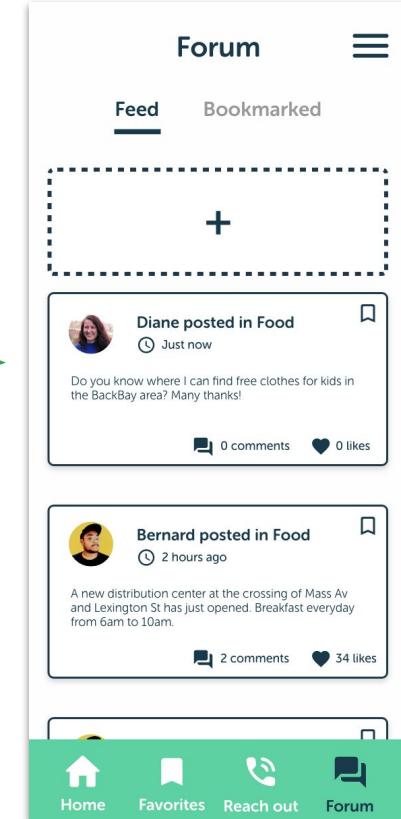
Mockups

The forum is now accessible in read-only to all users. The app asks the user to sign in or up only when they want to post a message or comment.

Before usability study



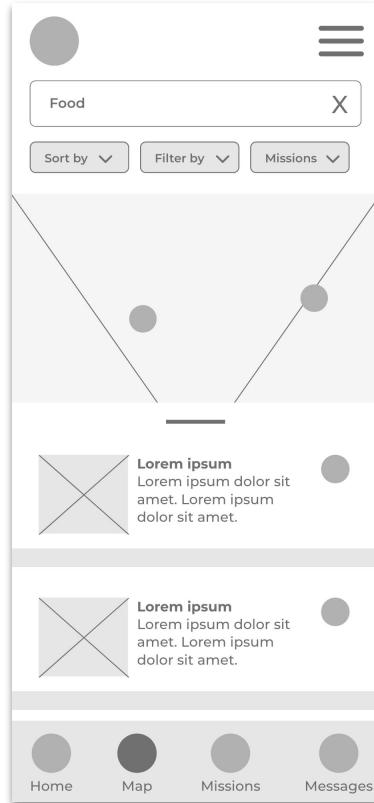
After usability study



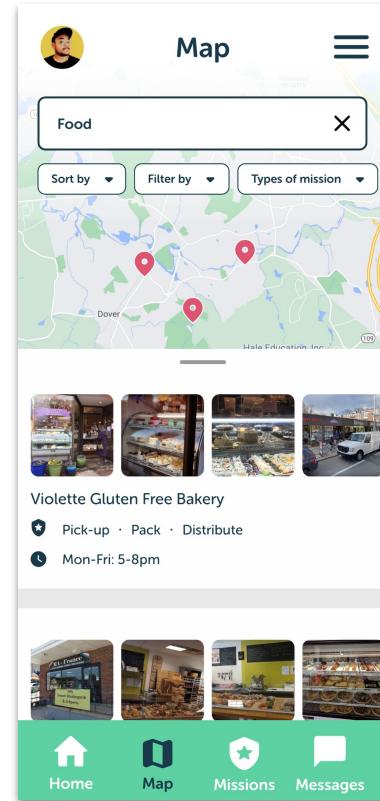
Mockups

The labels of the filtering options are more meaningful.

