

Rescue Dogz - Dog Rescue Finder App

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RescueDogz.io

RESCUE DÖGZ

Project overview



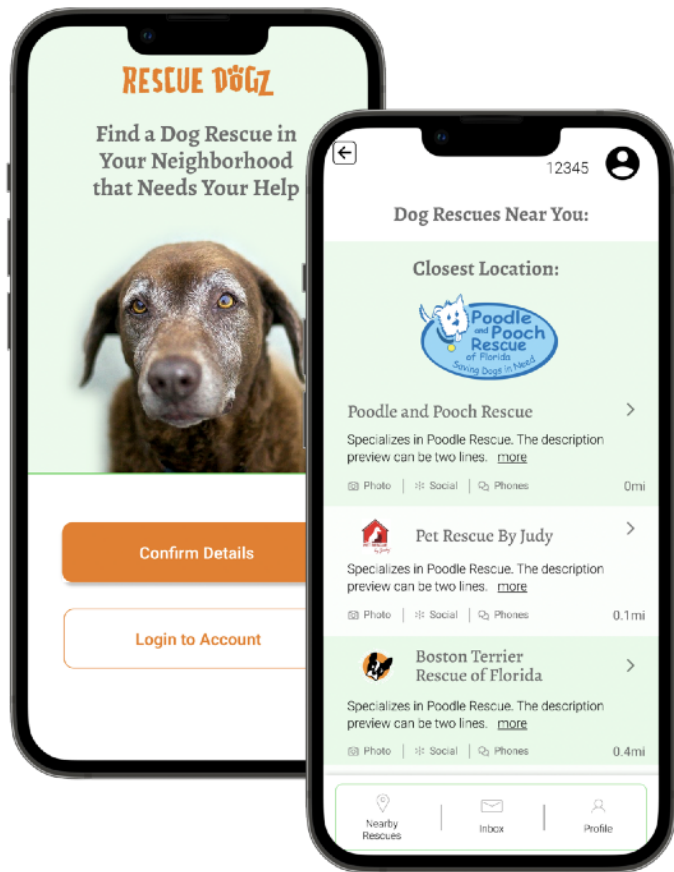
The product:

Rescue Dogz App is a digital tool to allow dog lovers who want to participate with a local dog rescue to input their interests into the app, their location and be matched with dog rescues near them who need their skills.



Project duration:

November 2021 - May 2022



Project overview



The problem:

Dog rescue volunteers have a hard time connecting with those new volunteers who want to help with specific tasks.



The goal:

Design an app that will help new volunteers match their skills and talents with local dog rescues looking for help with specific tasks.

Project overview



My role:

Lead UX designer, UX researcher for the Rescue Dogz App



Responsibilities:

Conducting interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototyping, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility, and iterating on designs.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

User research: summary



I conducted interviews and created empathy maps to learn more about the users I'm designing for and their needs. My primary user group was individuals who love dogs and have recently relocated to a new community.

This user group confirmed initial assumptions about dog rescues. Dog rescue volunteers are there to help but dog rescues have difficulty communicating with their potential audience. Research revealed dog rescue websites and social media focused on adoptable dogs limiting their search for volunteers, to help more dogs. Additionally, volunteers have specific ways they want to help and need a way to share these desires with dog rescues.

User research: pain points

1

Dog Focused

Rescue websites are focused on getting dogs adopted, and their needs and requests for volunteers get lost in the mix.

2

Overwhelming

There are so many dog rescues and shelters in my city, where do I start?

3

Poor Websites

Dog rescue websites tend to be poorly designed making it hard to connect with the team.

4

Making Friends

I'm new to an area, I want to connect with like-minded dog rescuers who share my passions.

Persona: Deb

Problem statement:

Deborah is a new to her town who needs to become familiar with local dog rescues because she wants to get involved in the community and doesn't know where to start.



