

A dark blue vertical bar runs down the left side of the page. A blue arrow points to the right from the bar, containing the date.

5/2/2023

Planet Smethport

A Redesign Project

Several thin, curved lines in dark blue and light grey originate from the bottom left and sweep upwards and to the right.

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Examination of the Current Website

Strengths:

1. **Historical Information:** The website provides an extensive collection of historical information about Smethport, including a detailed history of the town, biographies of important figures, and information about local landmarks and sites.
2. **Historical Walking Tour:** The website offers a comprehensive virtual walking tour of Smethport, complete with detailed descriptions of each site and historical photographs.
3. **Organization:** The website is well-organized, with clear categories and menus that make it easy to find information.
4. **Local Focus:** The website is focused on the history of Smethport, providing a valuable resource for residents and visitors interested in the town's history.

Weaknesses:

1. **Outdated Design:** The website's design is outdated and looks like it was last updated in the early 2000s.
2. **Inconsistent Content Quality:** While the website provides a wealth of historical information, the quality of the content is inconsistent, with some pages featuring well-written and engaging descriptions, while others have only basic information.

3. **Limited Interactivity:** The website offers little interactivity beyond the historical walking tour, with few opportunities for visitors to engage with the site beyond reading text and looking at photographs. This could be expanded so that the viewer knows exactly where they are on the walking tour as it is confusing to know where they are just by clicking the arrows.
4. **Incomplete Information:** Some sections of the website are incomplete or lack information, such as the “Online Newspaper” section, which provides an error result.

Opportunities:

1. **Modern Design:** A modern redesign of the website could greatly improve its visual appeal and make it more user-friendly.
2. **Improved Content Quality:** The website could benefit from a thorough review of its content to ensure consistency and quality.
3. **Expanded Interactivity:** The addition of interactive features such as multimedia content, quizzes, and user-generated content could increase engagement with the site. The walking tour could also be expanded and enhanced for easier usability.
4. **Enhanced Information:** The website could be expanded to include additional information about local events, businesses, and community organizations, providing a more comprehensive resource for visitors and residents alike.

Project Appropriate User Profiles

Profile 1: John the History Enthusiast



Demographics: Male, 64 years old, retired, resident of Smethport, Pennsylvania.

Attitudes: Curious, passionate about local history, proud of Smethport's heritage.

Knowledge: Familiar with Smethport's history but interested in learning more details and discovering new stories.

Literacy: Comfortable reading lengthy texts and interpreting historical documents.

Objectives: To deepen his knowledge of Smethport's history, to discover new stories and facts, and to share his findings with others.

Task/Process: The user starts by navigating to the homepage and exploring the different sections of the website, including the mansion district, walking tour, and historic churches. He finds the section about the early businesses particularly interesting as the descriptions provide a lot of information and the photos are original and updated. He is mainly interested in learning about lesser-known stories and personalities from Smethport's past. He may also reach out to the Historical Society via email or phone to ask questions or share his own knowledge. Finds that it takes longer than expected to find the information that he wishes to look at because the navigation is not detailed enough. He wishes there were subpage headings underneath the main navigation headings to easily complete his searches.

Motivations: Excitement and curiosity about Smethport's history, desire to connect with others who share his interest.

Difficulties: Difficulty finding specific information or navigating to relevant sections of the website.

Profile 2: Tina the Educator



Demographics: Female, 40 years old, teacher, resident of a neighboring town.

Attitudes: Curious, interested in using local history in her teaching, values accuracy, and credibility.

Knowledge: Familiar with the broader context of American history, but less familiar with Smethport's history.

Literacy: Comfortable reading and interpreting historical texts but looking for resources that are accessible to younger students.

Objectives: To find resources and lesson plans that use Smethport's history to teach broader concepts, and to verify the accuracy of information before using it in the classroom.

Task/Process: The user navigates to the Hamlin Library section of the website and explores the different resources available, including online catalog, primary sources, and activities. She evaluates the resources based on their age-appropriateness, accuracy, and relevance to her curriculum. She may also contact the Historical Society to request additional resources or collaborate on developing new content.

Motivations: Desire to engage students with local history, interest in collaborating with the Historical Society.

Difficulties: Finding resources and lesson plans that are age-appropriate and aligned with academic standards.

