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Web Standards and Style Guide

The Web Standards & Design Group (aka “group”) of the Town of Oakland Florida (aka “Town”) created this style guide as a tool to improve the user experience of the Town Internet (oaklandfl.gov) website. The style guide describes what needs to be done to maintain and grow the website.

The group’s intent is to maintain a website that:

- Contains correct, current information.
- Is user-friendly, both for the public and internal users. The group will accomplish this by:
 - Maintaining site consistency
 - Using sourced documents to guide decisions
 - Ensure that need drives technology on the website
- Contains accessible content by:
 - Meeting ADA accessibility standards, specifically WCAG 2.0, Level AA
 - For more detailed information, see the ADA Compliance section of this document.
 - Addressing the digital divide, making our website accessible regardless of the equipment being used.
- Has a modern look, feel and functionality
- Promotes the Town of Oakland
- Is responsive to the public’s needs

Current practice

With the utilization of CivicPlus for the website platform, the responsibility to create and maintain content on the website is now decentralized. This means that there are multiple employees contributing content. Employees can now update information more quickly and with additional tools, can better engage with their audience. However, because so many people are posting content to these sites, online content can look and be organized in dramatically different ways from page to page. Without a consistent look and feel, the user will have difficulty finding the information they need. This style guide will help you present your content in a way that ensures consistency throughout the sites.

When should I use this guide?

You should use this guide whenever you are creating new pages or making significant changes to content.

Specific Elements to Consider

In order to achieve the group's vision for the Town's site(s) we must deliver clear, concise, well-formatted content. Therefore, the Town has adopted the following best practices to help users develop and maintain content. This guide was created using some of the foremost authorities in website usability as references, as well as expertise from our own employees.

Capitalization

- The words “city”, “county”, or “town” (also borough, village, district, etc.) are never capitalized unless they are stated in that entity's proper name (ex: the “Town of Oakland” vs. the city. The same rule applies to “state.”
- Do not use all caps to emphasize an important point. Capitalizing all the letters in a word has been found to decrease a reader's ability to quickly discern what the word is. If you need to emphasize a piece of content, use bolding instead.

Numerals & Percentages

- Write all numbers as figures so that users scanning for measurements, limits, data, etc., can easily find them. For example: “Please submit 3 copies of the form,” not “please submit three copies of the form.”
- The percent symbol (%) should be used instead of the word “percent” in all content for easy readability.
- Numbers in a table should be right aligned unless the right alignment makes it difficult for users to read other data within the table (see also: Tables).

Grammar & Tone

- Content copy should be grammatically correct and written in clear, concise sentences.
- The average U.S. citizen reads best at an 8th or 9th grade level, so consider simplifying your content. You can use the Flesch-Kinkaid reader in Microsoft Word to determine the current level of difficulty of any piece of content.
- Avoid using multiple punctuation marks in a row such as “wow!” instead of “wow!!!!” or “what?” instead of “what???” Exclamation points should be used sparingly.
- Know your audience. Some content is meant to engage. Some content is meant to inform or educate. Some content must simply direct users to contact a real person. Not all content is intended to do everything, and that is ok. Make sure that you are keeping your audience and the purpose of the content in mind when either writing or formatting content for the website.
- It is okay to write in a more conversational tone when writing for the web. However, slang and jargon should still be avoided.
- Avoid writing in the passive voice. The active voice is more engaging and direct.
 - Example: “Action on the bill is being considered by the Board” is passive voice.
“The Board is considering taking action on the bill” is active voice.
- Do not use run-on or fragment sentences.
- Be consistent with your sentence tense throughout the entire page.

Contact Information Standards

- The home page for each department and division should have contact information on the right-hand side of the page. This information should allow a person to get in contact with a main desk where their specific request can be routed.
- Formatting for contact information:
 - 8 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - Ph: xxx-xxx-xxxx
 - Fx: xxx-xxx-xxxx
 - Street Modifiers – Abbreviate St., Ave., and Blvd. Spell out all other identifiers.
 - Street Numbers – Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used in street names; use figures for 10th and above: 7 Fifth Ave., 100 21st St.

Staff Directory

Town of Oakland users should display contact information in the Staff Directory module. This allows for department and staff information to be maintained and updated from a single location. An example for the suggested format is included to the right.

