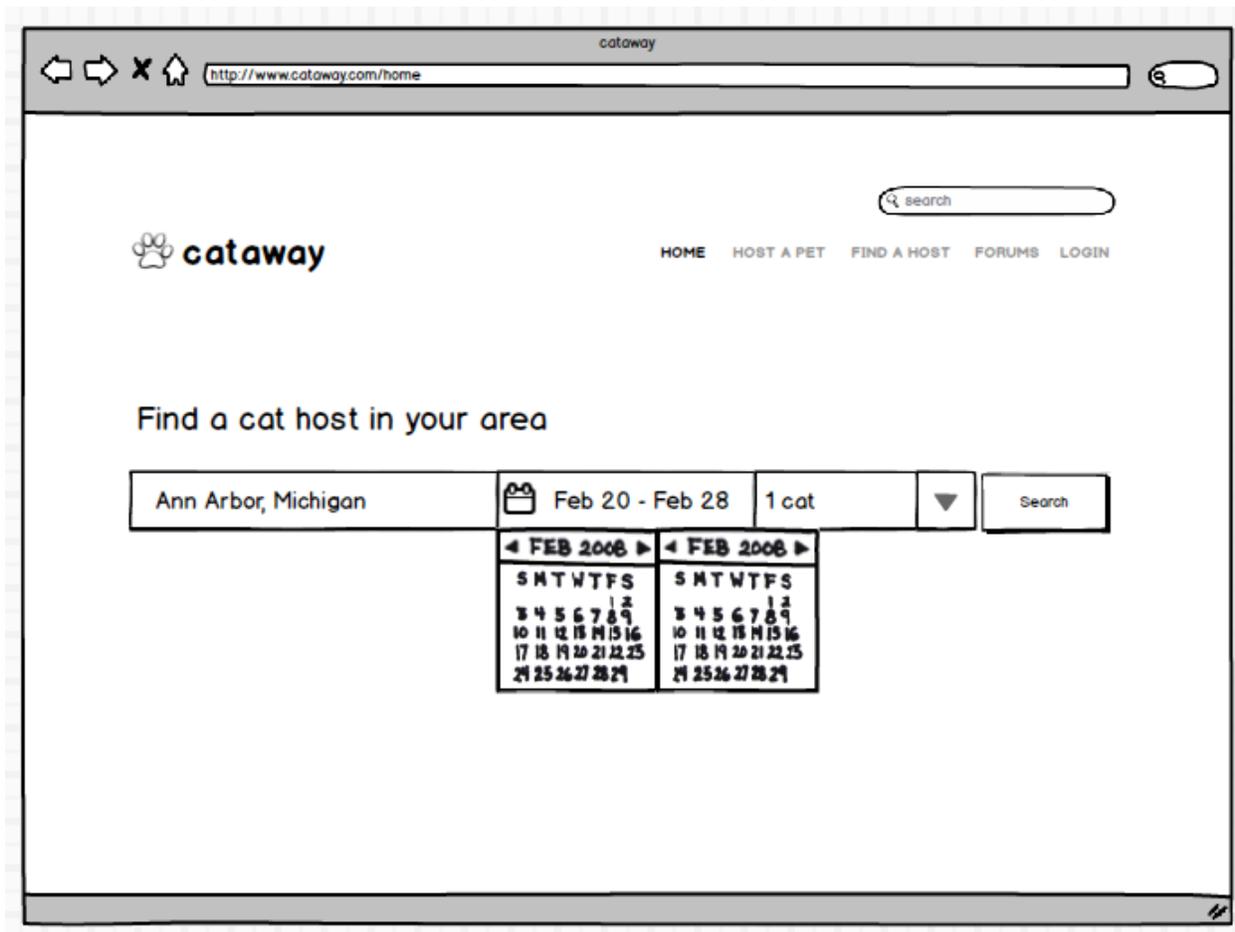


Design Synthesis and Design Defense

Through this design exercise, I explored the homepage of my web application. Because leaving one's pet with another person requires much trust and research, I believe this will be primarily a web application and not be used as much on mobile devices. Through the rest of the semester I will address the process of finding a cat sitter, researching, contacting, and confirming a cat sitter.

