



# **NYC Parks Website Revised Sitemap**

INFO643-01 Group 3

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## Research Brief

This research serves as a follow-on from the previous paper on redesigning the NYC Parks website. At this time, we have taken the lessons learned from the initial user research surveys and are working towards the redesign of the website. The first step of this website involves the architecture of the sitemap, the process of which this summary outlines. A new site map was created using a combination of expert knowledge and user experience testing - specifically hybrid card sorting and tree testing.

### Hybrid Card Sorting

A collection of approximately 150 page headings that currently exist on the NYC Parks website were recorded into a spreadsheet. These were then manually filtered down to 42 cards that the researchers believed represented the majority of the content on the website with minimal overlap. Users were then invited to participate in a card sorting exercise, grouping the cards into either categories designated by the research team, or additional categories they found more appropriate.

22 people completed the exercise. From their results, the following insights were drawn:

- The main additional category users created revolved around accessibility, leading to the creation of a dedicated page to the topic.
- Some ambiguity exists between 'activities' and 'events', leading to a reexamination of the topic headings.
- The users tested echoed the researchers uncertainty around topics such as sport, i.e. if you sign up for sport as an 'activity', or you use the sport 'facility'
- A distinction emerged between categories that needed to be in the main navigation (e.g. 'Parks', 'Events') and those that could exist in the footer (e.g. 'Press', 'Permits')

### Tree Test

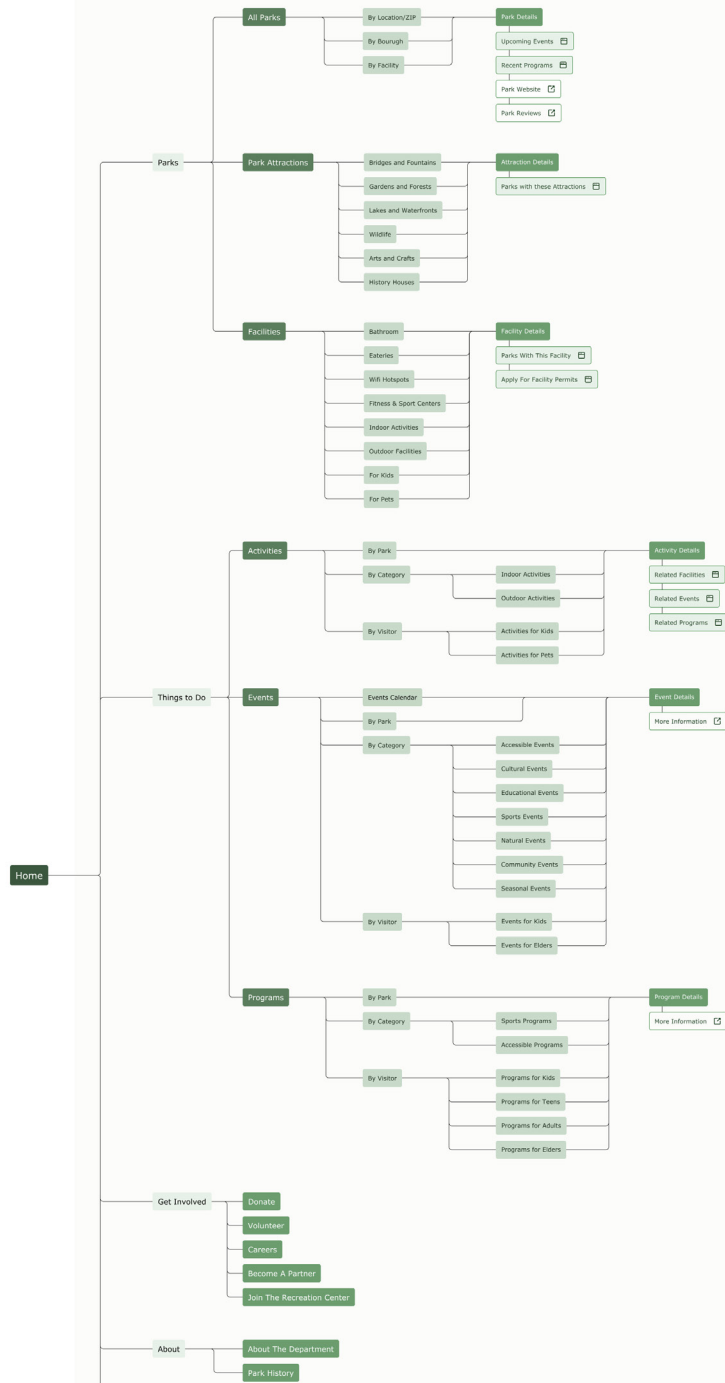
After the results from the card sorting exercise had been collected and analysed, the research team began drafting a site map. Topics were grouped based on the results of the card sort. When possible, an effort was made to not go deeper than 4 links into the website. In addition to the navigation options, special topic pages were created to bring together links on topics such as accessibility, kids, and pets.

Upon completion of the initial draft, a tree test was conducted to investigate what further improvements could be made. 21 participants completed six unique tasks by navigating the sitemap to find specific topics. From this, one major and a cluster of minor problem areas were identified.

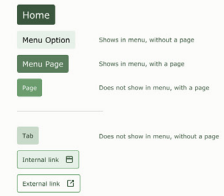
- The major issue to be addressed was the consistent confusion between the 'Events' and 'Activities' subject heading. While the distinction is important in order to delineate content, these headers (along with 'Programs') now live under the 'Things to do' heading. While this won't alleviate all confusion, it allows for additional context to be given to them than would be afforded in simply a navigation title.
- The minor issues involved users making simple (single click) errors when completing tasks, typically due to ambiguous labels. Examples include 'Become a partner' vs. 'Donate') or 'Visit a Park' vs. 'Browse Parks'. All such labels have either been clarified or merged.



## Primary Navigation



## Legend



## Footer Navigation