Profile 3: Dustin and Kelly



Demographics: Couple, 29-year-olds, from out of state, visiting Smethport for the first time.

Attitudes: Adventurous, curious, looking for unique experiences.

Knowledge: Little knowledge of Smethport's history or local attractions.

Literacy: Comfortable with basic reading and online navigation but looking for visually engaging content.

Objectives: To learn about Smethport's history and attractions, to plan their visit to local landmarks and events.

Task/Process: The user starts by navigating to the Smethport Web section of the website and exploring the different landmarks, events, and activities available. They may also use the search function to find specific information about attractions or events. They are particularly interested in learning about the lesser-known attractions and landmarks that are unique to Smethport. They may also reach out to the Historical Society via email or phone to ask for recommendations or guidance in planning their visit.

Motivations: Desire to experience local culture and history, interest in exploring lesser-known destinations.

Difficulties: Difficulty navigating the website to find relevant information, overwhelming amount of information to sort through.

Overview of Update/Redesign Approach

Strengths:

- Rich collection of historical artifacts, photos, and stories.
- Dedicated team of volunteers and staff members who are knowledgeable about Smethport's history.
- Strong emphasis on education and community outreach.

Weaknesses:

- Outdated website design and navigation structure.
- Limited accessibility for users with disabilities.
- Limited engagement with younger generations and non-local audiences.

Opportunities:

- Expanding the online presence and accessibility of Smethport's historical resources.
- Partnering with local schools and educational organizations to increase engagement with younger generations.
- Developing more interactive and visually engaging content to attract new audiences.

With these strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in mind, the following approach is proposed for updating and redesigning the Smethport History website:

1. **Redesign the Website:** The first step is to redesign the website to make it more visually appealing and user-friendly. This will involve updating the color scheme, font choices, and layout to create a more modern and engaging design. There are also a lot of elements on the homepage and other pages that are competing to grab the viewers' attention which can be overwhelming, so narrowing in on the design will help with the overall user experience. The navigation structure will also be reorganized and compressed to make it easier for users to find the information they are looking for. Utilizing a call to action such as, "Begin Your Journey Through Planet Smethport" will assist in grabbing the viewer's attention right away.
2. **Increase Accessibility:** The new website design will also prioritize accessibility for users with disabilities. This will involve implementing features such as alt-text for images, keyboard navigation, and high-contrast options for users with low vision.
3. **Develop Interactive and Engaging Content:** To increase engagement with younger generations and non-local audiences, the website will feature more interactive and visually engaging content. This could include videos, interactive timelines, and 3D virtual tours of historical landmarks. When the viewer scrolls down the page, there will be headings such as "Explore the Mansion District" or "Explore Historic Churches" with a horizontal scrolling list of some of the most well-known and popular locations with pictures attached. Once the user clicks one of the

options, they will be taken to a page that displays the virtual walking tour with a video, photos, and information regarding the location.

4. **More Focus on the Walking Tour:** In the new design, the walking tour will be more prominently featured. This will involve creating a dedicated page for the tour and using maps and other visual elements to guide visitors through the tour. The current walking tour for the Smethport was a suitable design for its time, but it needs an update.

- a. **Enhance the User Interface:** To provide a more engaging and intuitive experience for users, the user interface can be redesigned with a modern and clean design. The interface can incorporate larger fonts, clearer navigation, and more visually appealing graphics. Additionally, the virtual walking tour can be made more prominent on the homepage, allowing users to easily access this feature and encouraging them to explore the website further.
- b. **Expand the Content:** While the current virtual walking tour provides a comprehensive overview of the history of Smethport, there is an opportunity to expand the content to make it even more engaging and informative. This can include adding more multimedia elements, such as videos and interactive maps, to provide a more immersive experience for users. Additionally, the virtual walking tour can be updated with more recent historical events and information to provide a more complete picture of the history of Smethport and its surrounding areas.

