

Interface Redesign

Ann Arbor City Club

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Information Architect, WEB Associates

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Analysis of Current Interface	4
Layout, Responsive Design, and Page Weight	4
Interface Design	4
Redesigned Interface Wireframes	8
Large Display Home Page (Top of Page).....	8
Large Display Home Page (Bottom of Page).....	9
Smartphone Display Home Page (Top of Page).....	10
Smartphone Display Home Page (Bottom of Page).....	11
Large Display Sub Page (Top of Page).....	12
Large Display Sub Page (Bottom of Page).....	13
Smartphone Display Sub Page (Top of Page)	14
Smartphone Display Sub Page (Bottom of Page)	15
Analysis of Redesigned Interface	16
Appendix	17
Current Home Page.....	17
Current Weddings & Events Sub Page.....	18

Executive Summary

The Ann Arbor City Club contracted with WEB Associates for an interface redesign of their current website (<http://www.annarborcityclub.org>). This document examines the current interface and presents wireframes for the home page and a sub-page; these wireframes address limitations or concerns in the current interface.

The document is organized as follows:

- **Analysis of Current Interface**

The current interface is examined in terms of layout decisions, responsive design, and page weight (the size of the files downloaded, which determines how quickly pages load). The current design is also evaluated based on interface design principles and Gestalt rules of visual perception.

- **Redesigned Interface Wireframes**

Digital wireframes, showing placement and arrangement of interface elements, are presented for both the home page and a sub page. Each page is represented by two wireframes: one of the wireframes reflects a large display device, such as a desktop or laptop, and the other wireframe reflects a much smaller smartphone display.

- **Analysis of Redesigned Interface**

Improvements in the proposed interface design are discussed, as well as how the new interface addresses limitations in the existing design.

The most significant interface design concerns involved:

- Lack of responsiveness in the design, even though there is a mobile version of the site.
- Concerns with various principles and guidelines of interface design, including aesthetics, alignment, focus, and enclosure.
- The logo is not present on the sub-pages of the site; that's a branding mistake and a usability concern, as users may not recall what site they are using at any given moment.

The new interface addresses these concerns by:

- Allowing the layout to adapt to smaller screens, such as smartphones, by linearizing the content into a single column and reflowing page content to fill the screen width.
- Adding focus by placing important calls-to-action across the layout of the home page and the sub-pages, where users should be encouraged to take action on the most important sections of content.
- Adding an extensive footer with links and pertinent information to the bottom of every page so that it serves the purpose of being a point of reference for users to quickly find the information they are looking for at any moment.

Additional improvements are noted in the document.

Analysis of Current Interface

Layout, Responsive Design, and Page Weight

- The current layout is fixed-width centered.
- Even though there is a mobile version of the site, the design is not responsive; it does not adapt to the device's viewport width, which is recommended.
- Page weights are not excessive, and pages load fast. Google reports a 98/100 score for the loading speed on desktop, and a 71/100 score for mobile devices.
- The use of the browser's available space is limited, in the sense that many of the pages could be condensed into a single, longer page, where users could scroll down to quickly see the different sections of content, without having to click 2-3 times to try to find the information they are looking for.
- There are unnecessary borders surrounding the website's content, detracting from the aesthetics of the website.

Interface Design

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OBSERVATIONS

Aesthetics

The most notable concerns involving the design aesthetics are the unnecessary grey borders around the main content areas of the site, as those detract from the professional feel of the website.

There is a thick grey border at the bottom of all pages, that does not seem to serve any purpose, making that part of the site look like a mistake.

Alignment

The biggest alignment issue involves the Ann Arbor City Club logo, not aligning with the main navigation. The standard position for a logo on the web is somewhere at the top of the page, not below the hero section. Users have learned to expect a website's logo to be placed at the top-left of the site, horizontally aligned with the global navigation.