Design Option 1: Goal Oriented Approach

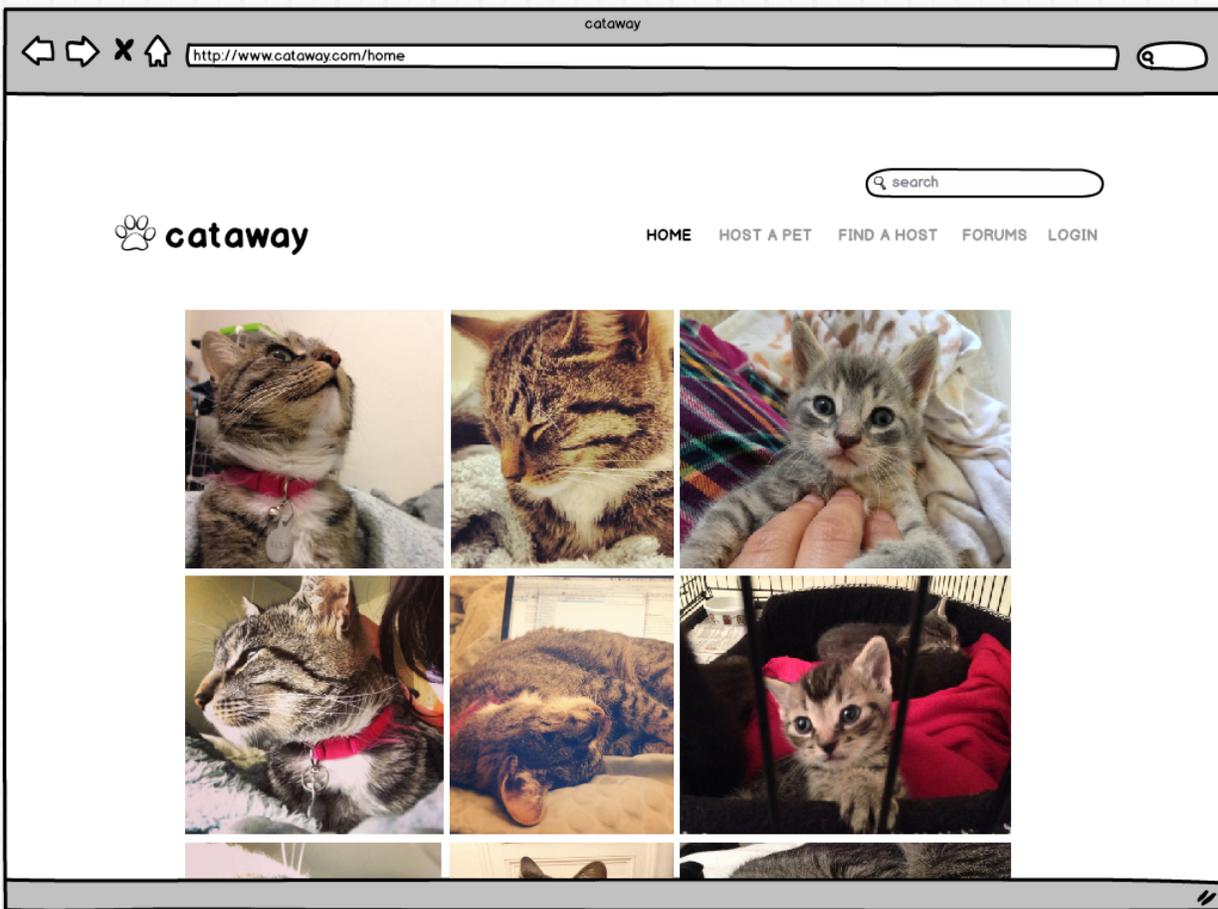


For the first design iteration, I focused on a goal-oriented approach. Primary users of the site will be looking for cat sitters in their location. By providing a clean interface with only a few menu options, users will quickly be able to see if there are any cat sitters available at a certain time. There is little confusion as to how to find a cat sitter; however, what about if users want to host a pet? In this option, hosting a pet is secondary to finding a sitter. If I use this approach, I wonder if there will be an abundance of people looking for cat sitters and not enough sitters. I also wonder if it is too goal-oriented. A secondary goal of the application is to connect and meet with other cat owners in the area. This option almost removes the "humanness" of finding a cat sitter. Perhaps the "booking" process shouldn't be so

stark and be more inviting to people who love cats. I do, however, like the efficiency of it. I find that this search style to be highly efficient and would allow users to find a cat sitter without much effort. It does achieve the goal of making the cat sitter finding process much easier and faster.

Pros:	Cons
Efficient	Too focused on finding cat sitters. Does not address the supply side of finding cat sitters
Clean	No community element
Easy to use	
Goal Oriented	

Design Option 2: Pet Oriented Approach



In this second option, I focused on a pet oriented approach. In this case, the website will use the user's ip address to get location information. The front page would feature images of cats and their owners in the neighborhood. To find an actual pet sitter, users would use the navigation links on the homepage to enter a secondary page. This homepage is much more exploratory, users would see and look at the latest pictures uploaded by their owners. This option focuses on the animals themselves and puts them front and center. The problem with this approach is that it may not be as apparent on how to find a pet sitter. Users may be confused with all the pictures of cats. They may select one of the images and wonder why it goes to a pet owners profile. I do like the visual aspect of it and think it's nice to see images of cats. It brings back the community aspect of the page but perhaps this takes it much too far. They may also not realize the pictures are of cats in their neighborhood. They may think that the images are just of random cats on the internet.