- c. **Personalize the Experience:** To cater to the different user profiles, the virtual walking tour can be personalized to provide a customized experience. This can include incorporating user preferences, such as language and font size, and providing tailored recommendations based on user behavior. For example, the website can suggest different sections of the virtual walking tour based on the user's interests or provide personalized recommendations based on their search history.
- d. **Improve Accessibility:** To ensure that all users can access the virtual walking tour, it is important to improve accessibility. This can include incorporating assistive technology, such as screen readers and voice navigation, to accommodate users with disabilities. Additionally, the virtual walking tour can be optimized for mobile devices to ensure that users can access the content on-the-go.
- e. **Incorporate Social Media Integration:** To enhance user engagement and expand the reach of the virtual walking tour, social media integration can be incorporated. This can include providing social media sharing buttons to allow users to share their experiences on their social media profiles, as well as incorporating social media feeds to provide real-time updates on historical events and news related to Smethport and its surrounding areas.
- f. **Provide Interactive Experiences:** To make the virtual walking tour more engaging, interactive experiences can be incorporated. This can include interactive quizzes and games, immersive multimedia experiences, and opportunities for users to contribute their own content to the website. These interactive elements can enhance the user

experience and provide a more engaging way to learn about the history of Smethport and its surrounding areas.

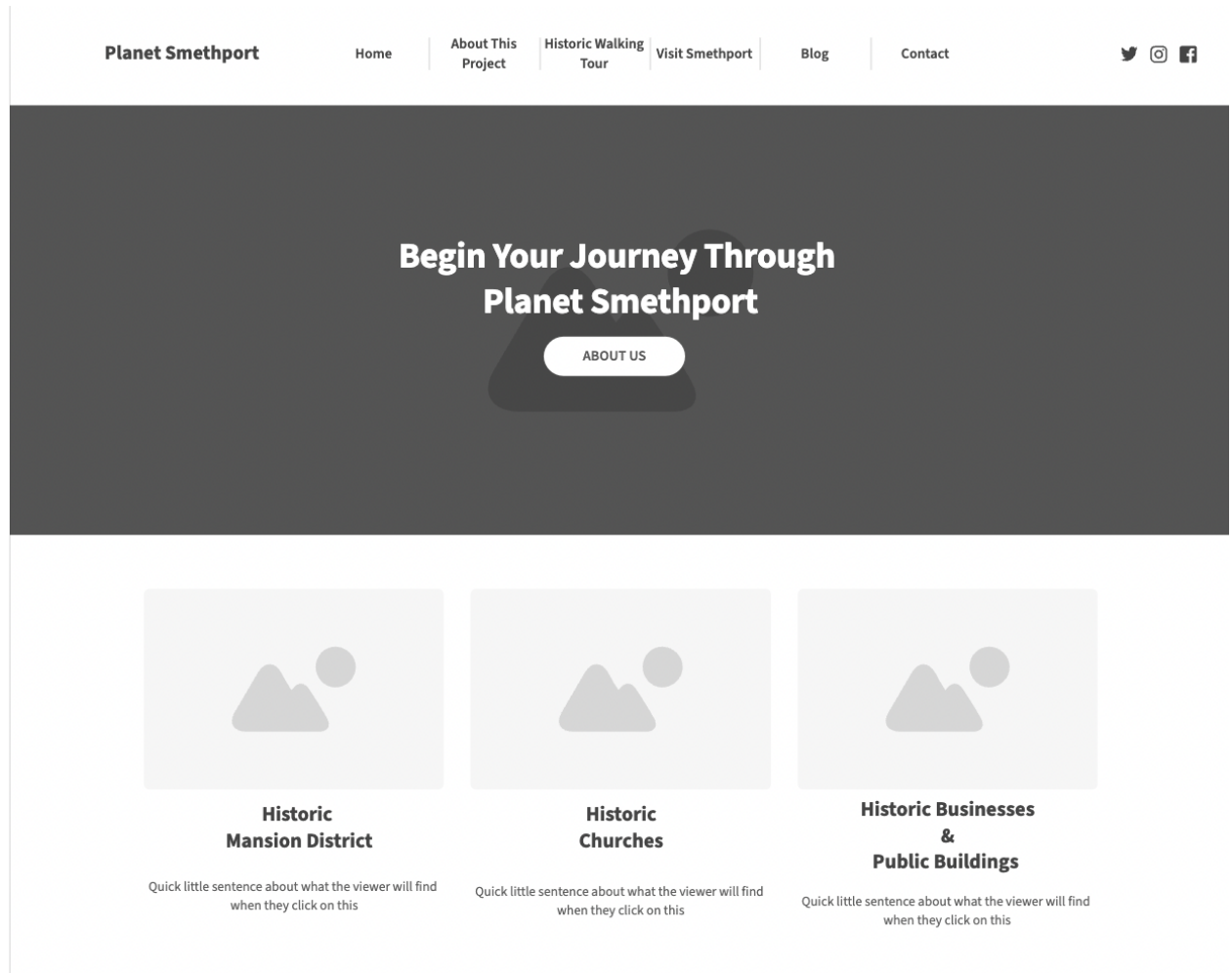
- g. **Incorporate a Navigation System:** To make the virtual walking tour more user-friendly, a navigation system can be implemented. This can allow users to easily navigate through the different sections of the tour and find the information they are looking for. Additionally, the navigation system can provide users with suggestions for related content based on their interests or search history, further enhancing the personalized experience.
- 5. **Expand Online Presence:** The historical resources will be expanded online, including the development of an online database of historical artifacts, photos, and stories. This will make it easier for users to access and learn about Smethport's history from anywhere in the world. The current website already has this idea; however, it can be expanded to be more organized, kept up to date, and digitally modernized.
- 6. **Collaborate with Local Schools and Educational Organizations:** To increase engagement with younger generations, Planet Smethport will partner with local schools and educational organizations to develop age-appropriate lesson plans and educational resources. This will help to increase awareness and interest in Smethport's history among the next generation.
- 7. **Restructure Information for Tourists:** A visit Smethport section of the website will be added updated to make it easier for tourists to find information about local attractions, events, and