Deborah Greenburg

Age: 40

Education: Masters in Finance

Hometown: Pittsburgh PA

Family: Single

Occupation: Accountant

"I get anxiety about reaching out to volunteer at rescue dog because I don't know if they need the type of help I'm willing to give."

Goals

- Sharing my talents with the community
- Help a dog that is special needs
- Find a dog rescue that I personally align with

Frustrations

- There are so many dog rescues I don't know where to start
- I've volunteered for a dog rescue before and they ask me to volunteer doing things I don't want to do
- I get anxiety about reaching out to a dog rescue because they may not align with my skillset

Deb is a lifelong dog lover that has adopted dogs from local humane societies all her life. She has relocated to Georgia and in a new geographical location is trying to discover a new dog rescue to volunteer at. She is concerned that she will not be able to find a dog rescue near her that could use her talents.

User journey map

Mapping Deb's user journey revealed how helpful it would be for users to have access to a Dog Rescue Finder app.

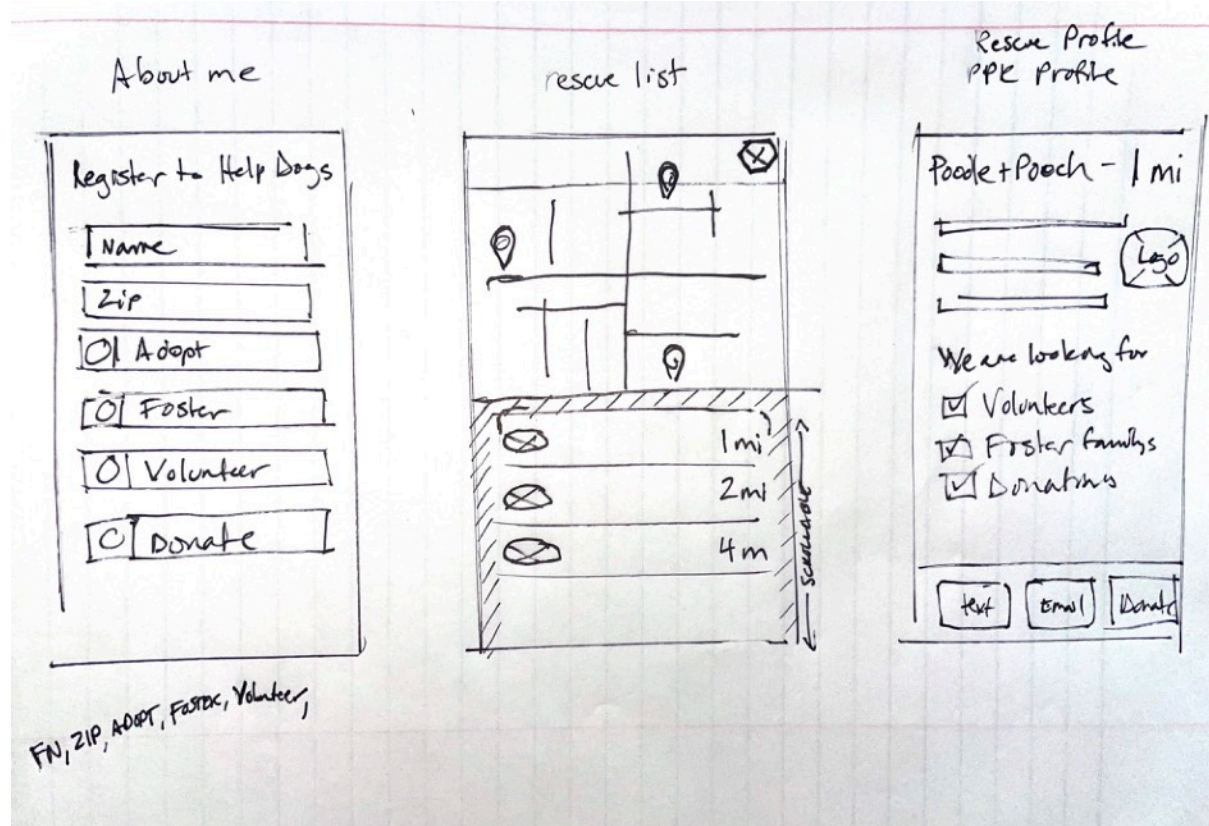
Persona: Deborah Greenburg

Goal: Experience a smooth process with volunteering with a local dog rescue organization