Info Advanced

The Info Advanced module is used to display the same content on multiple pages. If it is necessary to post the same information on multiple pages, this module should be used since the content can be updated from a single location.

Addresses within Text

- There is no break between a lead-in sentence or subhead and the address block below it. Use an address block when an address is listed within page content.
- If the address has a P.O. Box but the same zip code as the physical address, the P.O. Box info can be listed on the second line of the address.
- If you have a separate physical and mailing address, list the physical address info in a separate block from the mailing address to enable users to easily highlight and search for directions. (See example)
- Room, floor, suite, etc. is listed out on the second line of an address block. If there is also a P.O. Box in the address, the floor, suite, etc. – would still be listed above the P.O. Box.
- Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used in street names; use figures for 10th and above: 7 Fifth Ave., 100 21st St.

Staff Directory Example

Jane Doe

Department Director

Email

Ph: 555-555-5555

Physical Address

12345 ABC Lane

Suite 1

Whoville, FL 33333

[View Map](#)

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 123

Whatville, FL 33334

Email

Ph: 555-555-5555

Fax: 555-555-5555

Emergency: 911

Hours

(Excluding Holidays)

Monday - Friday

8 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

[Staff Directory](#)

Headings & Page Titles

- Page titles should be clear and concise and accurately describe what the page is about, because this appears in the top of your browser and is the first thing read by a screen reader. Ex: “Content Policy Documents” is much clearer than just “Documents.”
- Headings should be used to break up content and should be clear and concise to provide the user guidance as to what information is in the text below it.
- Headings and page titles should utilize the ampersand (&) to save space.
- Headings should be created with title case.
- You can use several levels of headings: Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. so assistive technologies can render them as headings. You should only use Heading 2 to separate information that is related to the Heading 1 topic. Heading 2 should always follow Heading 1 when used.

Links

- Don’t replicate content, use links instead. You can link to content within the site on the same topic to avoid having to duplicate any content.
- Be the authority when you can, but don’t create content you are not the authority on.
 - Want to educate citizens on disaster relief and emergency management using the same tools that FEMA uses? Great! Link to the FEMA website, don’t replicate their information. This will allow our citizens to easily access information directly from the authority on the topic and keep you from having to update content.
- Look for opportunities to link to related content, especially using keywords – if the content is about the flu vaccine, link to the words “H1N1 Flu Vaccine.”
- Do not convey a link by only changing the color. Also underline the link.
- Do not include the URL itself on the page – hyperlink text when possible. An exception is when you expect a document to be printed out and use largely off-line.
- Copy the link URL directly from your Web browser and not from an email message in Outlook. This will lead to broken links.
- Check URLs to make sure they are working after you publish the page.
- **ADA TIP:** Avoid using the terms like “click here” as they don’t indicate to the user where the link is going to take them. They also hinder the usability of the site for someone utilizing a screen reader. Instead, link to words that indicate what is found at the link. (Ex: Instead of “to view the training document click here” try “View the training document.”)

Tables

- Do not use tables to space content or pictures on the page.
- If the information you are displaying in a table doesn’t consistently fit under the headers for that table, that information should not be displayed in a table.
- Tables should display using the “Alternate Rows” color setting (auto-table class setting).
- Figures should be right aligned in tables unless right aligning causes other information in the table to be difficult to read.
- **ADA TIP:** All columns and rows must have headings. Try not to merge rows and columns as it complicates navigation for assistive technology users.
- **ADA TIP:** Do not leave any cells blank, put N/A in the cell instead.

