McCauley Community League Website Redesign

Context

McCauley Community League, located in one of Edmonton's oldest and most central neighborhoods, required an updated website to better serve its growing and diverse population. Surrounded by the neighborhoods of Boyle Street, Central McDougall, Cromdale, Parkdale, Alberta Avenue, and Spruce Avenue, McCauley is known for its unique blend of historic charm and multicultural vibrancy.

Problem Framing

We began by conducting a needs assessment for the community league, which involved meeting with the client to discuss the current website's usability and accessibility. As a community member, I had a strong understanding of the community's needs and the potential improvements for the site.

McCauley Community League - Needs Assessment

1. Understanding the Diverse Demographic
- Who are the different user groups within the community?
  - Children, teenagers, adults, seniors, families, newcomers?
- What are the specific needs and preferences of each demographic group?
  - What information and features are most important to them?

2. Accessibility and Usability
- How can the website be made accessible to users with disabilities?
  - Are there plans to meet WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) standards? https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/#intro
- Is the website designed to be intuitive for all age groups?
  - Are navigation and interface elements clear and simple to use?
- How will the website cater to users who may not be tech-savvy?
  - Are there guides, FAQs, or support available?

3. Multilingual Support
- Does the community include non-English speakers?
  - If so, which languages need to be supported?
- How will multilingual content be managed?
  - Is there a need for a translation service or multilingual plugins?

4. Content and Communication
- Who will be responsible for updating and managing the content on the site?
- Do you need training on how to use the new website?

  What types of content will engage each demographic group?

- What social media platforms does the community use?
  - How can social media be integrated into the website?

5. Design Preferences
- Do you have a preferred style or look for the new website (e.g., modern, traditional, colorful, minimalistic)?
- Are there any brand guidelines or color schemes to follow?

6. Current Website Analysis
- What do you like and dislike about the current website?
- What specific features or content from the current site should be carried over to the new site?

7. Events and Scheduling
- How will the website handle different types of events?
  - Community events, meetings, rink schedule?

8. Membership
- Is the current membership option working well for you?

9. Inclusivity and Community Building
- How will the website promote inclusivity and community spirit?
  - Highlighting diverse community members, sharing success stories, recognizing volunteers? Link to Boyle McCauley News?
- What initiatives or features will support underrepresented groups?
  - Programs, resources, special events?

10. Feedback and Improvement
- How will feedback from different demographic groups be collected and addressed?
  - Surveys, suggestion boxes, feedback forms?

11. Security and Privacy
- How will the website protect the privacy of all users?
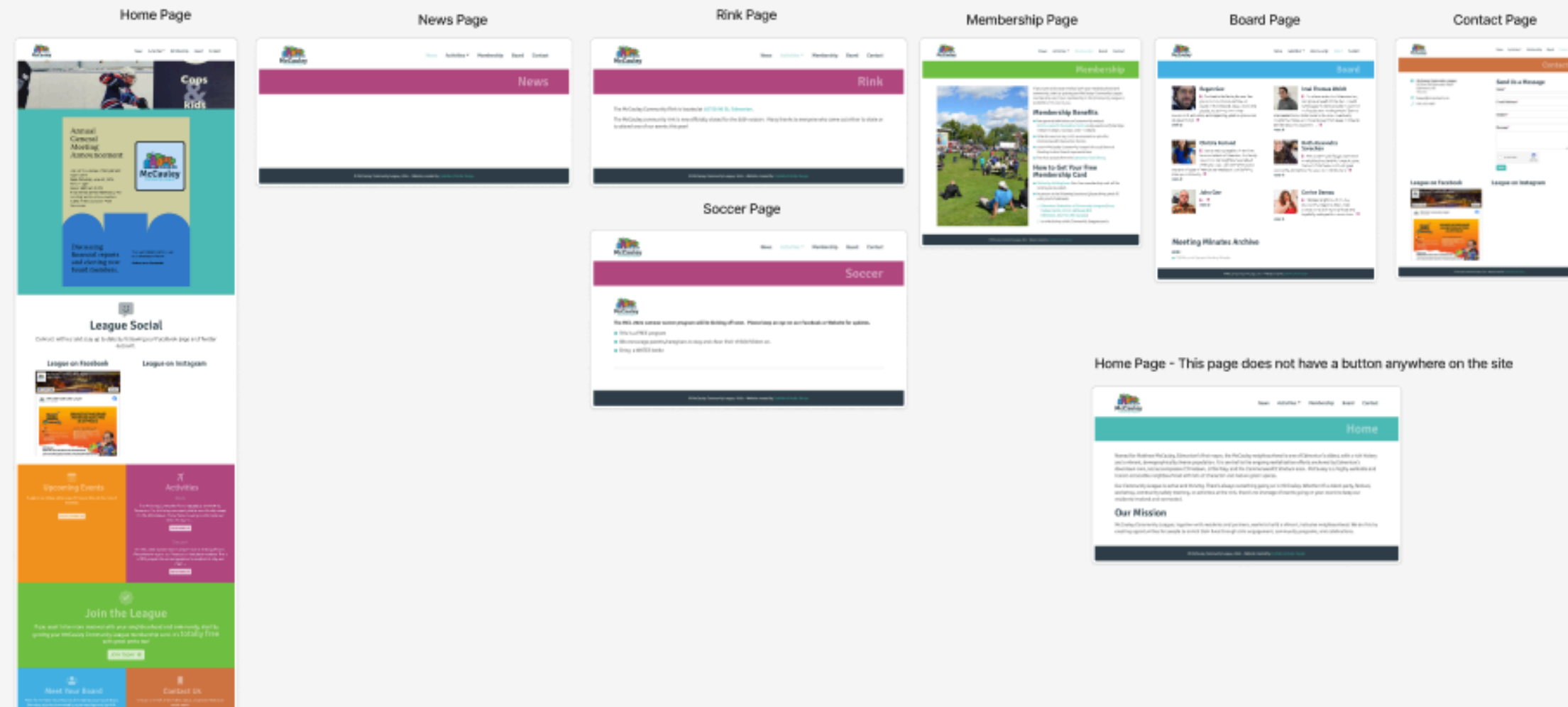 - Clear privacy policies, secure data handling, consent for data collection?

