

FINAL PROPOSAL

Farmur

Farming, for city folk.

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ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY,
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
WEB DESIGN & NEW MEDIA

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Introduction

From film to farming, I have always tried to use my skills to improve the world around me. Determined to leave this world better than when I entered it, I'm devoted to making positive social change happen.

A. About Me

From a young age I have taught myself every piece of software I can load, and built/rebuilt every chunk of hardware in my possession. I started making videos at age 10, visual effects at 12, and software development at 15. This led me to study Media Production and Business at Calvin College. After graduating, I had hopes of owning my own production company.

First, I decided to gain work experience before branching out on my own. A market research company I worked for gave me the opportunity to create a motion graphic marketing video. I realized, then, that I enjoyed the unique blend of video, design, and technical work more than video production. I learned more about motion design and have been working in motion graphics ever since.

Another formative job was as the lead UI/UX designer, web developer, and designer for a start-up. I gained experience in the iterative design process and the fast pace of start-up culture. Currently, I work as a motion designer at Lyft, where I create motion graphics to capture the identity of the brand.

I have a zealous energy for social justice and a passion for using technology to solve societal issues. My personal interests led me to pursue new media at the Academy of Art University. Offering a platform of limitless creativity, while allowing substantial messages to be broadcast to the masses, new media has helped me see the potential of interactive motion design.

Motion graphics, to me, is a way of creating an easily digestible message that people want to share and replay. My goal is to harness the power of motion graphics to educate, while adding a layer of interactivity to keep the user engaged. I aim to make stories and experiences come to life and immerse the user.

“Quote goes here.”

B. Résumé

Experience

SAN FRANCISCO, CA
DEC. 2013 - CURRENT

Lyft | Motion Designer

- Creates innovative, attention-getting animations in After Effects to distinguish brand identity and promote awareness.
- Animates training videos to effectively communicate important information and establish company culture.
- Works collaboratively with teams across the company to enhance product design and user experience.
- Uses code and design to create email templates & Lyft blog.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA
2012 - 2013

Spacebar | Design Internship & Creative Lead

- Designed complete UI/UX for three iPhone apps.
- Planned, designed and coded responsive launch website.
- Created deck presentation to attract rounds of investment.
- Designed logo, social and print materials for marketing.

ST. LOUIS, MO
2009 - 2012

Han's Media | Motion Graphics & Video Editor

- Animated motion graphics for commercials and web spots.
- Edited multi-camera event video requiring audio sync.
- Operated camera, steadi-cam, lights, and sound on location.

Education

ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
2011 - DEC. 2014

Master of Arts in Web Design and New Media

- Representative Coursework: Motion Graphics, UX, UI, Web Technology (CSS, HTML, Javascript), CMS, and Typography.

CALVIN COLLEGE
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
2005 - 2008

Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

- Representative Coursework: Media Production, Business, Film Studies, Economics, and International Development.

Achievements

SPACEBAR LAUNCH
FEBRUARY 2013

TechCrunch Disrupt 2013

- Spacebar officially launched at TechCrunch Disrupt event and accepted to Apple's App Store

ACADEMY OF ART SHOWCASE
SEPTEMBER 2013

Official Selection: Thesis Project

- Farmur: Farming, for City Folk

ACADEMY OF ART SPRING SHOW
JUNE 2013

First Place: Motion Graphics

- Web Design & New Media: Freedom Infographic

C. Portfolio

Over the last three years at the Academy of Art University I've had the opportunity to work on numerous projects for not only classes but also employers. My design work has included motion, web, graphic, user interface and user experience.

Beyond design, I enjoy understanding and building things from a technical side. I would say I enjoy a balance between artistic expression and technical wizardry, with a layer of lively motion to keep it engaging.

Project:

Freedom Infographic - [Link](#)

Semester:

Spring 2013

Class:

WNM 663 Advanced Topics in Motion Graphics
Instructor: *Meghan Newell*

Description:

Our instructor recorded an inspirational voice-over from an article one of her friends had written, and we were asked to interpret the voice-over into a motion graphic with an infographic style. This project was the first time that I learned to utilize a plug-in called Echospace. This allowed me to create one animated element and repeat it over time with delays and offsets. This piece won first place in the AAU Spring Show, and has repeatedly encouraged me that I can apply my skills to non-commercial work down the road. Non-profit work is one of the reasons I pursued my MFA and remains a personal goal.



C. Portfolio continued

Project:

MTV Station Identity - [Link](#)

Semester:

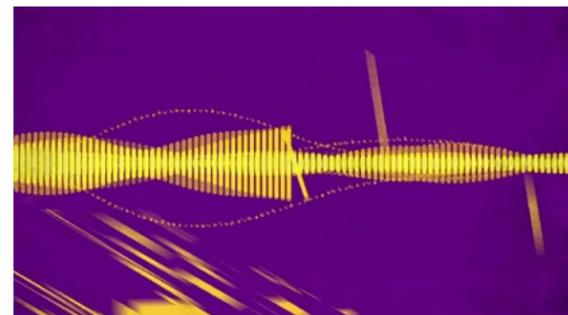
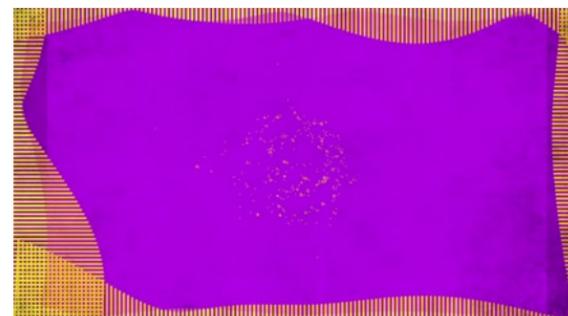
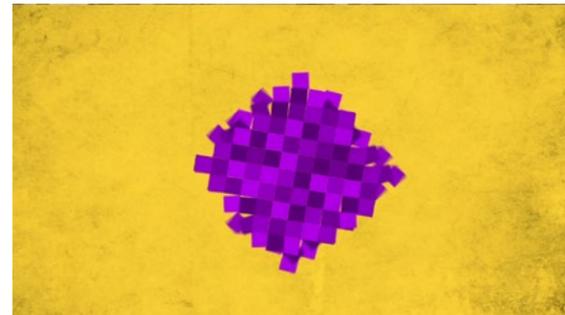
Fall 2012

Class:

WNM 613 Topics in Motion Graphics
Instructor: *Tim Rice*

Description:

For this piece, we were asked to pick a brand and create a bumper, or station identity for them. I picked MTV because most of their existing work had a very creative and open-minded style. I wanted to simply create with shapes, and MTV seemed like a brand that would allow me the freedom to do so.



Project:

Lyft Rebranding Presentation - [Link](#)

Created:

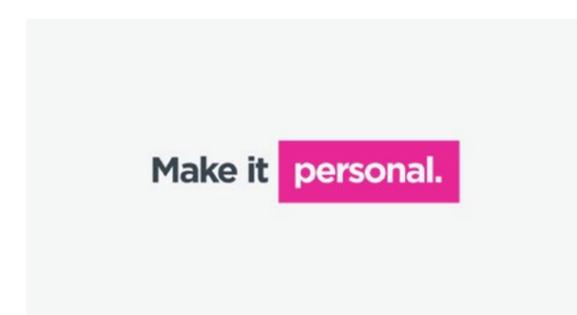
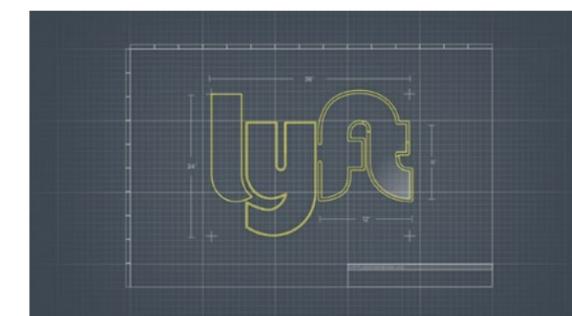
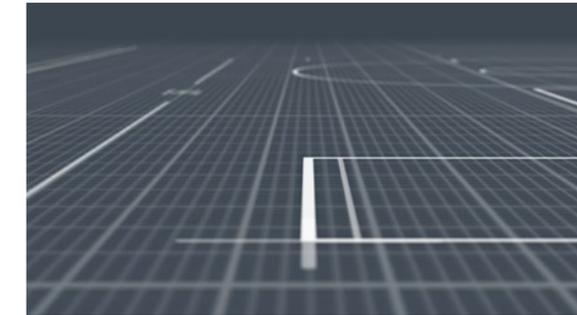
September 2014

Company:

Lyft

Description:

When our new creative director started at Lyft, I was asked to assist in a re-branding presentation to the company. I was given a direction to take the piece, but I was responsible for the overall animation and design. This was a really fun project because I was given a lot of freedom to create something eye-catching. This piece is still playing, on loop, in the reception area for Lyft, and was presented during an all-company meeting to introduce the re-branding.



C. Portfolio continued

Project:

Illustrate a Poem - Things I Should Have Said - [Link](#)

Semester:

Summer 2011

Class:

WNM 600 Digital Applications
Instructor: *Ruben Mosqueda*

Description:

An assignment for one of the very first classes I took at AAU was to illustrate a poem or song from a pre-selected list. I chose one titled, "Things I Should Have Said." This poem stuck a chord with me because my mother had passed away only two years earlier, and the poem was all about having things you wished you would have said while your loved one was alive. This illustration represents the feeling caused by those unspoken words.



Project:

Illustrate A Concept for an Organization - Amnesty International, Child Sex Trade - [Link](#)

Semester:

Summer 2011

Company:

WNM 600 Digital Applications
Instructor: *Ruben Mosqueda*

Description:

For a final project we were asked to pick from 3-4 organizations and illustrate a cause for them. I picked the child sex trade for Amnesty International. The article I referenced was about underage girls from Malaysia being shipped to other countries and being forced against their will into a form of horrific slavery. I tried my best to approach the subject matter with respect and felt that the resulting piece had the impact I was hoping for.



C. Portfolio continued

Project:

Hand drawn illustration mixed with photography - [Link](#)

Semester:

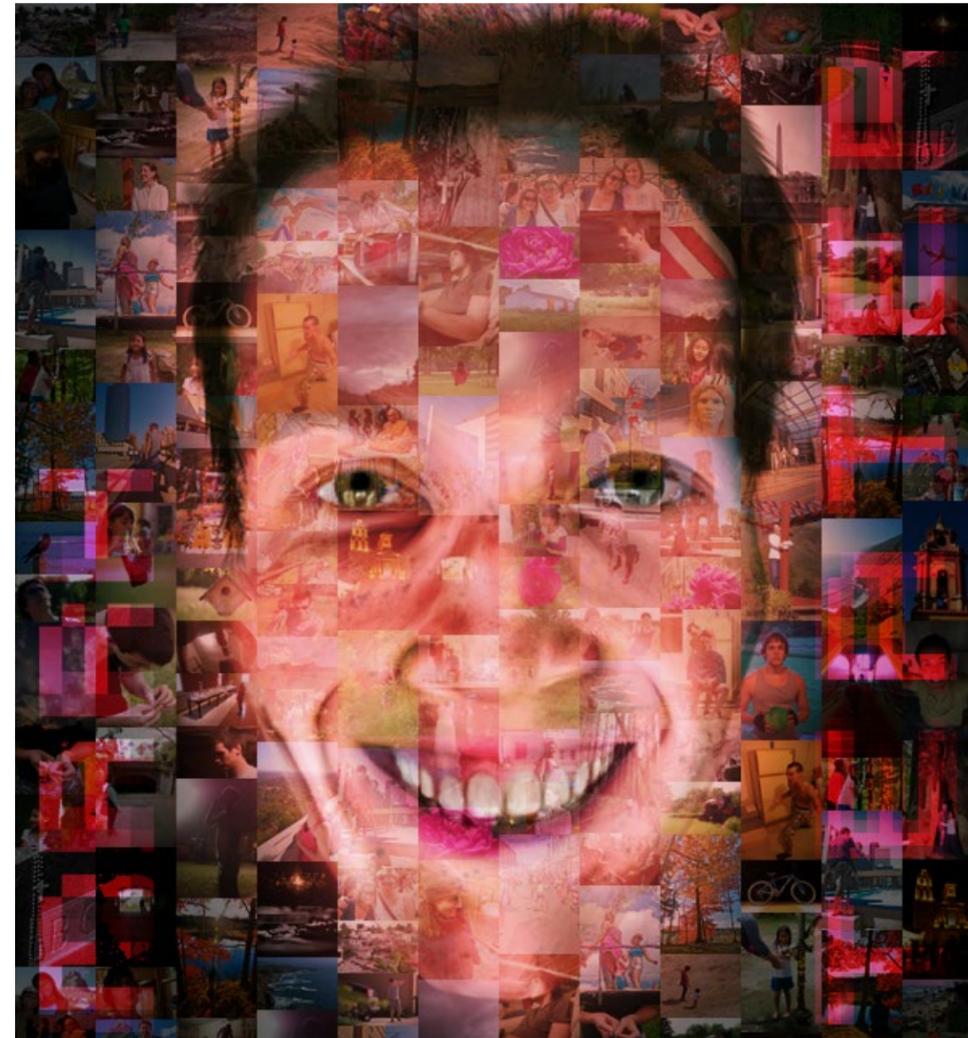
Summer 2011

Class:

WNM 600 Digital Applications
Instructor: *Ruben Mosqueda*

Description:

For this project we were asked to first draw an illustration of ourselves and then mix in photography to create a mosaic. I painted the image of my face in Photoshop, and then overlaid a selection of photographs I took over the past year of my life. My name is visible in red blocky type along each side. This class was one of my favorite classes at AAU because I was able to spend time simply digitally painting and creating things that I wanted to create — I was only bound by my own limitations and expectations.



Project:

Personal Portfolio - [Link](#)

Semester:

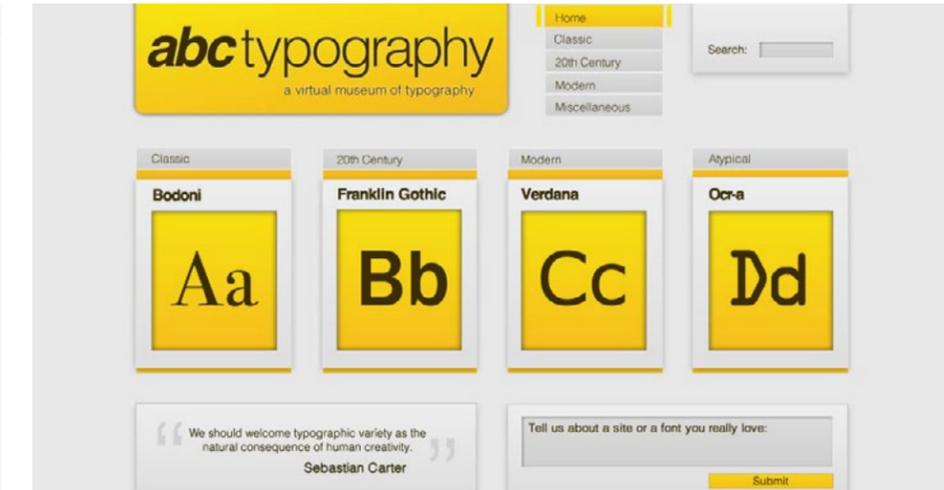
Spring 2012

Class:

WNM 608 Web Tech 1
Instructor: *Ethan Wilde*

Description:

This is an early version of my portfolio site created for a class. It was heavily inspired by infographics and was meant to be a fun introduction to me. I have since changed my design.



