

Accessible Document Standards

Terms of Reference

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), all documents and materials submitted to the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury that may be made publicly available—*as determined by the Town in its sole discretion*—must meet the following accessibility requirements:

APPLICABLE STANDARDS

All public-facing digital content must conform to the following accessibility standards:

- At minimum, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA as required under the AODA, and
- Preferably WCAG 2.2 Level AA, where feasible, to support broader accessibility and future compliance.
- PDF/Universal Accessibility (PDF/UA) standard for PDF documents.

FILE FORMATS

Documents must be submitted in accessible formats, including:

- Accessible Microsoft Word (.docx) or PowerPoint (.pptx) files using built-in styles, and/or
- Tagged PDF documents (.pdf) that meet PDF/UA standards.

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered accessible, submitted documents must include, but are not limited to, the following features:

- Proper tagging and logical structure in PDF documents
- Use of built-in heading styles in Word and PowerPoint to indicate hierarchy
- Descriptive alternative text for all images, charts, diagrams, and other visual elements
- Meaningful hyperlink text (e.g., “View the plan summary” rather than “Click here”)
- High colour contrast between text and background (compliant with WCAG 2.2 AA contrast ratios)
- Legible fonts, such as sans-serif fonts, minimum 12pt, with appropriate line spacing
- Use of real text instead of images of text (except where essential)
- Avoidance of scanned-only or image-only documents unless fully OCR’d and tagged
- Logical reading order that matches the visual layout, including for multi-column layouts or tables
- Properly defined table headers in Word and PDF formats
- Descriptive slide titles in PowerPoint files to support screen reader navigation
- Language settings correctly defined in the file’s document properties
- No use of flashing or blinking content

Accessible Document Standards

Terms of Reference

COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION

To demonstrate compliance, one of the following must be submitted with all public-facing materials:

- A PAC 2024 report (or newer) indicating compliance with PDF/UA and WCAG 2.0,
- A CommonLook report, or
- An equivalent accessibility verification report.

SUBMISSION REVIEW

Documents that do not meet the above accessibility standards may be:

- Returned to the submitter for revision, or
- Withheld from publication at the Town's sole discretion.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE THERE?

- Any comments and questions related to these standards and guidelines, please contact accessibility@townofbwg.com
- [Integrated Accessibility Standard O. Reg. 191/11](#) under the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005.
- [Microsoft Accessibility Video Training](#)
Information here is accessible with captions and transcripts available. You can further browse introductory videos for email, PowerPoint, excel and word documents.
- [WCAG 2.0 Quick Reference Guide](#): For the basics in web accessibility standards and guidelines that are backwards compatible from WCAG 2.1.

About these Terms of Reference:

These Terms of Reference were developed by the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

Notes:

If the proposed development is revised, the study/report shall reflect the revisions by an updated report or letter from the author indicating the changes and whether the recommendations and conclusions are the same (Note: this is subject to the extent of the revisions).

A peer review may be required.

If the submitted study is incomplete, is authored by an unqualified individual or does not contain adequate analysis, the applications will be considered incomplete and may be returned to the applicant.