

WATERLOOREGIONVOTES.ORG

The Sermon and the Sausage

Paul “Failure” Nijjar

2022-10-03

THE SERMON

PERSONAS

A **persona** is a fictional composite of a “typical” user.

A persona can help us understand what problems a website needs to solve, and what workflow is best to organize information.

Let's use a fictional composite persona!

MEET ANDREW

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- Lives in Kitchener
- Has a house and a family
- Wants to be a good citizen
- Not a political nerd

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1 MPP, 5 candidates, 5 parties

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Even those these proxies are technically incorrect, they work okay in practice.

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Special interest groups have surveys and debates (which are sometimes in obscure places).

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Low cognitive burden

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Lots of information

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11 positions to fill, 45 candidates, 0 political parties (officially)

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Unsolicited election signs are not permitted on Regional roads. (Regional roads?)

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Two-tier government is complicated but has some advantages.

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In Kitchener overall (municipally):

2018 Municipal election: 28%

2014 Municipal election: 29%

2010 Municipal election: 27%

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Thanks to COVID all levels of government are in dire financial straits. (And municipalities have weak taxation powers.)

MUNICIPAL SITES

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<https://wrvotes.com> exists. It links to municipal sites and “voting is exciting!!” videos.

Municipalities have their own election sites.

- 2018: They didn't list candidate websites!
- 2022: Some municipal sites are much better. They still don't list surveys or all-candidates meetings.

VOTING IS HARD! HOW MIGHT WE HELP?

THE SAUSAGE

THE STORY

<https://civictechwr.org> uses technology to increase civic engagement. In 2018 they were thinking about the municipal election.

I had previous interest in municipal elections and got involved.

We built the site in 2018.

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“How hard could it be?”

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- Be cheap, because CivictechWR had little moneys.