Project:

ABC Typography Web Site - [Link](#)

Semester:

Fall 2011

Class:

WNM 605 Typography for Digital Masters
Instructor: *Lance Anderson*

Description:

We were asked to redesign a non-functional website utilizing our understanding of typography.

C. Portfolio continued

Project:

Spacebar.fm - Design Intern/Lead

Role:

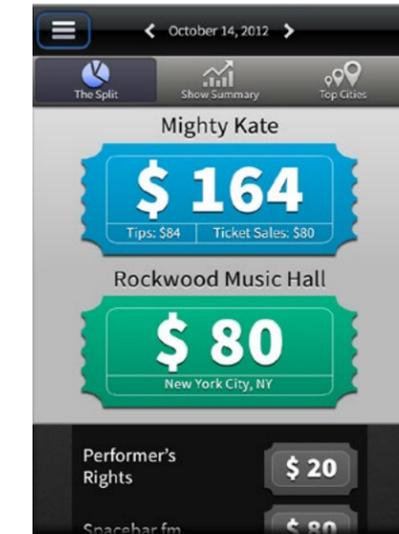
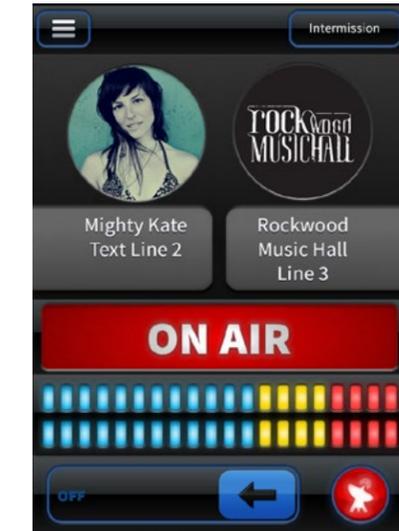
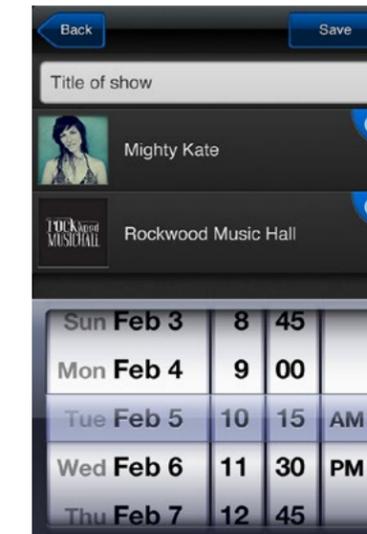
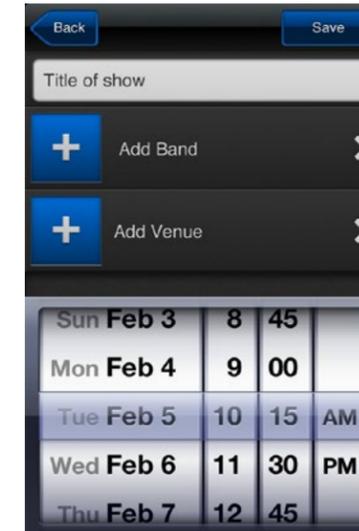
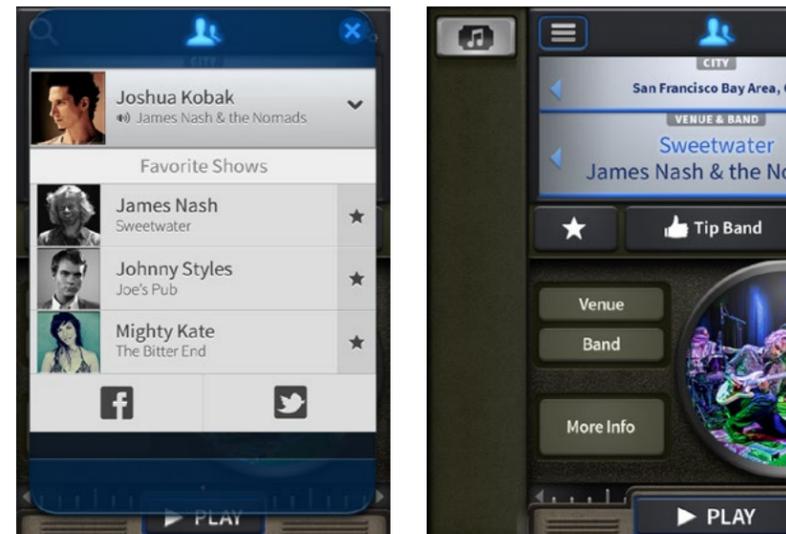
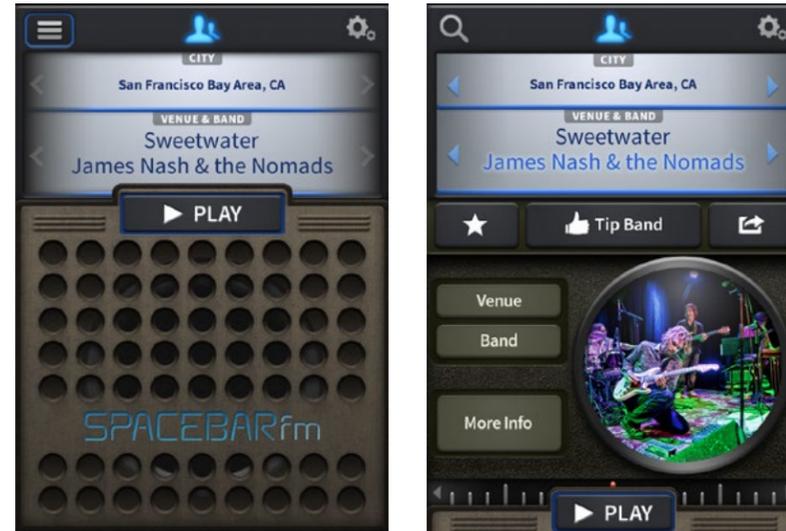
Complete UI/UX for three apps

Company:

Spacebar

Description:

During the summer of 2012 and beginning of 2013, I worked for a start-up company that broadcast live audio directly from soundboards to mobile devices. I was the only designer and my responsibilities included the user interface, presentation deck for potential investors, and marketing materials. I was asked to create a design in the style of an old radio on the listening side and a club soundroom on the broadcasting side. The app is still in the App Store, and was launched at TechCrunch Disrupt in January 2013.



Project

Farming is a way to connect to the natural rhythm of the world around us. In urban areas, this rhythm can be drowned out by traffic, construction, and people. Farmur is that connection between urban and nature.

A. Elevator Pitch

Urban farming resources today are static, text-heavy, complex, and focused on people already committed to the cause. Farmur is a responsive website that explores the concepts of urban farming and simplifies the learning curve utilizing: a three minute motion graphic, one interactive timeline, one cost & garden size estimator, a downloadable plan to get started, and over ten pages of illustrated content. Users will be inspired to do more than read content, they will engage it through interaction and motion graphics and will leave with instructions on how to get started on their very own urban farm.

B. Thesis Abstract

“All content will be aimed at introducing people to urban farming and how they can engage in both small and more significant ways.”

In the United States, there is a growing number of people with the desire to connect to their food sources and get involved in the local food movement. However, over 80% of United States population lives in an urban environment not conducive to growing, or is uncertain about avenues for involvement [CITATION].

Misconceptions exists, such as food can't or shouldn't be grown in urban areas due to soil issues, pollution, or limited space and sun exposure. Research also revealed a lack of rich, interactive media that educates about urban agriculture.

In an effort to educate the public about urban farming, my thesis will provide a way to learn about the history of urban farming, challenges that face our agricultural system, how urban farming helps, and where to get started. All content will be aimed at introducing people to urban farming and how to engage in both small and more significant ways.

My thesis will be presented as a responsive web site that will incorporate a motion graphic video on the history and future of urban farming, an interactive timeline displaying our shift from rural to urban living, one cost & garden size estimator, a downloadable plan to get started, and over ten pages of illustrated content.

The content presented on this site will provide easy to understand information about urban farms and aim to inspire people to take the first step towards growing food. The site encourages learning and exploration by incorporating richly illustrated and interactive sections the user will be able to discover as they move through the site. Throughout the experience, people will learn about the problems we face in agriculture and how urban farming fits into that picture.

Ultimately, Farmur will be a way to discover urban farming and inspire people to get involved in a food system that is increasingly serving corporate interests and leaving the health of individuals behind.

“Quote goes here.”

C. Statement of Interest

I chose to pursue my MFA because I thought it would better prepare me to tackle the types of problems I want to solve. I've never been interested in producing products that make lots of money, but instead help in an inexpensive or creative way. When I've finished this program I plan to continue working with organizations that are trying to take on social problems but may not know how to utilize new media to realize their objectives.

The summers of 2010 I volunteered at a botanical gardens, and participated in their gardening initiative that both donated to local shelters and informed the local community about gardening on their own land. I also grew my own garden and, at one point, considered switching into a horticulture track for my future. However, given my background in media production, I decided to pursue a track that would allow me to hone those skills in order to support non-profits and organizations working for causes that I believe in.

My first goal for the program has been to build a motion graphics portfolio that positions me in a field that prizes the work I have done over what I say I can do. Second, I wanted to make my motion graphics engaging through interaction and have strong calls to action. Lastly, I wanted to gain a strong understanding of interaction design and experient with user interfaces that make the user experience immersive.

Since my goal is to ultimately inspire social change and push for people to act, I must come out of the program with an interactive and modern approach that motivates a user to act. With Farmur being a responsive website that explains urban farming, uses motion graphics and interactive media, I will be utilizing my skills to educate and inspire action. My thesis project reaches my goals through: motion graphics that will inform the public about urban farms; a responsive website that provides interaction with rich media; and tools that will allow people to understand urban farming in more depth.

“Quote goes here.”

E. Personas

Sarah Fenkema, 26



Gender:

Female

Occupation:

Middle school teacher

Location:

Detroit, MI

Characteristics:

Green Thumb, Handy,
Independent

Children:

None

Education:

Masters

Hobbies:

Gardening, Cooking

Apps:

Garden Pro, Craigslist, Pinterest

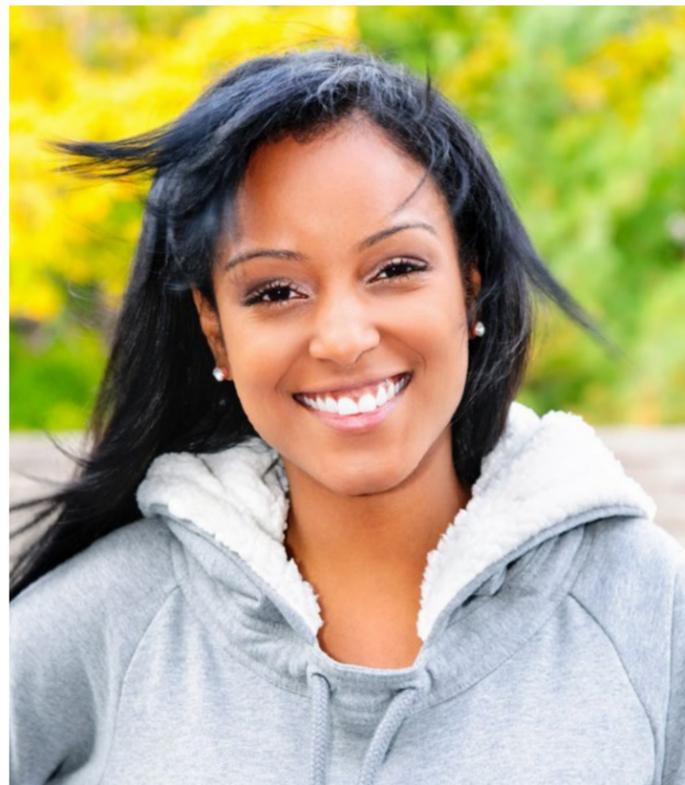
Sarah is a teacher and always looking for new ways to excite her students to learn. She's involved in gardening and is very interested in new tools that cover the topic. She's been looking for ways to explain the current US food system in an interactive way to her students and friends. What she'd really like to see is a simplified resource that explores the US food system visually.

D. Target Audience

The primary target audience for the motion graphic and website is 18-35 year olds familiar with mobile devices, live in an urban environment, interested in local communities, inquisitive about the food supply, and are potentially curious about starting a garden or a community farming initiative. This website will provide information to newcomers, but also seek to inspire those already gardening to share their interest with new people. The main users will fall within these categories and have access to a desktop computer or tablet device.

E. Personas continued

Althea Kemmer, 30



Gender:

Female

Occupation:

Homemaker

Location:

St. Louis, MO

Characteristics:

Unstructured, Image Scanner, Direct

Children:

Three

Education:

Bachelors

Hobbies:

Illustration, Photography

Apps:

Instagram, Twitter, Zite

Althea is a homemaker with three sons. She's constantly busy with some aspect of parenting but she values finding outdoor activities—especially activities that relate to health. She's often too tired and busy to read long articles or tutorials and finds that she searches best visually scanning images to find things that appeal to her. She would like to see how urban farming could benefit her family and what size garden she would need to save money at the store.

Nick Smith, 22



Gender:

Male

Occupation:

College student

Location:

Oakland, CA

Characteristics:

Green Thumb, Handy, Independent

Children:

None

Education:

Bachelors (In Progress)

Hobbies:

Video Games, Movies

Apps:

Hulu, My Veg Plot, Wonders

Nick is a college student and comes from a rural area of the United States. He's worked on farms before and has developed a fondness of growing his own food. He's been interested in learning more about the history of urban farming but most times he gets bored with all the reading and gives up. He'd love to explore the history of urban farming in an interactive and animated way.