Balance

There are many balance issues across the pages of the site; one example is the excessive and unnecessary amount of negative space on the Lunch Specials page. The contact information is pushed all the way down to the bottom of the

PRINCIPLE / GUIDELINE	OBSERVATIONS
<i>Continued</i>	page. There's no reason for the lack of balance between the content and the amount of negative space between elements.
Closure	Even though the use of closure helps users process information as belonging together, there is excessive and unnecessary use of closure throughout the site with the use, whether intended or unintended, of a grey border around the main container. It looks outdated and seems unnecessary, but above all, it looks like a mistake rather than an intentional technique to help users process content.
Connection	Because of the grey border mentioned above, most of the content on the site reads as being connected, although, in some instances, such as on the Lunch Specials page, the excessive amount of negative space cancels the connection effect produced by the surrounding grey border.
Consistency	The layout areas are generally consistent, in terms of the masthead always being present. The same fonts, text size, colors, and overall layout is consistently used across pages, even though some additional attention to detail is recommended.
Continuity	On the Programs and Classes page, for example, the information is presented in a linear sequence, allowing users to immediately mentally group chunks of content together because of their placement and visual flow.
Contrast	Contrast is not an issue on the site, the blue used for headings, and black for regular text, provide a strong contrast against the white background, making the content on all pages easy to read.

PRINCIPLE / GUIDELINE	OBSERVATIONS
Enclosure	<p>The use of boxes is a very effective way of grouping related items together; however, there is an unnecessary use of enclosure on the site, with the use of a grey border around all containers that seems to be the result of a mistake, or a lack of attention to detail. Even though enclosure helps users process pieces of content as being part of the same group, the grey borders negatively affect that same purpose.</p>
Focus	<p>The placement of the Ann Arbor City Club logo is a problem that must be addressed. The hierarchy of information is not well defined, as the logo should be placed on the top-left of the page, or at least on the top-center of the page. There is also no main call-to-action on the home page, and there seems to be a lack of focus for users to engage on a primary task when first visiting the site.</p>
Negative Space	<p>As mentioned earlier, there seems to be an excessive amount of negative space in some of the pages, that instead of making content easier for users to read and process, reads like a mistake, or at the very least, a lack of attention to detail.</p> <p>Negative space is recommended for users to be able to read and process content, but it must be carefully crafted to produce the desired results.</p>
Proximity	<p>The global navigation links in the masthead region are placed in close proximity to one another, which allows users to visually associate them.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the logo is not present in the masthead region and is non-existent on second and third-level pages; when it should be present in every single page for proper branding.</p>
Repetition	<p>The use of custom photography as decorative/illustrative images for various sections is a form of repetition that works well to tie together the design. The use of the same fonts and colors throughout the site also supports the same purpose.</p>

PRINCIPLE / GUIDELINE

OBSERVATIONS

Similarity

The global navigation in the masthead region follows a similar visual styling, which serves to associate those items as users visually scan them.

The use of similar visual styling on the global navigation makes the site easy to navigate, even though there's room for improvement.

Simplicity

One of the biggest strengths of the current website is its simplicity; only a couple of fonts are used, the color scheme is reduced to 2-3 colors, and the use of relevant photographs contribute to a streamlined style that does not use more than what is required to get the message across to its users.

More attention to detail is recommended to take the simplicity in the design to a more polished level.

Redesigned Interface Wireframes

Large Display Home Page (Top of Page)

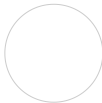
Ann Arbor City Club

Dining Weddings & Events Community Events Activities Membership

Where Community Becomes Family

There's never been a better time to join!


[BECOME A MEMBER](#) [LEARN MORE](#)



Dining Hours & Menu

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[LEARN MORE](#)



Weddings & Events

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Community Events


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Watch a video of Club members in action!


Large Display Home Page (Bottom of Page)



Activities

The Club features more than 20 Signature Groups and Clubs, each dedicated to a specific area of interest. These groups meet regularly throughout the year and provide numerous opportunities for members to learn and socialize. Areas of interest include Automobile Appreciation, Book Discussion, Genealogy, History, Poetry, Travel, Bridge and more.