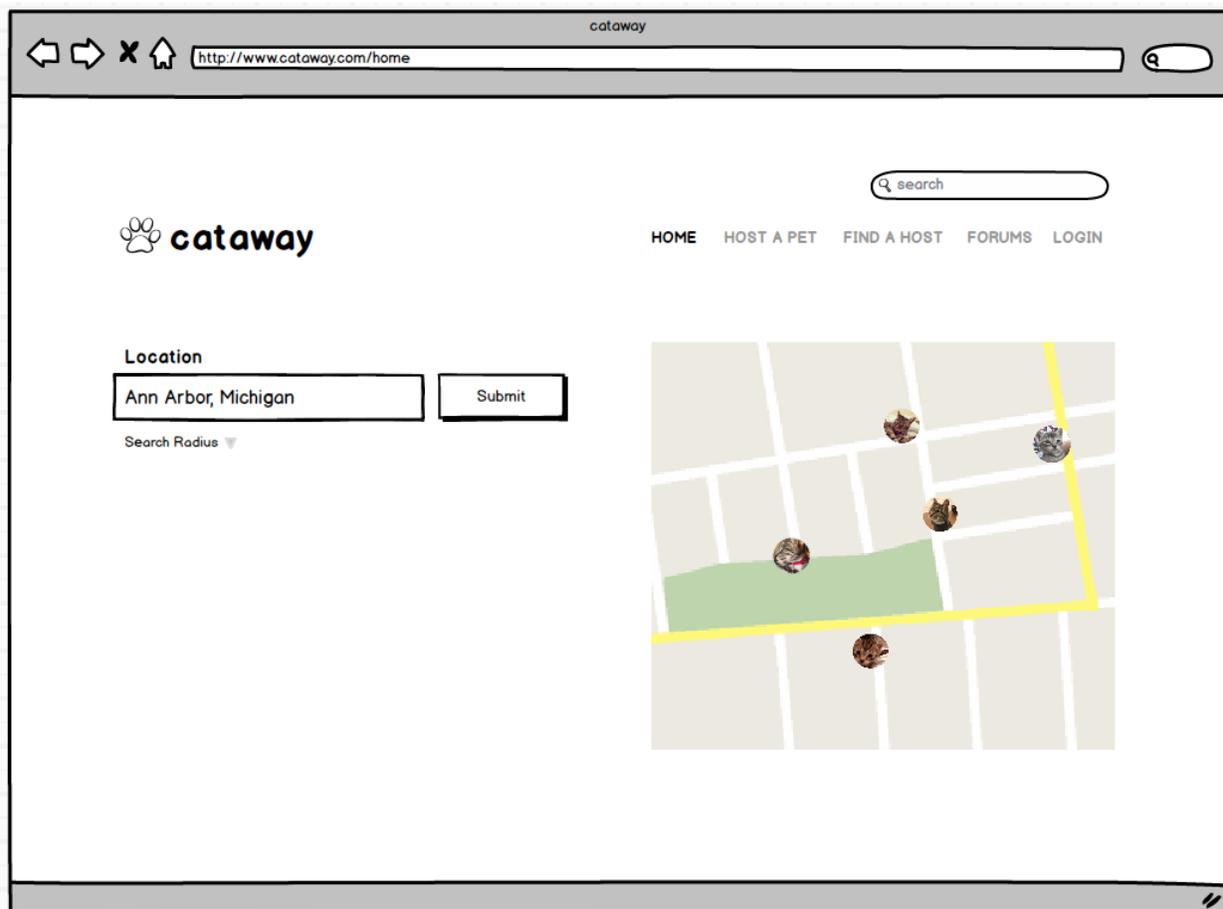
Pros:

Cons

Pet focused	Function of cat photos is not clear
Brings cat owners together	Not obvious that the images are of neighbor cats
	Website purpose is not clear

Design Option 3: Location Oriented Approach

In my third option, I created a location oriented approach. Users would type in their location and see the pets and/or sitters in their area. I think this option is quite good because it adds the “community” element that was lacking in option 1 but not going too overboard like option 2. Owner’s avatars are pictures of their cats, so it keeps some anonymity and protects the owner’s privacy. It also gives the users an idea of all the different cat owners in their area. From this page, users would be able to select a different cat owners and see their individual profiles and make decisions as to who they would like to contact and their availability for pet sitting. However, this option also doesn’t make it clear as to how to become a pet sitter. It is in the navigation links but may not be as clear to some users.



Pros:	Cons
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Efficient	Too focused on finding cat sitters. Does not address the supply side of finding cat sitters
Clean	May not be clear as to where to go next
Easy to use	
Community and location oriented	

Conclusion:

I believe a mixture of both option 1 and option 3 will work best for the site. It creates the efficiency that is required but includes the community aspect of finding more about cat owners in the user's neighborhood. However, I do believe adding pet sitters will need to be more apparent. Perhaps when users are finding pet sitters, they will also be asked to put down their availability to pet sit as well. I believe some aspect of option 2 can also be incorporated into the site. I think many cat owners would like to see other images of their neighborhood cats; however, it does not necessarily need to be a primary function and can be featured somewhere in the site.