

# project::silver creek

## Silver Creek Soap Company Website Design

### Assignment ::

We will begin this term by designing a new website for **Silver Creek Soap Company**, a local producer of handmade soaps. They currently do not have a traditional website, relying completely on word-of-mouth, a (modest) Facebook page, and solid in-store placement. They have limited existing branding (see product images) and owner-produced product photography.

For this assignment, we will design only the home page and a products page of the site, mixing content from existing sources.



### Objectives ::

As you work on your design, concentrate your efforts on the following areas:

- **Look & Feel**—You are starting nearly from scratch with the look and feel of this company. Some of the provided images display a bit of the look they are going for, but there is a lot of room to bring your own style to this company's appearance. Try to evoke more of an emotional response from the site visitors—help customers feel good about buying locally produced products direct from the manufacturers. Think about what is special about shopping at a farmer's market. What is the appeal to consumers?
- **Navigation**—Craft basic navigation that makes the site easy and intuitive to navigate. Focus on both meeting the needs of potential users and the requirements of the client.
- **Photography**—Use images to help convey a sense of culture and quality.
- **Typography**—There is a lot of type required in this project. Be intentional about the type formatting you apply and be thoughtful of hierarchy and font/style variation.

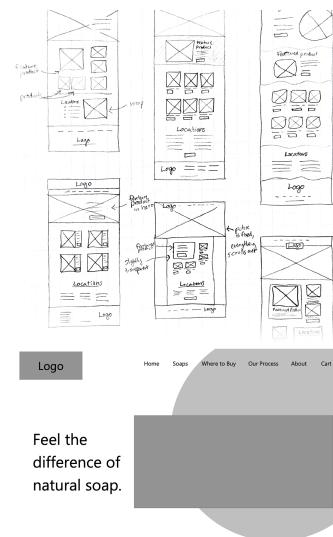
### Process ::

To begin our process, we will be doing **competitor research**, locating and analyzing the websites of similar companies. This step will be done as a lab in class within small groups, with a written component to be done individually. The information obtained from this work will form the basis of the strategy phase of this project, to be submitted on Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>.

After you've completed your research, create **eight thumbnail sketches** of the presentation of the content of the home page. These are rough sketches of ideas for the general layout of the website.

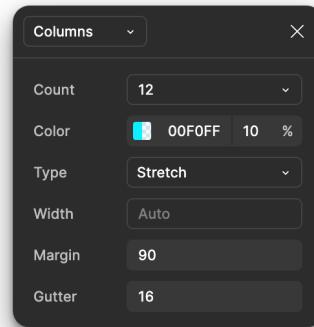
Once you have completed your thumbnail sketches, create in Figma or other dedicated drawing program a **detailed wireframe drawing** of the page. This should be in grayscale, to-scale, with hierarchy and layout being conveyed using generic type and image placeholders—see examples from class.

Collect your thumbnail sketches and wireframe into a **single PDF**, and turn that file in to the first round critique assignment on Canvas by the project critique date (January 27th).



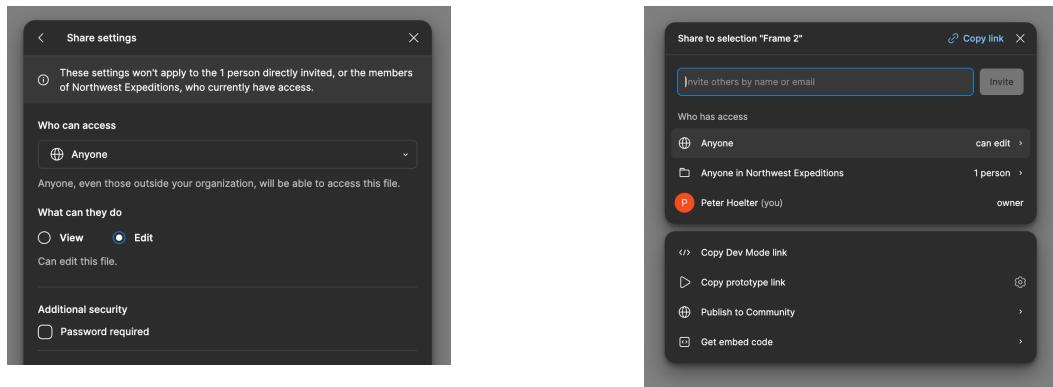
### Design Notes ::

Using the documentation created in the process and wireframing phase, craft a website design using **Figma**. Take time during this first project in Figma to learn this new application, and make smart use of the features that aid in the creation of web designs. We will be targeting a standard screen size (use Figma's **MacBook Air 1280px x 832px** Frame default as a start; add height as needed). Utilize a maximum live area width of **1,100px** for our layout grids by adding **90px** of margin to both the left and right side of our frame when creating the grid. The number of columns is up to you (12 is used in the example to the right; select Layout Guide > Columns).



In addition to turning in your **native Figma** files (.fig), we will also output your designs as **static PNG images** (to be viewed in other applications and to let me know what the design looked like on your computer). To create the PNG images, select the frame, then the plus (+) button in the Export panel; select PNG 1x; File > Export > Export button). You can also drag these images into a Web browser to preview your design in context. If your artboards are labeled in a manner meaningful to you, those names will be used as the filenames when exported by Figma.