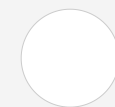
[VIEW ALL ACTIVITIES](#)



Become A Member

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[JOIN TODAY](#)



Parking & Directions

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[VIEW DIRECTIONS](#)

ANN ARBOR CITY CLUB

- Bulletin Board
- Index to Members Only Documents
- Membership Directory
- Photo Gallery
- Our Blog

ADDRESS

1830 Washtenaw Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Phone: 734.662.3279
Fax: 734.662.7105

DINING

- Menu
- Dining Hours

WEDDINGS & EVENTS

- Weddings
- Business, Social, and Other Occasions
- Meeting & Event Spaces
- Event Menus

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Lunch & Learn / Dine & Discover
- Flea Market
- Classics at the City Club
- Art & Craft Festival




MEMBERSHIP

- Join the City Club!
- History
- Reciprocal Clubs
- Member Clubs
- The Beacon

ACTIVITIES

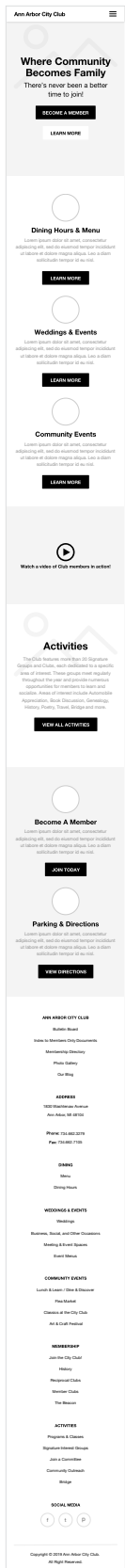
- Programs & Classes
- Signature Interest Groups
- Join a Committee
- Community Outreach
- Bridge

SOCIAL MEDIA

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Smartphone Display Home Page (Top of Page)