ACTION	Fill out a profile	Select the type of volunteering you want to do	Choose a local dog rescue	Connect with a volunteer from the selected rescue	Complete the Volunteer App Process
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Prepare your home B. Purchase items you will need for the dog C. Make your home safe indoors D. Have a secure fence around the perimeter of your home	Tasks A. Browse on map for locations B. Browse list of available dogs C. Search by city / state/ zip for rescues	Tasks A. Review dog photos B. Read dog needs or special needs if applicable C. Read requirements for dog safety	Tasks A. Personal info B. Questionnaire C. Confirmation	Tasks A. Check Email B. Check text
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Nervous / excited that you are preparing your space. You want to do right by the dog	Overwhelmed. You see on the app, there are so many dogs that need help	Frustrated you can't find the type of dog you want	Invasive, they are asking for a lot of personal info	Anticipation You are waiting to hear from someone.
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Give tips or blog posts on the website for how to prepare for a rescue dog	Put filters for miles radius from home to limit search results	Instruct foster parents to take clear photos and list relevant breed types	Let the adoptee know their information is private and secure	Give them a check in via text or email that we are still considering their application

Paper wireframes

I draft iterations of each app screen on paper to ensure the elements that made it to digital wireframes would be well-suited to address user pain points.



Digital wireframes

As the initial design phase continued, I made sure to base screen designs on feedback and findings from the user research.

Volunteers can select the specific types of way to volunteer

Logo

Sign up to Help Dog Rescues Near You

Your Name*

Zip*

I am interested in:

Volunteer

Select all interests that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Donate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster

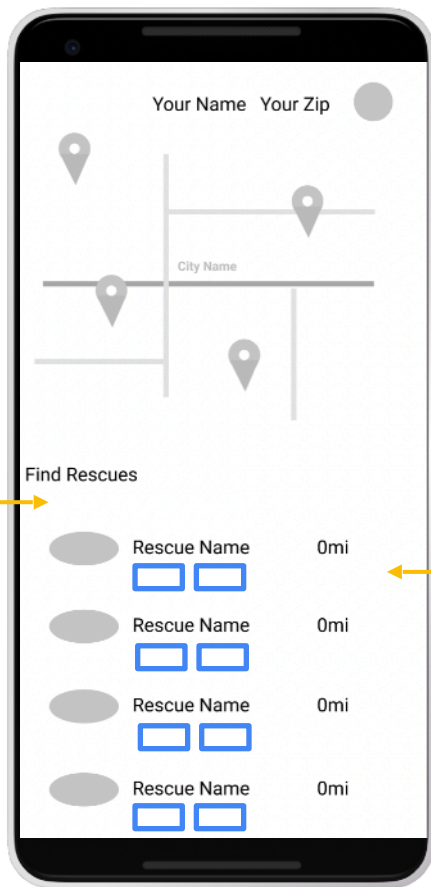
Users can communicate they want to foster a dog as well

Digital wireframes

Proximity of the user to the dog rescues is important in determining if the dog rescue is a good match for the user.

This is why I dedicate a screen to location of dog rescues.

