

Northline Concrete Forming Ltd.

Website typography audit

CONCEPT EXERCISE, FICTIONAL COMPANY

SUMMARY

This audit reviews a deliberately weak homepage for a fictional Toronto concrete contractor. It finds eight measurable typography problems: four unrelated typefaces, inconsistent heading styles, body line-height of 1.2, grey text at 1.90:1 contrast, lines up to 177 characters long, 12 px body text on phones, uneven letter-spacing and mixed text alignment.

The approach is refinement, not a rebrand. Colours, content and layout stay the same. Typography moves to two free Google Fonts (Archivo for headings and interface text, Source Serif 4 for body), a fluid scale (16 px x 1.2 at 360 px, 18 px x 1.25 at 1440 px), body line-height 1.6, a 60ch text measure, and contrast of at least 5.9:1 for secondary text.

Deliverables: `before.html` , `after.html` , `type-system.css` and `figma-styles.md` . Every Figma text style name maps to a CSS variable. All numbers in this document were read from the rendered pages in headless Chromium.

SCOPE

Reviewed: typeface choice, hierarchy, sizing, spacing, readability from 360 to 1440 px, and consistency of the tokens that Figma and CSS share. Not covered: logo, photography, copywriting, print materials.

Honesty note: the company, projects, address and contact details are invented. No real client, logo or result is shown. Photos are CSS placeholders.

4 → 2

typefaces on the page

1.90:1 → 12.05:1

contrast of the services intro text

177 → 73

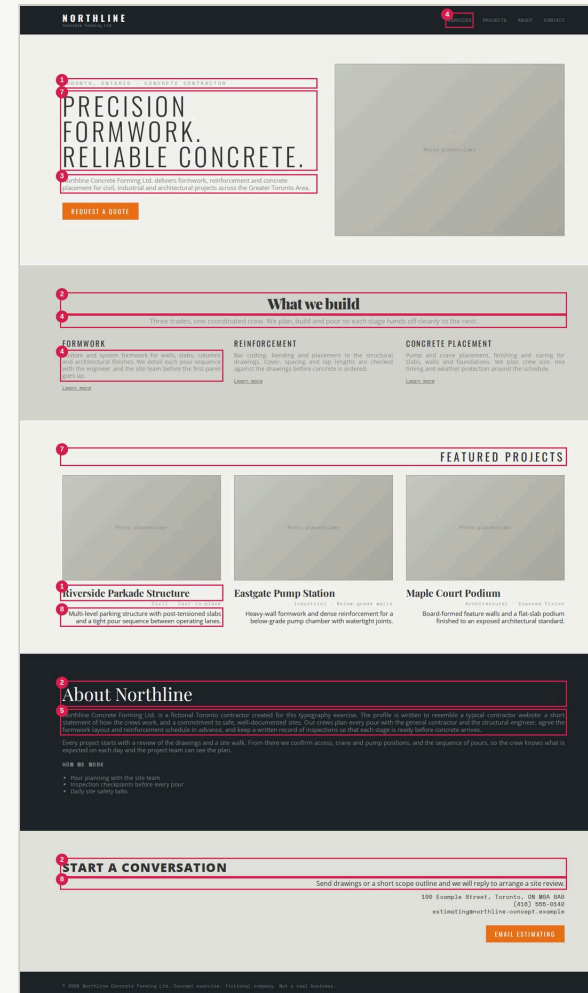
characters per line, About copy at 1440 px

