

# Com.unity

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Sylvie Donatien

# Project overview



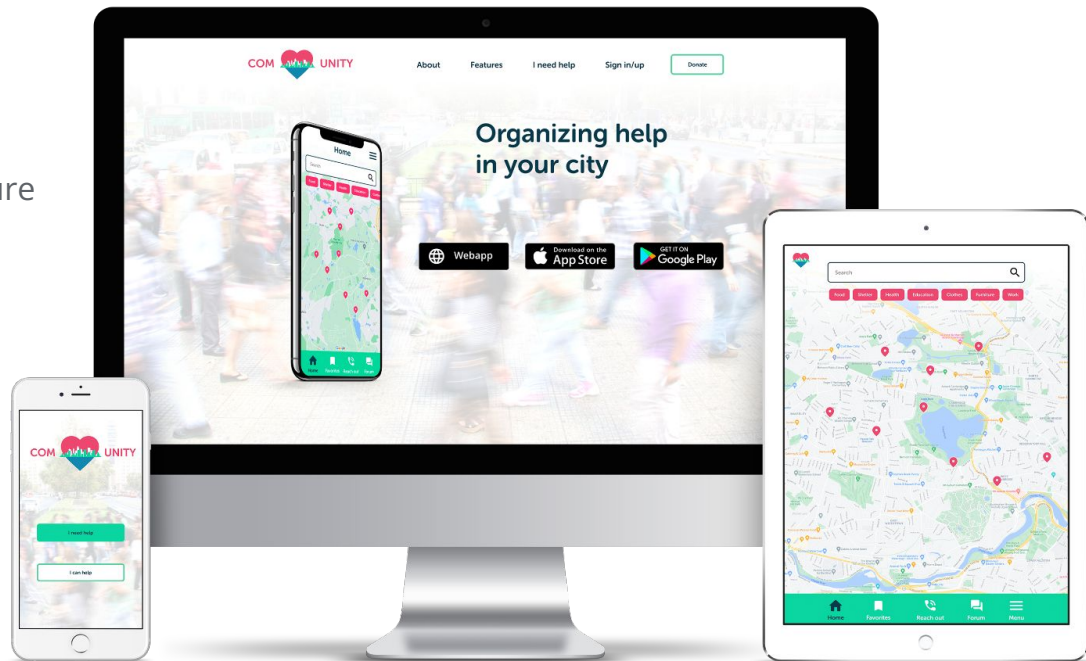
## The product:

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.

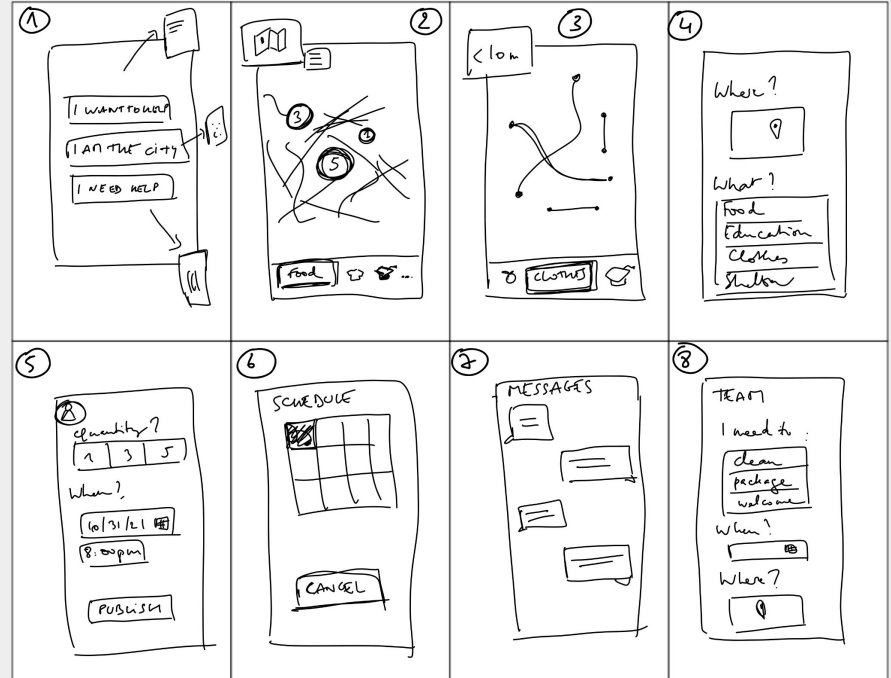
Competitive audit		Competitive audit goal						
General information								
Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition	
Olio	direct	Worldwide	A food-sharing platform, connecting people with neighbors and local shops all over the world	Free, in-app donations	<a href="https://olioex.com/">https://olioex.com/</a>	Small	Neighbors, local businesses	Transform the 'throw-away society' into a 'give-away society'
412 Food Rescue	direct	Pittsburgh, PA	Connects users with nonprofits who serve those who are food insecure.	Free	<a href="https://412foodrescue.org/">https://412foodrescue.org/</a>	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.
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	<a href="https://www.shelterapp.org/">https://www.shelterapp.org/</a>	Small	Homeless and low-income families, nonprofits/charities	Charities/nonprofits can add their services after signing up. All-volunteer nonprofit organization