12. Technical Support and Training
- What support options are available for users who need help?
  - Email, phone support?
- How will training be provided to website administrators and users?
  - Training sessions, user manuals, video tutorials?

McCauley Community League Website - Before

We tested the existing website to identify functional and non-functional elements. While some buttons were non-responsive and some pages were completely empty, there were functional elements that we decided to keep. We also examined websites of neighbouring community leagues to identify common features, such as event calendars, member benefits and sign-up options, feedback forms, and important community updates.

User Personas

To guide our design and ensure we met the needs of all community members, we developed three key user personas:

Sarah, 72, Retired Nurse

- **Background**: Sarah has lived in McCauley for over 25 years and is actively involved in community events. She values staying connected with neighbors and prefers easy-to-use websites.
- **Goals**: Stay informed about local events, access community updates and health services, and maintain social connections.
- **Pain Points**: Finds the current website difficult to navigate, struggles with non-responsive buttons, and needs better accessibility features.
- **Needs**: An intuitive website with clear labels, regularly updated content, and accessibility options like larger text and high contrast.

Amina, 28, Newcomer to Canada and Stay-at-Home Parent

- **Background**: Amina recently moved to McCauley from Somalia and is working to integrate into the community. She relies on accessible and multilingual online resources due to her improving English skills.
- **Goals**: Find information about local events and services, access content in her native language, and connect with other community members.
- **Pain Points**: Struggles with language barriers, finds it hard to locate and understand information, and needs a user-friendly website.
- **Needs**: Multilingual support, a simple and intuitive website layout, and comprehensive resource listings for newcomers.

Jordan, 35, Community League Board Member

- **Background**: Jordan is an active board member with five years of service in the community league.
- **Goals**: Jordan aims to learn basic web administration, effectively manage events using Google Calendar, engage the community through social media and the website, organize website content with support, and enhance volunteer sign-ups and donations.
- **Pain Points**: Faces challenges in troubleshooting, maintaining current and relevant website content, and engaging the community.
- **Needs**: Requires training in website maintenance, intuitive tools for managing events and content, and reliable technical support for urgent issues.

Low-Fidelity Wireframing

Based on these insights, Nathan started low-fidelity wireframing while I focused on researching accessibility and usability. Given McCauley's diverse demographic, we aimed to ensure the website's accessibility to all residents. This involved considering font and color accessibility, incorporating translator widgets, and referencing the guidelines of The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) throughout the project.

