



Site Planning Brief

Information Architect: Abi Jones, Future Makers Media

Client: Campaign for the United States Public Service Academy (USPSA)

Project: Redesign site with focus on search engine optimization, content management system implementation, ease of use and extensibility.

Outcome: Launched in February 2007, the redesigned site now ranks first for a search of 'US Public Service Academy' on Google, Yahoo and MSN, includes a blog and delivers audience-focused content. The site is updated and maintained by the owners and is consistently praised for its usability by the client and site visitors.

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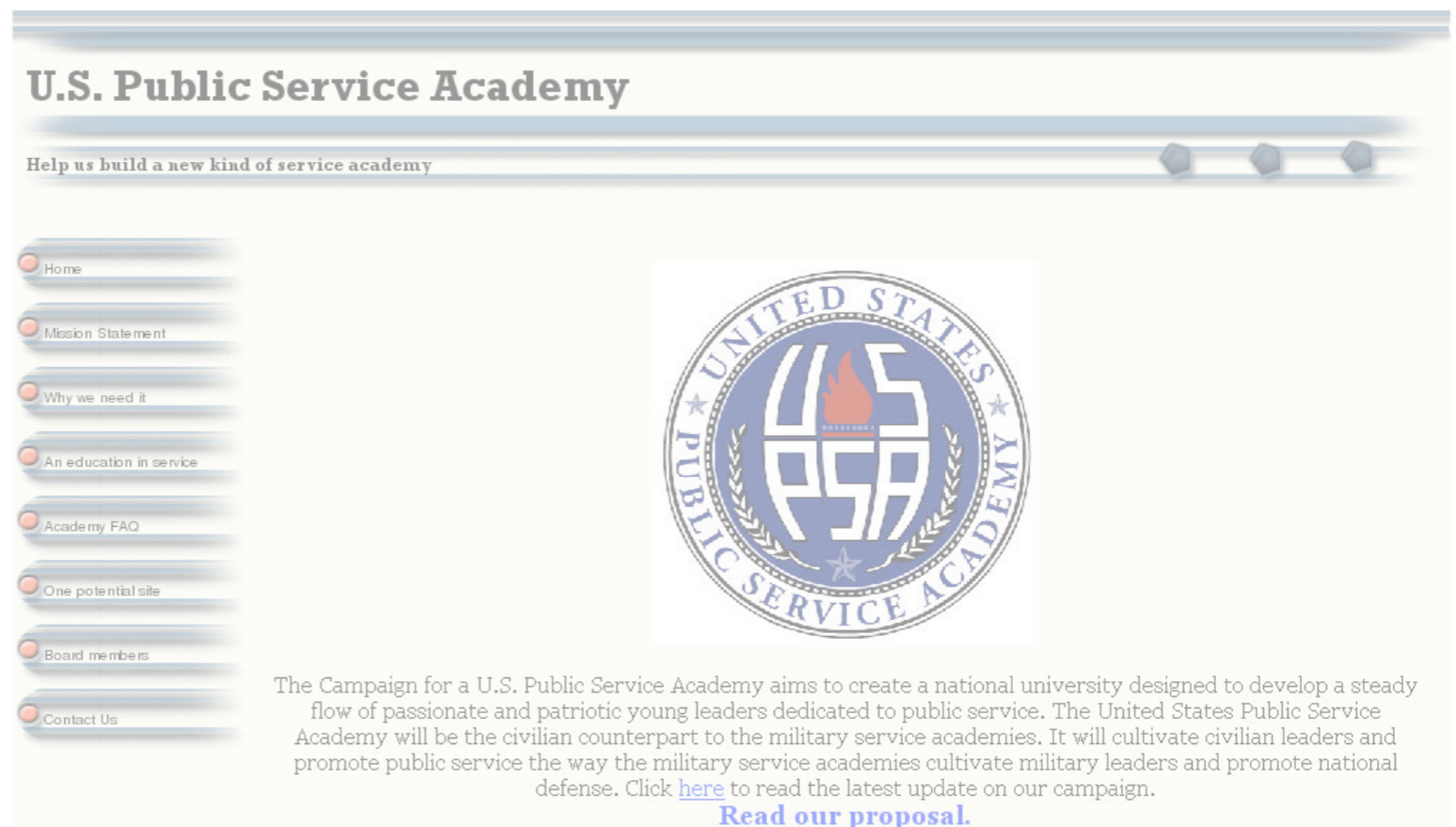