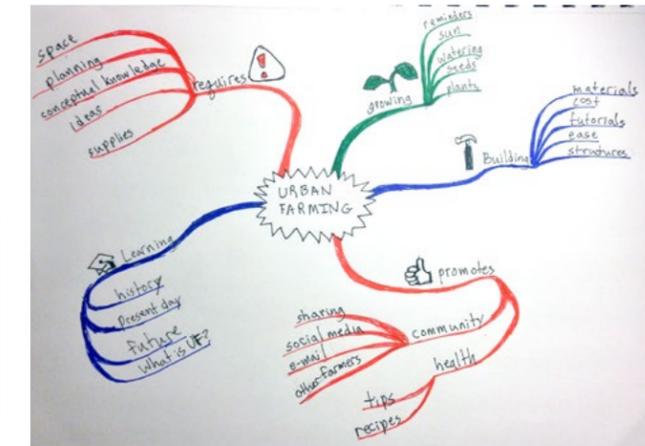
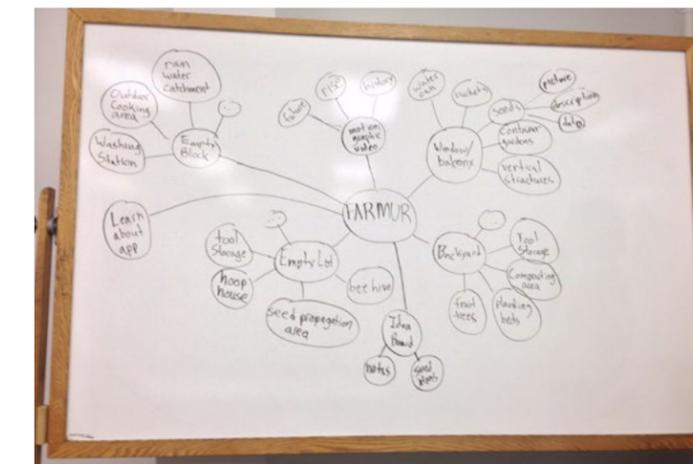
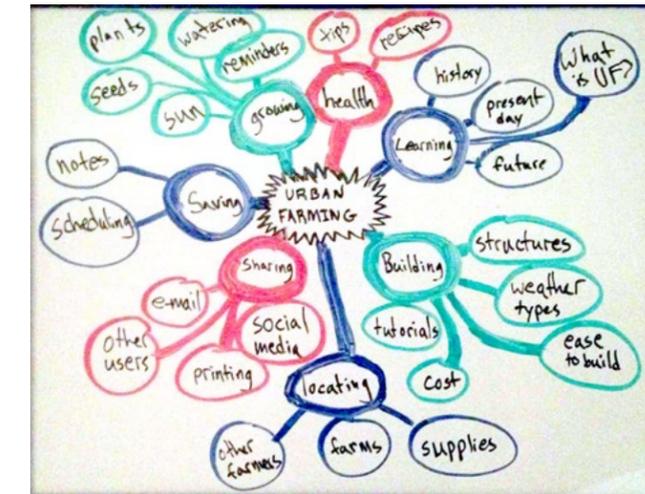
F. User Experience

I don't create things to look at, I create experiences. Engaging, informative, and relevant to the desired outcome, the interactive experiences I create are meant to be pondered and explored, even after its over. I understand that in order to deliver a message people should be arrested by the sentiment and emotion within the content. My background in motion design influences my understanding of how a person's perception can be shaped by milliseconds, not minutes.

For me to feel I succeeded, my target audience should feel I simplified something complex, fully informed them about the topic, and improved their lives. User experience is that moment someone connects to your design and feels it. The following section follows the process I went through to get Farmur to that moment.

Mind Maps

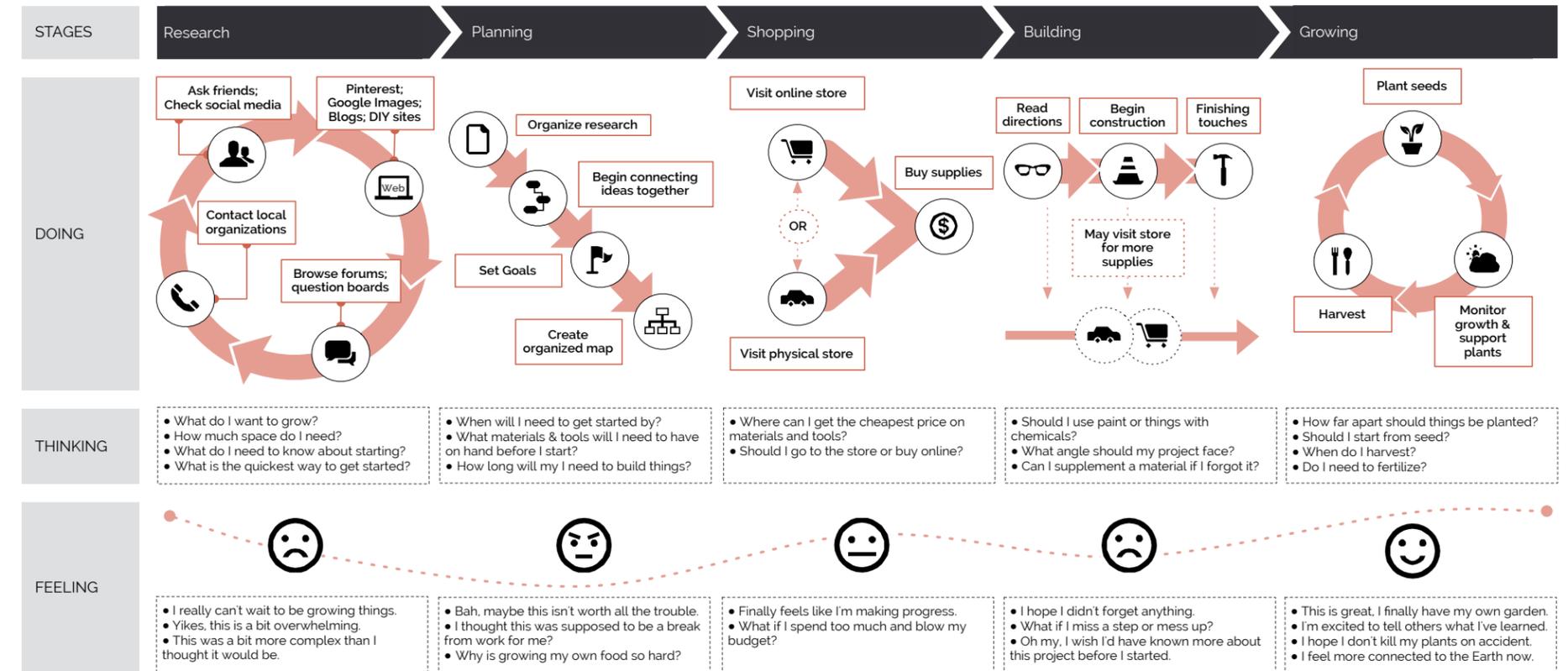
Creating any technical project requires advanced planning and an understanding of the content. For Farmur, there were several mind maps created to help visualize the concepts and needs of a urban farming app/website. Mind maps helped me think about main topics that needed to be presented in my thesis and guided me through the initial thought process. I learned that the maker of mindmaps didn't believe in ending each branch in circles, but instead leaving them open ended; this way the process was encouraged to keep going and remain open to new branches. A subtle, but interesting tip to help keep the creative flow moving forward.



F. User Experience continued

Urban Farming Customer Journey Map

Urban farming today has many pain points that people discover along the way. Many farmers and gardeners who are just starting their journey are confused about the process and will spend a lot of time researching where to begin. If people make it beyond the research phase, there are still the major phases of planning, shopping, building, and growing to overcome before they can harvest. This customer journey map follows the current pathway a “customer” would follow when trying to start their own growing operation.



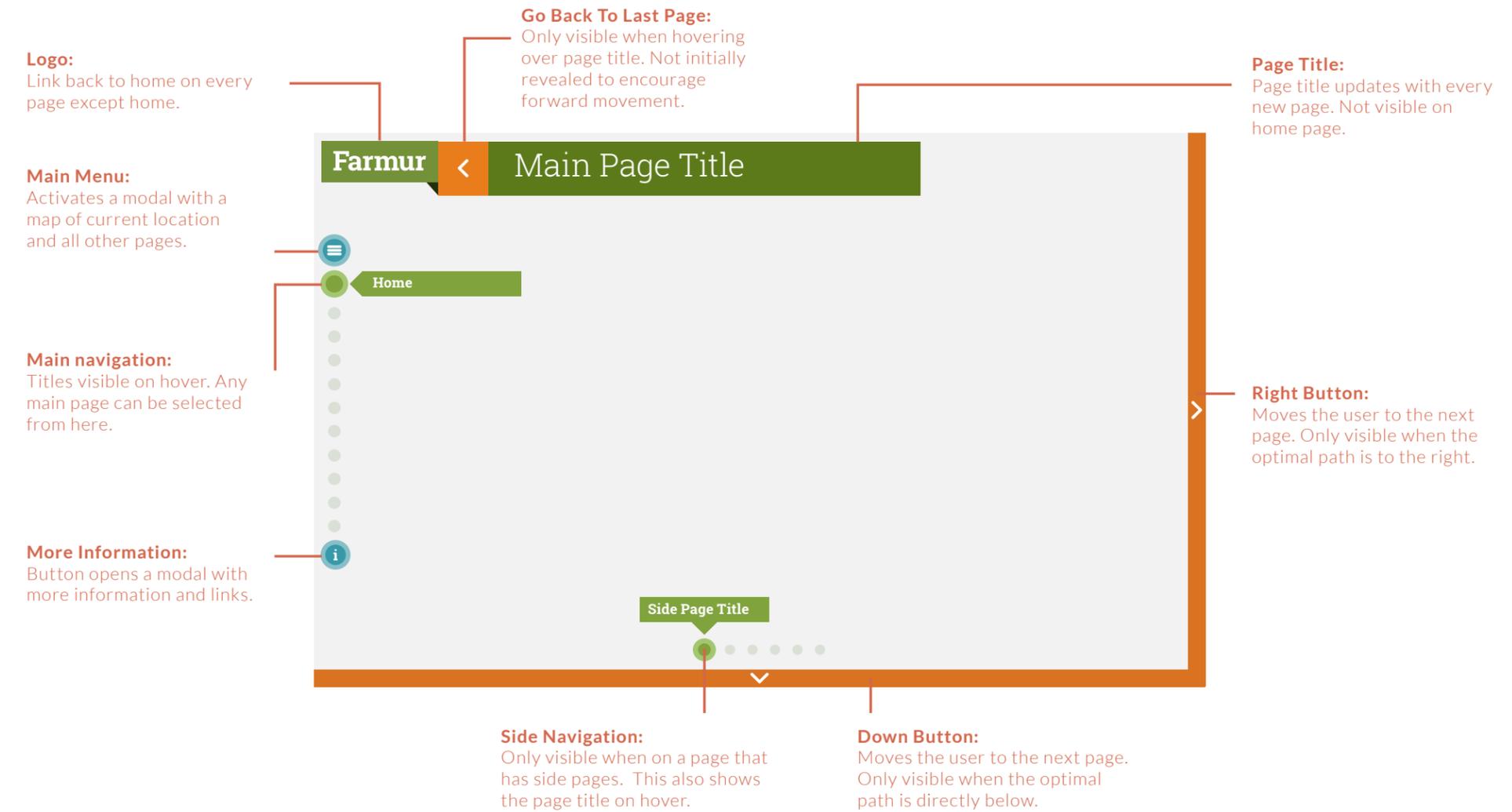
Opportunities

GLOBAL	RESEARCH	PLANNING	SHOPPING	BUILDING	GROWING		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow users to save and share ideas easily. Enable users easy tracking of their progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be transparent about projected cost, materials & time requirements. Connect users to other urban farmers to learn from. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow the options to a few that work really well. Provide quick answers to commonly asked questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate the ideas to allow easy selection. Enable filtering in searches for greater control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify the process for creating a plan. Visualize a timeline for broad view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide suggestions on where to buy low cost supplies. List all supplies needed and allow printing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate clear step-by-step directions to build ideas. List common roadblocks and typical solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up reminders for watering & caring for plants. Provide tips and instructions for growing various plants.

F. User Experience continued

Navigation Mechanism: Global

Good user interfaces should be intuitive and familiar. Well-designed user interfaces should be immersive and intelligent. Farmur's interface is a result of research, observation, and inspiration. While it is very common to find vertical and horizontal scrolling pages on the web today, it is uncommon to find both on the same site. Users are sometimes unpredictable and introducing multiple directions can easily feel confusing. After testing and interviewing users, the design evolved numerous times. I finally arrived at the following design



F. User Experience continued

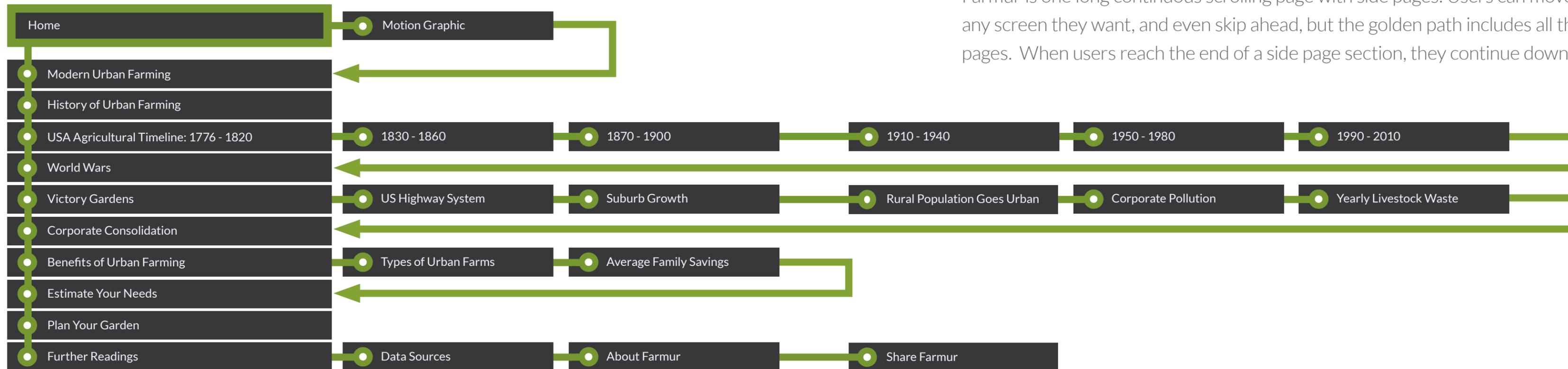
Navigation Mechanism: Main Menu

Farmur is meant to be moved through in a semi-linear fashion; jumping ahead can mean missing out on part of the story. Even though I deeply want everyone to follow the golden path, I found through testing that people want the ability to jump around—even if they don't use it. This main menu is my solution to that need to be in control of the site.

Kind of like a control panel, every page has access to the main menu which in turn allows access to any section of the site. It's a bit much to take in at first, and it may still need simplification, but this iteration gets straight to the point: people like feeling in control.



F. User Experience



Information Architecture

Farmur is one long continuous scrolling page with side pages. Users can move to any screen they want, and even skip ahead, but the golden path includes all the side pages. When users reach the end of a side page section, they continue downward.

