INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE?

Informtion Architecture (IA) focuses on the organization of information within the design of a website. There is a balance between organization, flow, and function, and IA assists in finding that balance.

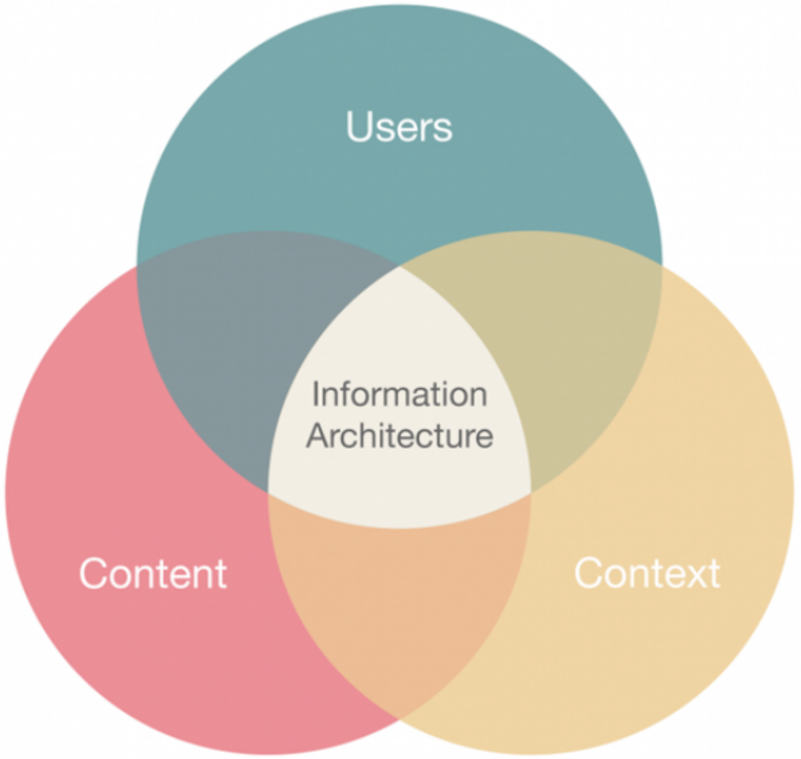
Think of IA as the backstage, a show cannot function without those critical pieces. The lights don’t turn on, the curtain doesn’t rise or fall, backgrounds don’t change. But, it’s not something that the audience sees from their seats.

Another example of IA is the blueprint of a building. The architect needs to put specific details about rooms, walkways, windows, etc. Now think of the blueprint as the website as a whole, the rooms are different landing pages, walkways are the navigation menus, and windows are previews you see of content.

HOW IS IA USEFUL?

Information Architecture design allows users to focus on their goal and tasks while on the website, rather than losing focus while trying to navigate the site. Users go to website for the content that is on them. Creating content that users are interested in is key to a valuable site. However, the flow of the website is really what matters. If users cannot find the content they are looking for, they will leave the site (abandonment).

Context is another crucial piece of the IA puzzle. Who, what, where, when, how and why the user is seeking out the website. Designers need to figure out the user's goal, needs, behaviors, and expectations.