Goal Setting

Project Goals

The initial United States Public Service Academy website (below) was created by the campaign's cofounders. This site used pre-made templates and lacked basic search engine optimization. Goals for the new site included:

- Appear as top search result in Google and Yahoo for 'US Public Service Academy'
- Supply information to targeted audiences via specific website sections
- Manage new content and site updates without needing an IT team
- Create a credible, informative public face for the campaign
- Implement a volunteer-run blog



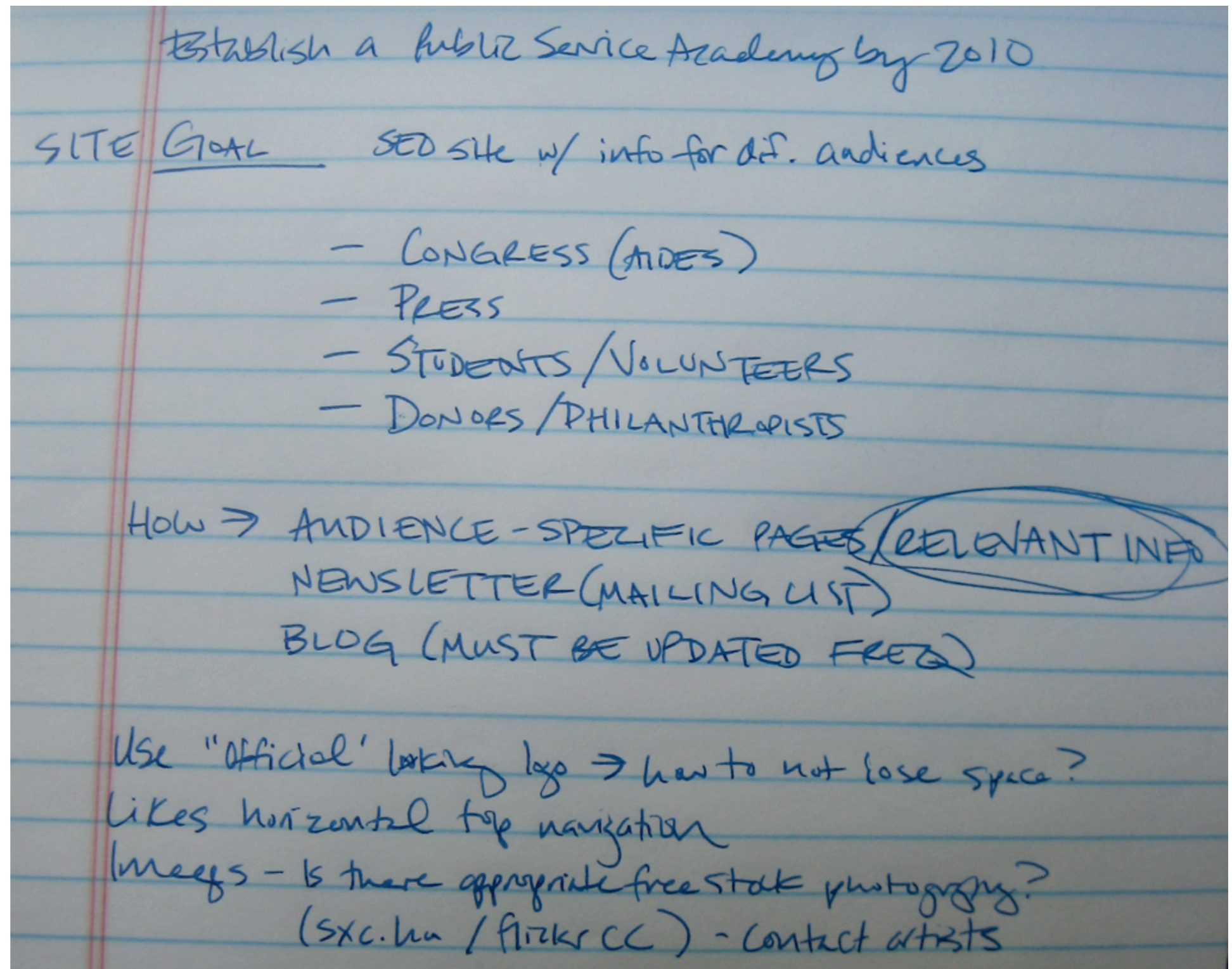


Information Gathering

I worked with Chris Myers Asch, one of the Academy's cofounders, to identify the goals for a new USPSA website.