<p><b>GOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Responsive</li> <li>- No features, only info</li> </ul>	<p><b>RATING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Multiple sign-in options</li> <li>- Too much personal information required by the app on first launch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Goals</li> <li>+ Forum</li> <li>+ Messages</li> <li>- No Facebook login possible on the mobile app</li> </ul> <p><b>NEEDS WORK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Map</li> <li>- No filtering options</li> <li>- No gamification</li> <li>- Phone number required</li> <li>- In Pittsburgh only!</li> </ul>	<p><b>GOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Color contrast</li> </ul>
<p><b>NEEDS WORK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Layout is like mobile one but bigger, not really responsive</li> </ul>	<p><b>GOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Great navigation, items in menu are helpful</li> <li>- Layout is a bit too condensed, more space needed between elements</li> <li>- Some filtering options are hidden in the burger menu</li> </ul>	<p><b>GOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ 3 platforms: web, Android and Apple</li> <li>+ Map or list view</li> <li>+ Contact info for each service/location</li> <li>+ Chatbot for support</li> <li>+ Crisis lines are listed</li> <li>+ Add service/location to my favorites</li> </ul>	<p><b>GOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Color contrast</li> </ul>

Visual design	Content
<p><b>Brand Identity</b></p> <p><b>OUTSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Very nice graphics that reinforces the tone</li> <li>+ Unique color palette</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tone</b></p> <p>Very friendly, positive and fun tone</p> <p><b>Descriptiveness</b></p> <p><b>OUTSTANDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Perfect amount of text</li> </ul>