Mid-Fidelity Wireframing

In this phase, we began integrating community photos, event information, and additional resources beneficial to residents, such as construction updates and traffic delay notices. This phase is where we highlight key information and core interactions.
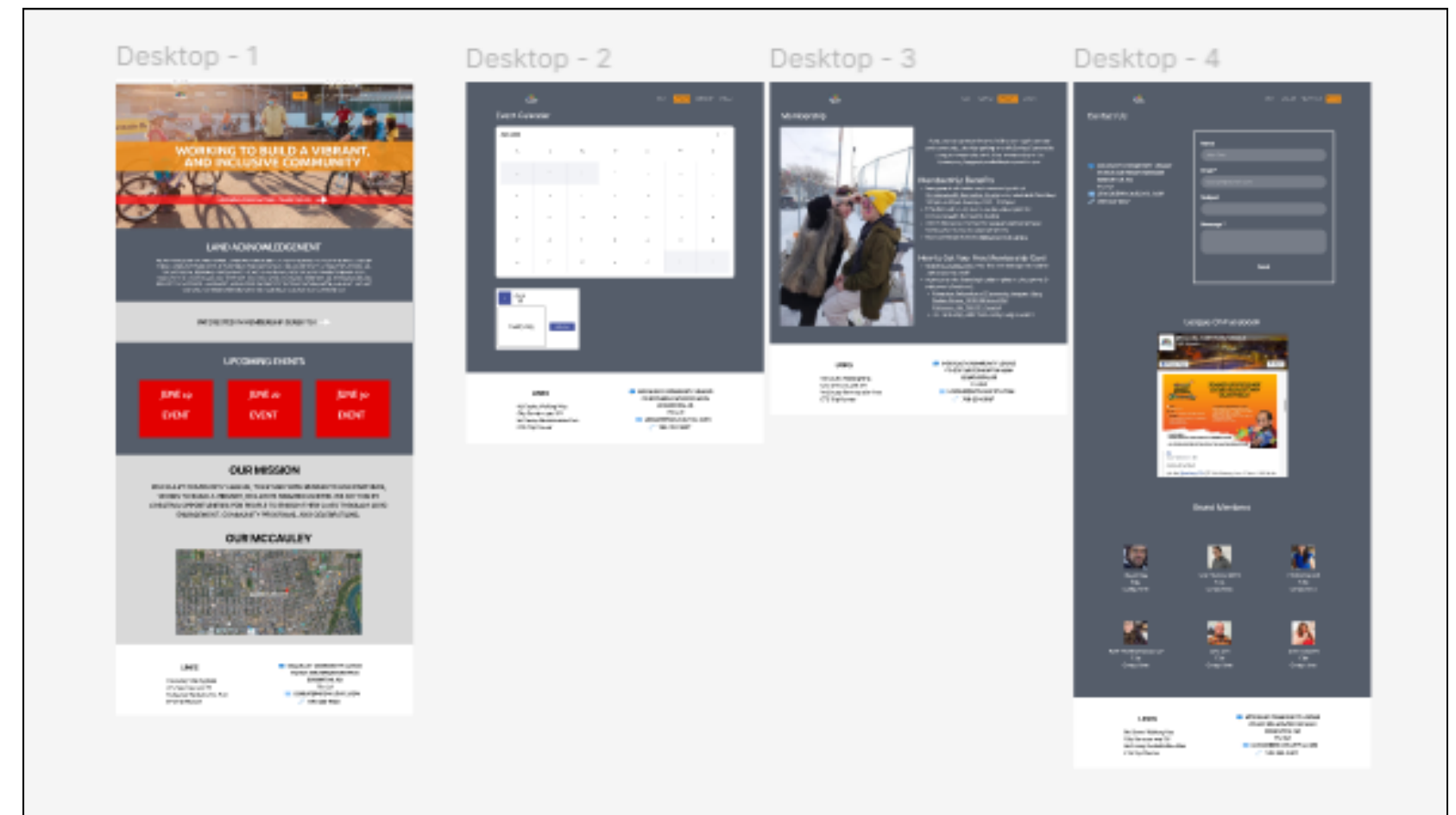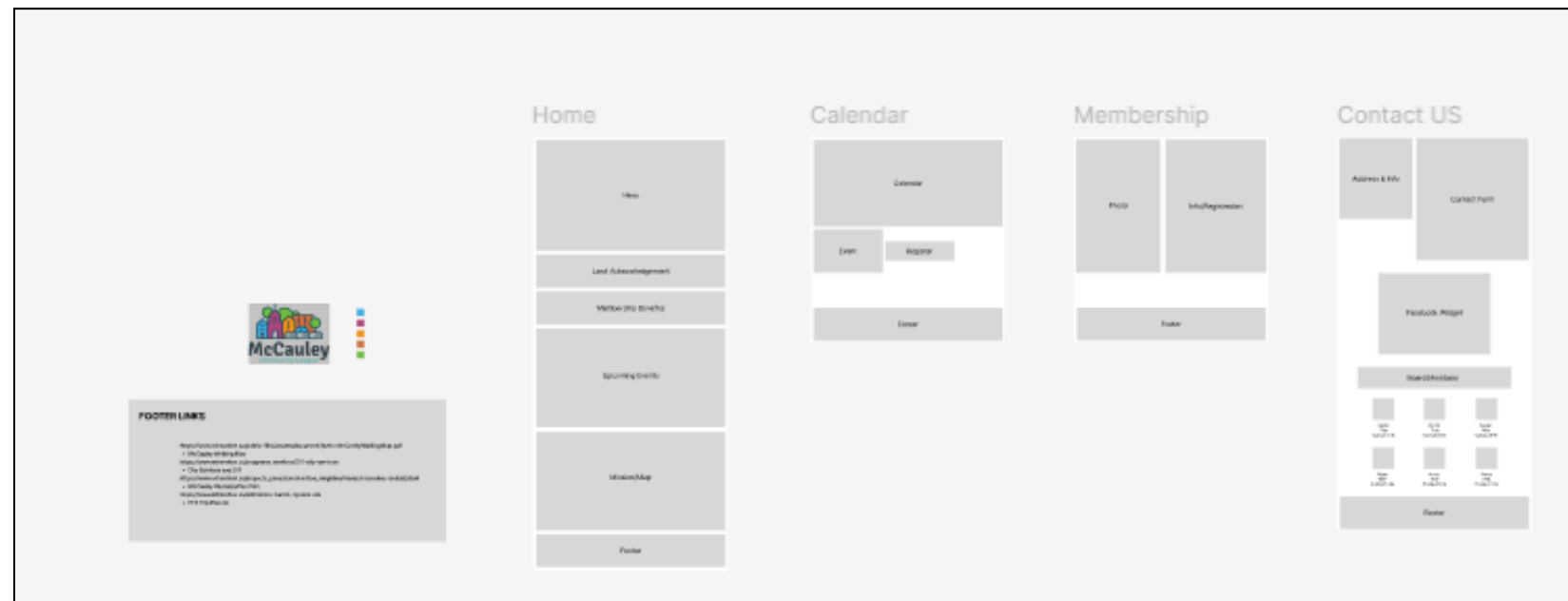
High-Fidelity Wireframing

