

# Documentation for Solaris Regional Library Website

## Summary and Methodology

Solaris Regional Library is a fictional library located in the nonexistent Town of Solaris, Colorado. My current home is in Parker, Colorado, a suburban town outside of Denver, between Aurora and Colorado Springs (much closer to southern Aurora than to Colorado Springs).

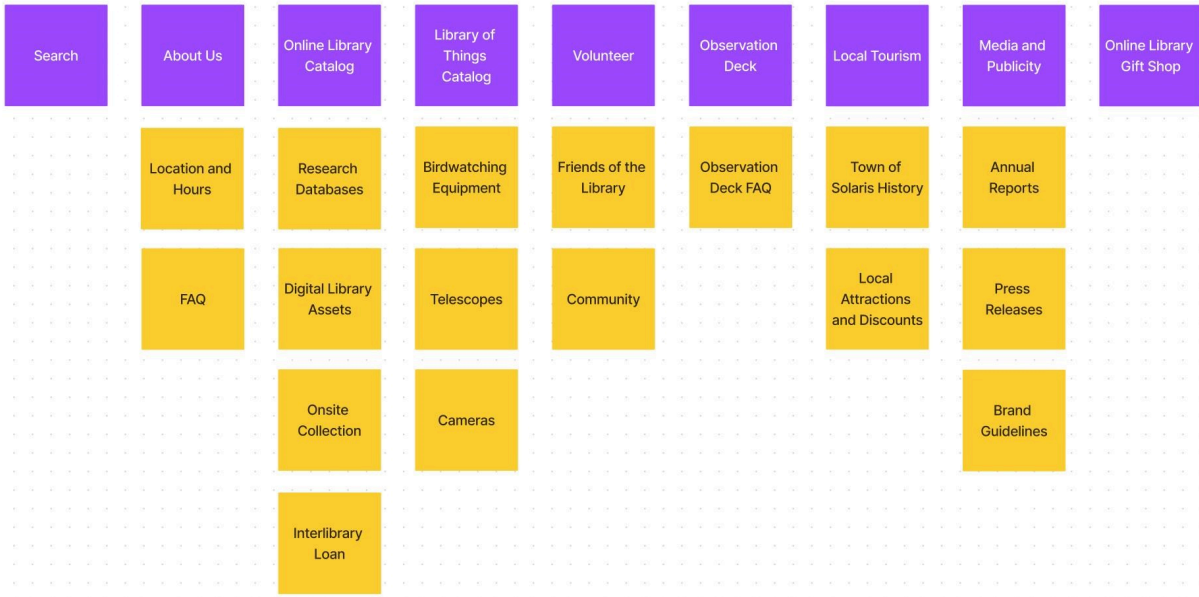
Recently, I went to the Parker Library (Douglas County Library System) and applied for a library card along with P1, who is 85 years old. I noticed immediately that the Parker Library had a recording studio, with a “cage” full of camera equipment and a green screen included within. This inspired me to come up with a similar library concept.

For several days in November, I captured the sunsets with my Canon Rebel T3i DSLR on a tripod, and uploaded them into Adobe Lightroom in order to bring out some of the brilliant colors in the sky.