He wanted a way to communicate the necessity and importance of a public service academy and reach constituents from a variety of backgrounds.

Establishing a goal for the site helped us in rapidly developing a plan for site design and launch.





Target Personas

The personas used in this project were created with the assistance of former legislative assistants, a foundation employee and current education volunteers. They allowed me to observe them while they reviewed pre-selected sites for the information they each used to fulfill their jobs and service goals.



Melissa Carlson

Melissa Carlson is a 22-year-old legislative assistant to a Republican Representative from Kansas. She is assigned to all education-related legislation research and briefings. When researching an organization she looks in-depth information on the full issue they support, other legislators who sponsor related legislation and sound bite ready information she can share with the legislative director and representative.

“I need to know right away why we should or should not support a program and how it will affect both our district back home and the United States.”



Scott Eick

Scott Eick is a Grants Assistant at the FutureTrust Foundation. He supports the Grants Officer by analyzing the portfolio and administration of multiple domestic education-related grant-making programs. He reviews new grant applications and writes briefs for the Grants Officer.

“I’m looking for information on why organizations need support from our foundation, what they intend to accomplish and how their work with positively impact education and a fiscally responsible government.”



Target Personas



Roberto Ruiz

Roberto Ruiz is a 19-year-old student in his first year at the University of San Francisco. Thanks to the publicity received by Teach For America he's become more interested in public service, but he worries that taking a government job will mean taking longer to pay back his student loans.

“I'm not sure what I want to major in yet, but I see things like Teach for America and think that might be cool to do after I'm done with school.”



Kayla Taylor

Kayla Taylor is an Americorps Volunteer finishing her first year in public service. When she finishes her Americorps commitment she will join the staff of a non-profit focused on building playgrounds in impoverished neighborhoods across the country.

“Even though I'll be starting a job at a non-profit, I'm still looking for ways to contribute to the world. I want to make sure that other young people have the same opportunity to serve that I had through Americorps.”