# 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.





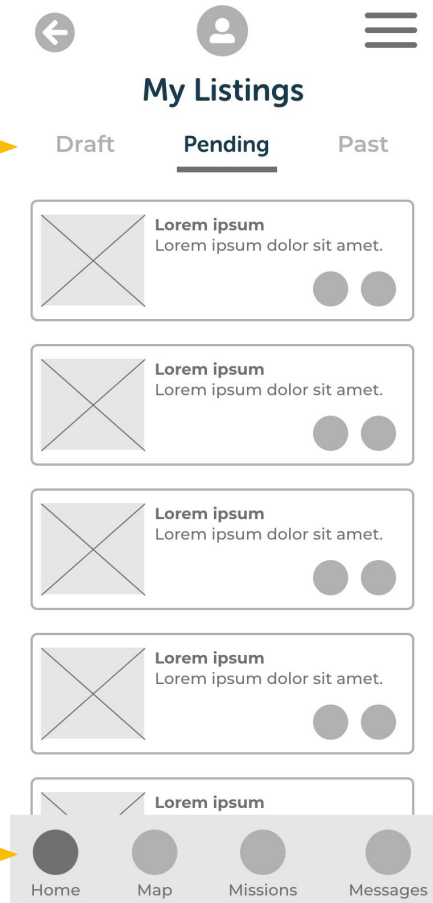
# Digital wireframes

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



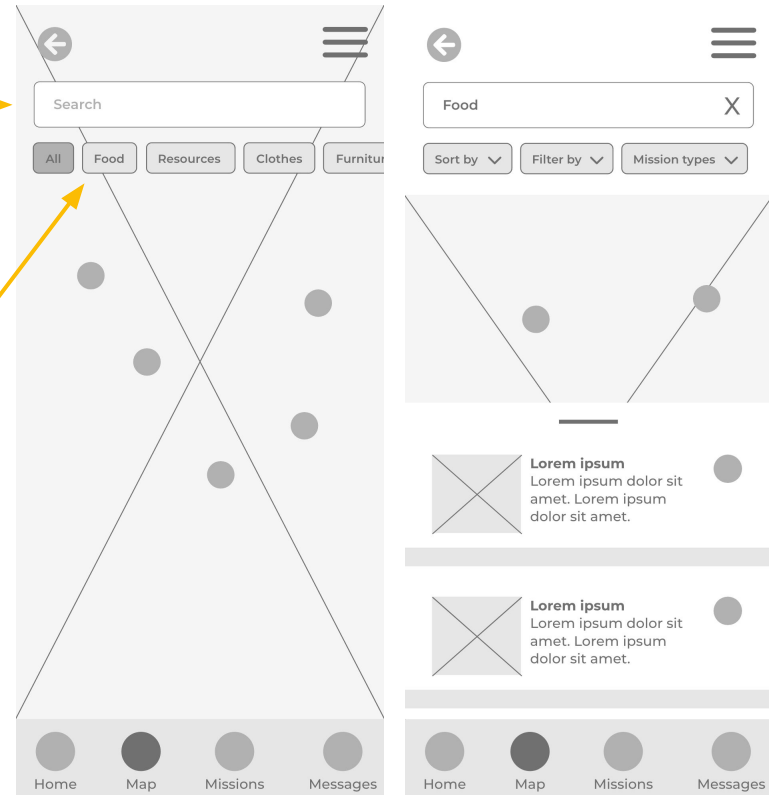
The user can scroll on their listings and click on a listing to view its details