Graphics

- Images inside the content area should be no wider than 300 px
- Image resolution should be 300 dpi (dots per inch)
- Use an approved photo release form whenever using a photo that displays a person's face.
- In general, avoid posting pictures of minors. The town has approved photo release forms you can use for these cases, but it is often more difficult to get these forms filled out and signed properly.
- Be aware of copyright laws when posting pictures (see: "Copyrighted Materials" in this guide).
- Images used on the site should enhance the content on the page.
- For more than two images per page, consider utilizing a slideshow instead of stagnant images.
- If there are many photos for a page, or if users would benefit from being able to slowly look at them, place pictures in the Photo Gallery instead of on the page or in a slideshow.
- **ADA TIP:** Images require a descriptive alt text for users with screen readers. File names and single words do not make usable alt text entries. It is important to note that alternative text reflects the purpose of the image and not necessarily what the image is of. Try "black and white police cruiser with lights on" instead of "cop car," or "young girl participates in recreation program" instead of "little girl."
- **ADA TIP:** Avoid using images of text. This means that you should never write or scan text into an image editing program and save it as an image. No screen reader technology can read images of text, because you cannot highlight text within an image and have it read aloud. Images of text also tend to pixelate and become blurry upon magnification, making them difficult to read for those with other visual and cognitive impairments.
- **ADA TIP:** If an image is used solely for decorative purposes, such as creating ambiance or giving visual context, then it should have "null" alternative text. You may see this in CivicPlus as alt = "".

Audio & Video

- When audio and video files are published on a web page, you must also provide an alternative format, captions, and audio descriptions.
- It is important to ensure that all buttons and navigation in the player can be used both with a computer mouse and from the keyboard alone. At the same time, buttons and navigation require text descriptions to help screen readers.
- For a video, you will need to add captions and to enter a dedicated track for audio description.
 - If the content is solely visual or only audio, then a text version is an accepted alternative on both levels.
- If a passage of audio starts automatically, the user should be able to pause, stop, or control the sound volume.

Menus & Navigation

- Mega menus should be used instead of drop-down menus as mega menus are easier to physically navigate than the typical "tree branch" structure of drop-down menus.

- Two-tier mega menus should be used to allow the user to see deeper into the navigation without having to click into something that may or may not take them where they want to go.
- Mega menus should be built out as evenly and thoroughly as possible. A mega menu with only two items is not highly usable.
- Menu items and navigation throughout the site should be listed in alphabetical order to make information easier to find.
- All content on a web page should be navigable both with a computer mouse and from the keyboard alone. This applies to forms, buttons, links, and more.
- Some users are unable to use a computer mouse and instead use the keyboard to navigate by tabbing through content on a web page. Because these users must always be able to see where they are located on the page, the indicator should always be visually evident.
- Provide the option of skipping blocks of repeated content in areas such as global and local menus and help functions.
- If some sort of time limit is present on pages, such as a time out, the user must be able to change the limit either by adjusting, extending, or disabling it.

Bulleted Lists

- Long lists within text should be broken out into bulleted lists so that they can be easily scanned.
- Alphabetize list items with fewer than three words.
- Avoid over-bulleted.
- The first letter of each item in a bulleted list should be capitalized.
- There should be no space above bulleted lists.
- There should be a break between the bottom of a bulleted list and the next text.
- Bullets should go, at the most, two levels deep.
- Do not mix sentence fragments and full sentences in one bulleted list. For consistency, all bullets in each bulleted list should contain the same format (and verb tense).

Breaking up Content

- Content should be broken up into small, easily readable chunks. As a rule, the text beneath each header should not contain more than 2 or 3 short paragraphs and each short paragraph should not contain more than 2 or 3 sentences.
- Subheads encourage users to keep scrolling to find information, so make sure that each new topic has a header. (See also: Headers and Page Titles)
- Completely separate topics should be housed on separate pages. While users will scroll longer pages to scan similar information, it can be very frustrating to scroll through information of completely unrelated topics, so that information should be housed separately.

When to Use PDFs

- Convert any Word or Excel files to PDF so that any user can access the information. Adobe Acrobat is a free download that any user can obtain to read documents, while other file types, such as Microsoft: Word, require expensive software to access.
- Open all PDF files in a new window.
- Indicate links that go to PDF files by including (PDF) behind the file name as a part of the link.

- Create PDF copies of the content that we recommend should also be available to print and provide it in addition to the page content.
- **ADA TIP:** There are some documents on our website and Intranet that citizens must use in order to access town services. These documents, especially PDF documents, need to be machine readable and comply with WCAG 2.0, Level AA standards.

Boards & Commissions

Boards & Commissions pages should be linked from the [Boards, Commissions, and Committees](#) page. Please work with the Town Clerk to make changes to the listing on this page.