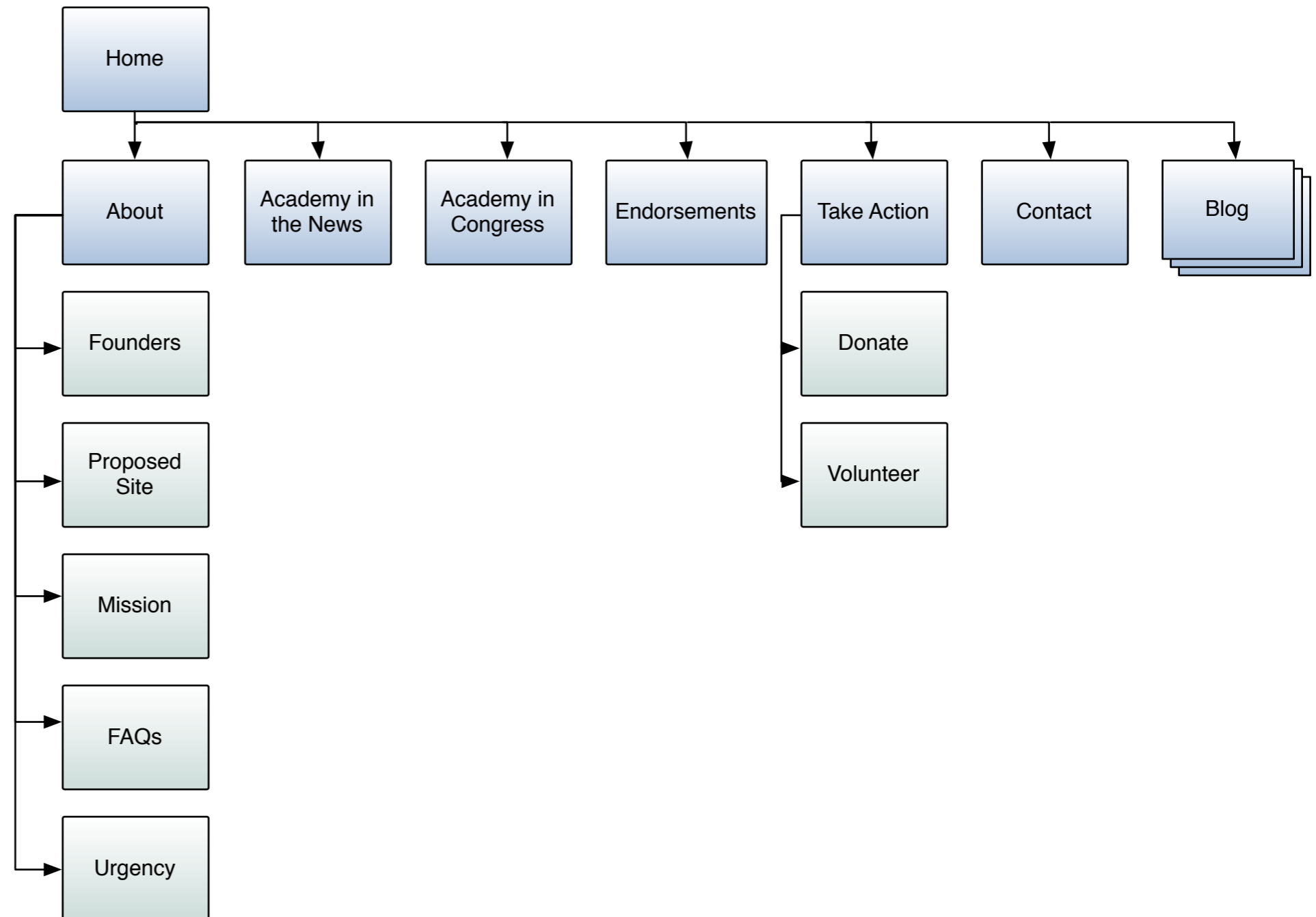
Initial Content Inventory

The initial content inventory includes both current pages on the site and planned site sections.

Content Inventory (proposed)				
ID	Title	Type	URL	Owner
1.0	Home	News and Links	/	Chris
1.1	About	News and Links	/about	Chris
1.1.1	Founders	Static Info	/about/founders	Chris
1.1.2	Proposed Site	Static Info	/about/proposed-site	Chris
1.1.3	Mission	Static Info	/about/mission	Chris
1.1.4	FAQs	Q & A	/about/faqs	Chris
1.1.5	Urgency	News and Links	/about/need	Chris
1.2	Academy in the News	Link List	/in-the-news	Chris
1.3	For Congress	News, Links, Downloads	/in-congress	Chris
1.4	Endorsements	List	/endorsements	Chris
1.5	Take Action	Info, Links	/take-action	Chris
1.5.1	Donate	Paypal Link, Information	/take-action/donate	Chris
1.5.2	Volunteer	Info, Links	/take-action/volunteer	Chris
1.6	Contact	Contact Form, Address, Phone	/contact	Chris
1.7	Blog	Blog	/blog	Ashley