The high-fidelity wireframing phase involved creating detailed and realistic representations of the web pages. This included designing interactive elements such as functional buttons on the homepage, working footer links on every page, and active buttons directing users to membership benefits. Additionally, all links on the membership page were ensured to be fully operational.

Proposal

Next, we drafted a proposal that included an overview of the current website, suggested improvements, a proposed redesign, a breakdown of costs, and the next steps.

The proposal was presented and accepted by the league. They requested an opportunity to provide input, so we created the MCCL Website Design Feedback Form using Google Forms.

1. Are there any specific elements or sections of the design that you feel need adjustments or improvements?
2. Does the overall look and feel of the design align with your brand and the message you want to convey to your audience?
3. Are there any features or functionalities you would like to add, modify, or remove based on the initial design?
4. How do you find the navigation and user experience of the design? Is there anything that could be made more intuitive or user-friendly?
5. Are there any accessibility or performance concerns you have noticed in the design that we should address?
6. Is there any content or information you feel is missing or should be highlighted more prominently within the current design?
7. Any additional feedback?

Conclusion

The McCauley Community League website redesign project successfully addressed the need for an updated, user-friendly, and accessible online presence to better serve its diverse and growing population. By conducting a thorough needs assessment, we identified key areas for improvement and developed a comprehensive plan to enhance the website's usability and functionality.

Throughout the project, we adhered to best practices in web design and accessibility, ensuring that the site meets the needs of all community members, regardless of their technical skills or language proficiency. From the initial low-fidelity wireframes to the detailed high-fidelity designs, we incorporated valuable feedback from the community and the league, resulting in a website that is not only visually appealing but also highly functional. Key features such as interactive buttons, functional footer links, and accessible membership information were meticulously designed and tested.

In conclusion, the new McCauley Community League website stands as a testament to collaborative effort and thoughtful design. It effectively captures the multicultural vibrancy of the McCauley neighborhood, providing residents with a valuable resource for information, events, and community engagement. This project not only enhances the league's digital presence but also strengthens its connection with the community it serves.