12 → 16 px

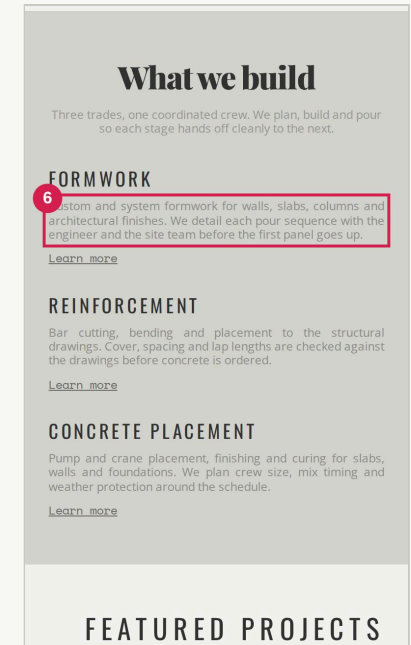
body text on a 390 px phone

Audit of the “before” page

- 1 Four unrelated typefaces.** Oswald, Playfair Display, Open Sans and Space Mono are all in use with no role rules. **Why:** Mixed voices read as unplanned and add 3 extra font files to load. **Measured:** 4 families on 1 page (target: 2).
- 2 Inconsistent heading styles.** The four section H2s each use a different family, size, weight and alignment. **Why:** Readers cannot tell which headings are the same level. **Measured:** H2 sizes 36, 28, 44, 30 px; weights 900, 400, 400, 800.
- 3 Body line-height too tight.** Body and paragraph line-height is 1.2. **Why:** Lines crowd each other; long copy is tiring to read. **Measured:** line-height 1.2 on 14-16 px text (target 1.5-1.6).
- 4 Low-contrast text.** Grey text on grey: services intro, card copy, nav, eyebrow, captions. **Why:** Fails WCAG 2.x AA (4.5:1) for normal text. **Measured:** Intro 1.90:1; card copy 2.18:1; eyebrow 2.54:1; nav 3.36:1; captions 2.36:1.
- 5 Line length too long.** About copy has no max-width and runs the full 1232 px container. **Why:** Eyes lose the next line; comprehension drops past about 75 characters. **Measured:** 177 characters per line at 1440 px (target 45-75).
- 6 Body text under 14 px on mobile.** At 600 px and below, all body copy is forced to 12 px. **Why:** Hard to read outdoors or on a site; below common minimums. **Measured:** 12 px body on 390 px screens (target 16 px).
- 7 Inconsistent letter-spacing.** Tracking ranges from tight to very wide with no rule; light all-caps H1. **Why:** Uneven texture; wide tracking on a 300-weight caps H1 weakens it. **Measured:** -0.03em (H2) to +0.30em (logo, eyebrow); H1 +0.12em.
- 8 Mixed text alignment.** Centred, justified, right-aligned and left-aligned body copy on one page. **Why:** Changing left edges slows scanning; justified text makes uneven word gaps. **Measured:** Centre: services H2, intro. Justify: cards, about. Right: projects, contact.



before.html at 1440 px. Callouts match the issue numbers.



before.html at 390 px, services section. Callout 6 = 12 px body text.

The new type system

FONT PAIRING

Archivo (500-700) for headings, nav, buttons and captions: a sturdy grotesque with a flat, engineered feel that suits formwork and structure, and stays clear at 13-16 px in uppercase captions.

Source Serif 4 (400, 600) for body: a text serif with open counters that holds up at 16 px, and adds a measured, trustworthy voice next to the sans.

Both are free on Google Fonts, 5 weights in total. Fallbacks: Helvetica Neue/Arial and Georgia.

RULES

- Scale: 360 px = 16 px x 1.2; 1440 px = 18 px x 1.25; `clamp()` interpolates.
- Body line-height 1.6; headings 1.1-1.25.
- Text measure 60ch : 73 characters at 1440 px.
- Left-aligned. Letter-spacing only on caption (+0.08em) and display/headings (negative).
- Small and caption are floored at 14 px and 13 px on mobile.

TYPE SCALE (CSS VARIABLE = FIGMA STYLE)

CSS VARIABLE	FIGMA STYLE	FONT	WT	SIZE @360	SIZE @1440	LINE-HEIGHT	TRACKING
--text-display	text/display	Archivo	700	39.8	54.9	1.1	-2.0%
--text-h1	text/h1	Archivo	700	33.2	43.9	1.15	-1.5%
--text-h2	text/h2	Archivo	600	27.6	35.2	1.2	-1.0%
--text-h3	text/h3	Archivo	600	23.0	28.1	1.25	-0.5%
--text-h4	text/h4	Archivo	600	19.2	22.5	1.25	0%
--text-body	text/body	Source Serif 4	400	16.0	18.0	1.6	0%
--text-small	text/small	Source Serif 4	400	14.0	14.4	1.5	0%
--text-caption	text/caption	Archivo	600	13.0	13.6	1.4	+8.0%
--text-button	text/button	Archivo	600	16.0	17.0	1.2	+2.0%
--text-nav	text/nav	Archivo	500	15.0	16.0	1.2	+1.0%

Sizes in px. Each size is a `clamp(min, intercept + slope vw, max)` in `type-system.css`. Line length measured on the rendered After page: lede 59, intro 68, About 73, contact 70 characters at 1440 px. In the 3-column cards it is 42-46 (layout unchanged). At 360 px the column holds 39-41.

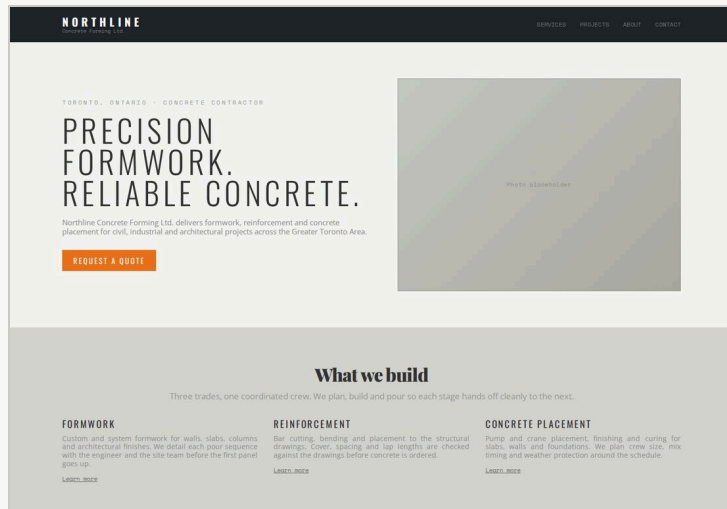
CONTRAST (WCAG 2.X, AA = 4.5:1)