F. User Experience continued

Key User Flow

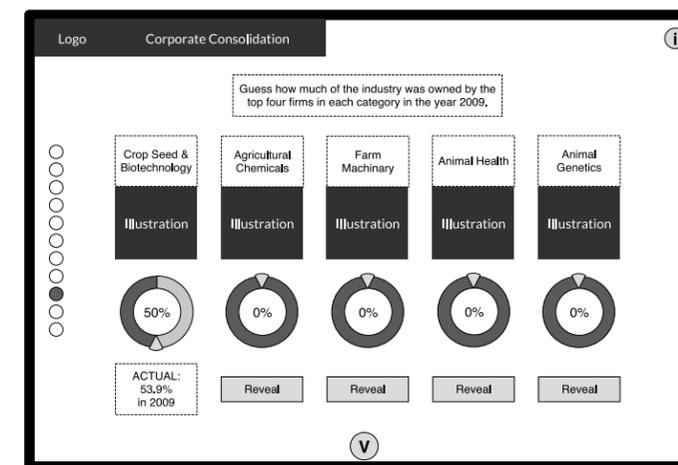
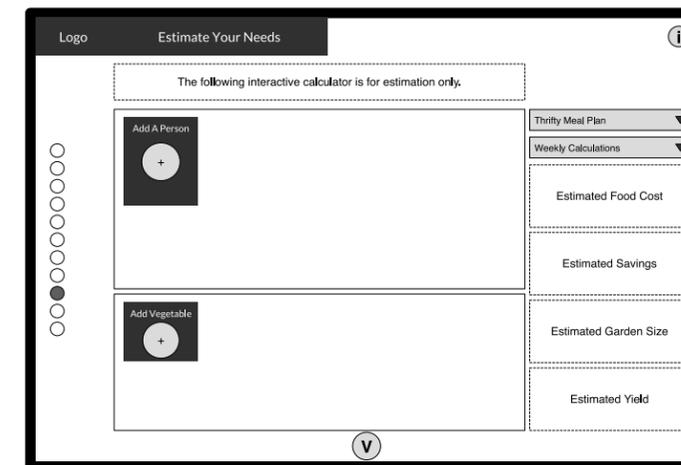
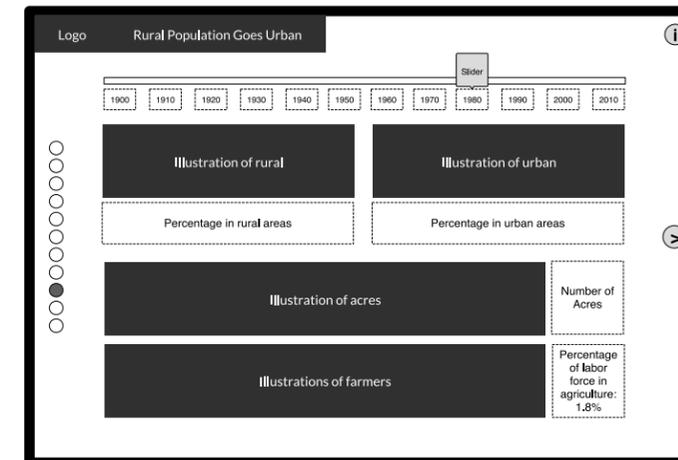
Farmur is all about learning and exploring urban farming. Users are encouraged to quickly take in the text but linger only to take in the illustration if they want to. Even though there is lots of content, the key user flow will funnel users to two tasks. First, the user will be taken to the "Estimate Your Needs" page where a user is allowed to calculate what space size they need to grow vegetables for their needs. They will be introduced to their potential savings and yield just by growing in their respective space.

Lastly, users will move on to the "Plan Your Garden" page where they will be prompted to download a quick start guide for their space. If the calculator says they need a larger space, tutorials for large spaces will be highlighted.



Wireframes

Before Farmur became a working site, there were numerous changes and refinements along the way. One way to avoid costly and time-consuming changes late in development is to start with a skeleton. Early wireframes came in at 37 pages and required 3-4 revisions before any high-fidelity screens could be produced. These wireframes were used in early testing to determine potential issues in the design. Early testing allowed me to reorganize pages, flow and placement of user interface items.



G. Proof of Concept

User Requirements

Users have specific needs that any proposed solution must address. Farmur's users have several requirements that need to be included in order for it to be useful to their need. This is a list of those requirements:

1. Sarah will need the information on Farmur to be presented in a clear and concise manner. She will need it to be usable as a presentation as well as an easily sharable tool.
2. Sarah needs the site to work on a tablet since she plans to present in person and she doesn't always have access to a laptop.
3. Althea needs the concepts to be engaging, illustrative, and fun so that she can use this site to inspire her children.
4. Althea wants there to be more of a story, and feel like the story is informative. Briefly going over the history of urban farming would help understand the current day trend.
5. Nick requires there to be some practical examples to learn from. He would love to see a way of calculating how all this information practically applies to him.
6. Nick expects there to be an action plan he can utilize right away. He wants there this action plan to be tailored to individuals, not community gardens.

User Cases

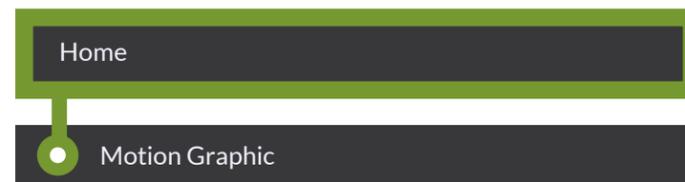
For any solution to be truly useful, it must be usable in the real world. Use cases are a way of walking persona's through a real world problem and see how they might use it. Farmur has many real world applications but the following list is the result of carefully dissecting my target audience's expected behavior through testing, interviews, and observation.

1. Sarah watches a motion graphic overview of urban farming for a quick introduction.
2. Althea visualizes the change in urban and rural population and finds specific year on the page "Rural Population Goes Urban."
3. Nick calculates food cost, savings, estimated garden size and potential food amounts on the page "Estimate Your Needs."

G. Proof of Concept continued

User Scenario 1

Sarah has become interested in starting a community garden in her area. In order to convince her neighbors and the local government to get on board with the plan, she turns to Farmur. Sarah shares the link with her neighbors and brings a tablet device along with her when she is asked to meet the county commissioner in person. Farmur allows her to communicate the information needed to explain urban farming and is able to convince people to join her cause. To begin her meeting, she goes straight to the motion graphic.

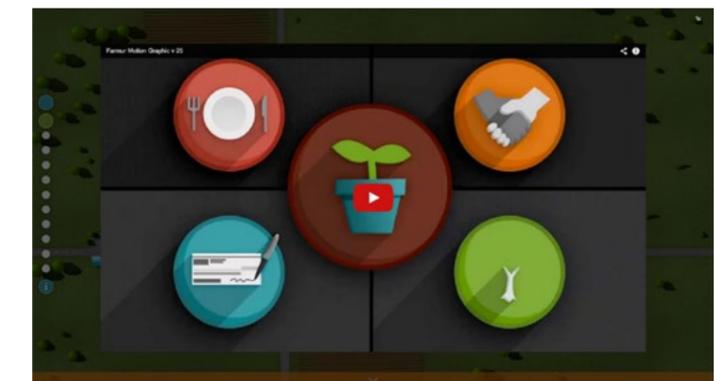


Sarah wants to open the motion graphic to start of her meeting with the local county commissioner:

1. Sarah navigates to farmur.com and clicks the button, "Watch a Video"



2. She clicks the play icon to start the video.



G. Proof of Concept continued

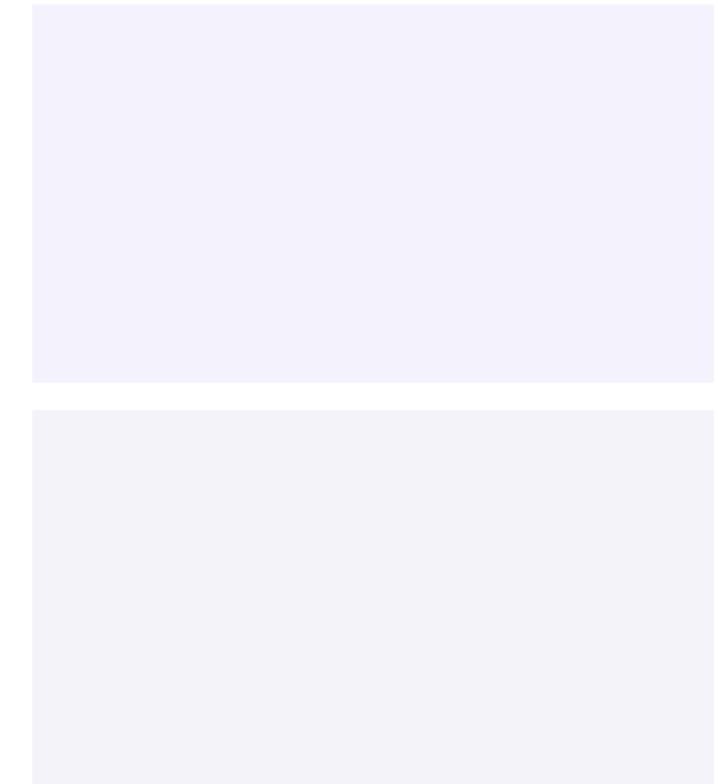
User Scenario 2

Althea is really excited about the idea of urban farming, but she feels like she doesn't really know much about it at all. Since she is a visual learner and enjoys images and video over reading when she is learning. To top it off, she's always busy with her kids. Althea needs a tool that will get her up to speed on urban farming and preferably it could be used to get her kids interested too. Farmur provides an animated and illustrative tool to learn a great deal about urban farming in a relatively short time.



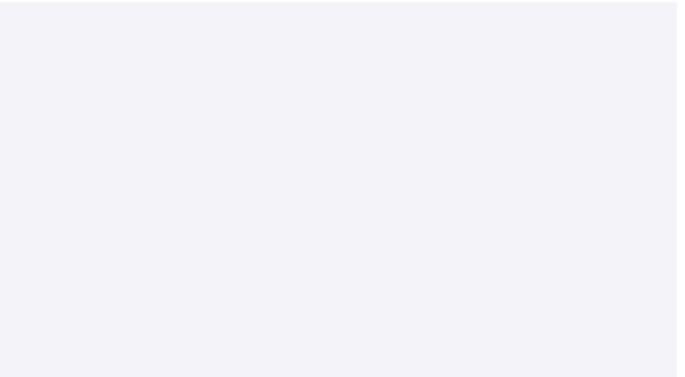
Althea visualizes the change in urban and rural population and finds specific year on the page “Rural Population Goes Urban.”

1. Althea has been exploring the site already and has landed on the page, “Victory Gardens.” She moves to the next screen by pressing the orange button with an arrow in it.
2. After pressing this button three times, Althea has arrived at the page “Rural Population Goes Urban.” To get to this page she could have also selected the fourth dot in the secondary navigation along the bottom.



G. Proof of Concept continued

- 3. Althea slides the knob along the timeline to the years she wants to view information about.



Quote

G. Proof of Concept continued

User Scenario 3

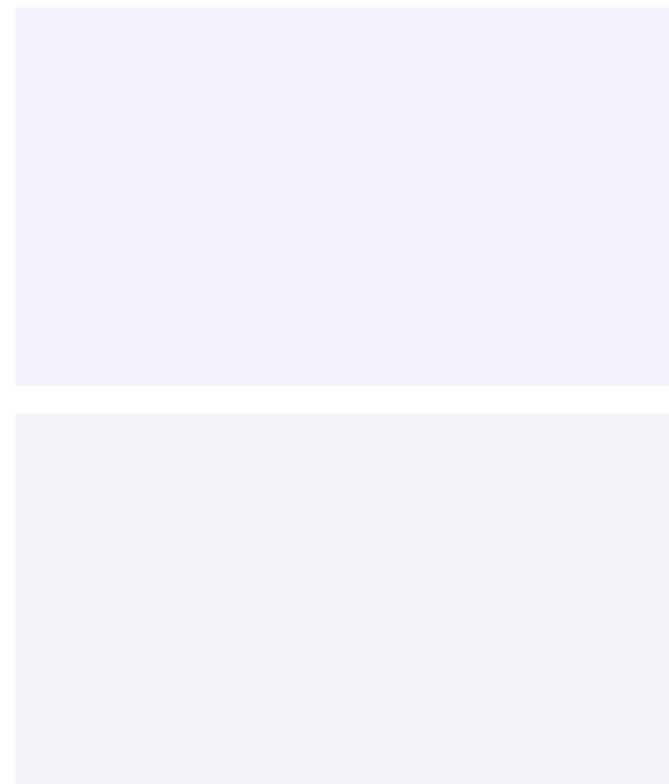
Nick really wants to learn more about how he would benefit from urban farming and where he can get started. He's already convinced he wants to get started, so he uses the "Estimate Your Needs" page to calculate what his savings could be urban farming, what size garden plot he might need, and how much he can expect to grow in that space. Once he knows this information he moves on to the next page, "Plan Your Garden." He downloads the "Individual Starter Kit Plan" since he doesn't plan on starting a community garden.



Nick calculates food cost, savings, estimated garden size and potential food amounts on the page "Estimate Your Needs."

1. From the home page, Nick uses the left side global navigation to move to the "Estimate Your Needs" page.

2. Nick presses, "Add person."

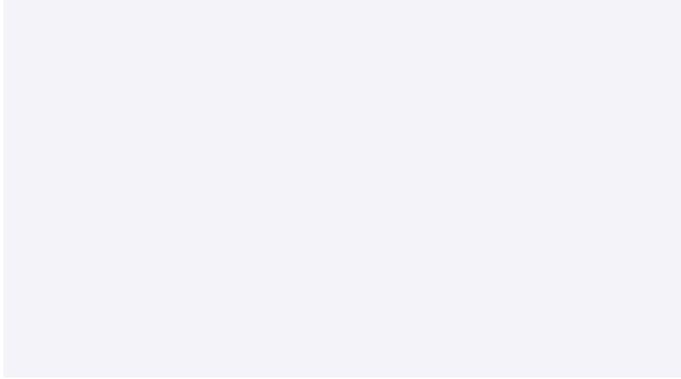


G. Proof of Concept continued

3. Nick selects, "male," and "19-50," but changes his meal size to "above average," and name to "Nick" then presses, "Add This Person."



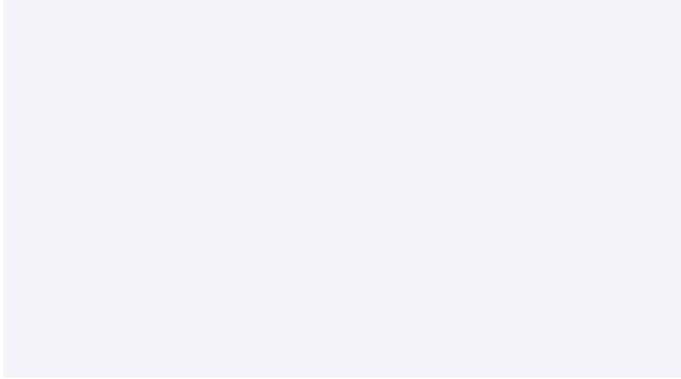
4. Nick presses, "Add a vegetable."



5. He chooses, "Kale," and presses, "Add This Vegetable."

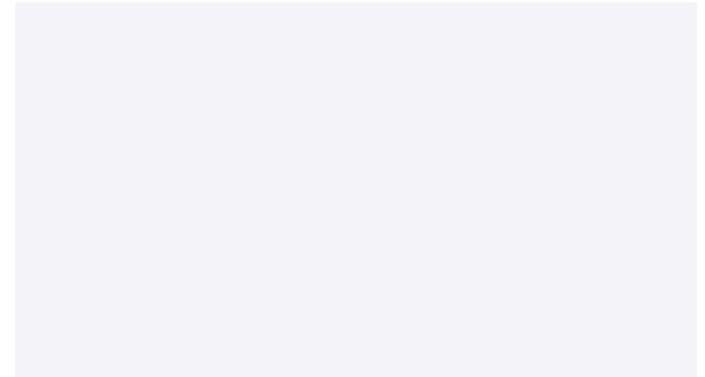


6. Next he presses the drop-down box that reads, "Thrifty Plan," and selects "Low Cost Plan."



G. Proof of Concept continued

7. Finally he presses the drop-down box that reads, "Weekly Plan," and selects "Monthly Costs."



Quote

Process

Over two years of work went into making Farmur more than just an idea. Hundreds of hours, and countless changes, the process to create something magical started in a journal and evolved from there.