accommodations. The information will be organized by category and location to make it easier to navigate.

8. **Promote Community Engagement:** The website will continue to prioritize community engagement, with features such as an online forum for discussions about Smethport's history and a blog featuring updates and stories from the locals of Smethport.

Basic Wireframe of Proposed Website Redesign

The wireframe below is a very basic view of what the future of the Planet Smethport website will look like. The idea was inspired from the previous website design, and the lack of informational hierarchy. The new website redesign will be simplified but will allow the user to narrow down what they are looking for just by using a few filters. There will also be a search bar that will allow the user to search for exactly what they are looking for. Under each site page, there will be subpages to narrow down the search even more. Everything listed above will be included in a “hamburger” style menu to the left of the page.



Overview of Proposed Design Elements

Fonts:

Bebas Neue

Bebas Neue is a sans-serif font that is clean, modern, and legible. It is an all-uppercase typeface that will be great for emphasizing a few words at a time. It will be used for all headings, subheadings, and navigation menu items.

BEBAS NEUE
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890

Old Standard TT

Old Standard TT, on the other hand, is a serif font that is elegant, classic, and has a historical feel. It will be used for all body text on the website.

Old Standard TT
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Colors:

For the color scheme of the redesign, we propose using a palette of blues and grays. These colors are inspired by the natural beauty of Smethport and the surrounding area, as well as the historic buildings and landmarks that are featured on the website. Blue is also a color that signifies trust and dependability, which is what Smethport's visitors and locals want to feel while being there.

Proposed Usage:

The primary color of the website will be a navy blue, which will be used for the background of the header and footer, as well as the secondary color for links and buttons. A lighter shade of gray will be used for the main background color of the website, while the accent color will be used for text on the buttons and other elements. A darker shade of gray will be used for the main text color.