Before usability study



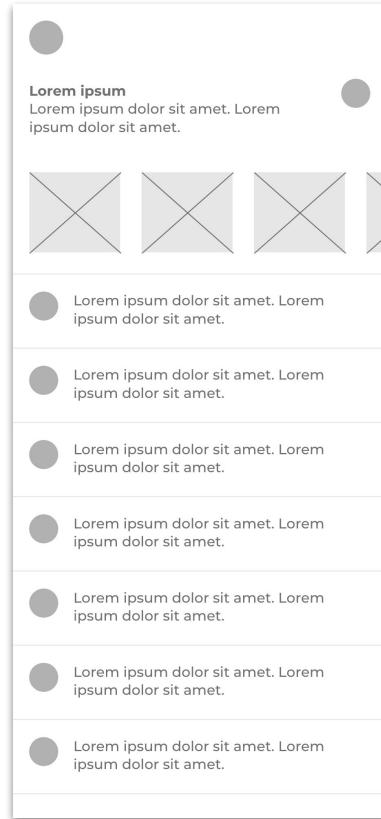
After usability study



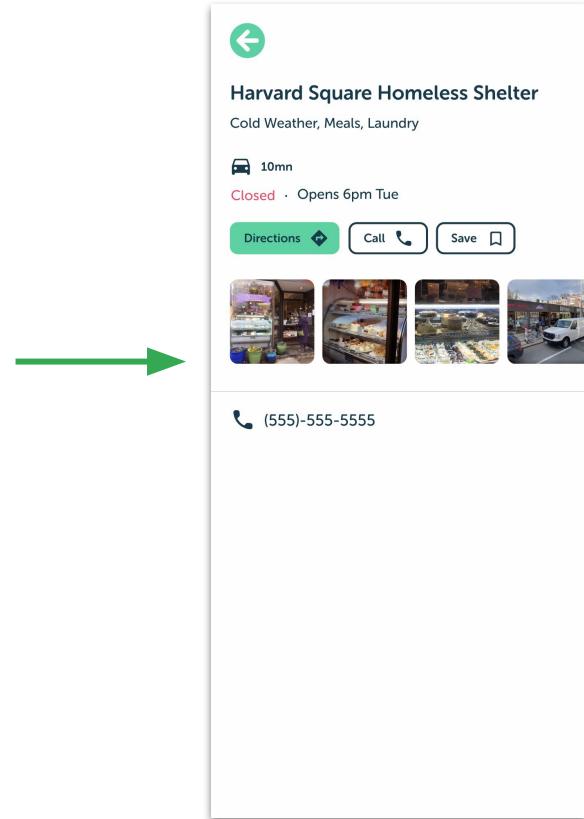
Mockups

The actions that a user can do are clearly identified with buttons.

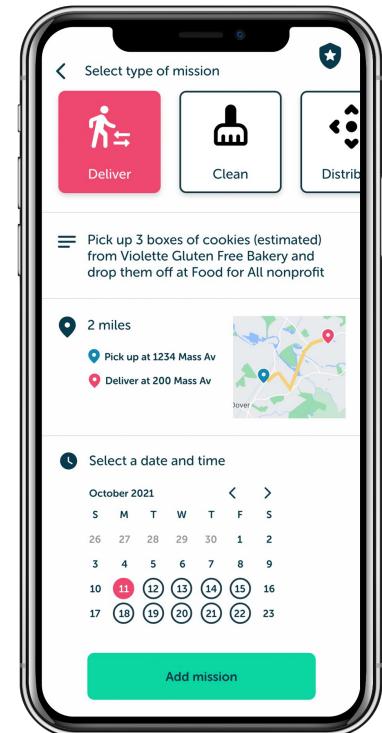
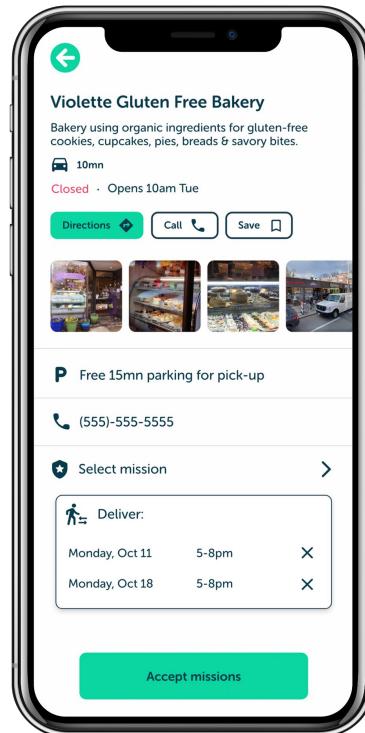
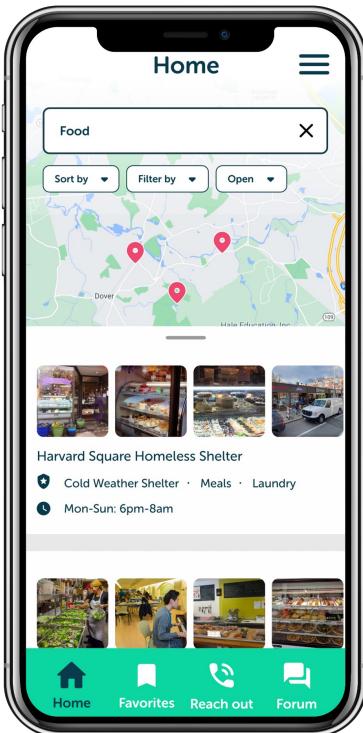
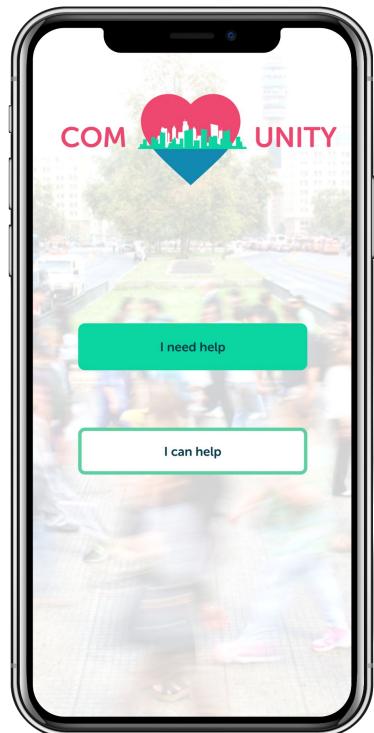
Before usability study