A. Unique Positioning Statement

Farmur's position in the current competitive market is summed up in three main ideas:

- 1. Interaction encourages active engagement:** Users are encouraged to explore, engage, and make educational guess to learn the topic. When the content offers another level beyond reading, the user is given more time to soak in the information.
 - 2. Focused on before people start their garden:** Most major websites aimed at urban farming aim at the people who have already started—Farmur hopes to inspire people to take the first step.
 - 3. More illustrations, less text:** While reading educational material is helpful, Farmur will be trying to simplify the concepts through infographics, drawings, videos, and a focus on aesthetics.
-

B. Competition

The thesis I created is unique and unlike many competitors out there today. Since my end goal is education and inspiration, the closest thing to competition are other sites or apps that have the same usage needs as Farmur. While most of the competition focuses on what to do with an existing garden, my focus has been on inspiring people to get started. The following list contains the major competitors in urban farming related content and a brief breakdown of their pros and cons. While I use the word “competitor” throughout this section, it is important to note that I do not see Farmur as a replacement for such useful services. Instead, Farmur is for a generation that thinks these sites are unappealing and boring.

urbanfarming.org

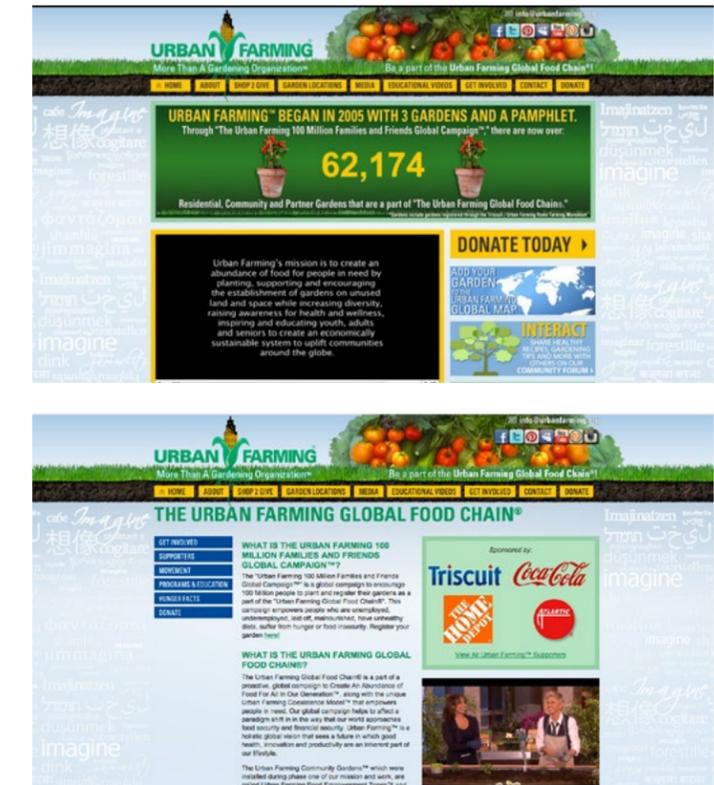
A nonprofit website aimed at connecting urban farmers and helping establish gardens in urban communities. This site is more like a glorified bulletin board and has limited interactive content that would encourage newcomers to get started. The concept seems to be aimed at those already with a garden or those interested expanding their garden into a communal space. The site itself has plenty of content and videos, but it's not maintained well with content missing when you try to visit a page. Overall this site is frustrating and slows the visitor's learning potential with dead-end links and unnecessary text.

Pros:

- Garden locations
- Short documentaries
- Discussion boards
- Get involved section

Cons:

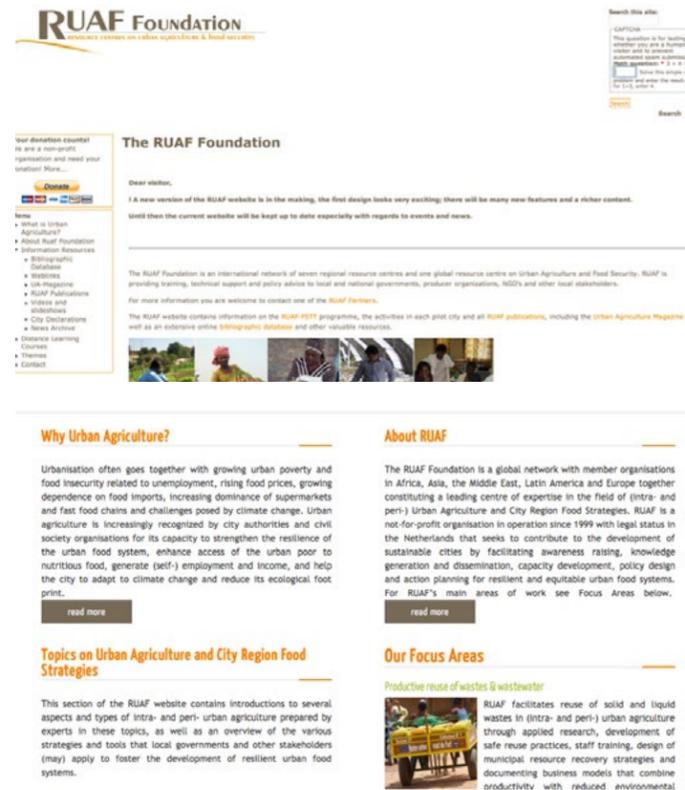
- Low quality visual design
- Broken links and content
- Frustrating UX and UI; easy to get lost
- Lots of text on many scattered pages



B. Competition continued

ruaf.org

A text heavy resource center for people interested in urban agriculture and food security. The site is in the middle of a redesign, but the current layout is not likely to inspire anyone to start their own garden. It's much more helpful if you know what you're already looking for, and if you do this site has a depth of knowledge on urban farming. There are also videos to look through, but they are mostly recordings of speeches and presentations.



Pros:

- Large information database
- Online learning course
- Publications and videos

Cons:

- Hard to find content
- Poor visual design
- Way too much text vs. using visual explanations

communitygarden.org

This site helps people plan and get involved in gardening in a more community-oriented way. Sadly it has a lot of member's only content, but it's useful and insightful. This site is aimed a cultivating and maintaining visitors who are interested in larger scale urban farming. Similar to urbanfarmonline.com, this site has a clean design and is visually appealing.



Pros:

- Garden locations
- Visually appealing design
- Programs to get involved

Cons:

- Members only content
- No rich media content
- The UI is a bit confusing in areas

B. Competition continued

urbanfarmonline.com

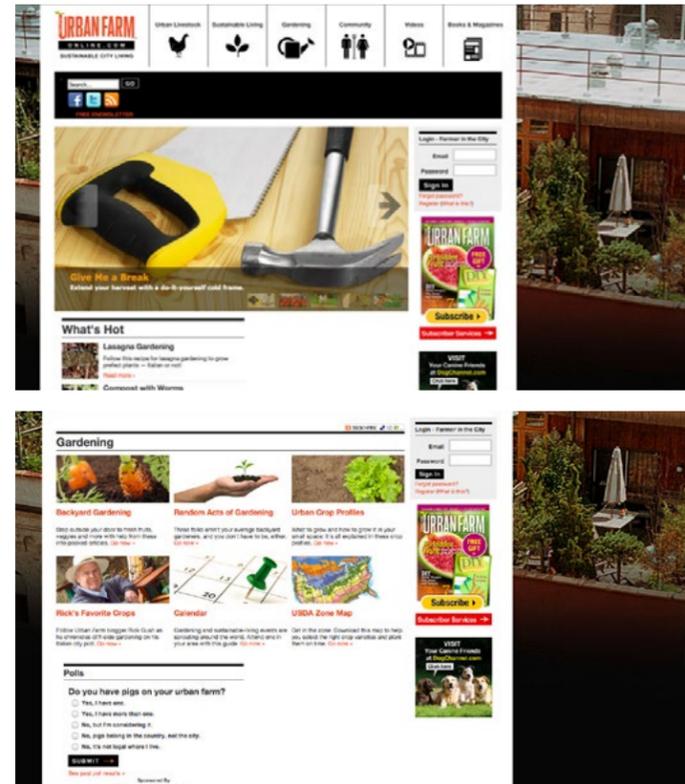
This site is basically an online presence of a print magazine. This site has a better visual design than most other sites I researched, but it still suffered from a lack of rich media interactivity. The audience for this site is most likely readers of the magazine as well as people already gardening, so there is no section devoted to inspiration or education on urban farming and the benefits.

Pros:

- Friendly design
- Tutorials and guides
- Videos and stories
- Quizzes

Cons:

- Blog style format
- Limited interactivity
- Lack of inspirational section



EPA Brownfields UrbanAg

The EPA has a great informational site on the topic of urban farming, but it's almost completely text based. Complete with checklists for planing a garden, this site is full of helpful information for urban farming. It's organized in a thoughtful manner, but it's really unfortunate that the site has no visual aides to help understand the material.

Pros:

- Wealth of information
- Organized informational structure
- Informational presentations

Cons:

- Text heavy and lengthy
- Very little inspiration



B. Competition continued

Competitive Matrix

	URBAN-FARMING.ORG	RUAF.ORG	COMMUNITY-GARDEN.ORG	URBANFARM-ONLINE.COM	EPA BROWNFIELDS URBANAG	FARMUR
Illustrations used to explain content	●	●	●	●	●	●
Video content or motion graphics	●	●	●	●	●	●
Calculator to help assess needs	●	●	●	●	●	●
Download-able plans to get started	●	●	●	●	●	●
Interactive elements for explaining concepts	●	●	●	●	●	●

Summary of Competition

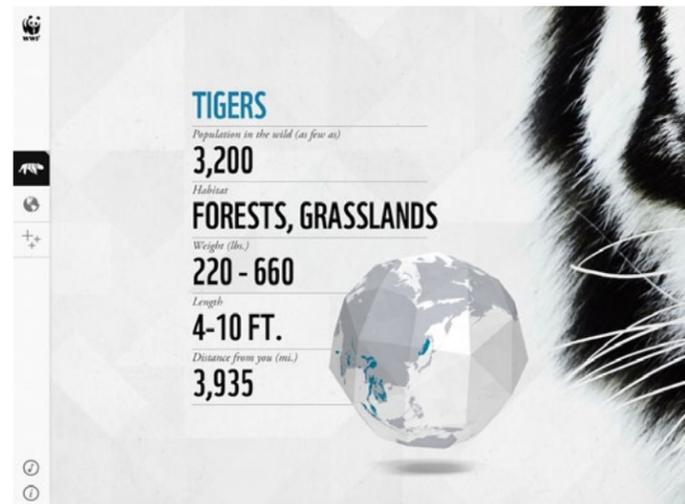
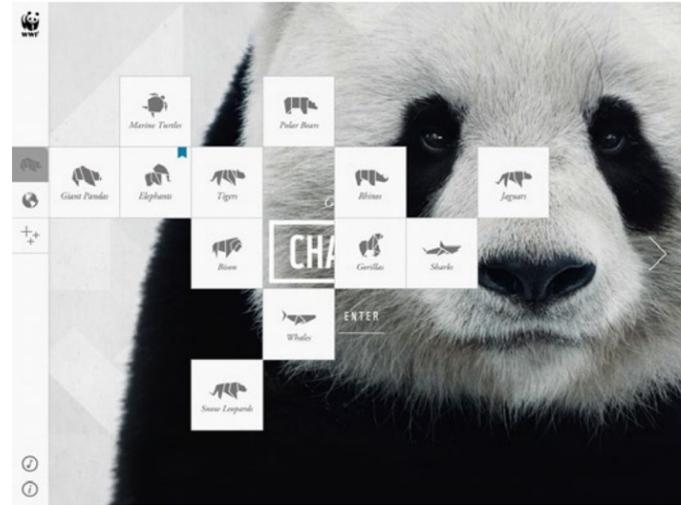
Farmur provides a rich media experience that focus on story and action. Competitors have an immense amount of content but force users to hunt for what they need. Content is mostly textual with a few video documentaries and no motion graphics. Many of these “competitors” are non-profits or government organizations, and this most likely explains the focus on just getting information out to people. Design can be expensive, and if there is no need to make money off the information, it’s easiest to simply put copy on a web page and a search function. Farmur aims to let the visitor discover the story of urban farming in a new way, but not overwhelm them with large amounts of information before they want or even need it.

My target audience is young and technically capable. Farmur aims to breakthrough to an audience that expects more from a web site, and gets bored reading page after page of text. The audience wants to know why they should grow food, how it affects them, where they can start and feel entertained along the way.

C. Inspiration

World Wildlife Foundation

This iPad app is educational and fun without feeling overbearing or pushy. It's filled with interactive information that feels intuitive to discover. The menu system is unique and the layout is different in the ability to move in many different directions. This freedom to move up/down & left/right inspired me to add side pages to my long scrolling page. The interactive elements are natural and useful and the design is clean and sophisticated utilizing photography and simple illustrations.



inequality.is

A major source of inspiration for my interactive elements and planning calculator came from this unique website. The typical presentation for this type of content is long articles with graphs, but inequality.is turned the information into something relevant to the user and much more interactive than just show a graph. Visitors are encouraged to learn about inequality and our financial system through interactive infographics and fun animations. This site helped me think about how a complex topic can be made engaging by choosing the proper format for your audience.



D. Visual Design

Farmur has gone through many design revisions since September 2012 when I first started thinking about an urban farm focused thesis project. Farmur started as a isometric gamified map of Corktown in Detroit, MI. When I presented at my midpoint review in 2013, the idea had turned into a 3D interactive model focused on four types of urban farming across the USA. The next major pivot was to a utilitarian iPad app that walked people through creating a plan for starting a garden and allowed tracking progress with tips along the way.

When I started creating the motion graphic I made my final major design change to Farmur. The illustrations I had created for animating became the foundation of my visual language and I turned Farmur into a responsive web site that focused on the story instead of creating an app. In this section you will see the visual evolution of Farmur.

Moodboard

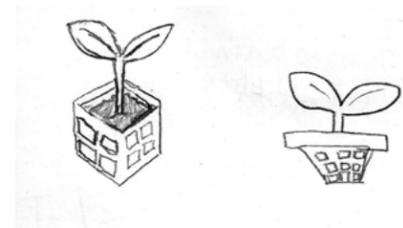
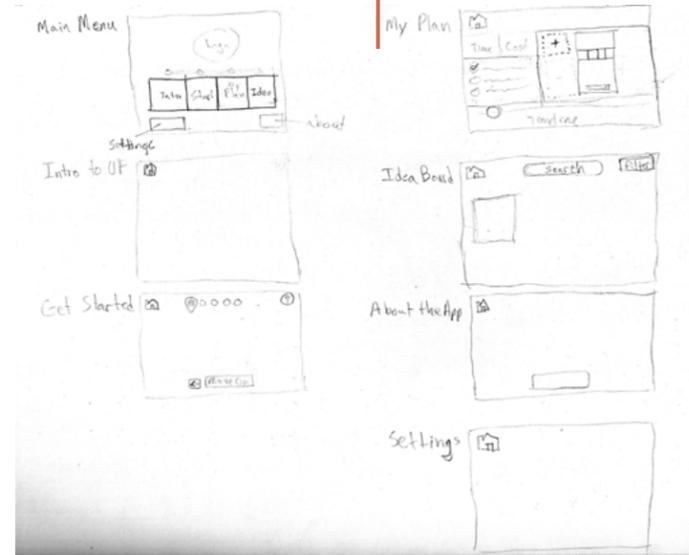


D. Visual Design continued

Sketches, Mocks, Lists & Brainstorming

For me, designing something visual almost always starts with paper and pencil. I take lots of notes, doodle ideas, sketch wireframes and try to roadmap anything before I spend too much time on it. Here is a look into my early process.