# 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

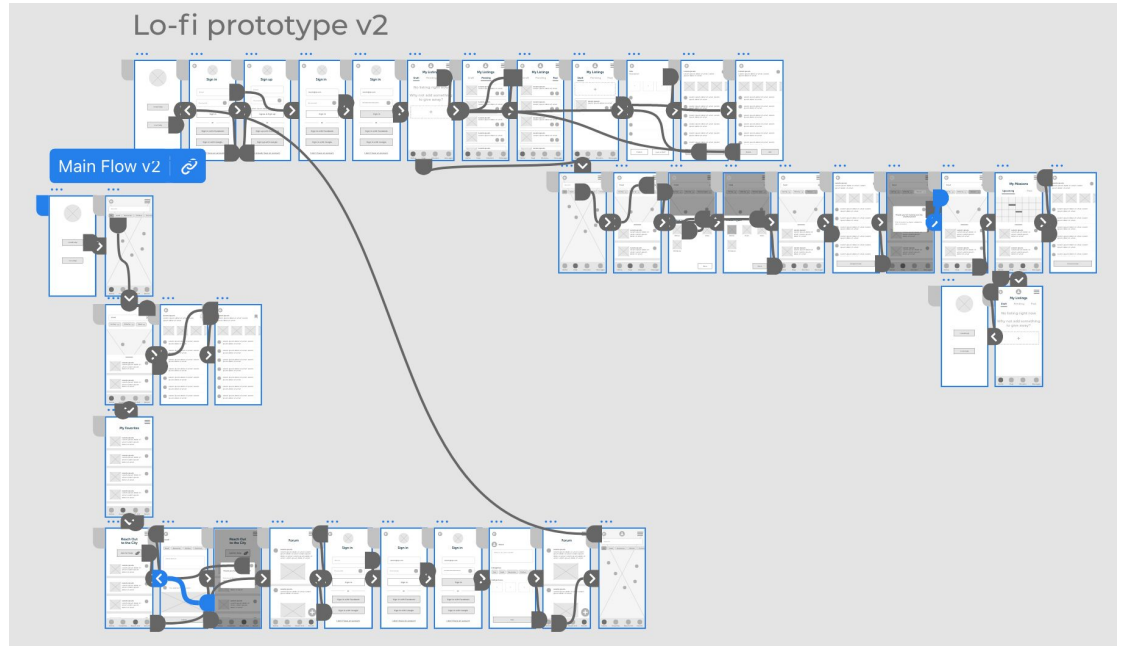
And filter on relevant categories



# 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

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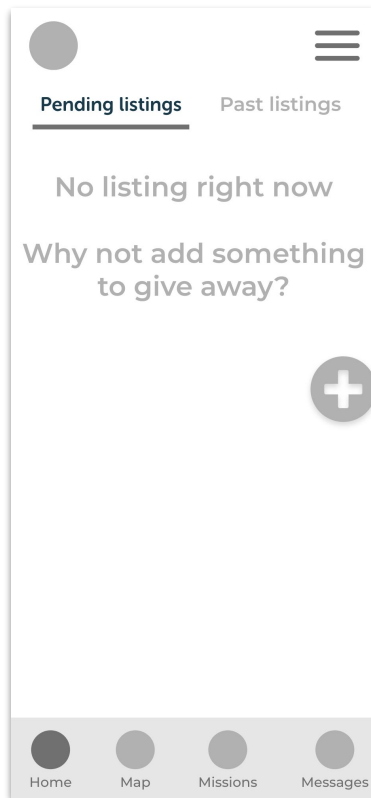
- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