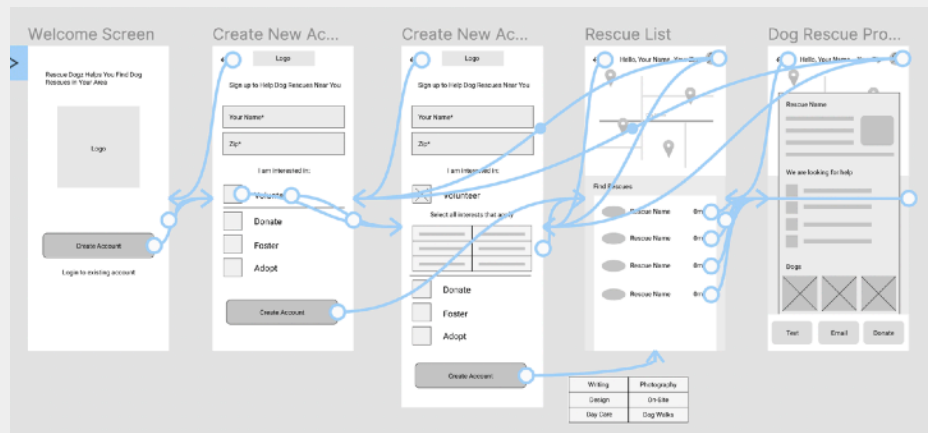
Dog rescue list based on distance to user zip code



Under the dog rescue name would confirm icons representing the type of help they are looking for that matches user inputs

Low-fidelity prototype

Using the completed set of digital wireframes, I created a low-fidelity prototype. The primary user flow I connected was setting up the user account, dog rescue volunteering options, identify a rescue you align with, so the prototype could be used in a usability study.



Usability study: findings

Write a short introduction to the usability studies you conducted and your findings.

Round 1 findings

- 1 Users wanted more rescue details on the dog rescue list
- 2 Users didn't use the map function
- 3 Users are confused about the text option since they didn't add a phone number

Round 2 findings

- 1 Users wanted to select volunteer options that were not on the list
- 2 Users wanted a easy way to view other dog rescues from feature page
- 3 Users wanted to train dogs

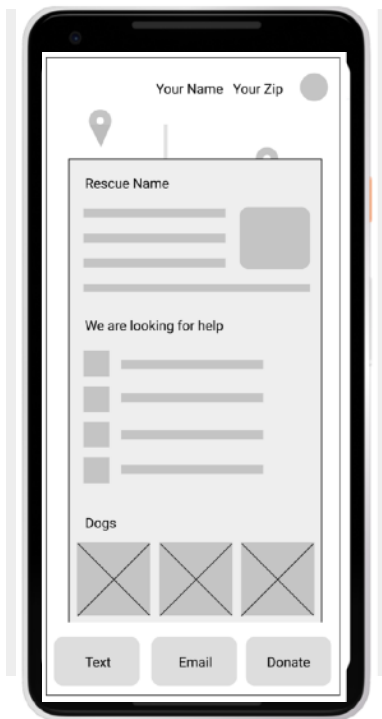
Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

Early designs featured a map functionality to show users the many dog rescue options around them. Users expressed they needed to compare dog rescues rather than see a map. The map feature was scrapped.

Before usability study



After usability study



Mockups

The original mockup refrained from using a phone number for privacy. However we realized dog rescues needed user phone numbers in order to provide an additional method to contact them by text.

Before usability study

The original mockup is a white form on a black phone frame. At the top, there is a 'Logo' placeholder and a title 'Sign up to Help Dog Rescues Near You'. Below the title are two input fields: 'Your Name*' and 'Zip*'. Underneath is a section titled 'I am interested in:' with a radio button selected for 'Volunteer'. Below this is a table with the instruction 'Select all interests that apply' and four empty rows. At the bottom, there are three checkboxes for 'Donate', 'Foster', and 'Adopt'.