When creating or updating a board page, be as consistent as possible when displaying its information by:

- Organizing content in the same order from board to board
- Including all pertinent information about how to join or who to contact
- Linking to any applicable documents such as agendas and minutes on the board page

Pages Widget

The Pages Widget is used to create menu pages that display a listing of the subpages for a parent page and their page descriptions. These pages help provide structure and organization to the navigation. They should be used in conjunction with other content to make a more robust landing page. However, it is not recommended this be the **only** content on a main department landing page. Instead, feature relevant and actionable content whenever possible.

Font Styles

- Underlining should only be used for hyperlinks. Underlining for emphasis can confuse users who might think they can click on that area of the screen.
- Avoid using all caps for anything but acronyms. If you need to emphasize something, use bold instead. Using all caps makes the words more difficult to read.
- Avoid italics, which are hard to read online. Use bold instead.
- Only use Heading1 and Heading2 font on headings.
- Do not center text: centered text is hard to read. Imagine having to read a book where all the text was centered.
- The background color and text color should be in sufficient contrast to one another, in order to allow everyone to read text clearly.
- Text should be able to be resized up to 200% without degrading quality/understandability.
- If moving information from another source to our website, make sure to paste all items in plain text by using the tool in the Editor widget. This will clear any formatting or text class information from the previous source that may be left on text.
- Avoid using strikethrough (e.g. Closed roads: ~~Broadway St~~, Clark St.). Many screen readers do not acknowledge that the text is crossed out.

Page Descriptions

- Page descriptions should be completed for every page. This will help search engines to better determine what pages to bring up as the results for a search. They also help

guide users to the correct information by providing better details on what can be found on any page.

- Page descriptions should accurately describe the content on the page, including any major topics that are covered.
- Page descriptions are displayed below page titles when using the Pages Widget.

Documents

File size: In general, try to break up large files in to smaller files and rely on sound organization when displaying files. If you must store a large document, let the user know the file size and type so they can consider whether they want to spend the time to download (Response Times: The Three Important Limits, Nielsen).

Organization: It is vital that the documents are organized and displayed in ways that make sense to the user. All documents should be named with the document title or other name that clearly states what the document is. To ensure users can find similar documents, use an *organization scheme* when saving and displaying files (Classification schemes, and when to use them, Spencer 2010).

Agenda Center: The Agenda Center should be used to house agendas and complimenting minutes and packets. They should be in order by document date, starting with the most recent.

Archive Center: The Archive Center should house: Items such as newsletters, police reports, press releases, etc. that are frequently published and should be sorted by date, documents that are updated frequently such as budgets, financial reports, etc.

Document Center: The Document Center should house all other supporting documents. All documents in the Document Center should be named with the document title or other name that clearly states what the document is.

Form Center

Placeholder text that indicates the purpose of a form field is not sufficient instruction for users. To make sure users can identify and use a form or search field, explicitly add text to the field through a label.

Be sure all forms are navigable by mouse and keyboard.

The following types of forms work best in the Form Center:

- Contact Us forms or other simple requests
- Forms consisting of mostly short answer, multiple choice, or long answer questions
- Forms that can be emailed to a specific person or accessed by a specific person for processing
- Forms that don't require an official signature or notary.

The following types of forms don't work as well in the Form Center:

- Forms containing a lot of text-based instructions or introductions
- Forms that require attachments that the client has indicated cannot be copied
- Forms that require an official signature or notary

The Form Center is not a secured way of collecting information, meaning that CivicPlus cannot guarantee the security of the information after being collected through the Form Center. As such, CivicPlus does not develop forms that contain specific kinds of identifying information and does not recommend you create such forms via the Form Center. CivicPlus recommends any form with potentially identifying information remain as is or be turned into a PDF that must be printed and mailed or brought in for submission. Identifying information includes:

- Social Security numbers
- Driver's license numbers
- Tax ID numbers
- W2 or other tax documentation or information
- Birth certificate copies
- Account numbers

File Structure

- The organization of the Document Center and Forms Center should reflect the department organizational structure.
- File names within the document center and forms center should clearly identify the document. For example: Instead of "Form 1293" use "Social Media Request Form." File names should be concise however our content management system allows for longer file names if needed.
- Include a description of documents and forms you store. This will allow users to more easily identify documents when navigating through the document and forms center.

