

Making a good first impression

Our website at 1666Coffman.com is getting a new look. Styles change – hats change, clothes change, home décor.... even website styles change. So it's time for a change. Time to go shopping!! We'll get some lovely new dresses....er, pictures, grab lots of the latest colors and fonts, and mix things up. A new wardrobe always lifts one's spirits! An update to our website will dress up our public image, increase our appeal, highlight our unique amenities, and make a great first impression with our constituency!

IKEA, who sells home furnishings, has been researching what makes us feel “at home” in a place. They have identified five core emotional needs connected to the home: privacy, security, comfort, ownership and belonging.

([https://lifeathome.ikea.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/](https://lifeathome.ikea.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/LAHR18_Report_in_short.pdf)

LAHR18_Report_in_short.pdf) Eve Brown, our maven of Promotions, suggests we can present ourselves in light of these identified values. 1666 Coffman certainly offers excellent security and ownership. The freedom to remodel and personalize our condos is not available to the same extent in other complexes. Comfort and belonging are the true standouts of our community, though, as the social fabric and friendships link people together. The new website attempts to convey these aspect of our association.

The broader Coffman community has been weighing in on the design, layout and content of the new site. Committees have been meeting with Cathy Gierke, who is doing the new design, to review content, and share ideas. The Newsletter committee met and looked at ways to present our rich menu of activities. The Social committee and Dining committee have helped to refine the organization and page content. And our Promotions curator, Eve Brown, has guided updates of our Sales information, which needed some updating, and culling of duplicate information. Working with new residents, who recently used the site to learn about Coffman, we identified amenities that consistently drew potential-buyers interest. Among the most highly regarded were the beautiful green spaces surrounding us; our engaged community, music events, lectures and plentiful social activities; and our well-appointed shared spaces such as the dining room, social room, social room balcony, and our grand, expansive library.

Thanks to our talented resident photographers, we have a collection of impactful pictures to highlight our public spaces, and grounds. Photos of individuals will not be on display on the public pages of the site, for privacy reasons. There will, however, be a section of the website that is password protected and accessible only to residents. In the private areas, we may decide to post photos of social events, lists of board and committee members, board minutes, financial reports or other more personal information. The password protected pages are not indexed on the web, and are secure areas for information we may not want to put on public-facing pages.

Another new feature will be the ability to view the calendar of room reservations. Donna has an online calendar where changes will be immediately visible on our website. (This calendar will be in the passworded section of the site.) Reservations can be initiated online, using the online reservations forms, but payments will still be made through the office.

Part of making a great first impression will be the “chunking” of content into smaller, skimmable blocks, with the addition of visual cues (photos, formatting, ...) to highlight main points. Website design has benefitted from studies of how we use websites. It tells us that readers skim, they do not read, and they depend on visual cues to focus their attention on important content. Readers spend an average of 25 seconds on a web page, plus 4.4 seconds for every 100 additional words. Content needs to be succinct and visually appealing to maximize efficacy. (<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-little-do-users-read/>)

A go-live date has not been determined for the new website. It continues to be shaped and edited, but it is nearing its final form. Please email Cathy at leegi001@umn.edu with suggestions or questions. Are there other things that should be included on the new site, that we have not had previously?