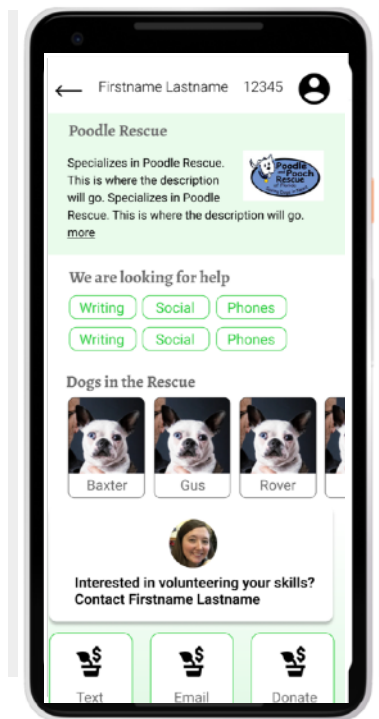
After usability study

The revised mockup is a green-themed form on a black phone frame. It features a back arrow, a title 'Sign Up to Connect with a Dog Rescue Near You', and a text input field containing 'Patrick Stewart'. Below are two input fields for a phone number: '123-456-7890' and '12345', with a '*Required field' note. The 'I AM INTERESTED IN:' section now has a checked radio button for 'Volunteering' (indicated by a green 'X' in a box) and a list of interest options: 'Photography', 'Phone Calls', 'Writing', 'Dog Walking', 'Events', 'Social Media', 'Transport', and 'Care'. A bottom navigation bar includes icons for 'Nearby Rescues', 'Inbox', and 'Profile'.

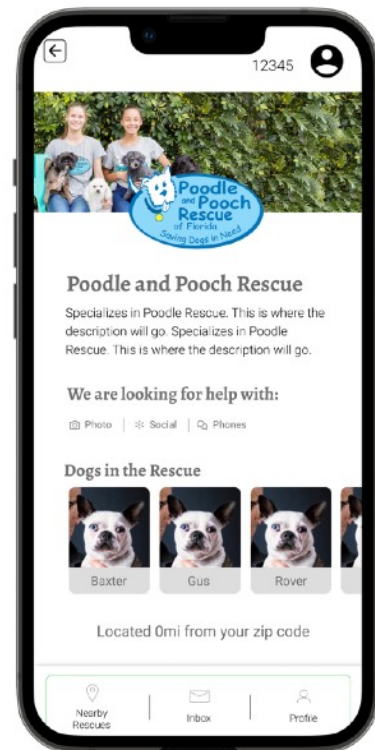
Mockups

The second usability study revealed frustration with a layout that was hard to read with a lot happening. Users were confused navigationally with so much to look at. I improved the visual hierarchy and added a fixed navigation at the bottom of the app.

Before usability study 2



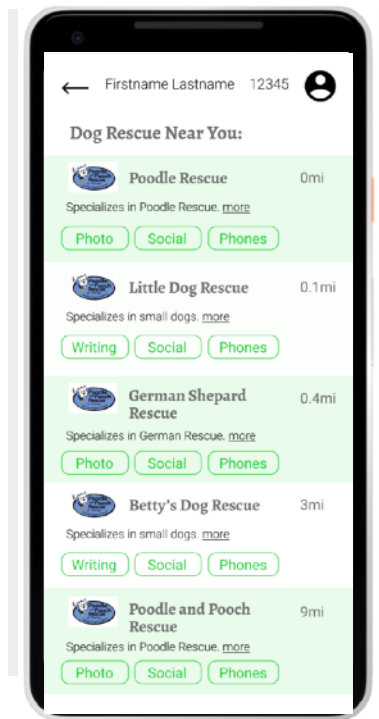
After usability study



Mockups

Additionally, on the dog rescue list screen users we not encouraged to select a specific rescue, a common theme was everything felt the same to them. I improved the experience by making the nearest dog rescue more prominent and more desirable to click on.