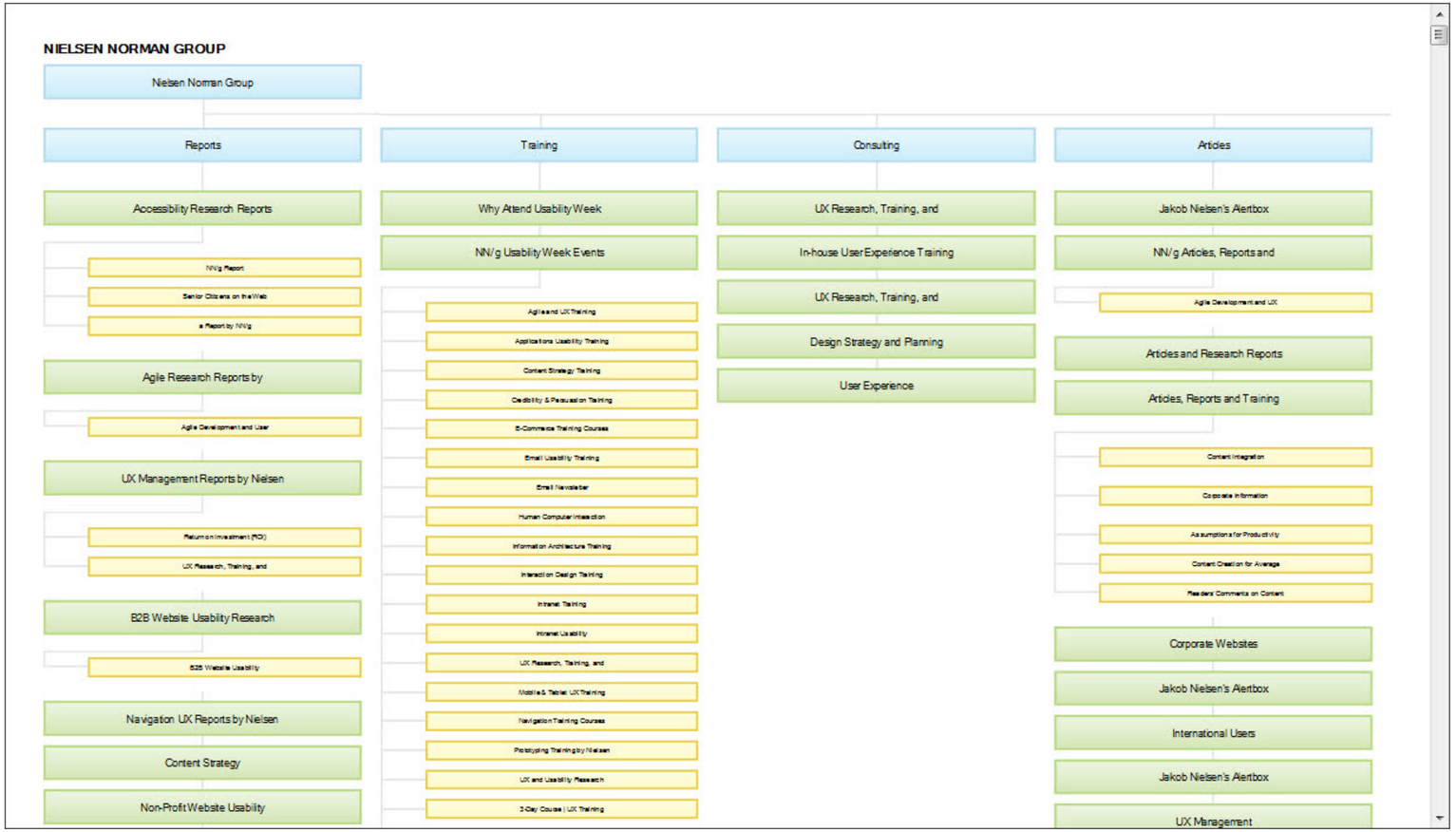


From Adobe Xd

WHAT IS A SITE MAP?

Site mapping is the backbone for the functionality of the website, it shows how the website is meant to flow and what information can be found where.
Think about the blueprint example again – this is where this comes into play in IA.

In the site map below, think of each blue box as a room. The green boxes are activities you can do in that room, and the yellow boxes are the different aspects of each activity you can do.



From the Nielsen Norman Group

THE SITE OF STUDY

THE SITE

www.WalkingForRochester.org

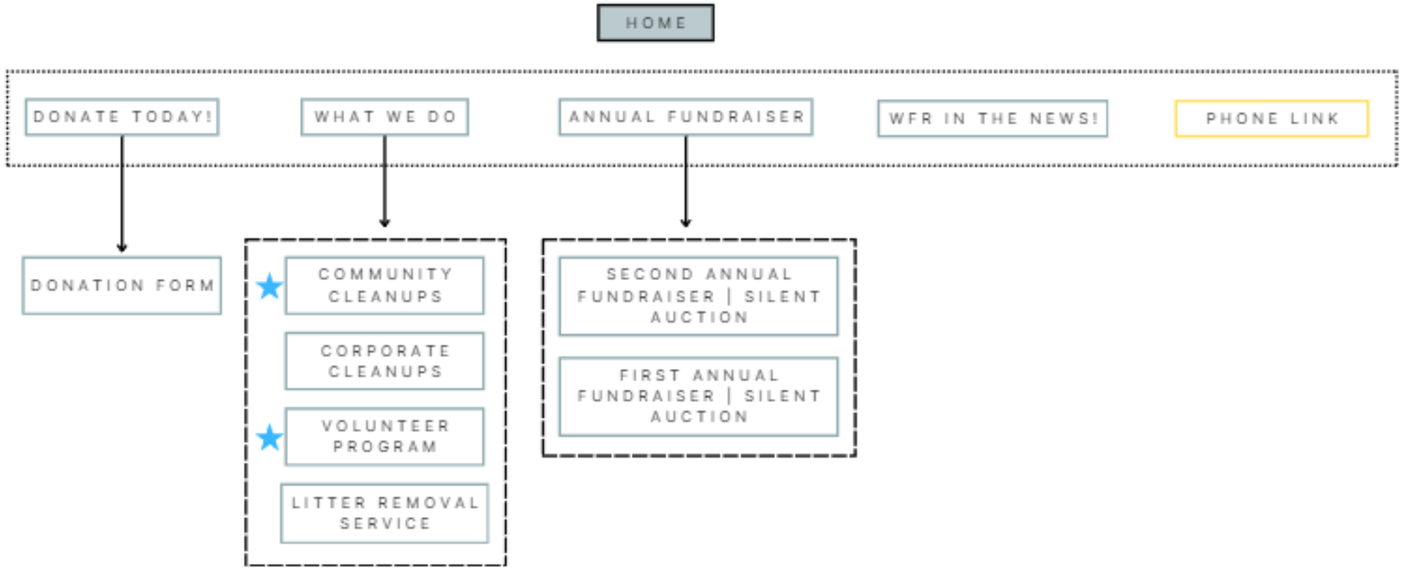
What is WFR?