TOUR TIME

<https://waterlooregionvotes.org>

THE SAUSAGE FACTORY



waterlooregionvotes.org

GitHub Pages 

Jekyll
Liquid
Markdown

waterlooregionvotes.org

**OpenStreetMap
& Nominatim**

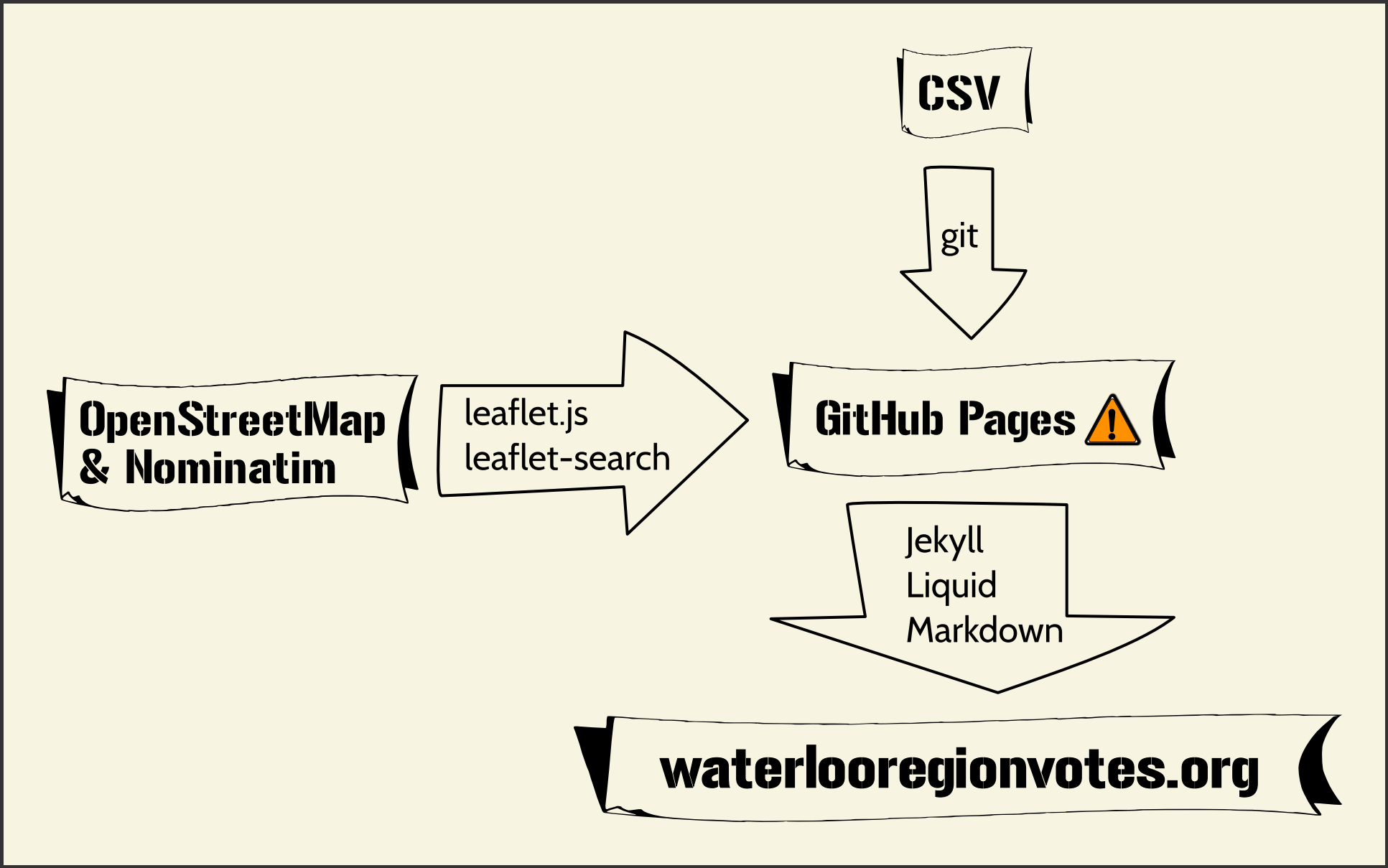
leaflet.js
leaflet-search

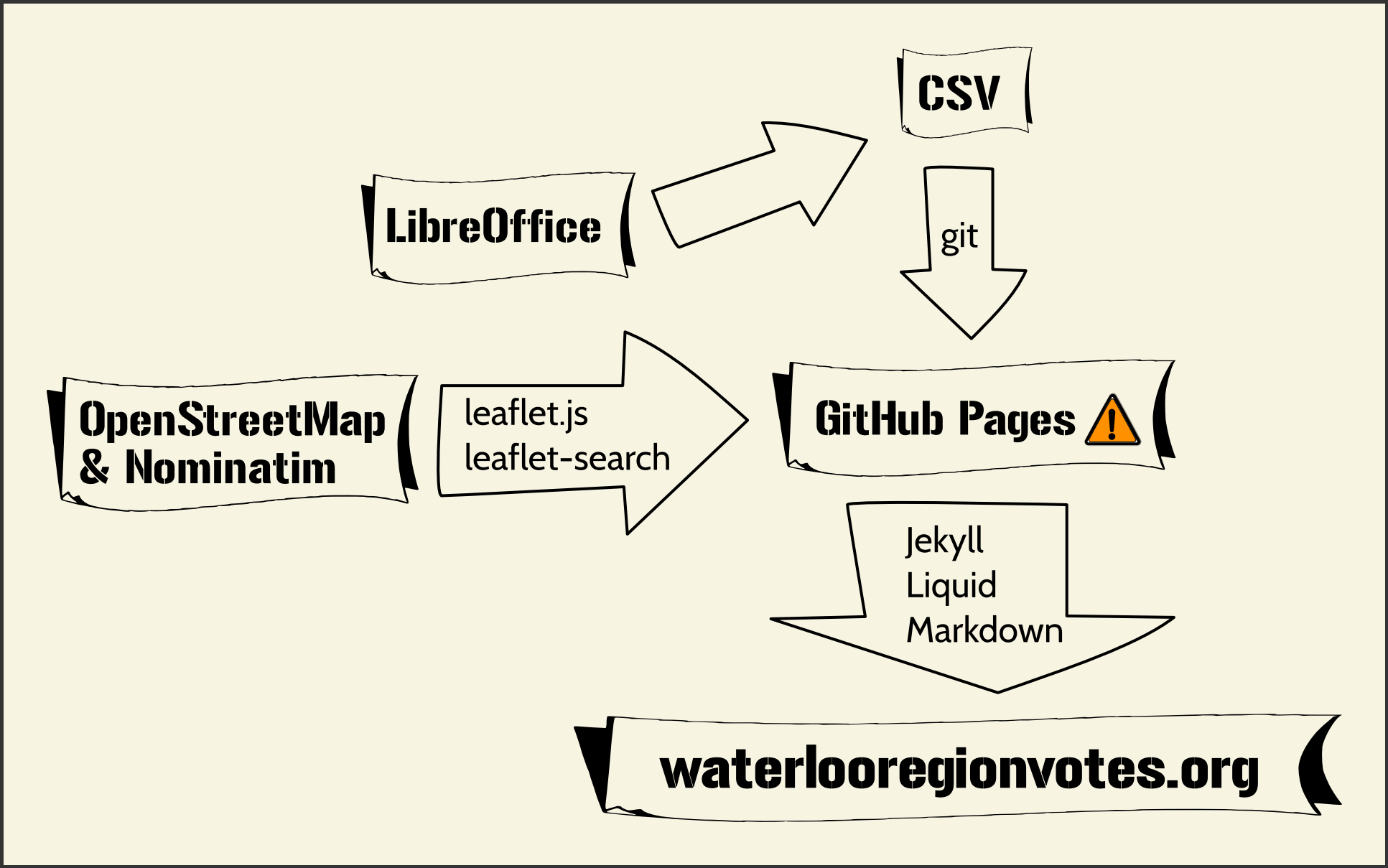
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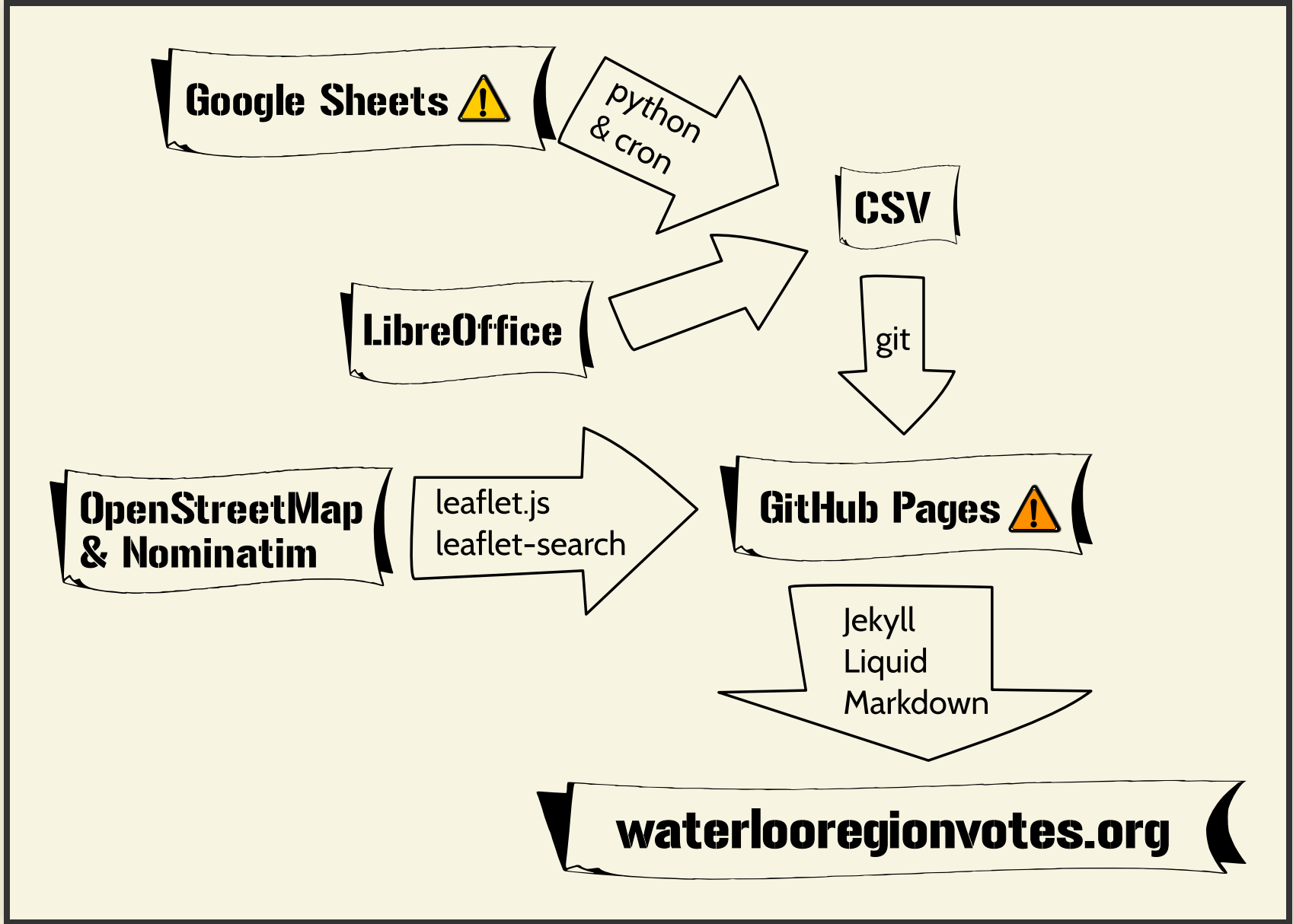