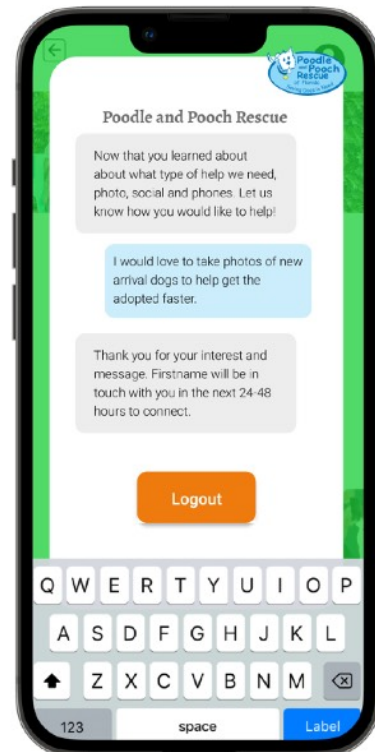
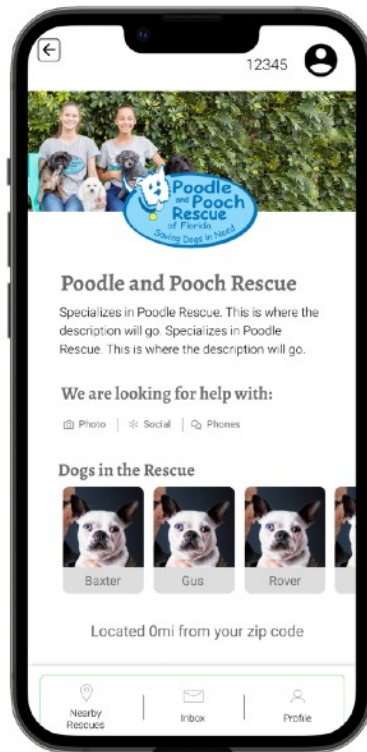
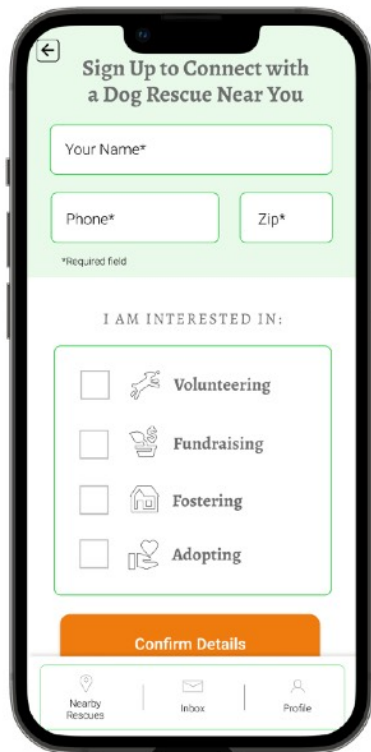
Before usability study 2