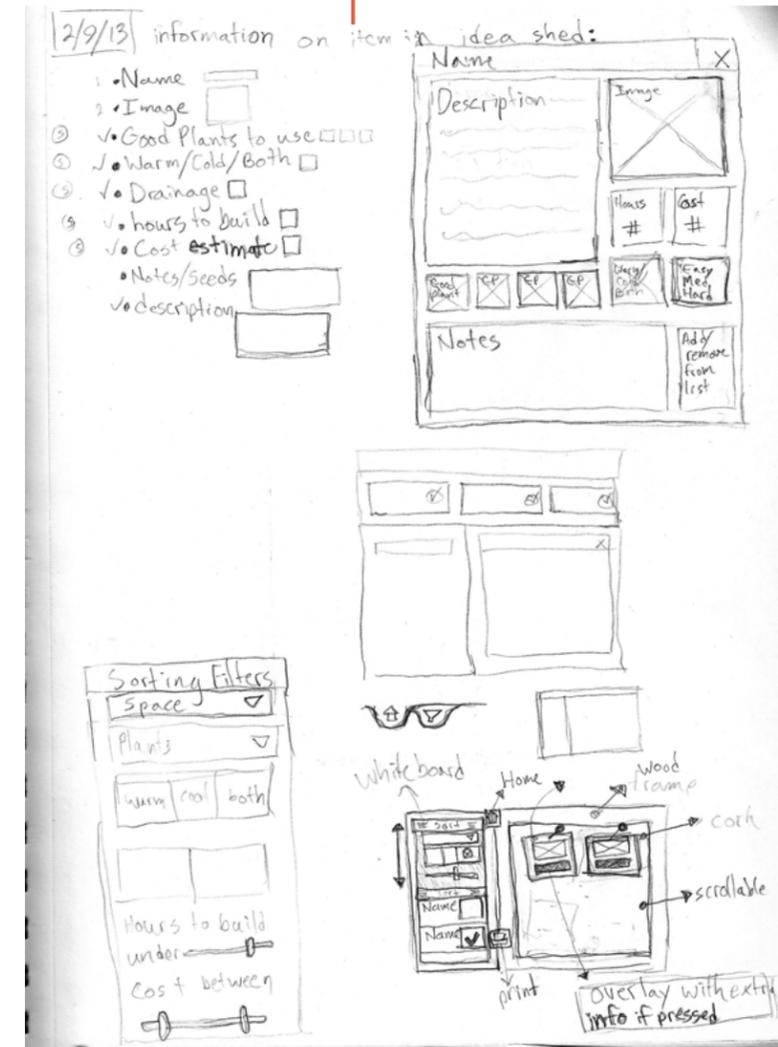
Earliest Farmur Sketch: My first idea was to, ironically, be a responsive website. The idea was too boring though. There were four pages of content. On one page there would be a 3D walk through a garden where different urban farm elements would be highlighted.



First App Design: My earliest focus was on highlighting the urban farms located in Detroit, MI. I created an isometric map that rewarded users for discovering things. Users could then cash in points to buy plants/tools to grow a garden.

Early Logo Design: This idea still holds promise, but I moved away from creating an icon as a logo and towards typography. At some point I may feel Farmur needs more, and return to this thinking.

Filtering & Idea Board
In the 3D model screen, people could filter to find ideas and save them to a board for later use.



Main Menu 3D Model: Midpoint review idea, where users zoomed into a garden type and swiped between them to explore.



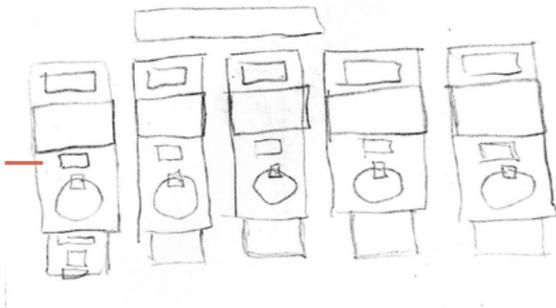
Utilitarian iPad App: Basic ideas for what would become an app that accepts user data and creates an action plan as well as a calendar with notifications. There would be a way to track progress and get tutorials for specific space sizes.



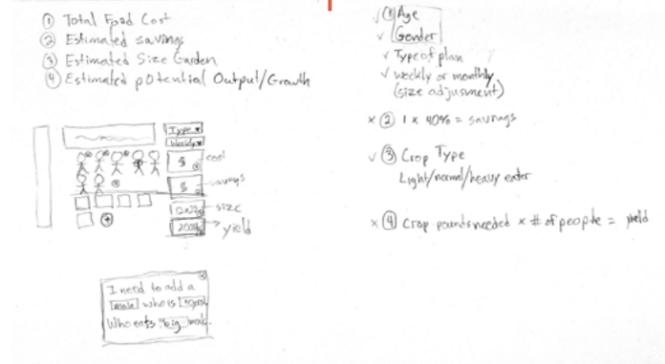
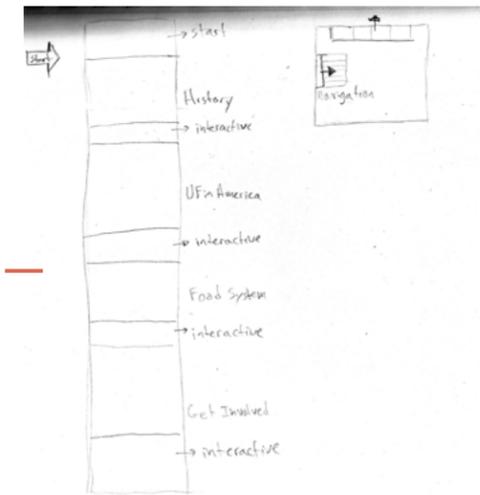
D. Visual Design continued

Sketches, Mocks, Lists & Brainstorming

Corporate Consolidation Infographic: Each column was a different sector of the industrial agriculture system with a dial to guess the amount of consolidation.



Initial Flow For Current Design: The current flow of Farmur used to be a single page with no side pages. This sketch shows that initial idea before I started thinking about the UI for each section.

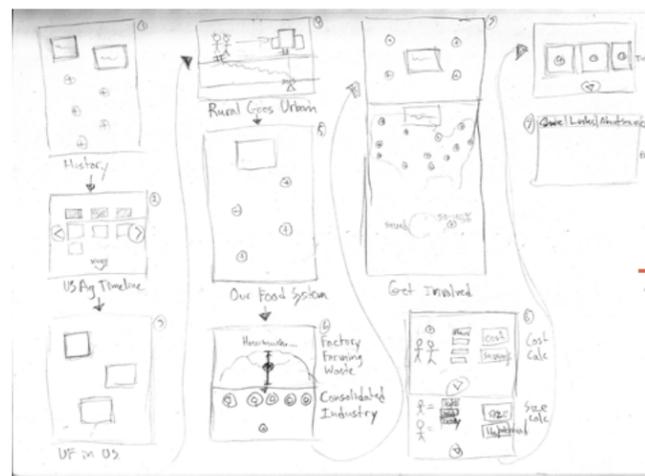


Early Calculator Functionality Design:

The calculator was my first foray into coding anything major in javascript. Here you can see me thinking through variables and UI elements before I started coding. The goal was to identify make sure there was a UI element if a variable required input.

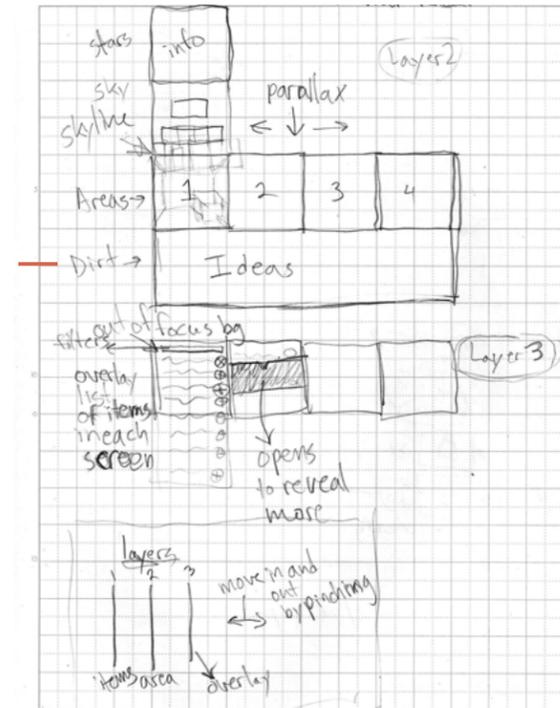
Advanced Early Flow:

As I realized Farmur was going to become a responsive web site, I expanded on the initial idea on the left hand side of the page and started filling in UI elements and expected content.



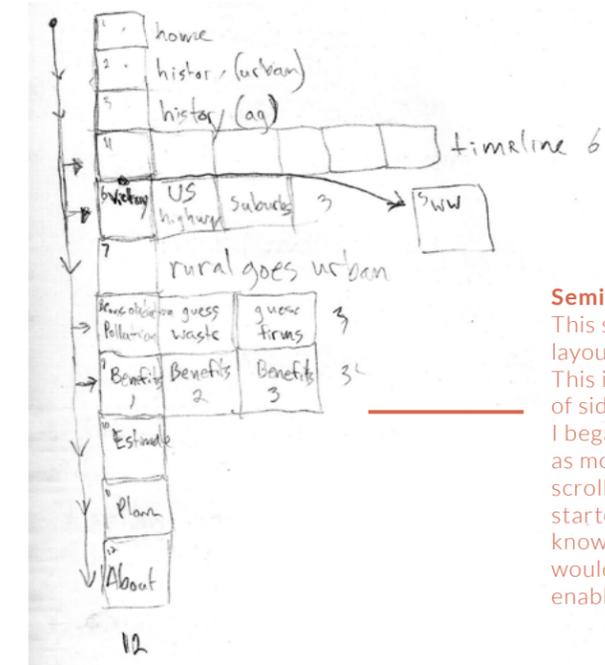
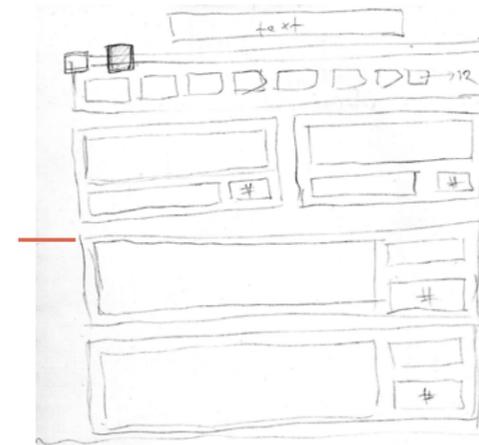
Preliminary Side Page Idea:

Before I went completely to a web site design, I was still trying to make the experience work as an iPad app. Here you can see an idea that placed users in the stars to star and they can move down through a city skyline, urban farm types, and into the dirt where they store their ideas. Below you can see the layers for making it utilize parallax, with the menu floating beyond a viewable area and activated by a two finger pinch to "zoom out".



Rural Population Goes Urban Timeline Sketch:

Every complex page I created started off as a series of box drawings. Each box would end up becoming a div or other appropriate semantic HTML option.



Semi-Final Page Layout:

This sketch shows my initial layout before I finalized it. This is when the concept of side pages emerged and I began thinking of the site as more than just a vertical scrolling design. Before I started coding, I needed to know how my information would flow, and sketches enabled this process.

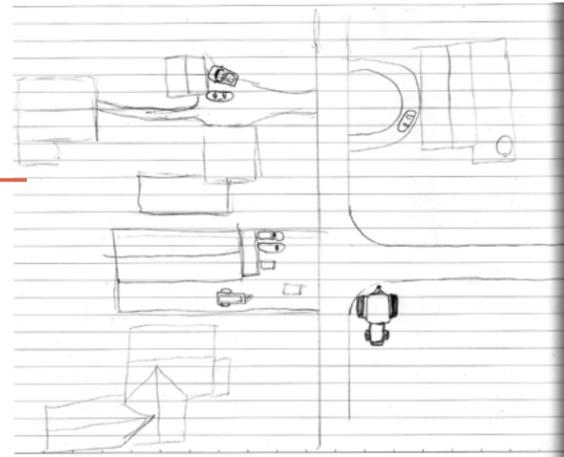
Calculator Sketch:

The reason I sketch each page as boxes before I code them is to help identify help me visualize how much code is necessary and decide if there are ways to simplify before I even begin.

D. Visual Design continued

Motion Graphic & Illustration Sketches

First Shot & Home Page: My earliest gamified idea utilized isometric imagery and as my visual language matured, so did the camera angle. I wanted to create a stylized world that felt like it was real in some ways. Referencing real satellite imagery, I started to sketch the first illustration any visitor would



Motion Graphic Flow Sketch: I planned the camera move well in advance of creating my illustrations. The numbers/letters correspond with the script.



Storyboards 1-4:

Here you can see that I planned on having a map showing the Fertile Crescent at one point. I removed this to tighten up the animation, and moved away from showing icons of wheat to represent food growth.



Storyboards 7-8:

World wars and victory gardens. I removed items for the final illustration, and flipped the trowel in the hand so it looked less like a weapon.

Storyboards 9-10:

United States highway system growing into the suburbs. Along the side is a sketch of historical urban farming milestone placement.



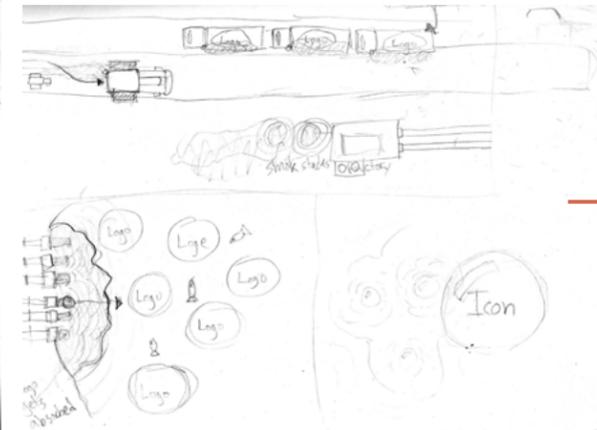
Storyboards 14-20:

This is where I go over the different types of urban farms in the USA, at least the types I felt needed to be highlighted.