Facilities

The Facilities module best houses the following types of information:

- Parks
- Rentable city/town facilities
- Trails
- Pools
- Community centers and meeting places
- All facility amenities should be populated as "features" within the Facilities module. If the amenities are not populated within the features section in the Facilities module, citizens will be unable to correctly utilize reservations and will be unable to search or filter for facilities by amenity.
- Use a specific address and the map location feature whenever possible.
- Format information in the editor box within the Facilities module just as you would with page content.
- CivicPlus does not recommend use of the Facilities module to house business information. The Resource Directory is designed to display information about local businesses.

FAQs

- All FAQs should be housed within the FAQ module to best utilize the CivicPlus GCMS™.
- Each department is encouraged to provide citizens with answers to a useful set of FAQs.
- If there are more FAQs than can practically be displayed within the module widget on a page, link a subpage directly to that FAQs category so that all the FAQs can be quickly and easily found.
- FAQs should be formatted in a way that makes the answer immediately clear but is not too abrupt. (See FAQ example).

FAQ Example

Q: Can I pay my bill online?

Poor answer: Yes

Poor answer: The system allows you to pay your bill online.

Best answer: Yes, please visit our [Online Payments page](#) to make a payment

Quick Links

Category titles should be intuitively named using titles that make sense on their own and out of the context of any surrounding text, because they may be viewed from the main Quick Link module landing page and will need to make sense standing on their own.

- Quick links should be intuitively named. Ask these questions:
 - Does the name of the link make sense out of context?
 - Is it clear where this link is going to take a citizen?
- Link titles should be in title case.

Third-Party Content

- When linking to places outside the town Intranet, try to link only to other government agencies, non-profits, community organizations and businesses with whom the town contracts. Commercial organizations often solicit the town to include their link or information on the town's website. In general, this should be avoided.
- Avoid duplicating content. See: Links.

Copyrighted Materials/Fair Use/Intellectual Property

- All employees are prohibited from copying materials not specifically allowed by copyright law, "Fair Use" guidelines, licenses or contractual agreements or the permission of the copyright proprietor. Web pages must include a statement of copyright when appropriate and indicate that permission has been secured when including copyrighted materials and that such publication is in accordance with the "Fair Use" provision of the copyright law.
- Fair use provisions allow for copyrighted material to be used for the purpose of criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship or research. However, information on a website may not be covered by these provisions because they could be widely disseminated because they are available on the Internet. Therefore, you should get permission of the copyright holder before posting copyrighted information.
- Unless otherwise noted, always assume that work (including photographs, text, music and graphics) on the Internet is copyrighted. It is NOT necessary that the copyright symbol (©) be displayed for the work to be protected by copyright laws.
- Proper attribution must always be given per the organization or the individual.

- Obtaining permission from the copyright holder should occur during the developmental process of the project, rather than waiting to seek permission upon completion of the project.
- Unauthorized electronic transmission of copyrighted materials is illegal.
- Any permission obtained from a copyright holder for text, pictures, graphics, music or other copyrighted material should be given to your department's content owner.

ADA Compliance

The Town of Oakland is committed to closely working with our vendor – CivicPlus – to provide and maintain accessibility to our website for all citizens. We use site scanning technology from other vendors – AudioEye and Siteimprove – to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.0 AA. AudioEye also provides accessibility tools and services directly on the public site.

The Intranet holds a collection of web content accessibility information and resources for town employees on the Section 508 Compliance page. The Web Standards and Style Guide and other resources were created to assist town employees who provide content updates to stay in compliance.

From CivicPlus: “As local governments strive to meet the needs of all citizens; accessibility compliance is a topic that can’t be ignored. Disabilities can affect any age group limiting their ability to get information, learn, work, and communicate online. As an industry leader with more than 2,000 local government clients, accessibility compliance is a topic we take seriously. We provide highly compliant sites based on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 A and AA, which encompass and surpass Section 508.

For more specific details on WCAG 2.0, please refer to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Recommendations or World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) How to Meet WCAG 2.0 Quick Reference.

For an explanation and breakdown of the WCAG 2.0 A & AA Structure, see the CivicPlus document: CivicAccessibility – Website Accessibility Overview and Guidelines.