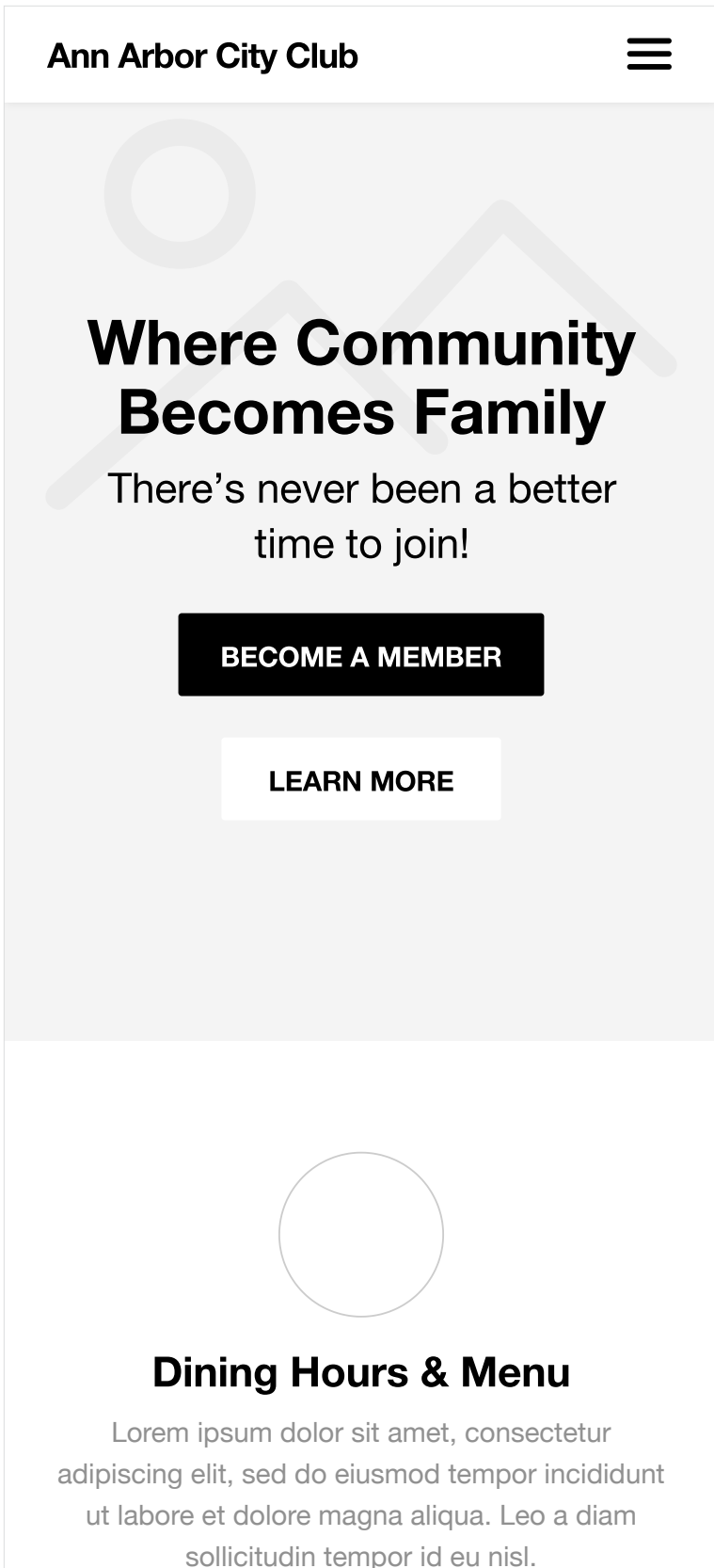


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Ann Arbor City Club

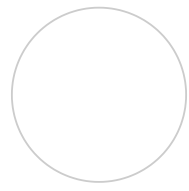


Where Community Becomes Family

There's never been a better time to join!

BECOME A MEMBER

LEARN MORE



Dining Hours & Menu

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<p>Watch a video of Club members in action!</p>	<p>ANN ARBOR CITY CLUB</p> <p>Bulletin Board</p> <p>Index to Members Only Documents</p> <p>Membership Directory</p> <p>Photo Gallery</p> <p>Our Blog</p> <p>ADDRESS</p> <p>1830 Washtenaw Avenue Ann Arbor, MI 48104</p> <p>Phone: 734.662.3279 Fax: 734.662.7105</p> <p>DINING</p> <p>Menu</p> <p>Dining Hours</p> <p>WEDDINGS & EVENTS</p> <p>Weddings</p> <p>Business, Social, and Other Occasions</p> <p>Meeting & Event Spaces</p> <p>Event Menus</p> <p>COMMUNITY EVENTS</p> <p>Lunch & Learn / Dine & Discover</p>	<p>Copyright © 2019 Ann Arbor City Club. All Right Reserved.</p>
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Large Display Sub Page (Top of Page)


Ann Arbor City Club


Dining **Weddings & Events** Community Events Activities Membership

Weddings & Events

Contact us today to reserve your date!

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Weddings


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Business, Social, And Other Occasions

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Meeting & Event Spaces


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[VIEW ALL ACTIVITIES](#)

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Meeting & Event Spaces

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[VIEW ALL ACTIVITIES](#)



Event Menus

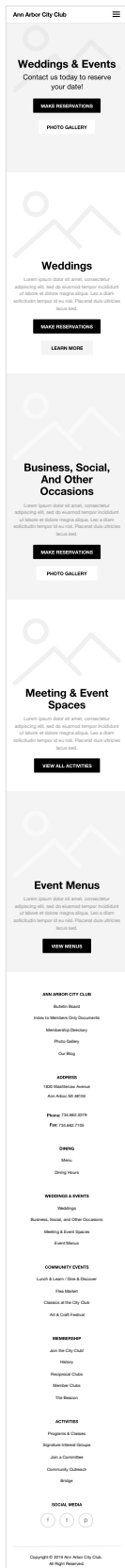
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[VIEW MENUS](#)