Walking For Rochester is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Rochester, NY. What exactly do they do for the community? They host weekly Community Cleanups, plan private Corporate Cleanups for businesses/teams, offer a Volunteer Program to record service hours, and have a Litter Removal Service.

THE CURRENT SITE MAP

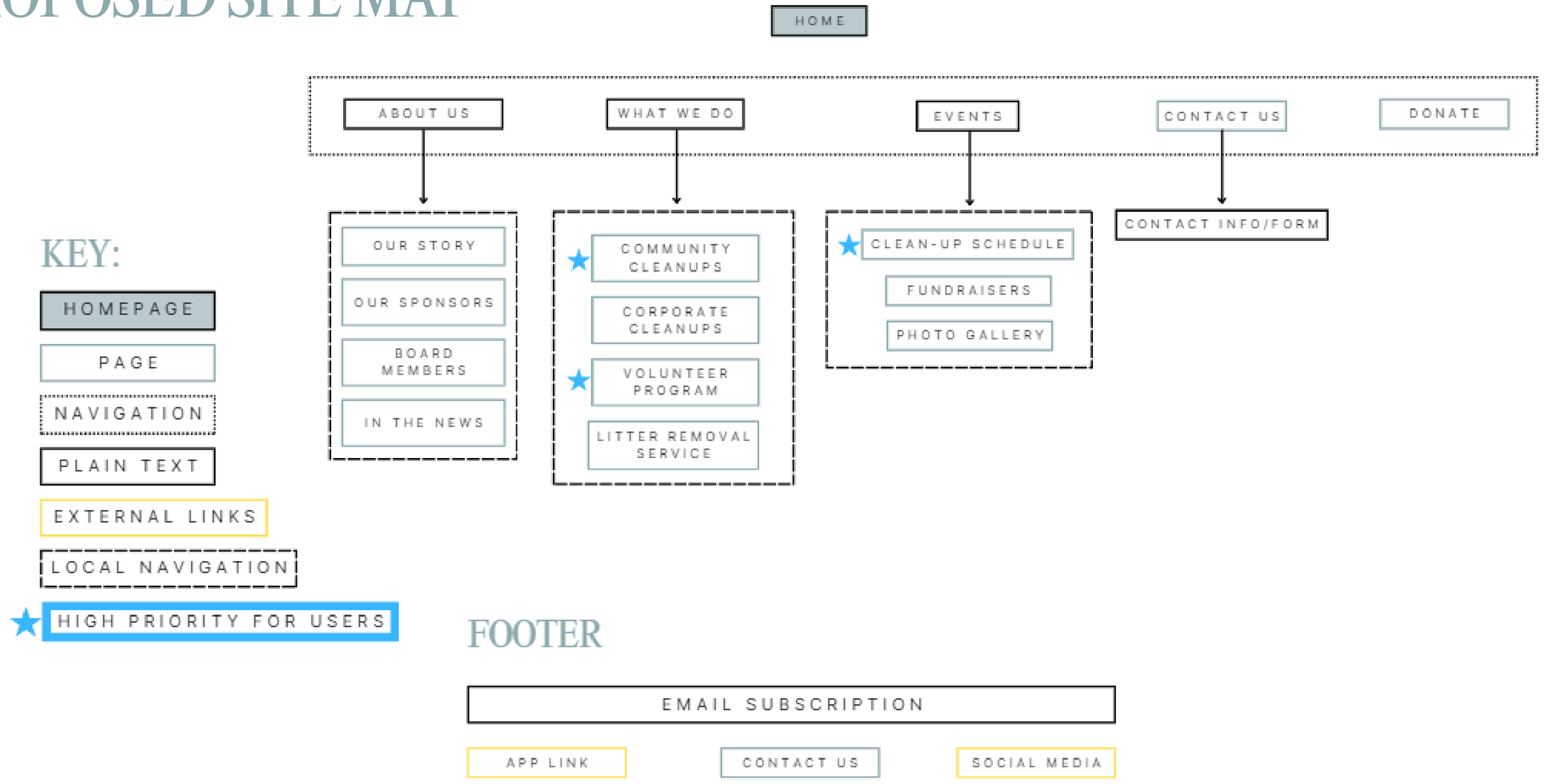
KEY:

- HOMEPAGE
- PAGE
- NAVIGATION
- PLAIN TEXT
- EXTERNAL LINKS
- LOCAL NAVIGATION
- ★ HIGH PRIORITY FOR USERS



FOOTER

PROPOSED SITE MAP



FOOTER

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