# 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



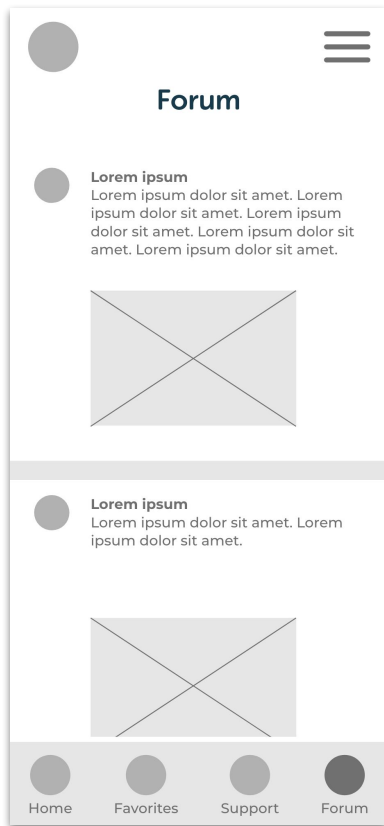
After usability study



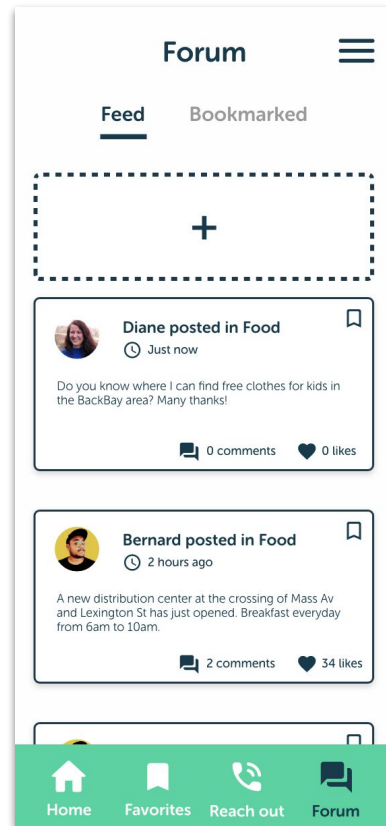
# Mockups

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



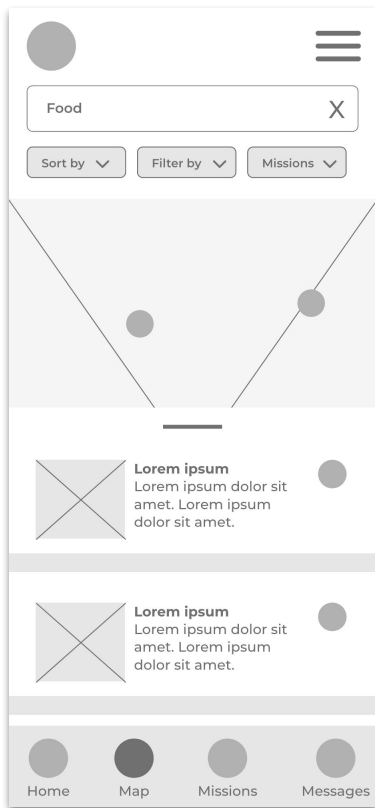
After usability study



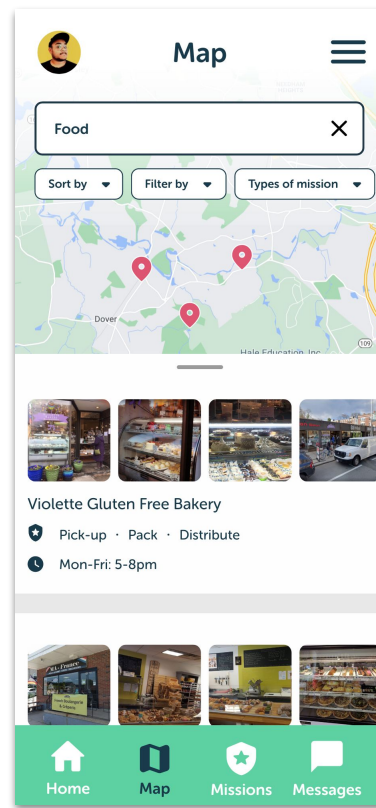
# Mockups

The labels of the filtering options are more meaningful.