ANN ARBOR CITY CLUB Bulletin Board Index to Members Only Documents Membership Directory Photo Gallery Our Blog	DINING Menu Dining Hours WEDDINGS & EVENTS Weddings Business, Social, and Other Occasions Meeting & Event Spaces Event Menus	COMMUNITY EVENTS Lunch & Learn / Dine & Discover Flea Market Classics at the City Club Art & Craft Festival MEMBERSHIP Join the City Club! History Reciprocal Clubs Member Clubs The Beacon	ACTIVITIES Programs & Classes Signature Interest Groups Join a Committee Community Outreach Bridge SOCIAL MEDIA f t p
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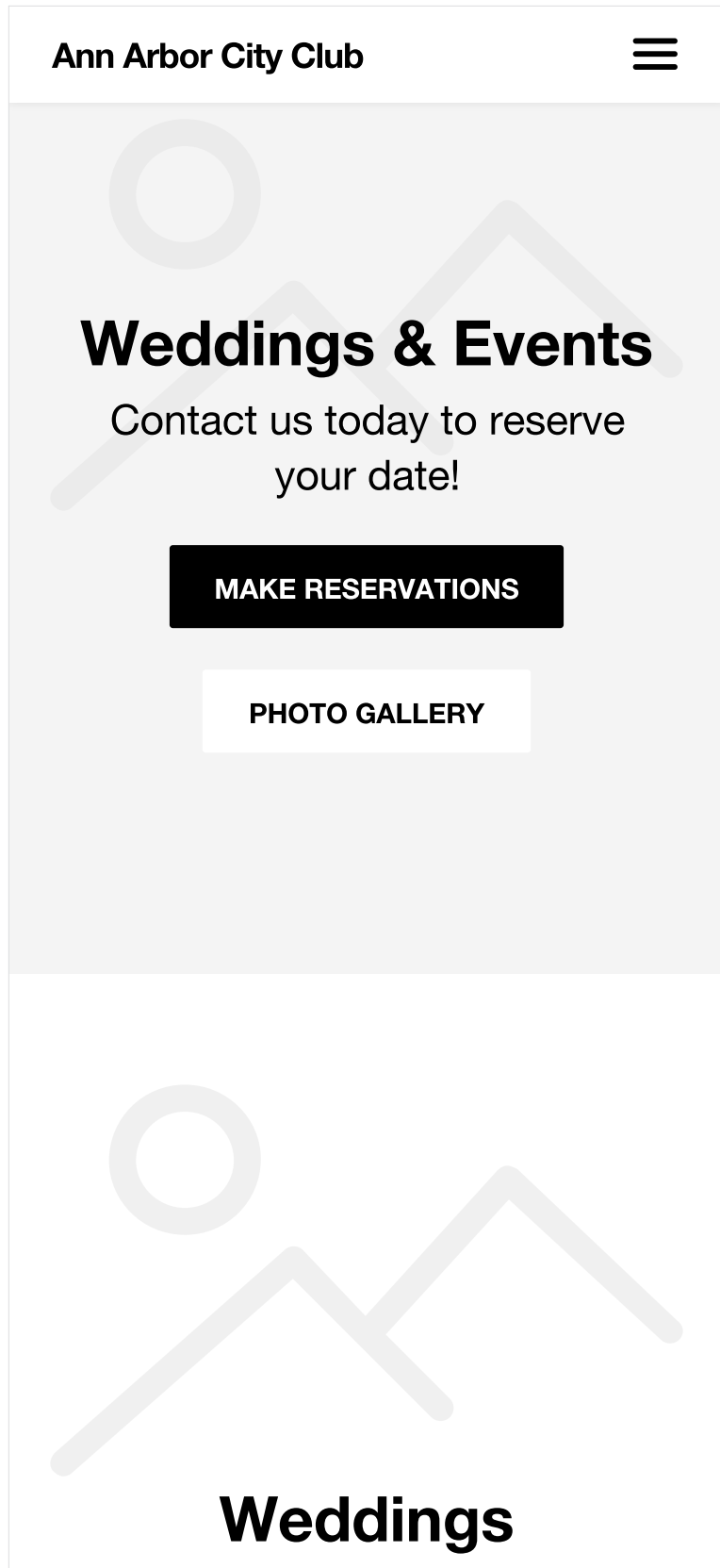