After usability study

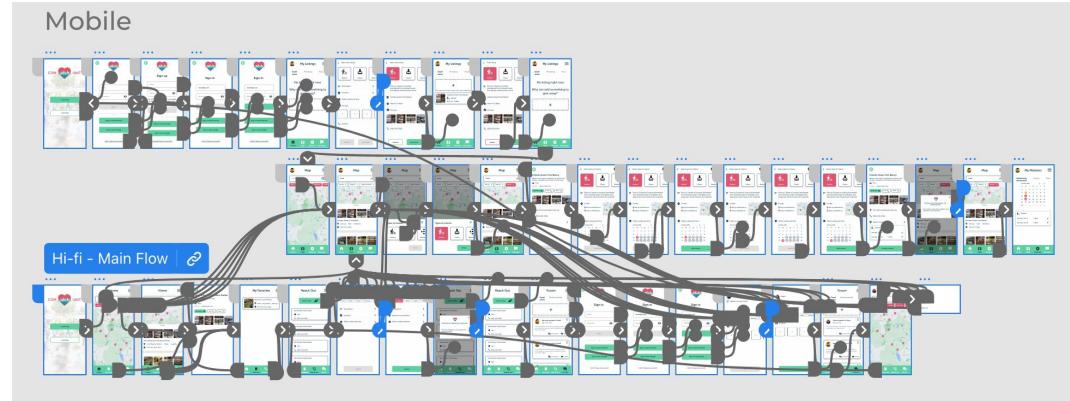


Mockups



High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype followed the same user flow as the low-fidelity prototype, including design changes made after the usability study.



[View Com.unity's high-fidelity prototype](#)

Accessibility considerations

1

I checked color contrast
using [WebAIM online
checker](#)