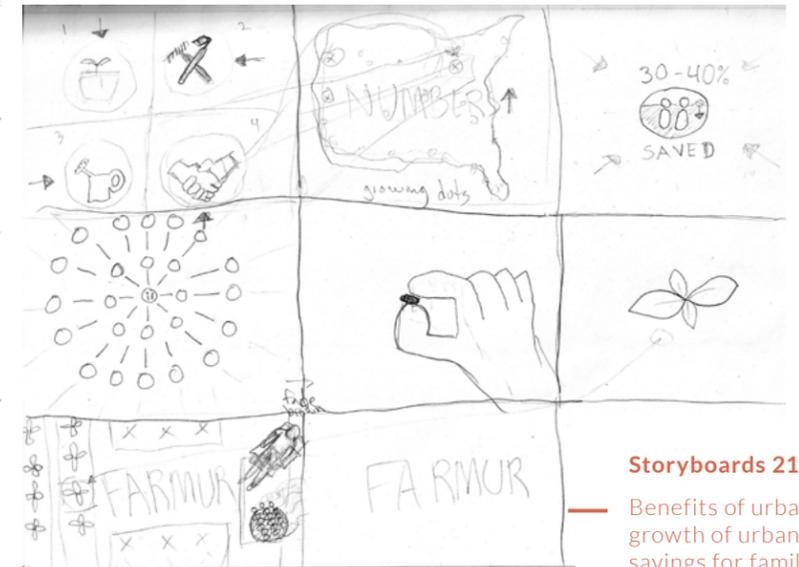
Storyboards 11-13:

Corporate pollution and consolidation. Early on I had a tractor driving down the road, but it felt out of place since it was driving from the suburbs.



Storyboards 21-29:

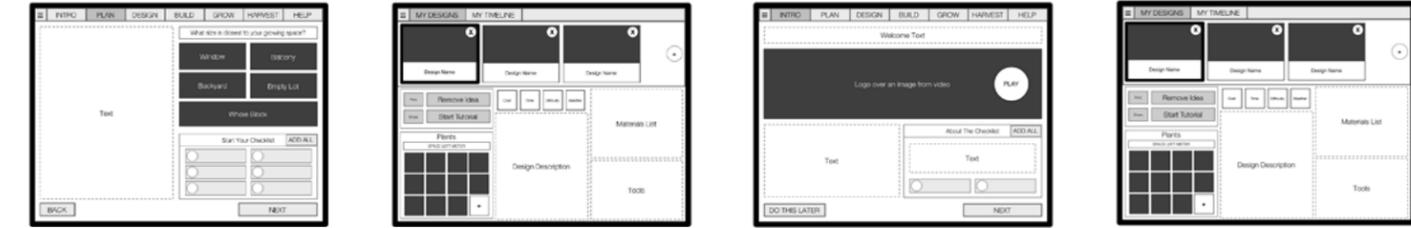
Benefits of urban farming, growth of urban farming, savings for families, and ending logo scene.



D. Visual Design continued

Progression To Final Designs

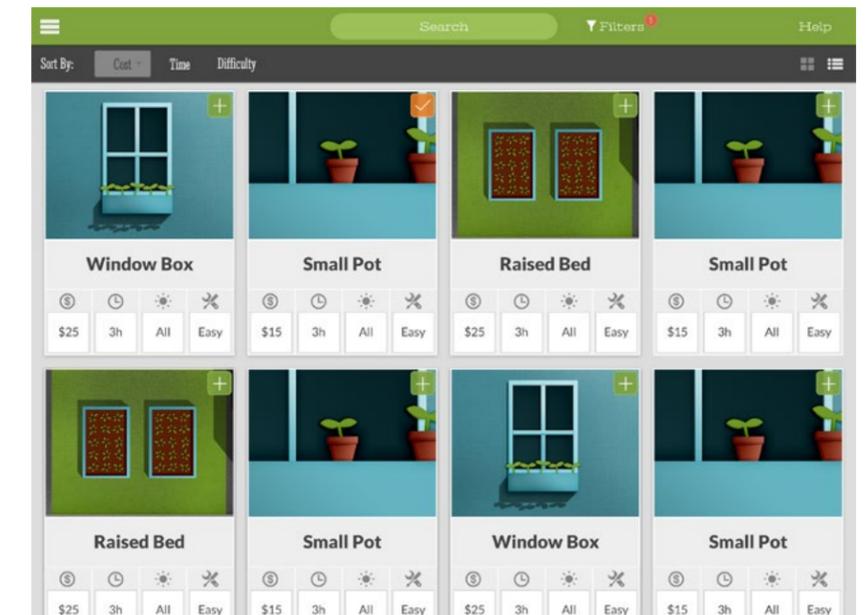
My visual design has shifted every time I've made a major update to the flow of the app. When I started I was designing a gamified isometric iPad app. My next iteration was a 3D model that tried to keep a very DIY style. The last version, before my final version was a clean iPad app with a refined UI and new illustrations.



[Proof of Concept Videos Link](#)



[Proof of Concept Videos Link](#)

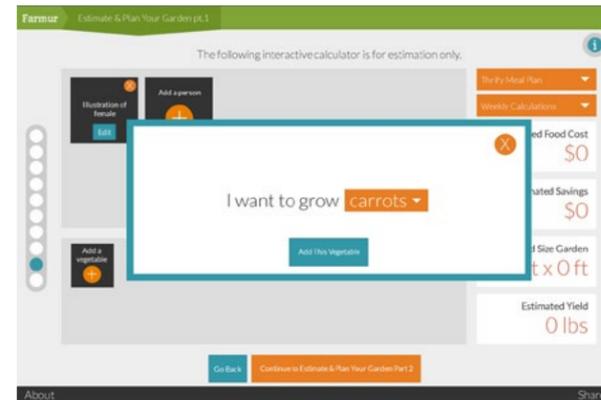
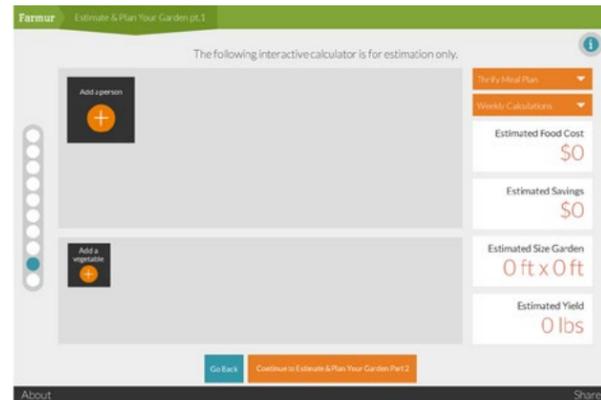
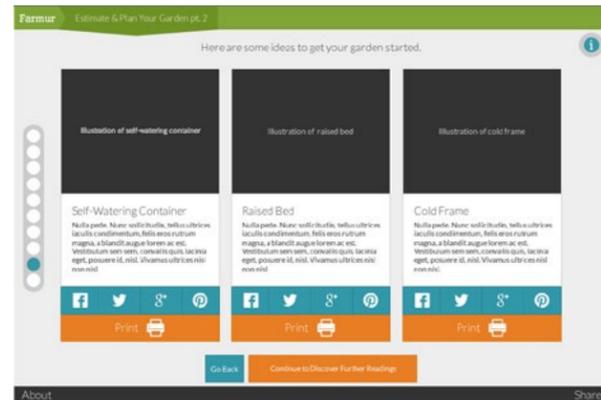
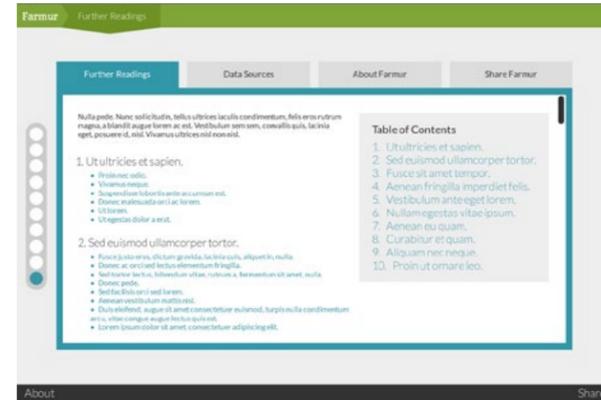
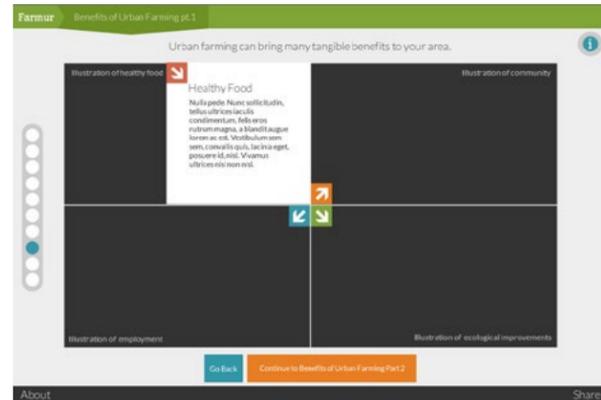


Farmur, at one point, was meant to be an iPad app that helped people create a plan based on information they input. When they initially opened the app, there would be a quick 6 step walk through that gathered all sorts of useful data about their needs. Users would get a plan, tutorials, tips and suggestions to start their garden.

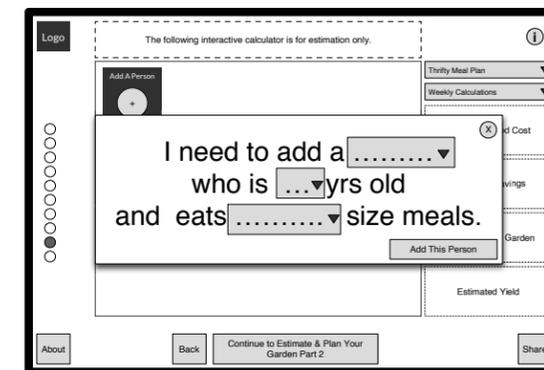
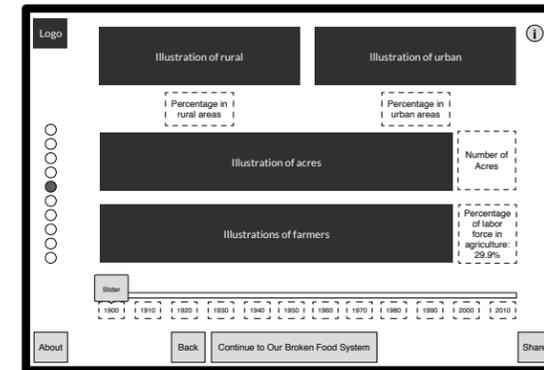
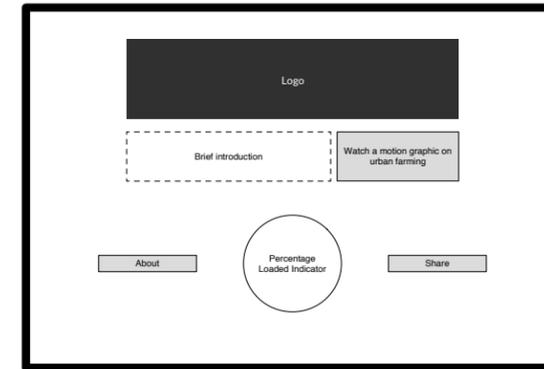
D. Visual Design continued

Progression To Final Designs

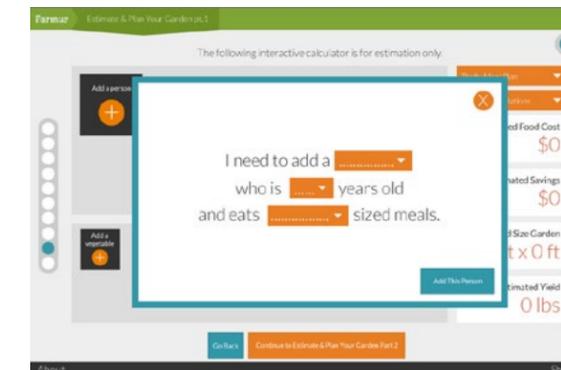
Working Click-Through Prototype Link



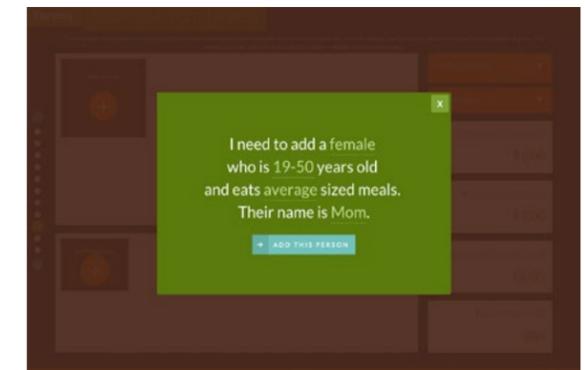
WIREFRAME



HIGH-FIDELITY



FINAL DESIGN



D. Visual Design continued

Typography: Headings

TYPEFACES

Roboto Slab Light
Roboto Slab Bold
Lato Black

HEADINGS

Heading Style 1

FONT-SIZE: 30PT | WEIGHT: LIGHT | KERN: -10

Heading Style 2

FONT-SIZE: 20PT | WEIGHT: BOLD | KERN: -10

Heading Style 3

FONT-SIZE: 18PT | WEIGHT: LIGHT | KERN: -10

Heading Style 4

FONT-SIZE: 18PT | WEIGHT: LIGHT | KERN: +10

Typography: Body

TYPEFACE

Lato Light

NORMAL

The quick farmur jumped high above the rows of beets and carrots she had planted in her backyard raised bed. When she landed, she stared at her seedlings and felt at peace. Not every person on the planet gets to feel so close to life.

FONT-SIZE: 10PT | WEIGHT: LIGHT

LARGE

The quick farmur jumped high above the rows of beets and carrots she had planted in her backyard raised bed. When she landed, she stared at her seedlings and felt at peace. Not every person on the planet gets to feel so close to life.

FONT-SIZE: 16PT | WEIGHT: LIGHT

D. Visual Design continued

Logo

COLOR

Farmur

BLACK & WHITE



Let The Logo Breathe
Always leave space around the logo equal to the height of an "r."

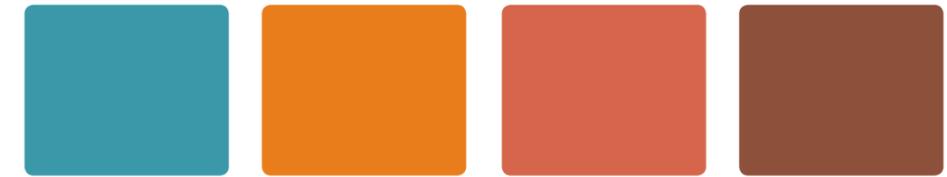
Color

PRIMARY



#7BA333	#303036	#686A72	#C3C2CD	#EBE9F4
C - 56	C - 73	C - 61	C - 23	C - 56
M - 19	M - 67	M - 52	M - 19	M - 19
Y - 100	Y - 57	Y - 43	Y - 13	Y - 100
K - 2	K - 56	K - 15	K - 0	K - 2

SECONDARY



#3698A8	#EB7E1E	#D36650	#8C503C
C - 75	C - 6	C - 13	C - 33
M - 25	M - 61	M - 72	M - 70
Y - 30	Y - 100	Y - 74	Y - 78
K - 0	K - 0	K - 2	K - 26

E. User Testing

Creating a usable product that people enjoy is a challenge. Without user testing, I would have continued down tangents that were just plain misguided. Putting a design in front of a person is the best way to see assumptions turn into facts or proven completely false. Farmur went through a series of formalized tests with users while informal feedback was constantly being gathered in tandem. As I stated to all testers, there is no right or wrong answer in this test, it's all about finding ways to improve the usefulness of Farmur. In the following pages, you can read some of the feedback I received at different stages of the design process.