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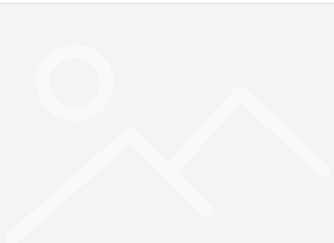
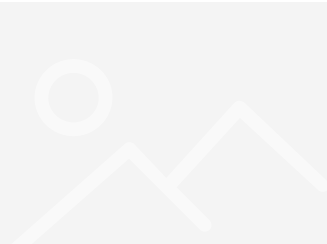

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 <h2>Meeting & Event Spaces</h2> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Leo a diam sollicitudin tempor id eu nisl. Placerat duis ultricies lacus sed.</p> <p>VIEW ALL ACTIVITIES</p>		

Analysis of Redesigned Interface

The new interface design for the Ann Arbor City Club addresses many of the concerns noted previously:

- The new design adapts to smaller screens, providing the responsiveness that the existing design is lacking. The responsive design ensures that the website's layout adjusts to the viewport's width, not just on mobile, but tablets too.
- Aesthetics have been improved by removing the grey borders across all sections of all pages. The attention to detail applied to all sections of the site will help increase the user's trust.
- Alignment concerns have been addressed by placing the logo at the top-left of the page on all pages. The current link to home on the main navigation has been removed, as it's unnecessary since users have learned to use/click the logo to go back to the home page.
- Focus concerns have been addressed by placing calls-to-action throughout the home page and the sub-page wireframes, on all the different sections of content where users should be encouraged to perform the most crucial tasks, which in return will benefit both the user's needs and the Ann Arbor City Club's bottom line.
- The proximity of the logo and the navigation items help users associate the website's content throughout the website.
- Simplicity continues to be embraced, but it's taken to a more polished level, where attention to detail has been given to all buckets of information so that users can find what they are looking for, without having to struggle to find it.
- Consistency continues to be embraced by the use of the same professional photography style throughout the site while ensuring that loading times continue to be optimal for users.

Contrast issues will need to be addressed when mockups are created for the new design, and issues with either too much negative space or not enough negative space will need to be addressed during the rebuild process of each page.

Appendix


Current Home Page



Screenshot taken at 1200 x 2200 pixels.

Current Weddings & Events Sub Page

HOME DINING WEDDINGS AND EVENTS COMMUNITY EVENTS MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES OUR BLOG MORE...



Weddings and Events

The City Club is one of Ann Arbor's premier venues for weddings, rehearsal dinners, holiday parties, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, and other special events. Built in the late 1800s as a private residence, the City Club's elegant home is one of Ann Arbor's true architectural gems, rich in character and charm. Our meticulously maintained gardens and grounds provide a beautiful backdrop for weddings, receptions and other social events.

Our talented Executive Chef and staff will prepare culinary delights for you and your guests that will please the eyes as well as the palate. We work with you to develop a menu that surpasses your expectations and meets your budgetary requirements.

We look forward to accommodating your event needs ranging from an intimate gathering of 10 to a large scale event of more than 200. Our experienced, professional staff will help you coordinate all details from menu selection to choosing the perfect room for your occasion.

To arrange a tour or to learn more about hosting an event at the City Club, please contact Greg Fleming, General Manager, at 734-662-3279 ext. 6 or greg@annarborcityclub.org.

Screenshot taken at 1200 x 1040 pixels.