Sitemap





Sample User Scenario

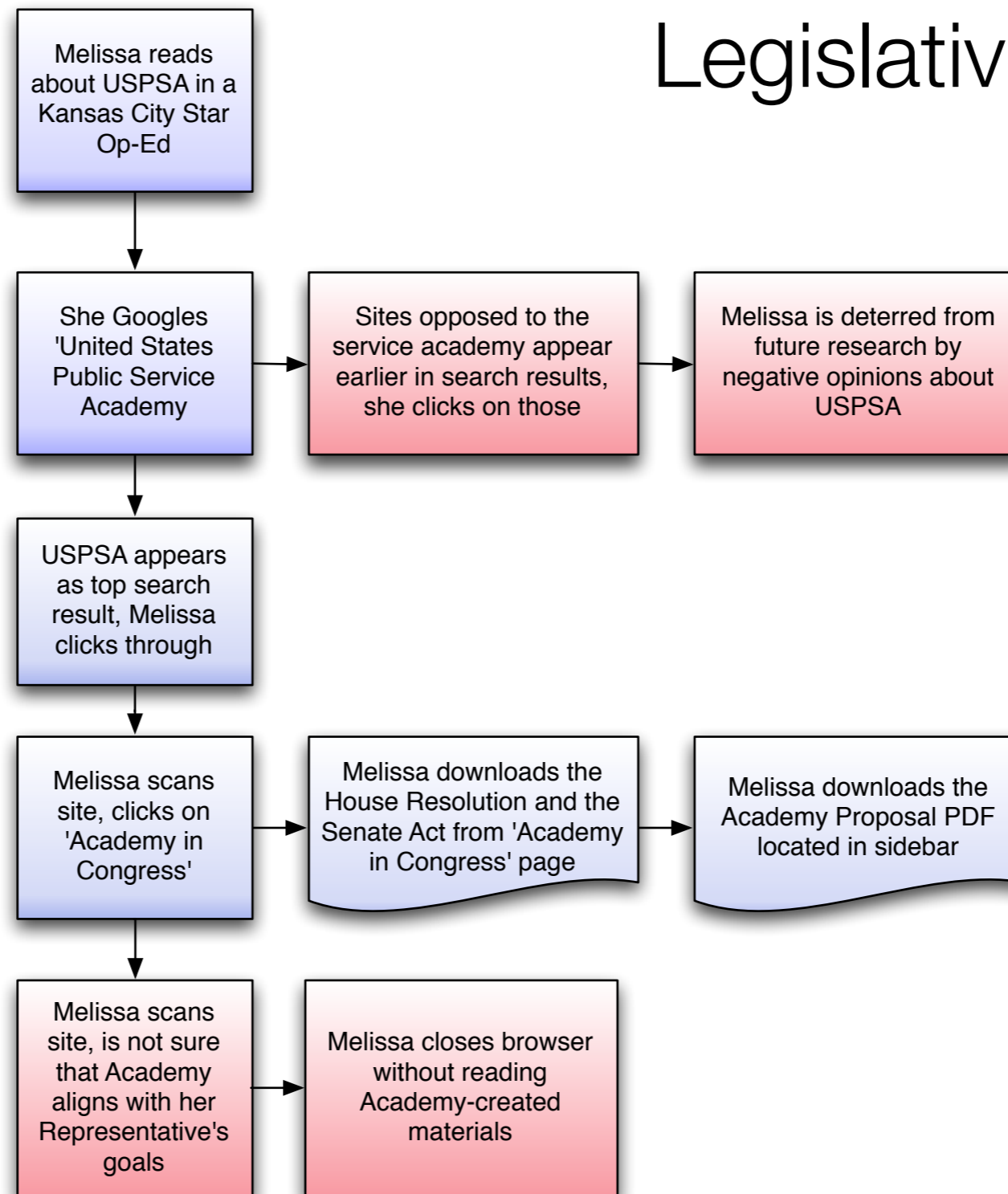
This User Scenario shows the ideal and potential processes for Melissa, the Legislative Assistant.

Key:

Successes in user process

Failures in user process

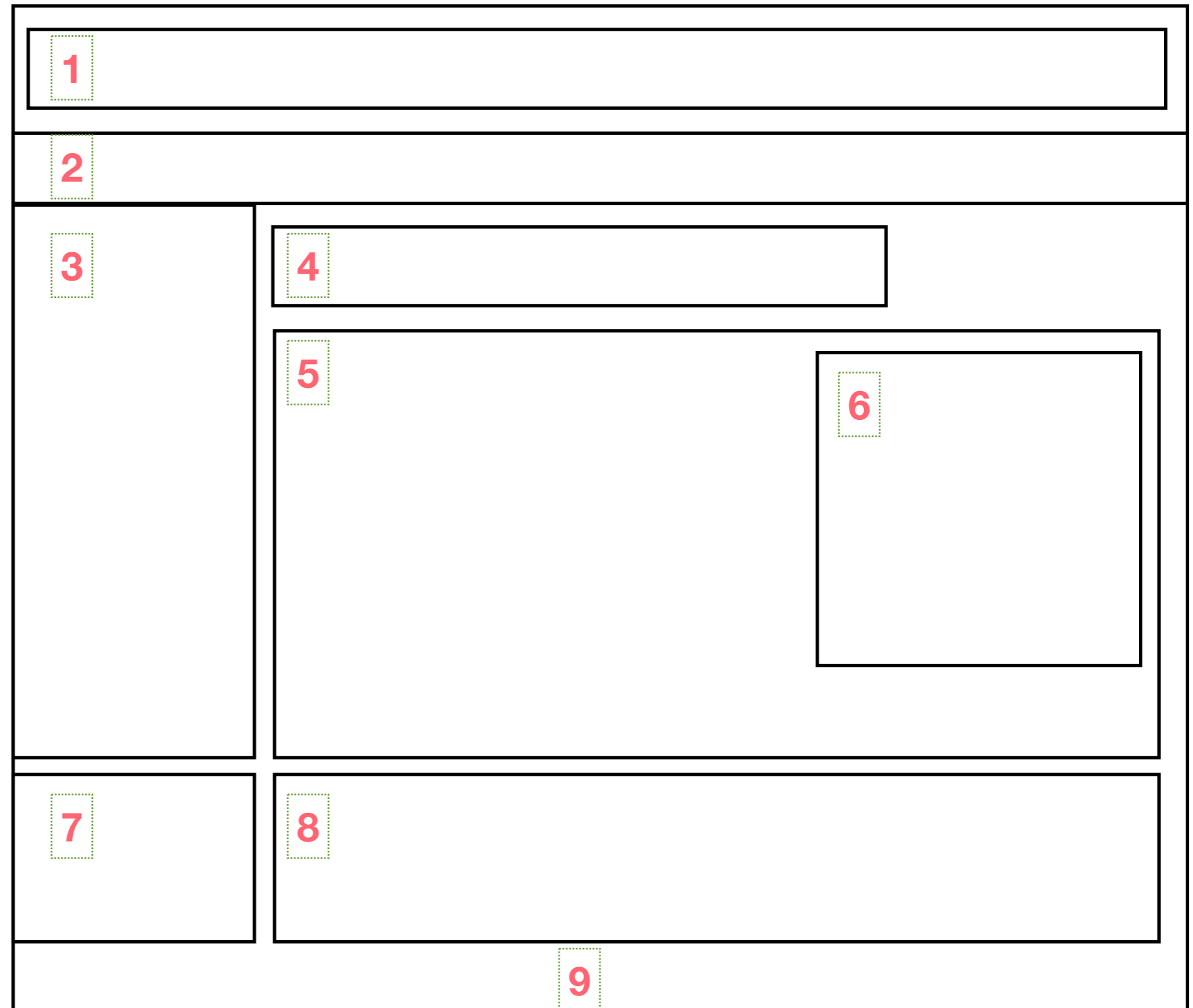
Legislative Assistant





Wireframes: Home Page

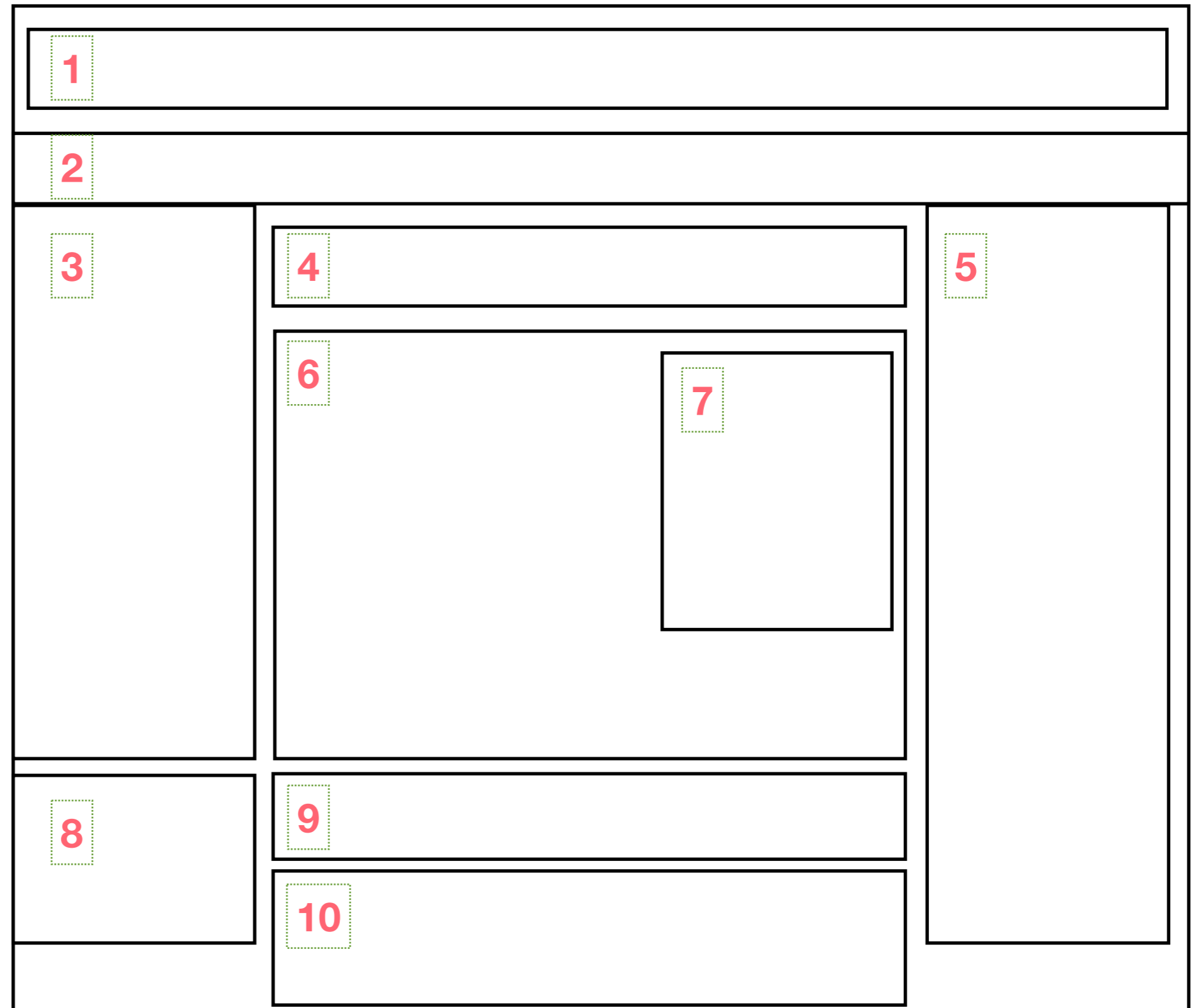
1. Branding
2. Global navigation
3. Additional navigation & search function
4. Headline
5. Front page news
6. Image
7. Academy brief download
8. Recent news
9. Footer