CivicPlus has identified the top 10 content development tips for compliance and usability as stated below:

- 1) **Users need to know where they’re going.** When naming items (pages, documents, categories, etc.) on your website remember that naming is essential to understanding. You should name items in a way that describe their topic or purpose. Aim for specific instead of broad naming conventions.
- 2) **Break up page sections/topics with headings.** When a user arrives on a page, they scan for the information they need. Use Subhead1 and Subhead2 class headings to break up your content and show hierarchy so it is easily scanned.
- 3) **The purpose of links can be determined in context.** Links are how users get from place to place on your site. It is important that they be able to determine where a link goes without reading all of the text near the link. This concept applies to both the average user and users with assistive technologies.

- 4) **Only use tables when the information fits under the header cells appropriately (do not use for layout purposes).** Screen readers are particular about tables. In order to provide your users with screen readers the correct information, you must make sure that the content within every cell is directly related to the heading for that cell and that each column does have a heading.
- 5) **Do not depend on only color to relay information.** Color should never be the sole indicator for a user as to what text is important. Color is problematic for both screen readers and users with color blindness.
- 6) **Do not use symbols or abbreviations that will not translate well (symbols such as " for inches).** Screen readers have limitations regarding what they can read or how the symbols or abbreviations are translated.
- 7) **Know your audience. Do not use jargon and think of the average reading level of the user.** The internet is the ultimate source of information. Users from all backgrounds and levels of education need to be able to find information on your site.
- 8) **Use descriptive alt text for images or provide a link to a text description adjacent to an image or other non-text content.** Screen readers rely on alternative text in order to give your visually impaired users the same experience as your users that do not require assistive technology.
- 9) **Use consistent navigation techniques and placement of other important items, such as contact information.** When users find a piece of information in an area of your site, they are going to look in that same location the next time they need to find similar information. Using consistent navigation and placement of important information will help your users find what they need faster.
- 10) **Do not use flashing elements, such as images, text, or banners.** Flashing lights can be a huge medical problem for those with seizure disorders and can inhibit the ability of light sensitive individuals to see other page content. Flashing elements should always be completely avoided.

Additional Microsoft Word Tips

Headings

- When creating a document, it's important to make sure that headings are created which allow the document to become more usable and accessible. It also provides individuals a way to navigate through the document.

Accessibility Checker

- To check if your document is accessible, you going to go to "File", then the "Check for Issues" button then "Check Accessibility". Leave this tool enabled as you create the document as it will tell you where to find accessibility issues and how to resolve them.
 - While it is important to use this tool to make sure the document is accessible, we need to consider everything about the document. We need to manually check our heading to make sure they make sense. You can do this by going to "View" in the ribbon toolbar then "Navigation Pane" in the "Show" section. This allows you to easily view and navigate the documents by seeing the headings.

Paragraph and Style Features & Tables (Best Practices)

- **Document Spacing** - Instead of using the enter key or tab to create spaces in our document, we'll need to use the paragraph section pop-out and add line spacing page breaks. If we don't use this feature, a screen reading application could prematurely determine that a section of a document is blank and report to the user that the document is complete.
- **Tables** - When adding tables using the "Insert" tab, **do not** use the "Draw Table" option. Instead, manually specify the number of columns and rows that the table will have. Instead of leaving a field in a table blank, it is best practice to type the word "blank". For cosmetic purposes, we can highlight the word and then blend it into the background so that the text color is the same color as the background.
 - To make sure that the category or main row in a table is featured in all documents (instead of having to scroll up to the original page to look at the headings if a table spans more than one page), highlight the main heading row and right click on the **"plus"** sign that appears in the top left hand corner of a table. Then click on **"Table Properties"**, go to the **"Row"** tab, and then select **"Repeat as header row at the top of each page"** in the **"Options"** section.
 - Alternate text also needs to be added to a table so that screen readers can recognize what it is. To do this, use the **"AltText"** tab in the same properties window and add a description (if you want to add a title, that's optional). Screen reading applications won't recognize the title, just descriptions.
 - To title/label a table, we're going to right click on the same plus sign and click on the **"Insert caption"** option. Then we're going to enter the title (it could be above or below the table, wherever you like) and then from there you can edit it.
- **Columns** – If you wish to present content in columns, there is a built-in "Columns" feature most often available directly through the top menu. Avoid using the tab key to move content in a position that looks like columns. This method of creating columns is not only more difficult, but also makes the reading order very poor for assistive technologies.
- **Reading Order** – A document's reading order can vary depending on software version and conversion type. If the document originates in MS Word it will often have a logical structure. However, in some case, images are prioritized last. This means if an image with alternative text conveys information and its position in the reading order doesn't make sense, it should be moved to the correct position in the sequence. This is also possible through remediation tools.
- **Bookmarks** – You can create bookmarks in two ways:
 - Ticking a box in the "Options" menu when saving the document as a PDF. This option bookmarks the headings in the document.
 - Using a remediation tool after the document has been converted to a PDF.
- **Saving as an Accessible PDF** – When the document is complete, you're going to then save it as a PDF so that all of the accessibility features transfer over. To do this, go to **"File"**, then select **"PDF"** as the file type, and then click on the **"More options..."** link below the file type drop down. Select **"Options"** again when the save Window appears and make sure the following options are checked:
 - Page Range is set to "All"
 - Publish what is set to "Document"
 - Include non-printing information is set to "Document Properties" and "Document structure tags for accessibility"