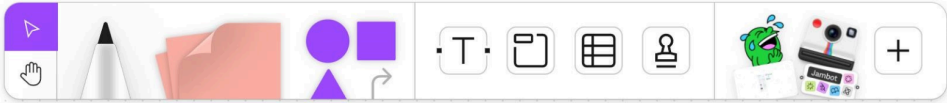
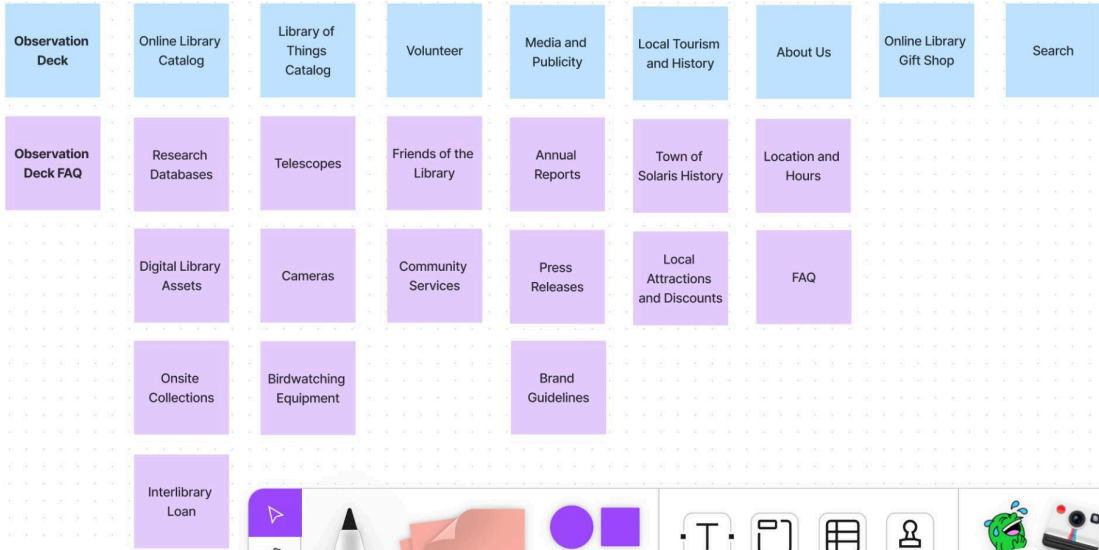
The logo is a stock vector from Adobe Stock, which I then recolored for the purposes of building the website. Credits to **Goga** for producing the stock logo. For the AI photographs and concept sketches that are available in <http://www.solarisregional.com/observation-deck>, I entered my sunset photos into Adobe Firefly and requested various renditions of an observation deck with a telescope on it until I came up with the photos that are currently on display on the website. The first was meant to be a faux conceptual sketch with the “real” observation deck below. It was thankfully easy to disguise some of the errors that tend to crop up with AI by making the photo(s) either artistically stylized or very dark. I was pleased with the end result of this process in particular, as getting the wording or style settings correct for AI is no easy task, as it turns out. There really is an art form to how one asks for artificially derived information, as it is easy to be misunderstood. The remainder of assets are either Adobe Stock photos that have been optimized for the web or low resolution PNG copies of vector files.

## Card Sorting Exercises and User Testing

I have provided some screenshots below to demonstrate the extensive card sorting process for the menu selection and wording of individual menu items. All did multiple card sorts using Figma’s FigJam whiteboard. In P1’s case, I spent extra time assisting with the card sort and explaining the concept and reasoning behind some of the categories. Names of categories were changed and concepts were added based on P1’s feedback in particular, as Parker is known to be somewhat of a retirement community, and I value the opinions and feedback of all community members, regardless of age or tech savvy. This actually made the menu incredibly easy to use, such that P4 (who is incredibly picky about UI and website navigation) even commented that the menu was intuitive, simple, and mobile friendly.



Rae Part Deux



Online Library Catalog	Library of Things Catalog	Volunteer	Observation Deck	Media and Publicity	Local Tourism	About Us	Online Library Gift Shop	Search
Research Databases	Birdwatching Equipment	Friends of the Library	Observation Deck FAQ	Annual Reports	Town of Solaris History	Location and Hours		
Digital Library Assets	Telescopes	Community		Press Releases	Local Attractions and Discounts	FAQ		
Onsite Collection	Cameras			Brand Guidelines				
Interlibrary Loan								

Events Calendar On Main Page

Search	About Us	Online Library Catalog	Physical Item Checkout	Volunteer	Observation Deck	Local Tourism	Media and Publicity	Online Library Gift Shop
Location and Hours	Research Databases	Telescopes	Friends of the Library	Observation Deck FAQ	History of Solaris, Colo...	Press Releases		
Community	Digital Assets	Birdwatching Equipment			Local Attractions and Discounts	Brand Guidelines		
Frequently Asked Quest...	Local Collections	Cameras				Annual Reports		

Observation Deck	Location and Hours	Events Calendar	Library of Things	Library Catalog	About Us	Community	Shop and Library SWAG	Search
Deck FAQ			Birdwatching Equipment	Research Databases	History of Solaris	Friends of the Library		
			Cameras	Local Collections		Volunteer		
			Telescopes	Digital Assets				



## Personas:

P1 (Age 85)

Location: Parker, CO

Former Profession: Lawyer, Judge

Notes: P1 does not understand most user interface symbols, such as the magnifying glass icon to indicate “search” or its typical placement on the page. She also was not aware of the meaning of “digital” in terms of online documentation (i.e. digital assets).