Before usability study



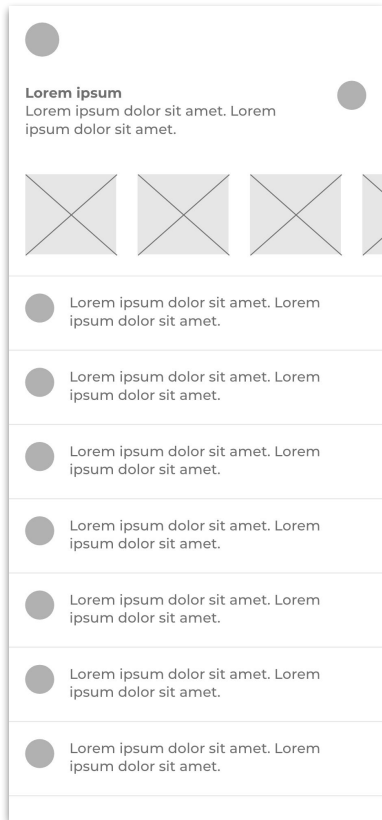
After usability study



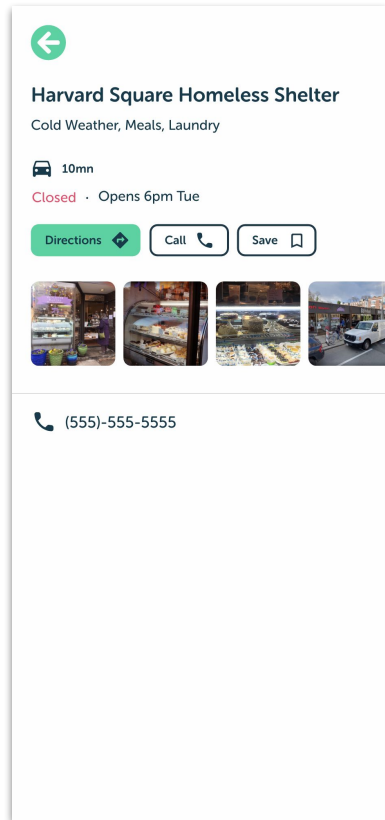
# Mockups

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

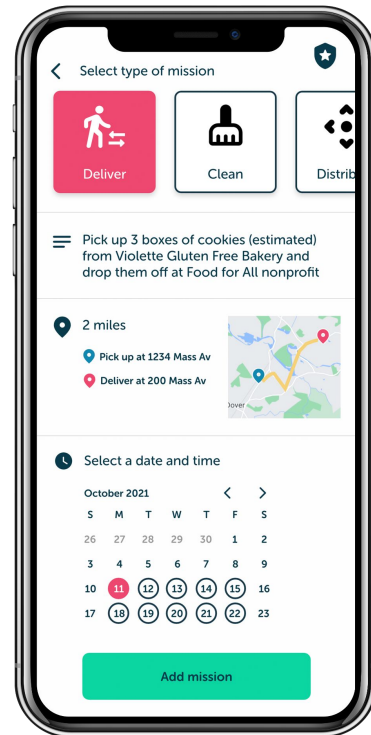
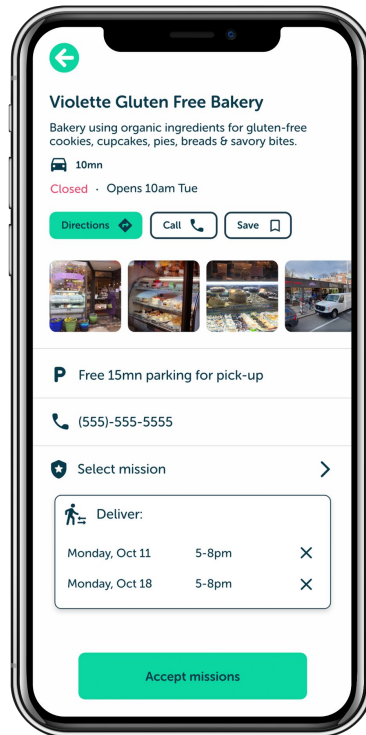
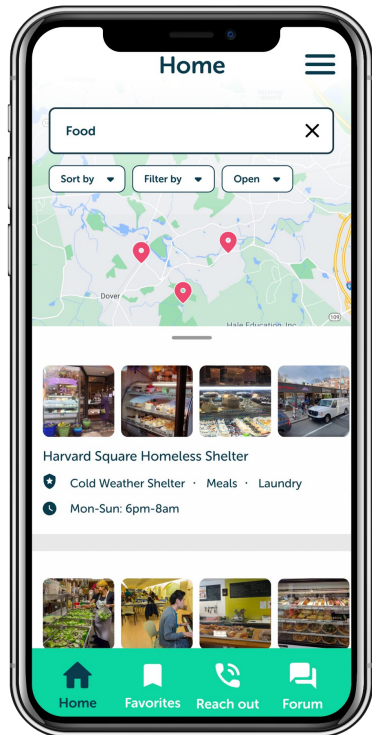
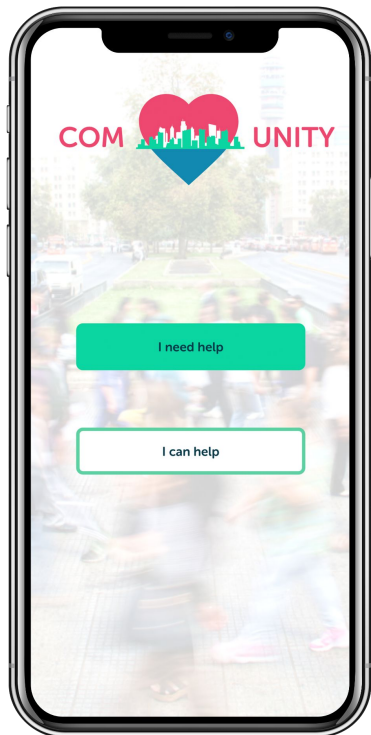
## Before usability study