- PDF options make sure that Bitmap text when fonts may not be embedded is selected

Additional Adobe Acrobat Tips for PDFs

- **Accessibility Tool** - For documents that cannot be formatted in Word, then the Accessibility Tool within Adobe Acrobat Pro needs to be used. To check if a PDF document is accessible, go to the “**Tools**” tab (in Acrobat DC), and then “**Accessibility**”. This tool scans the document and guides you to add alternative text, descriptions, captions, and tags.
- **Add Document Properties** – Go to File>Properties, Select “Description” tab
 - In “Description” tab: Add Title, add Author
 - In “Initial View” tab: Under “Window Options”, select “Document Title”
 - In “Advanced” tab: Under “Reading Options”, select “English”
- **Create Tags in Document** – If the document has been tagged, set Tab Order to follow document structure.
 - If the document has not been tagged –
 - Auto Tag Document
 - Add Tags Manually – Open the Tags Pane to view, reorder, rename, modify, delete, create tags (or use the TouchUp Reading Order Tool)
 - Review Tag Structure – Open the Tags Pane to see tagged elements and tag properties.
- **Add Alternative Text to Images** – Open the Touch Up Reading Order Tool, locate the tagged image, right click and select “Edit Alternate Text” or use the “Set Alternate Text” tool in the Accessibility tool panel.
- **Check Reading Order** – Review the Reading Order of the Tags. To modify the Reading Order, in the Order panel: Drag to reorder the elements in the displayed tree structure. It is extremely important to ensure there is a sensible reading order.
- **Bookmarks** – Provide bookmarks based on document headings. This gives users the ability to navigate the PDF using bookmarked headings, rather than having to read through the entire document to find what they need.



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Web Style Guide – Quick Reference Sheet

Visuals

- Avoid clipart
- Use Alt Text. Always.
 - Try “Softball player holding red glove” instead of “Girl.”
- Choose fonts for readability in context.
- Consider size, sequence
- Emphasize effectively
- Use contrast, not just color

Photographs

- Take photos
- Phone photos are fine, but take several
- Come in tight on subjects
- Pose groups creatively
- Go outside
- Send releases when submitting photos; get releases every time.
- Beware copyright violations.

AP Style

Consult the AP Style Guide

- Dates: Jan. 25, Dec. 3, December 2018
- Times: 1 to 4 p.m., 1:35 p.m., noon
- Addresses: 123 First Street
 - Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used in street names; use figures for 10th and above: 7 Fifth Ave., 100 21st St.
- Phone numbers: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Digital standards

- Keep it relevant to the people we serve; don't use web pages as a storage repository.
- Put it on a page, not a PDF
- Minimize clicks: Least number of clicks, small file sizes.
- Break it up: Use headings, bullets and white space
- Strive for compliance: Screen reader compliant
- Offer media alternatives: Provide transcripts for any audio or video content
- Link, don't repeat: Don't duplicate content, link to sources
- Call it what it is: Name links intuitively
- Organization: Follow department structure