After usability study



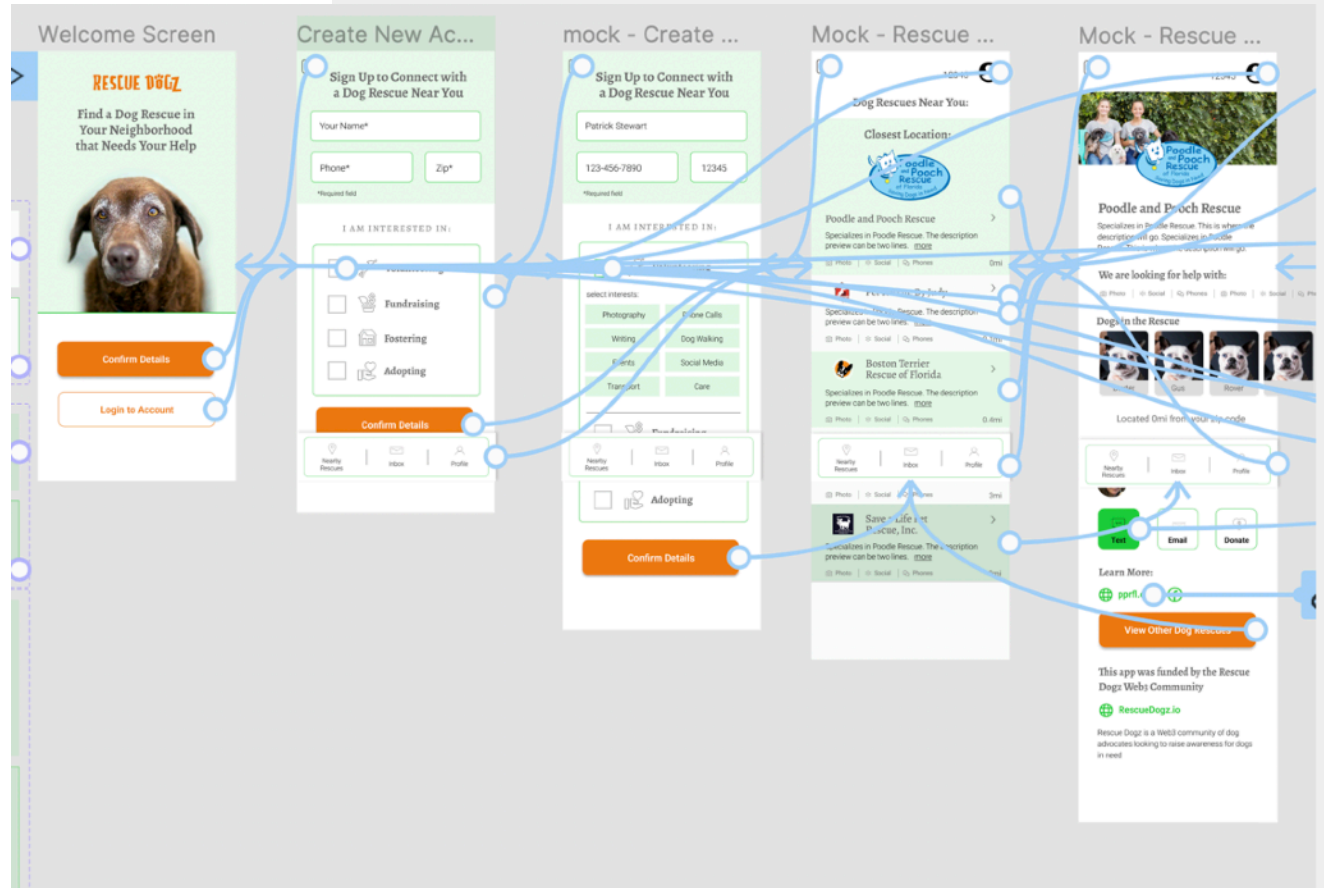
Mockups



High-fidelity prototype

The high-fidelity prototype presented an improved UI, spacing and readability.

[Link to high-fidelity prototype](#)



Accessibility considerations

1

I used icons designs to help make the selectable features more visible, understandable and readable.

2

I leveraged high contrast text and background combinations and bright colors for the primary buttons.

3

The app includes text and phone contact options in order to provide the hearing impaired with a method for communicating with dog rescues.

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways



Impact:

The app makes users feel like the dog rescue finder is about connectivity between dog rescues and potential volunteers.

One quote from peer feedback:

“I understand how the app connects my talents and volunteer objectives with the needs of dog rescue. The dog rescue proximity feature is very useful as well”



What I learned:

When I started designing the Dog Rescue Finder app I thought it would be a purposeful tool for locating nearby rescues, but now it has turned into a usable tool for matching the needs of dog rescues with willing volunteers.

Next steps

1

Add screen designs to allow dog rescues to customize the specific needs they have within their rescues to help them curate the best matched volunteers.

2

Conduct another round of usability studies to gauge the effectiveness of the dog rescue needs customization screens.

3

Seek funding to develop the app.

Let's connect!



Thank you for your time reviewing my work on the Rescue Dogz - Dog Rescue Finder app! If you'd like to see more or get in touch, my contact information is provided below.

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Website: designmorse.com/ux

Thank you!