Wireframes: Blog

1. Branding
2. Global navigation
3. Additional navigation & search function
4. Post title
5. Blog sidebar
6. Entry text
7. Related image
8. Academy info download
9. Blog entry metadata
10. Blog entry comments





Interface Design

The screenshot shows a website for the U.S. Public Service Academy. At the top is a dark blue navigation bar with white text links: home, Internships, youth council, sign our petition, support us, contact us, and our blog. Below the navigation bar is a large header area with the text 'U.S. PUBLIC SERVICE ACADEMY' in a blue serif font, followed by the tagline 'America Deserves Our Best' in a red cursive font. To the right of the tagline is a circular logo identical to the one in the top left. Below the header is a section titled 'Help Us Build the U.S. Public Service Academy' in blue. On the left side of this section is a vertical list of menu items, each underlined: About the Academy, Mission, Founders, Advisors, FAQs, Endorsements, Why We Must Act Now, Draft Blueprint, Proposed Site, Academy in the News, and Academy in Congress. To the right of the menu is a photograph of a classical building with columns and a dome, with people walking in front. Below the photo is a paragraph of text describing the academy as a national civilian college. To the right of the photo is another paragraph of text explaining the academy's model and goals. Below the photo is a 'LATEST NEWS' section with a bulleted list of four news items. At the bottom left of the main content area is a PDF icon with the text 'Download our Proposal'.

home Internships youth council sign our petition support us contact us our blog

U.S. PUBLIC SERVICE ACADEMY

America Deserves Our Best

Help Us Build the U.S. Public Service Academy

- About the Academy
- Mission
- Founders
- Advisors
- FAQs
- Endorsements
- Why We Must Act Now
- Draft Blueprint
- Proposed Site
- Academy in the News
- Academy in Congress

The U.S. Public Service Academy will be America's first national civilian college, a flagship institution designed to build a "more perfect union" by developing leaders of character dedicated to service in the public sector.

Modeled on the military service academies, the Public Service Academy will provide a rigorous undergraduate education followed by five years of civilian service to the country. It will develop young leaders with the character, intellect, and experience necessary to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Join us as we build our generation's defining public institution.

LATEST NEWS

- Academy Hires Stellar Group of Summer Interns
- Academy Co-Founder Shawn Raymond Featured on Cover of Texas Super Lawyers magazine
- D.C. City Council & State Board of Education Pass Resolutions Supporting Academy
- Academy Wins Big in State of Washington — Sens. Maria Cantwell & Patty Murray, Rep. Norm

Download our Proposal