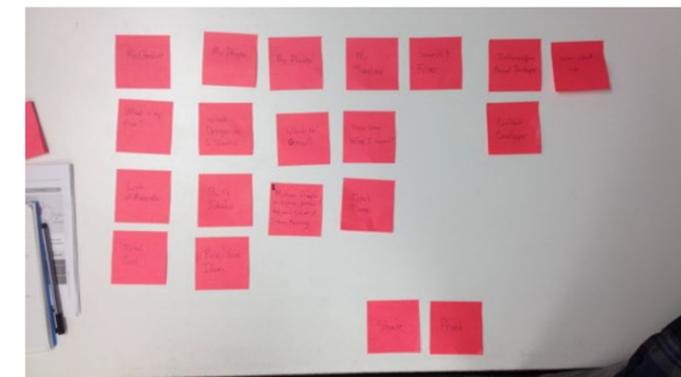
Round 1

Date: 7/12/13

Type: Low-fidelity & Card Sorting

Users: Three

This initial test included some of my sketches and card sorting. People first organized cards I had created with different sections/headings that could be found in Farmur. This round of testing was fairly rough for me because two of the testers spoke English as a second language and did not understand some of the words I was asking them to sort. The major takeaway for me was to simplify and start telling a story. I was encouraged to do something I would actually enjoy creating and using.



Feedback:

- Hard to understand tasks
- Not sure what each heading meant
- General misunderstanding of concepts
- Felt it was too utilitarian

Adaptations:

- Reworded tasks to better describe what was expected
- Changed the headings to match the card sorting layouts
- Worked in more descriptions and explanations in areas
- Began to explore telling a story more

E. User Testing continued

Round 2

Dates: 7/27/13 & 7/28/13

Type: Wireframes

Users: Five

Full Report: [PDF Link](#)

This round involved 37 pages of wireframes, a script, a full report and five users meeting my target audience criteria. I learned much more in these sessions than I did in my previous round. It was exciting to see the interest and ideas came from my testers. This test really instilled in me the need for user testing along all stages.

This round involved placing printed wireframes in front of a user and asking them to perform a task. Users would move through the wireframes by touching the paper and were encouraged to think out loud. Getting people to verbalize their thought process is hard to do as people often times go silent as they think intensely about the problem. I encouraged thinking out loud by asking questions along the way, always being careful to avoid subtly guiding them or biasing the response.

Feedback:

- Hover menu not immediately apparent
- Data shown should be expanded to include more years
- Unsure about data sources
- UI element showing question mark is confusing
- Change labels to clarify message

Adaptations:

- Adjusted UI placement, changed colors, and adjusted scale
- Changed “?” to an “i” to indicate “more information”
- Changed label wording based on feedback and layout
- Included sources in more information modal

Round 3

Date: 8/24/14

Type: High-fidelity Clickable Prototype

Users: Three

When I complete my high-fidelity prototype I was in the process of thinking about adding side pages. This round of testing helped me feel that it was something worth trying and that people would be able to find their way with subtle directions. While this prototype represented a lot of work it was an important step towards the final design. Just building something more advanced than wireframes uncovers issues that users may not see. Prototypes help clarify dreams and make them practical realities.

Feedback:

- Why are some pages scrolling and others full screen?
- The buttons with text are distracting at the bottom
- The bars along the top and bottom feel constraining

Adaptations:

- Moved all pages to single screens and separated content to new pages that didn't fit on one page
- Removed text on buttons and made buttons smaller and circular
- Removed bars and attempted make the design more immersive

E. User Testing continued

Round 4

Dates: 4/18/14 & 4/24/14

Type: Working site

Users: Five

Full Report: [PDF Link](#)

The most recent round of testing involved a working version of Farmur and was performed over two weeks. Four of the users were remote tested using Skype and a javascript library called together.js. This library allowed my testers and I to share the same web page simultaneously. I also began recording video of tests so that I could review and take more notes later.

I learned that users don't like to feel forced in one direction all the time. While most of my users moved around in the way I intended one stated he never follows the directions and wanted to be able jump around more, even if he didn't use the feature much. This is where the idea of my main menu came around and allows for users to move anywhere in the site within two clicks.

It was encouraging to hear the positive reactions to the general design of the site and the interest people expressed at this phase. Most people couldn't wait to see a final product, which kept me fueled as I moved forward.

Feedback:

- Enable users to feel they can jump anywhere
- Sometimes it's unclear where to go
- Is there a way to go back?
- Placement of "i" seems out of place
- Label the side page navigation
- Expected interaction and there was none in places

Adaptations:

- Added main menu, enlarged directional buttons, added a back button, moved "i" into place at the bottom of the main navigation, and labeled side pages on hover
- Added interaction in area that users expected

"Quote goes here."

F. Technical Process

Technical Specifications

The target audience my project aims for is younger and is typically up to date on the most current software and browsers. To reach the broadest audience, and encourage sharing, Farmur will be a responsive website. The site will function normally on tablets and desktops, but it will not work on mobile phones in the same way. On a mobile phone, only the motion graphic will be available.

The information presented is ideal for a larger display, above 960px wide. It will work on a Mac, PC or tablet computer. Testing will be done for Safari 7+, Chrome27+, Firefox 19+ or IE 9+, but the recommended browser is Safari 7+ or Chrome 27+.

Adobe Creative Cloud was used for nearly all design work. The airplanes and globe in the motion graphic were modeled using Cinema 4D and animated in After Effects using Element 3D.

Open Source Utilities & External Libraries

MAJOR COMPONENTS

- [jQuery](#) 1.11.1
- [Swiper](#) 2.7.0

MINOR PLUG-INS

- [classie.js](#) 1.0.1
- [Masonry](#) 3.1.5
- [jQuery Easing](#) 1.3
- [jquery.dropdown.js](#) 1.0.0
- [jquery.easydropdown.js](#) 2.1.4
- [dragdealer.js](#) 0.9.7
- [modalEffects.js](#) 1.0.0
- [Modernizr](#) 2.6.2
- [Nivo Lightbox](#) 1.2.0
- [nlform.js](#) 1.0.0
- [odometer.js](#) 0.4.7
- [pace.js](#) 0.5.6

UNUSED

- [jquery.knob.js](#) 1.2.11
- [css-filters-polyfill.js](#) 0.22
- [cssParser.js](#) 1.1
- [vminpoly.js](#) 1.7.1

Conclusion

After three years, it's time for me to move forward.
When I started, I just hoped to make it through.
Now, I feel that Farmur is just getting started.

A. Analysis & Review

Farmur is about getting people involved in the food system through growing food. While competitors focus on people already committed to gardening, Farmur reaches out to inspire a generation that increasingly stays away from agriculture in general. If a change is to be made to industrial farming, young people need to be galvanized into action.

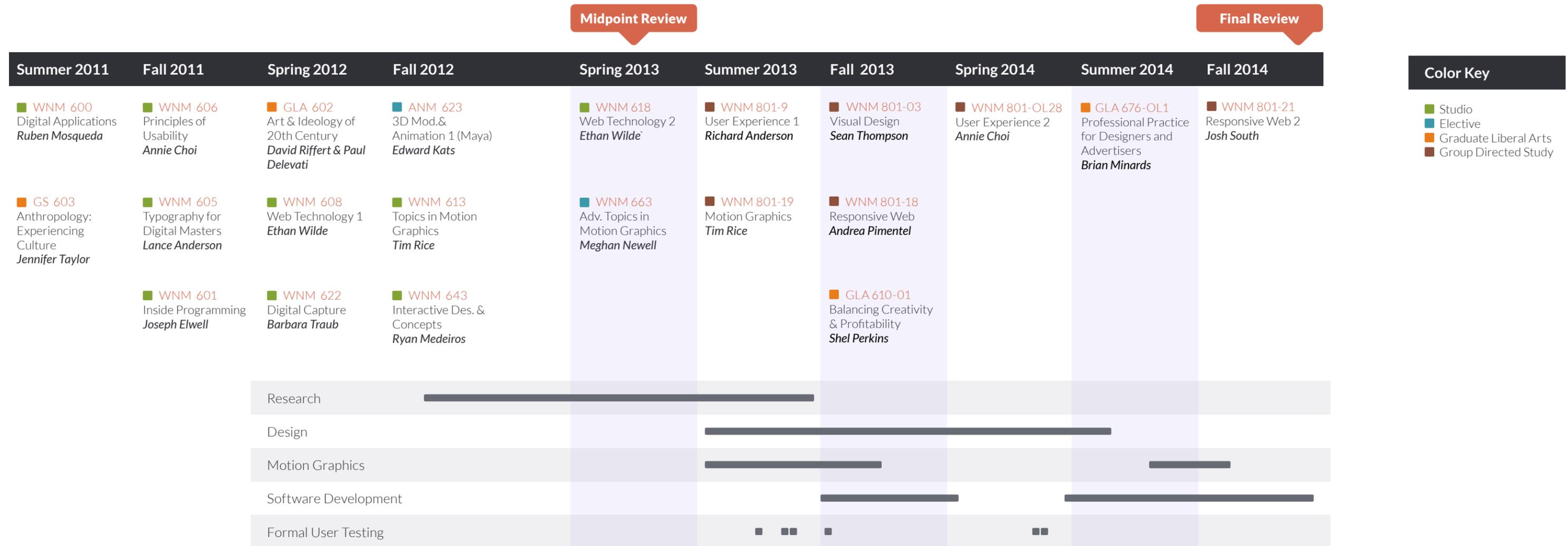
Farmur introduces the problem through a platform that encourages interaction. People are shown that growing food can, and will, make a difference to them. When they reach the end, Farmur presents a plan to get started. Through an engaging campaign to start individuals growing food, as simply as possible, Farmur is ready to motivate a generation to get back into agriculture.

A. Analysis & Review continued

Key Process Stages

I began research on Farmur in the Fall of 2012. All the class work up to this point was non-thesis specific. After I presented at midpoint, the real work on Farmur began. I had originally planned to be finished with the program in the Spring of 2014, but moved down to one class a semester when I was hired as a full-time motion designer at Lyft. Since I started working full-time I have learned a few valuable lessons about proper time management when the work load seems overwhelming.

I don't recommend other students take on this type of work load, but it's a reality many of us face to try and lower the amount of loans we require. Farmur has been a labor of love for over two years, and involved many late nights and numerous decaffeinated drinks. You can see every class I took and all major phases involved in the completion of Farmur to the right.



A. Analysis & Review continued

Reflection

Creating Farmur has been one of the most challenging things I've put myself through in my quest for professional development. I pursued my graduate degree because I wanted to offer quality motion design services to non-profits and non-governmental organizations. This seemed like a way to make a difference in the world in a small way.

As I progressed through the program at the Academy of Art University, I began to discover I enjoyed more than motion design and that adding interaction to animation made things come to life. Given my own interest in growing food, and my past research that inspired me to become a vegetarian, I felt creating an interactive app that targeted the food system was a natural pathway for me.

When I presented at my Midpoint Review, I was still trying hard to make a motion graphics be central to the operation of my thesis, and I ended up feeling that my chosen platform was going to limit the reach of my message. Although the idea would have been fun to create, I kept pushing myself to make something more relevant and useful to my target audience.

I have been devoted to coming up with something I feel my audience will feel drawn to and inspired by. Halfway through my first user experience class I scrapped weeks of work and spent

morning and night over a weekend reworking my entire project. I'm happy to say that as a result, I feel Farmur matured into something I want to grow past my graduation day.

At Midpoint, I was focused too much on forcing the motion graphic aspect and I eventually felt that moving away from creating a DIY tutorial app was necessary. My target audience was really what inspired me to change. All the data showed my target audience needed to be shown why being involved in the food system is important, then shown what to do next.

Although Farmur is different than where it started, I feel I was able to take Farmur to a better place. I feel I met my goals stated at my Midpoint Review and that all the changes I made were in direct response to the needs of my users. Focusing on the user has made all the difference to my project, and that's something I learned through AAU.

The skills I've gained while developing Farmur will no doubt set me up for advancement in future jobs. I'm already employed and utilizing skills I've gained on a daily basis. I can safely say that I do more than motion design now, and can approach any design project in my future feeling confident.

Next Steps

Farmur has potential to be more than a thesis, but it's become too much for me to do on my own. I have numerous ideas and routes I could take, but it's come to the point where I need to start getting feedback and input from more people. When I graduate, I plan to take a month off of anything related to Farmur, but I don't plan to leave it where it's at.

Currently, I'm thinking already about version two to the site, where I fix and update code. I've learned a lot since I started, and I need to go back, replace bloated plug-ins and fix quirky issues in browsers. I want to add in more animations and generally make Farmur a more streamlined experience.

The next part to Farmur is what I'm calling Phase 2. Right now Farmur is inspirational, and it does a great job getting people interested. I want to develop Farmur into something more. I want to get people growing, trading, educating, and maybe even making money.

I see ways to create a new micro-agriculture system that doesn't try to support the entire United States. My goal is to diminish the reliance on industrial agricultural, create organized community food systems, create jobs, and provide healthy food to people who otherwise wouldn't have access.

Right now, I see Farmur becoming a B-Corporation, where it isn't reliant entirely on grants but isn't making profit the ultimate goal. However, I plan on talking to savvy business people in the coming months and asking their opinion before I say anything for sure. I do want to seek investors at some point, and I would like to hire a few people to handle things I just don't have the time to do. I will eventually seek outside help to develop a business plan and begin condensing this massive document into something relevant to possible investors.

In the coming months, I will be connecting to people who urban farm and are involved in aquaponic farming. I want to start talking to people who know hard data about the financial feasibility of small to medium scale urban farming. I will need to continue creating tutorials and researching the whole time I'm talking to people, but I hope to start bringing in others to provide most of the new content.

Right now Farmur is a thesis project that will become a hobby when I graduate. If the market responds to Farmur positively, I will do my best to grow it as much as possible.

B. Thesis Links

Looking for all the thesis related links I referenced throughout this document?
Below you'll find a list of all the links that pertain to Farmur.

- [Farmur Web Site](#)
- [Directed Study Journal](#)
- [First Design Proof of Concept 01](#)
- [First Design Proof of Concept 02](#)
- [First Design Proof of Concept 03](#)
- [Midpoint Design Proof of Concept 01](#)
- [Midpoint Design Proof of Concept 02](#)
- [Midpoint Design Proof of Concept 03](#)
- [High-Fidelity Prototype](#)
- [Personal Website](#)

C. Recommended Links

If reading about urban farming peaked your interest, please feel free to explore the subject more. Below is a list to help get you started. These sites are simply listed as a starting place to learn more, and is in no way exhaustive.

- [Tutorial for self-watering container](#)
- [Tutorial for raised bed 01](#)
- [Tutorial for raised bed 02](#)
- [Tutorial for raised bed 03](#)
- [Tutorial for cold frame](#)
- [Cooperative extensions list](#)
- [Hardiness zone lookup](#)
- [Organic tips for growing](#)
- [Food desert locator](#)
- [Urban Agriculture: Interim Guidelines for Safe Gardening Practices](#)
- [Community & Local Agriculture](#)
- [USDA's 'Your Food Environment' Atlas](#)
- [Industrial Properties Renewed Through Agriculture](#)
- [EPA Brownfields](#)
- [Find a garden in your area](#)
- [USDA People's Garden](#)
- [Let's Move Community Garden Checklist](#)

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