2

Clear labels and
conventional icons

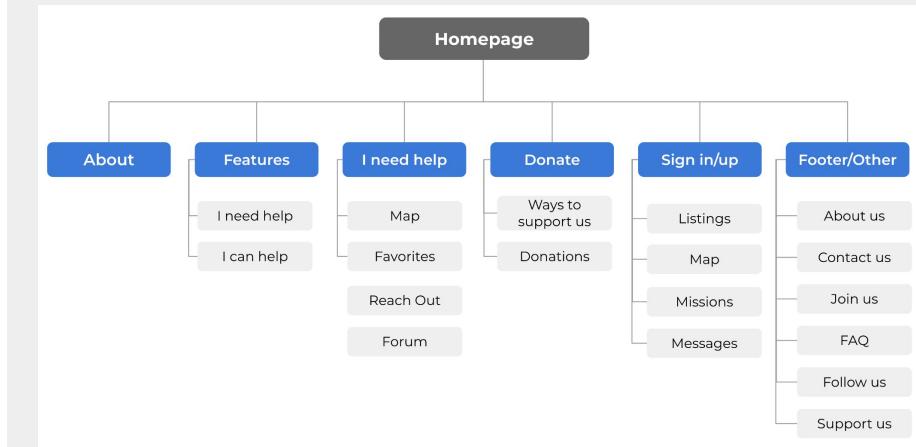
Responsive Design

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

Sitemap

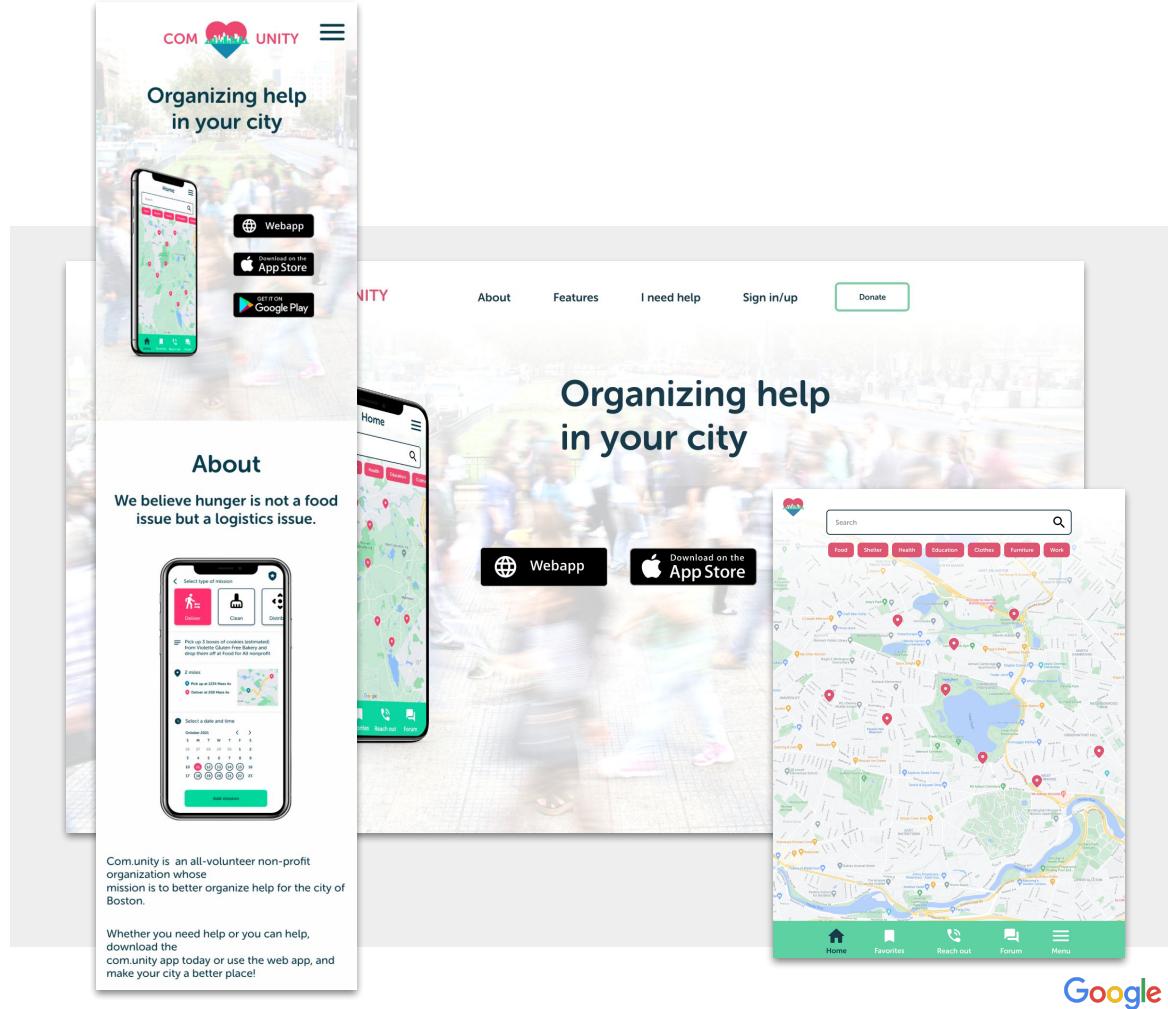
The homepage is there to present the app and to let the users know how to download and use it. The users can also donate very easily through a call-to-action button in the header and in the footer.

The *I need help* page and *Sign in/up* page are the entry points to the web app.



Responsive designs

The app was designed for multiple screen sizes (mobile, desktop and tablet). Elements were reorganized or replaced depending on what's best for the users on a specific device.



Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

Users found the features in the app very useful and would love to be able to use this app in real life and make a positive impact on their community and city.



What I learned:

Low-fidelity prototypes are great to test the user flow and detect early any problems in the flow.

I also learned the importance of designing first for the device the users will use the most and then adapting the design to other devices.

Next steps

1

Conduct another round of usability studies to make sure the pain points have been eliminated and validate that the current design has not created new ones.

2

Identify any additional areas of need and ideate on new features

Let's connect!



Thank you so much for taking the time to review my work! Any feedback is always valuable so if you'd like to share your thoughts with me or just get in touch, contact me:

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