## After usability study



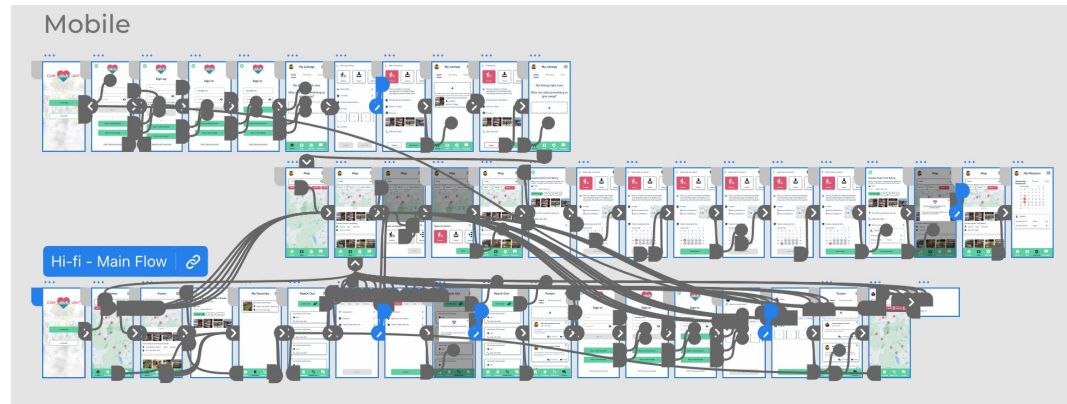
# Mockups



# 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



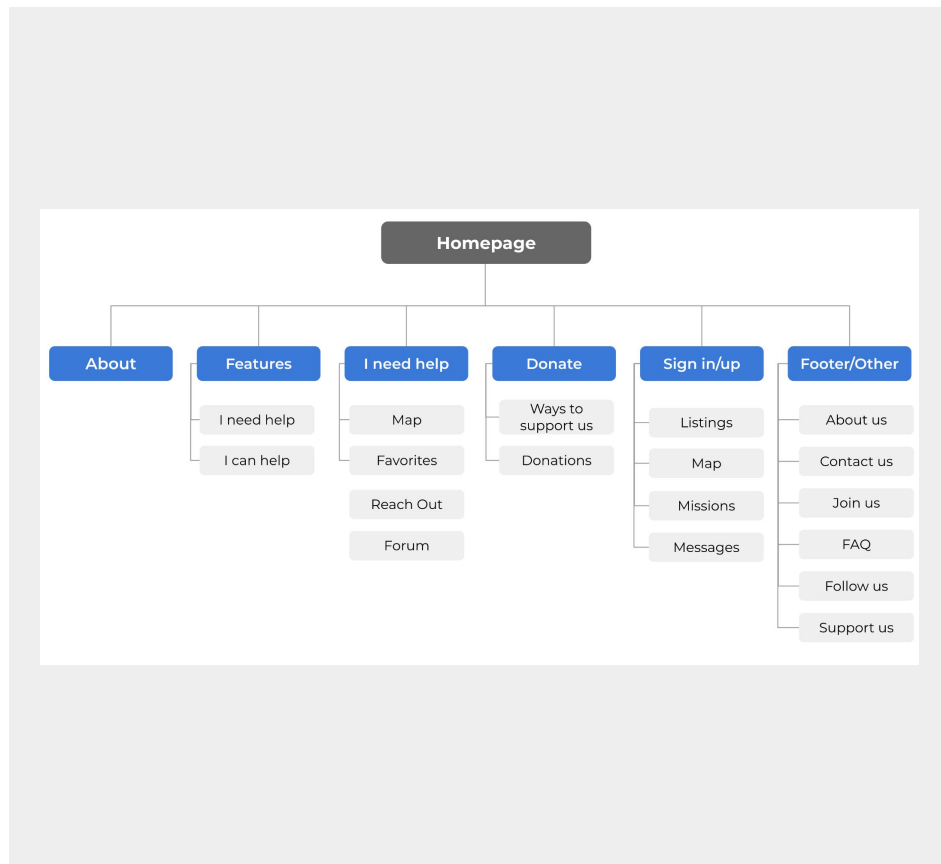
# Responsive Design

- Information architecture
- Responsive design

# Sitemap

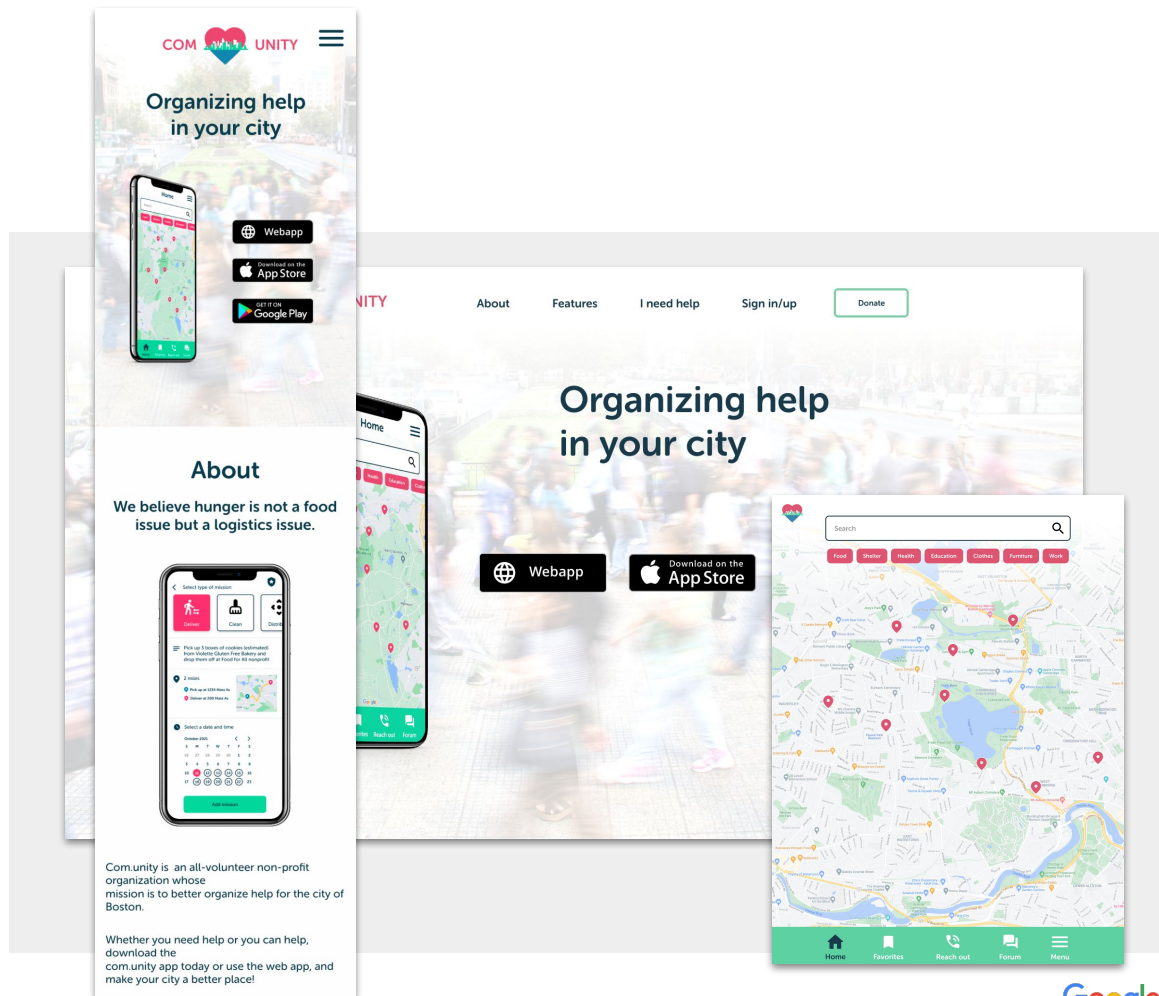
The homepage is there to present the app and to let the users know how to download and use it. The users can also donate very easily through a call-to-action button in the header and in the footer.

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

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- 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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