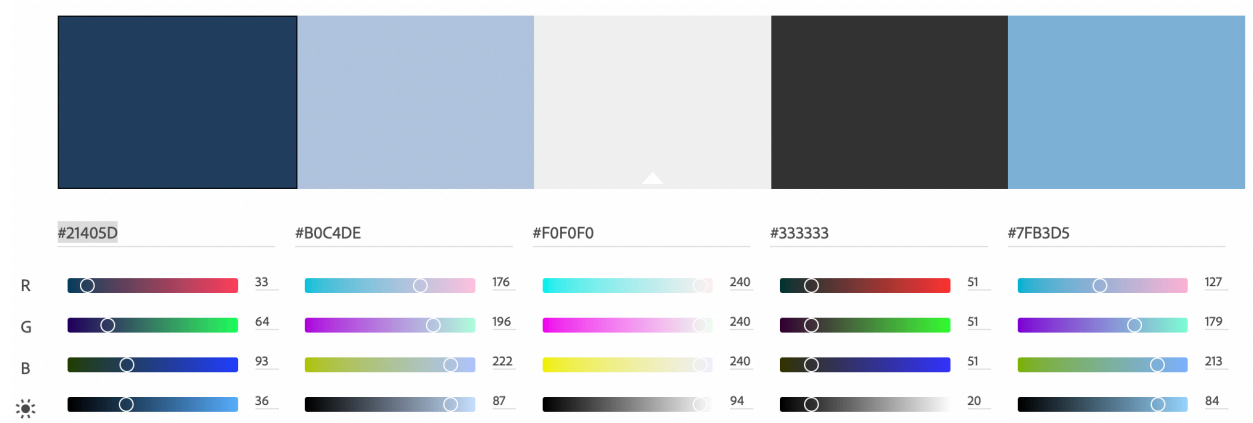
Primary Color: #21405D

Secondary Color: #B0C4DE

Background Color: #F0F0F0

Main Text Color: #333333

Accent Color: #7FB3D5



Examination of the Proposed Website Update/Redesign

Strengths of the proposed update/redesign:

- Enhances the user interface and provides a modern, clean design that is more visually appealing and easier to navigate, which can increase user engagement and retention.
- Expands the content by adding multimedia elements and more recent historical events and information, which can provide a more immersive and comprehensive experience for users.
- Personalizes the experience to cater to the different user profiles, which can increase user satisfaction and loyalty.
- Improves accessibility by incorporating assistive technology and optimizing for mobile devices, which can increase inclusivity and reach a wider audience.
- Incorporates social media integration to enhance user engagement and expand the reach of the website, which can increase brand awareness and attract new users.
- Provides interactive experiences to make the virtual walking tour more engaging and memorable, which can increase user retention and loyalty.

- Incorporates a navigation system to make the virtual walking tour more user-friendly and easier to navigate, which can increase user satisfaction and retention.

Weaknesses of the proposed update/redesign:

- The proposed update/redesign may require a significant amount of time and resources to implement, which can delay the launch and increase costs.
- There may be a learning curve for some users who are used to the previous website design, which can lead to frustration and a decrease in user satisfaction.
- Incorporating new features and content may result in a larger website size, which can impact website speed and load times if not optimized properly.

Opportunities presented by the proposed update/redesign:

- The proposed update/redesign can attract new users and increase engagement from existing users, which can lead to increased traffic and brand awareness.
- By personalizing the experience, the proposed update/redesign can increase user satisfaction and loyalty, which can result in higher retention rates and more repeat visitors.
- The incorporation of social media integration can expand the reach of the website and attract new users, which can lead to increased brand awareness and a larger user base.

- Providing interactive experiences can make the website more memorable and shareable, which can result in increased user engagement and social media sharing.
- The proposed update/redesign can position the website as a leader in the field of virtual walking tours, which can increase its credibility and authority in the industry.