Finally, create a share link to your design (click the blue Share button, then Copy Link) and post it to **Canvas**. Be sure to set the permissions on your Figma file so that I am able to both view and edit it. See the example dialog boxes below.



### Elements of User Experience ::

	<b>Surface</b>	You are responsible for the final design, feel, layout, and how existing images are used.
	<b>Skeleton</b>	You are responsible for the skeleton, defining the arrangement of page elements and what interactive components are presented. The provided information should be included, though some can be removed or added. Be prepared to justify your choices.
	<b>Structure</b>	A single home page (to be designed), with links to other pages in the site (not designed as part of this project). Basic content requirements and some of the page functionality is provided. Primary navigation outline is also provided.
	<b>Scope</b>	Provide site visitors with information about our products, where to find them (retail outlets), and the ability to purchase the products online, as well as general information about the company.
	<b>Strategy</b>	Design a website to improve the overall visual design, customer experience, usability and information organization and timeliness. Client would like users to be able to purchase select soaps (featured products) directly from the home page of the site.

## Resources ::

You may use any of the content available on the existing Facebook page, including text and photographs, content provided by the instructor, and content that you create yourself. Since there is not an existing website, there is some work to be done to generate the content for the site pages. Doing your competitive research should have provided some ideas of what content to include. Read and think about the answers that owner Judi provided to help guide what sort of content you will include.

Additionally, you can use photographs found from other sources, including product shots of soaps (since our clients does not have these). Be sure that the copyright of the image or text allows you to use it, and document where you got the image or text from. If you use content from other sources, include a list or where things came from (media/text used and URL) to hand-in at the final due date.

Some resources provided include:

- [Silver Creek Soap Company Facebook Page](#)
- Written question-and-answer session with owner Judi.
- Photographs provided by the client, plus any photograph published by the client to Facebook.
- Photographs created and provided by current and past VC students (some provided).
- A logo or style guide is not provided. You may attempt to re-create their logo from the provided photographs, or create your own version, simply set the name using type, or use no logo bug at all.

## Navigation ::

For the primary site navigation, use the following as links (in the order presented):

- **Home** (*the page we are designing*)
- **Soaps**
- **Where to Buy**
- **Our Process**
- **About**
- **Cart**

## Home Page Content ::

While you have some freedom as to what content you decide to include on the home page, your design should at a minimum include the following:

- A feature product/promo area advertising a current sale/new soap/other promotion
- At least four soap products for sale right from the home page, complete with *Add to Cart* buttons
- A section listing some of the locations that you can purchase their soap at, including a link to a full list of retail locations.
- Any other content you feel would be appropriate.
- And, of course, a header, primary navigation, and footer.



**Key Dates ::**

At the beginning of class on the dates listed below, the following items are due:

<b>Tuesday, January 20th, 2026</b> Week 03   20 points	20 points	Your <b>competitor site research</b> is due. Save this as a PDF document to be turned to the assignment in Canvas. This is just one common component of "Strategy & Scope"-phase documents.
<b>Tuesday, January 27th, 2026</b> Week 04   20 points	20 points	<b>Round One</b> of your designs of the <b>home page</b> for desktop is due. This will be critiqued in class. In addition, your <b>hand-drawn sketches &amp; digital wireframes</b> for desktop are due. Create a PDF of these and upload them to the assignment in Canvas.
<b>Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026</b> Week 05   100 points	100 points	Your <b>final design</b> for the home page is due. There will not be a critique of this phase.

**Requirements ::**

By the beginning of class on **Tuesday, January 20th, 2026** (Week 03), collect your **competitor research** notes (completed as part of the first lab) into a single PDF and upload it to the *Strategy Phase* assignment on Canvas.

By the beginning of class on **Tuesday, January 27th, 2026** (Week 04), combine your **thumbnail sketches** and **wireframe** into a single PDF, and upload it to the *First Round Critique* assignment on Canvas. This is our class critique day — we will be doing one round of revisions for this project. Your initial design is due at the beginning of class for critique, and you must be present at the critique to receive full credit.

In addition to the PDF of sketches and wireframes, in Canvas **paste a link to your Figma design** on the day of the project critique to the primary assignment — *Project - Silver Creek Soap Website Design*.

Finally, place the native **Figma file** and the **exported PNG images** of your interface design in a folder named `lastname_silver_creek_soap_v1`, and copy that folder to your shared Drop Box on Google Drive for this class.

When you begin revisions to your design, save your current design in the **"Version History"** in Figma. To do this, select Figma menu > File > Save to version history... (Command-Option-S), title it "Round One Design" and click save. Continue work on your Figma file, making revisions as needed. You will not need to turn in a new link to Canvas for the final project due date.

Revisions to your design, based on feedback from the class critique, are due on **Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026** (Week 05). Create a folder for your saved .fig file and exported PNG images, naming it `lastname_silver_creek_soap_v2`, and placing it in the Google Drive Drop Box for this class. If you shared your URL in Canvas for the critique you will not need to resubmit it.

This project is worth 140 points.