P2 (Age 30)

Location: Aurora, CO

Profession: Software QA

Notes: P2 is fascinated by the concept of user experience for libraries, and loves doing card sorting exercises with me. These exercises were conducted collaboratively in real time and we discussed his notes via text, which I then copied into the FigJam. His input was great for polishing the menu and finalizing it.

P3 (Age 41)

Location: Van Nuys, CA

Profession: Software QA

Notes: P3 doesn’t really use libraries and prefers multimedia, such as YouTube, to gather information and data. He is a hands-on person in terms of work, and prefers to analyze physical items as opposed to code and automation. His commentary included that his primary interest would be in the history of Solaris as opposed to other perks and assets of the library.

P4 (Age 40)

Location: Santa Clarita, CA

Profession: Campus Safety

Notes: P4 did not do a card sort, however he expressed great pleasure with the intuitive and easy nature of the menu layout– high praise from someone that finds a way to hate every user interface he sees.

Rae (Age 36)

Location: Parker, CO

Profession: Full Time Student

Notes: I spent a lot of time helping with much of the card sorting, as there was a learning curve for many of my personas that required additional explanation or tweaking of the cards. I also love web design and responsive, mobile-friendly user interfaces, as well as prioritize accessibility by choosing simple Wordpress themes when building my website(s). My main goal during this process was to make a concept that people fundamentally wanted to experience, that was unique in that it wasn't common at many (or any!) libraries.

### **Pain Points and Issues**

The calendar on the front page took hours of my time away from the website, as I was having issues connecting the Google calendar for Solaris Regional Library using an API Key. I finally was able to find a plugin that used an iCal link instead. The calendar and events page would have been more robust and detailed if this had not been the case.

The whole point of the initial website based on the card sort was to have a huge detailed calendar full of programming and other events related to the observation deck and so forth throughout the year. My focus was going to be on the calendar and programming, so I feel a little disappointed in how empty the calendar currently is.

Finding an accessibility friendly, free, and easy to use Wordpress theme is more challenging than it first appears. I was lucky to find and use Twenty Twenty, an older (but very solid) default Wordpress theme. This theme carried over from my free site to a paid site, which was very helpful as I wanted a stable template that wouldn't be prone to bugs or accessibility issues.

**Files and Digital Assets:** (link)

### **How Categories Were Chosen for Library Website**

I thought back to library websites I had seen in the past, and developed the original cards based on items that users either frequently see or would likely want to see in a library of this type. User input from P1 in particular led me to add special features, such as a dummy link to a mock annual report, as she said she would like to see the statistics for a library of this type. I realized later however that if it is a new library, they may not yet have an annual report or only have a report of how the library was originally funded and built.

Essentially, this came down to me deciding what I would want to see in a brand new local library, and what decisions I would make for a website promoting it. I am hoping in the future to expand graphics and flesh out mock databases in order to make the website appear fully functional.

### **Credits:**

“Brand Guideline Presentation Brand Guideline Manual Purple Brand Guideline Brand Strategy Guideline Template” By **Graphic Titan via Adobe Stock**

“Mountains. Sunset in mountains. Travel emblem. Mountain adventure vintage style hand drawn illustration. Travel and outdoor tourism sketch drawing logo.” by **Goga via Adobe Stock**

“two woman looking through telescope”  
By **geargodz via Adobe Stock**

“Child observing the universe with enthusiasm and curiosity. Generative AI”  
By **Miguel Aguirre via Adobe Stock**  
Generated with AI

“Father and daughter observing the sky with a telescope.”  
By **astrosystem via Adobe Stock**

“Father and his son are stargazing at night with a telescope. generative ai”  
By **Robotoyo via Adobe Stock**  
Generated with AI

“Smart boy using a telescope and watching stars”  
By **StockPhotoPro via Adobe Stock**

“Colorado State Capitol, Denver in Black and White”  
By **Melissa Woolf via Adobe Stock**

“Coupon Savings”  
By **Kimberly Reinick via Adobe Stock**

“Infographic brochures data visualization vector design template. Can be used for info graphic, resume and cv, web, print, magazine, poster, flyer, brochure, annual report, marketing, advertising.”  
By **alexndz via Adobe Stock**

\*\*\* I am having trouble finding some of the credits for Adobe Stock I have downloaded, so it is safe to say that all of these images can either be found on Adobe Stock or were created in Adobe Firefly with Generative AI. \*\*\*