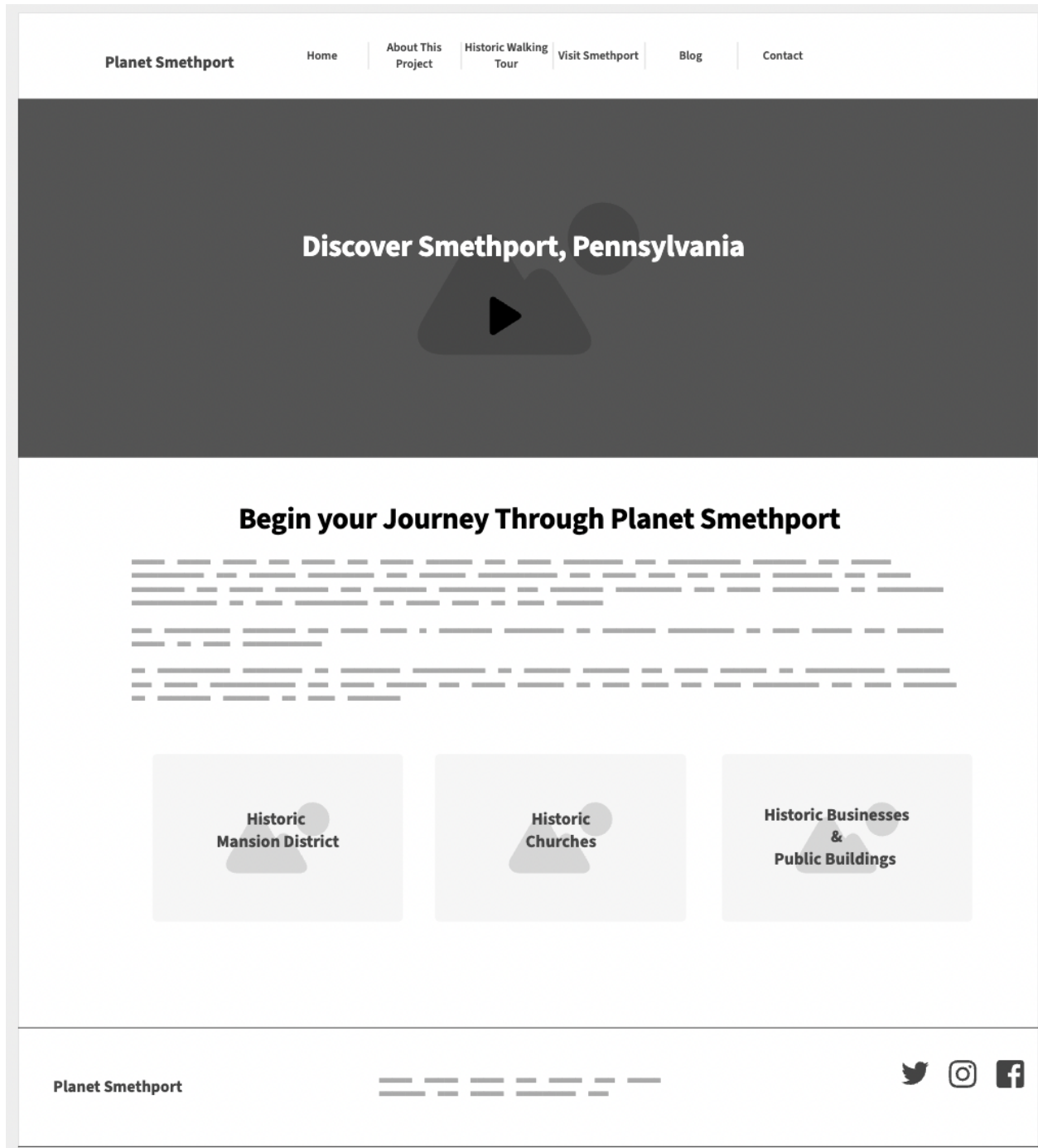
Future/Expandability

1. **Interactive Maps** - Interactive maps can be added to show the locations of historic landmarks, events, and walking tours. Users can explore the map, get directions, and learn about the history of the location.
2. **Virtual Tours** - Virtual tours can be created to provide an immersive experience of historic sites, buildings, and monuments. Users can view 360-degree images, read about the history, and listen to audio tours.
3. **Online Exhibits** - Online exhibits can be created to showcase the history and culture of Smethport. Users can browse through different themes and topics, view photos, and read about the exhibits.
4. **User-generated Content** - User-generated content can be added to the website to encourage community engagement and participation. Users can share their stories, photos, and memories of Smethport and its history.

5. **Social Media Integration** - Social media integration can be added to the website to increase its visibility and reach. Users can follow the website on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to stay updated on news, events, and content.
6. **Mobile Optimization** - The website can be optimized for mobile devices to provide a seamless experience for users on the go. This can involve creating a mobile app or optimizing the website for mobile browsers.
7. **E-commerce Integration** - E-commerce integration can be added to the website to sell historic items, books, and souvenirs related to Smethport's history. This can generate revenue for the website and provide a unique shopping experience for users.