USE	COLOURS	RATIO	
Body text on page bg	#1F2428 on #F3F3F0	14.08:1	Pass
Body text on alt bg	#1F2428 on #E2E2DD	12.05:1	Pass
Muted text on page bg	#4B545B on #F3F3F0	6.95:1	Pass
Muted text on alt bg	#4B545B on #E2E2DD	5.94:1	Pass
Text on dark	#F3F3F0 on #1F2428	14.08:1	Pass
Muted text on dark	#C4C9CD on #1F2428	9.38:1	Pass
Button label on orange	#1F2428 on #E8711A	5.08:1	Pass
Photo placeholder label	#1F2428 on #A8A8A1	6.55:1	Pass

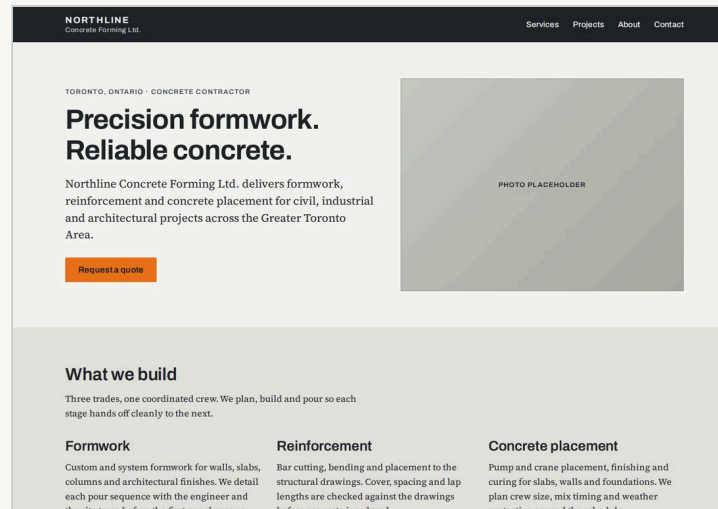
EXAMPLES

ELEMENT	BEFORE	AFTER
Hero H1	Oswald 300, 62 px, +0.12em, lh 1.0	Archivo 700, 54.9 px, -0.02em, lh 1.1
Section H2	4 styles, 28-44 px	Archivo 600, 35.2 px, lh 1.2, all four
Body	Open Sans 14-16 px, lh 1.2; 12 px mobile	Source Serif 4 400, 18 px (16 px mobile), lh 1.6
Nav	Space Mono 12 px, 3.36:1	Archivo 500, 16 px, 14.08:1

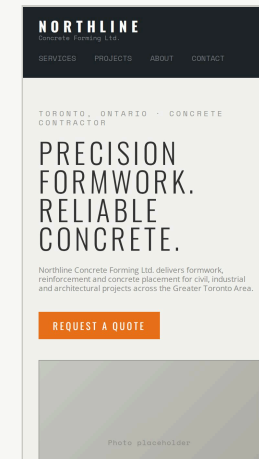
Before / after



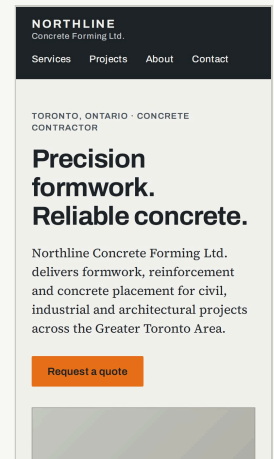
BEFORE · 1440 px



AFTER · 1440 px



BEFORE · 390 px



AFTER · 390 px

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES FOR THE DESIGNER AND DEVELOPER

- **Developer:** add the Google Fonts link, then `type-system.css` before page styles. Keep `display=swap`.
- Replace every hard-coded `font-size` with a `var(--text-*)` token. Delete per-section font-family rules.
- Remove `text-align: justify|center|right` from body copy. Headings and paragraphs inherit left.
- Keep paragraphs inside `max-width: var(--measure)` (60ch). In wide columns do not stretch text; stretch the layout instead.
- Do not set body below `var(--text-small)` (14 px). Use `.t-caption` only for short uppercase labels.
- Use `--color-text-muted` for secondary text. Never use light grey on grey.
- **Designer:** build the text and colour styles in `figma-styles.md`; bind sizes to a two-mode variable (Desktop 1440, Mobile 360).
- Apply styles, not raw values. A text layer with no `text/*` style is a defect.
- Test at 360, 390, 768 and 1440 px. Check the same pages with browser zoom at 200%.
- One concrete grey was lightened (#D4D4CF to #E2E2DD) on the services band; hue unchanged.