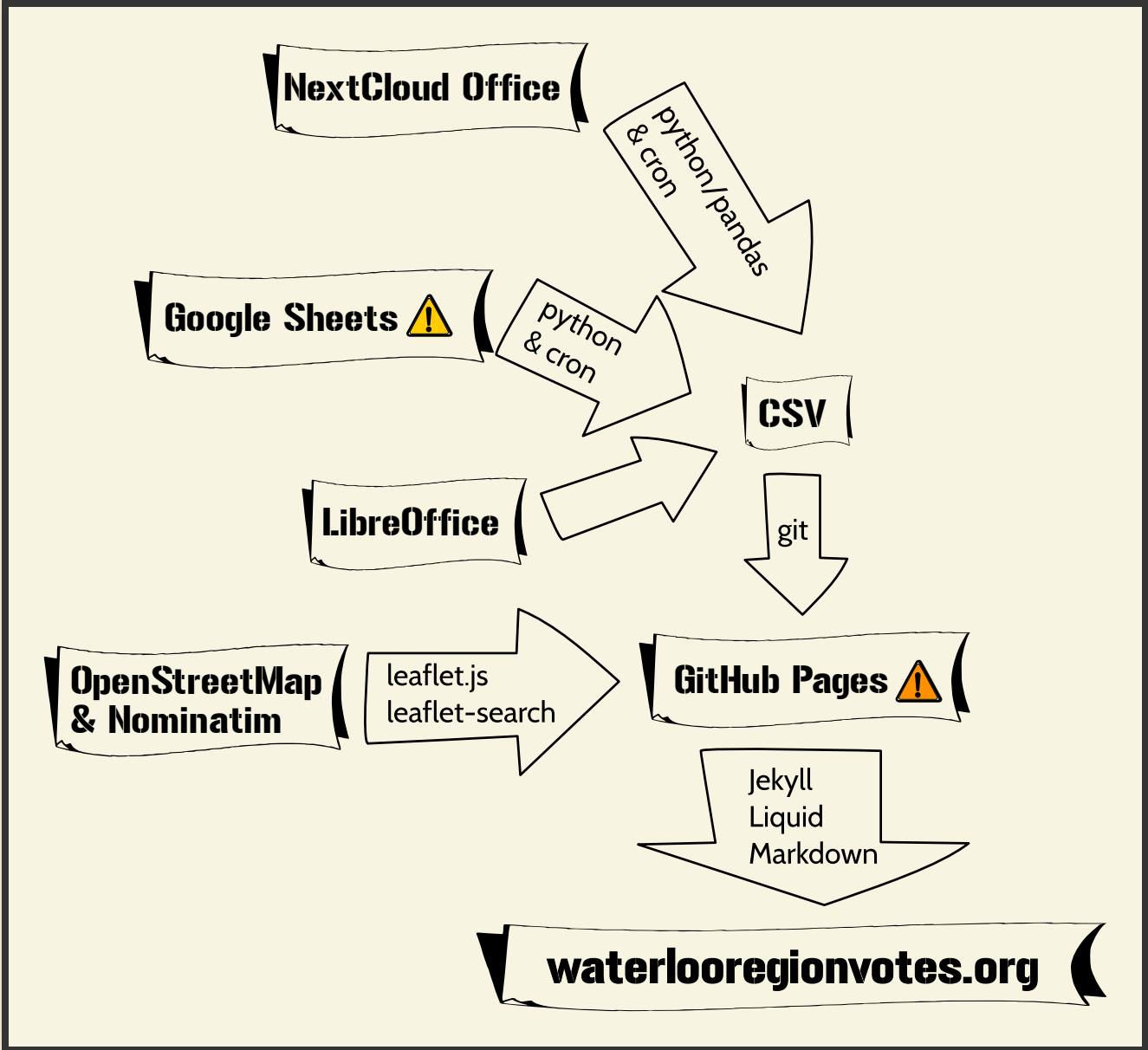
Jekyll
Liquid
Markdown

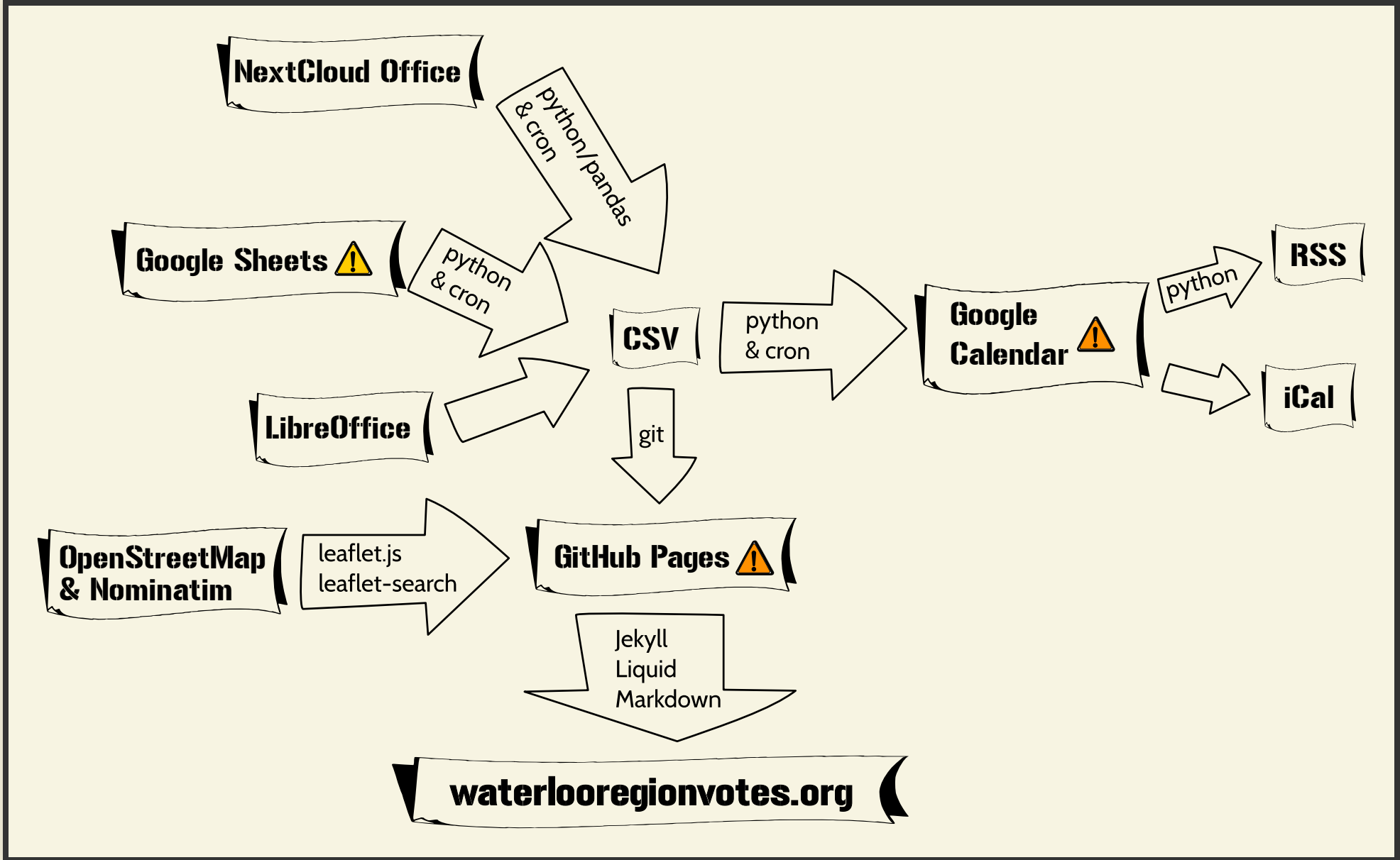
waterlooregionvotes.org











DATA

How do we populate the site?

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Machine learning?

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Internet of Things?

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Machine learning?

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Blockchain?

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It would be lovely to get Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, ... as well

CONCLUSIONS

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- Anecdotally some people think the site is important enough to send harassing messages and cease & desist requests.

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Marketing campaign!

(Thanks Hayley Rutherford and Jane Snyder)

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- Hunting down information
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Also: using the site and sharing it with others.

Also: voting if you are eligible.

THE END

THANK YOU

- To CivictechWR for spearheading this project
- To the many volunteers not mentioned in this presentation
- To local media and grassroots organizers generating content for us to collect
- To the candidates for participating in democracy
- To you for attending (and maybe participating in democracy?)
- To Microsoft and Google, I guess

BUILDING THIS PRESENTATION

```
pandoc -t revealjs 2022-10-03-waterlooregionvotes.md -o \  
2022-10-03-waterlooregionvotes.html --standalone -V theme=beige
```

IMAGE CREDITS

- Paper Frame: <https://openclipart.org/detail/329631/blank-note>
- Arrow: <https://openclipart.org/detail/290890/collection-of-arrows>
- Alert Symbol: <https://openclipart.org/detail/104263/warning-sign>

QUESTIONS AND CONVERSATION

- What else do you want to know about municipal elections?
- What else do you want to know about <https://waterlooregionvotes.org> ?
- What was unclear?