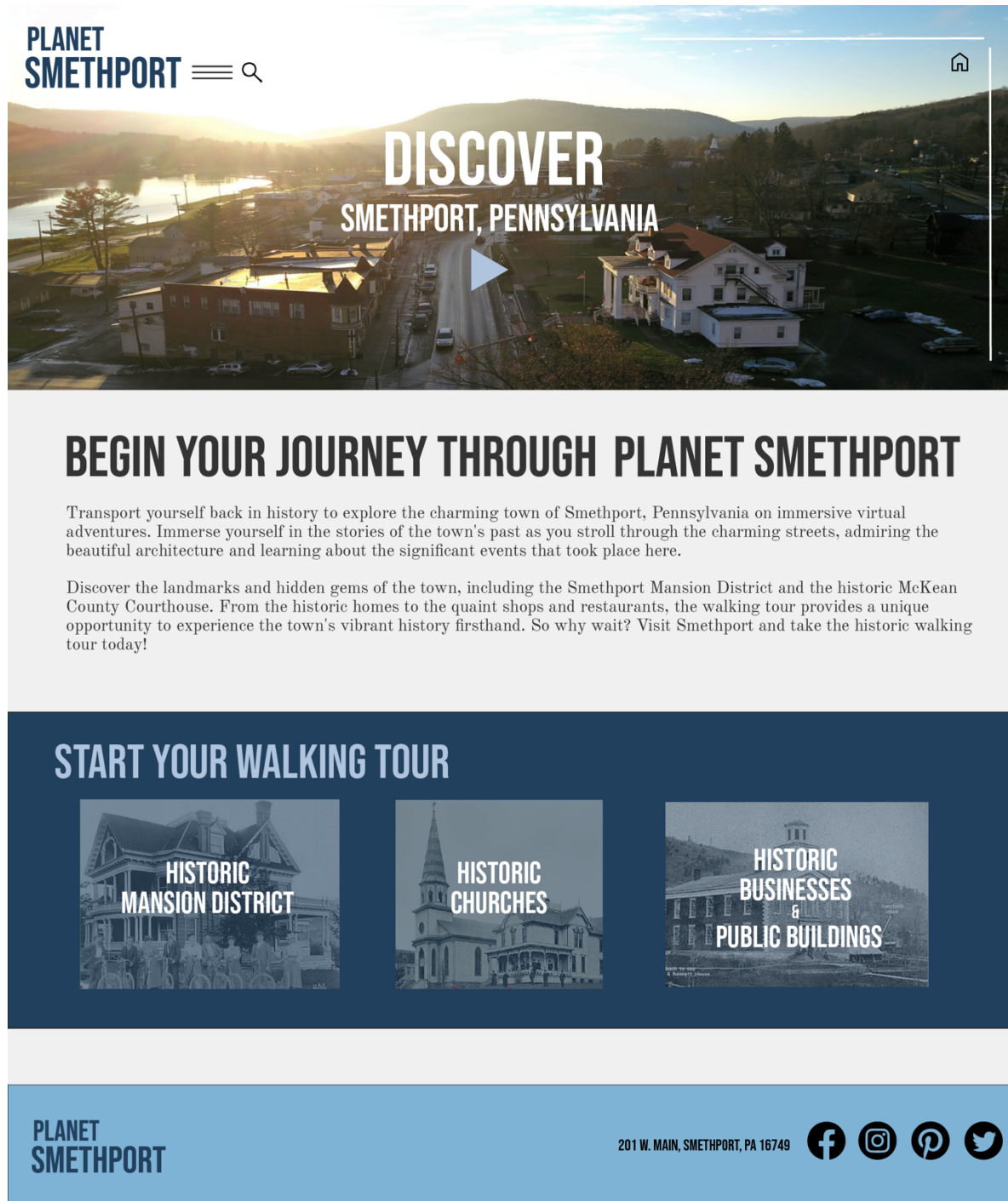
Overview of Proposed Homepage Design:

Wireframe of Proposed Homepage Design



1. **Engaging Design:** A drone video of the town of Smethport with an overlay text of "Discover Smethport, Pennsylvania" would immediately capture the attention of visitors and create a strong first impression. This engaging design can make visitors more likely to explore the rest of the website.
2. **Clear Navigation:** The call to action "Begin Your Journey Through Planet Smethport" provides clear direction to visitors and encourages them to explore the website further. The information about the website, the walking tour, and the town would help visitors understand what they can expect to find on the website and how they can use it to learn more about Smethport.
3. **Interactive Features:** The walking tour provides an interactive feature that can help visitors explore Smethport's historic sites in a virtual way. The pictures with text overlays that say, "Historic Mansion District," "Historic Churches," and "Historic Businesses & Public Buildings" will act as interactive buttons are a great way to showcase the town's historic architecture and encourage visitors to explore the walking tour.
4. **Promotes Tourism:** By showcasing the town's history and architecture, the new homepage promotes tourism in Smethport, Pennsylvania. This could attract visitors who are interested in history and architecture to the town, which could benefit local businesses and the community.

Proposed Homepage Prototype



Comparison of Proposed and Current Homepage

