Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Standards and Guidelines

2022

Content

The Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Standards and Guidelines are not all encompassing and there is acknowledgement that there are some topics that are not covered. We advise that this Guide be used in conjunction with the document training provided as well as the resource library that will be made available to staff on CityNet beginning in May 2022.

Introduction

The [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)[1] (AODA) was enacted in 2005 with the objective to create an accessible Ontario for all by January 1, 2025. Under the *AODA* five standards were developed to remove and prevent barriers in different areas. [The Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)[2] (IASR) houses these standards including Information and Communications. This Standard outlines requirements to remove barriers in the areas of Information and Communications, giving people with disabilities access to more of the information all citizens depend on.

The City of Brantford recognizes the importance of providing easily accessible information and communication in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that information and communication is presented to the public in accessible formats. This document outlines the guidelines and standards required to create accessible Word and PDF documents and the steps by which Corporate Communications and the City's Accessibility Coordinator will work with individual departments to facilitate the process of creating accessible documents and providing customized formats upon request in a timely manner.

Purpose

The *AODA* requires that documents on the website(s) be accessible and that the City provides accessible formats of all other documents for people with disabilities upon request. Implementing these Accessibility Standards and Guidelines will facilitate inclusiveness and enhance access to municipal goods, services and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. These Standards and Guidelines aim to assist in the basic production conversion and website ready, user-friendly documents for all customers and staff, including people with disabilities. Some documents are more complex and may require further formatting.

City of Brantford's Statement of Commitment

The City of Brantford is committed to providing an accessible environment in which residents, visitors and employees have equitable access to municipal programs, services and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of each

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[1] The AODA can be viewed at https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11
[2] The IASR can be viewed at https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK9

individual. The municipality is dedicated to ensuring that all legislated obligations under the *AODA* are met and that compliance with these standards is maintained.

What Does It Mean To Make Information Accessible?

Making information accessible means using plain language and using proper formatting to allow the greatest number of users to access the information being provided.

When documents are created, authors should think about what might help a user who has low vision, hearing loss or a learning disability to understand what is being communicated.

To make your existing information more accessible, create it in a conversion ready format. Having conversion ready formats will save time and expense and may even reduce the number of alternative format requests. Documents formatted in this manner assist, individuals who rely on assistive technology interact with the information independently.

Accessible Technologies

Some people with disabilities use assistive technology, such as screen readers, Braille displays, or a modified keyboard or mouse to access information in documents using their computers. Screen readers and text to speech tools help a person who may be blind, have low vision, or have a developmental or learning disability to navigate a computer screen. These tools read the information on the screen out loud to the person using it.

Alternate Formats and Communication Supports

As per the City of Brantford Accessibility Policy and Health and Safety Standard-053 the City will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports and upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs by consulting with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. Examples of communications supports include videos with closed captioning, descriptive audio, providing documents with larger text or in Braille, a meeting in person or over the phone to explain the information clearly or relay of information through the use of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter.

Accessible Document Compliance

There are various standards for accessible documents.

Offline information (information not posted to a City website)

The City will provide offline information in an accessible format upon request, in a timely manner, and at a cost no more than the regular price. Offline information produced by the City will meet the checkpoints listed in this Guide to Accessible Documents.

Online information (information posted to a City website)

Online information will generally be available on a City website in HTML format. Where online information is more suitable in a document format, the information will be available as a PDF.

Online PDF documents will meet the checkpoints listed in this guide and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines[3], also known as WCAG 2.0. They will include features such as proper tags, correct tab and reading order, bookmarks, advanced table attributes and document metadata such as document title, subject and author.

The City shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A with goal to increase to Level AA. By January 1, 2018, any new web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA. By January 1, 2021 all web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

Emergency Information

The City shall provide publicly available emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request, as soon as practicable.

Exceptions

The IASR does not apply to the following:

- Product and product labels;
- Unconvertible information or communications; and
- Information that the City does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

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[3] The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines can be found at https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/

If the City determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the City shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications. Information or communications are unconvertible if, it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications; or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

Other Accessible Document Standards

PDF/Universal Accessibility (PDF/UA)[4]: the most robust International Standard for an accessible PDF also referred to as ISO 14289. It offers the highest level of compliance.

The Matterhorn Protocol[5]: 31 checkpoints to test for PDF/UA.

Section 508[6]: information standards of the US federal sector.

Training

In addition to adherence of the City's Accessible Formats and Communications Supports Standards & Guidelines, training of document authors across the organization will be required. Upon completion of the training program, staff (identified by Department Directors) responsible for creating public documents will be required to follow the guidelines outlined herein. To facilitate the training process, accessible formatted templates for common public documents such as RFPs, Agendas, Reports to Council and Public Notices will be provided by the Corporate Communications Department as part of the Communications Toolkit on CityNet.

As has been the City's standard since *AODA* was enacted in 2005, any staff responsible for developing and/or posting web content to the City's digital platforms must receive ongoing training in creating accessible text documents or PDF's and using accessibility check applications in both Word and Adobe.

Making All Documents More Accessible

When developing written communications, elements such as font style, colour contrast and size make a significant impact on the effectiveness of the communication to those with or without disabilities. Several factors need to be taken into consideration to make it easier for people to read and understand the content.

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[4] More information on PDF/UA can be viewed at https://www.pdfa.org/resource/pdfua-in-a-nutshell/
[5] Information on the Matterhorn Protocol can be viewed at https://www.pdfa.org/resource/the-matterhorn-protocol-1-02/
[6] Information on Section 508 can be viewed at https://www.section508.gov/manage/laws-and-policies#508-policy

Readability should be the first step in making administrative documents accessible to everyone.

Do not scan documents – scanned documents are not accessible, and cannot be easily converted.

Accessibility Statement on all Public Documents

In accordance with *IASR* the City is obligated to provide Communications in an accessible format upon request. The City's Accessibility Coordinator and Communications Manager will work closely with the content author to provide the communication in the requested format.

All public documents for the City of Brantford will include the following direction in the beginning pages of a document:

Accessible formats and communication supports available upon request. For more information please contact the City of Brantford Accessibility Coordinator at accessibility@brantford.ca.

Clean and Simple Design

Use distinctive colours, sizes and shapes on the covers of materials to make them easier to tell apart. Don't overlap too many images and/or text elements. Reduce distractions by not using watermarks, clipart graphics, WordArt or complicated background designs that include patterns. Background designs interfere with legibility.

White Space and Spacing

White space plays and important role in your design, as it increases readability of your document. Leading or the space between lines of text should be at least 25 to 30 percent of the point size (the default normal style accommodates for this). This is because many people with partial sight have difficulty finding the beginning of the next line while reading.

It is important that you do not add extra spaces in between lines by using the return key but rather by choosing the line adjustment option in Format menu, paragraph, line spacing within the style you are working in (see modifying a style).
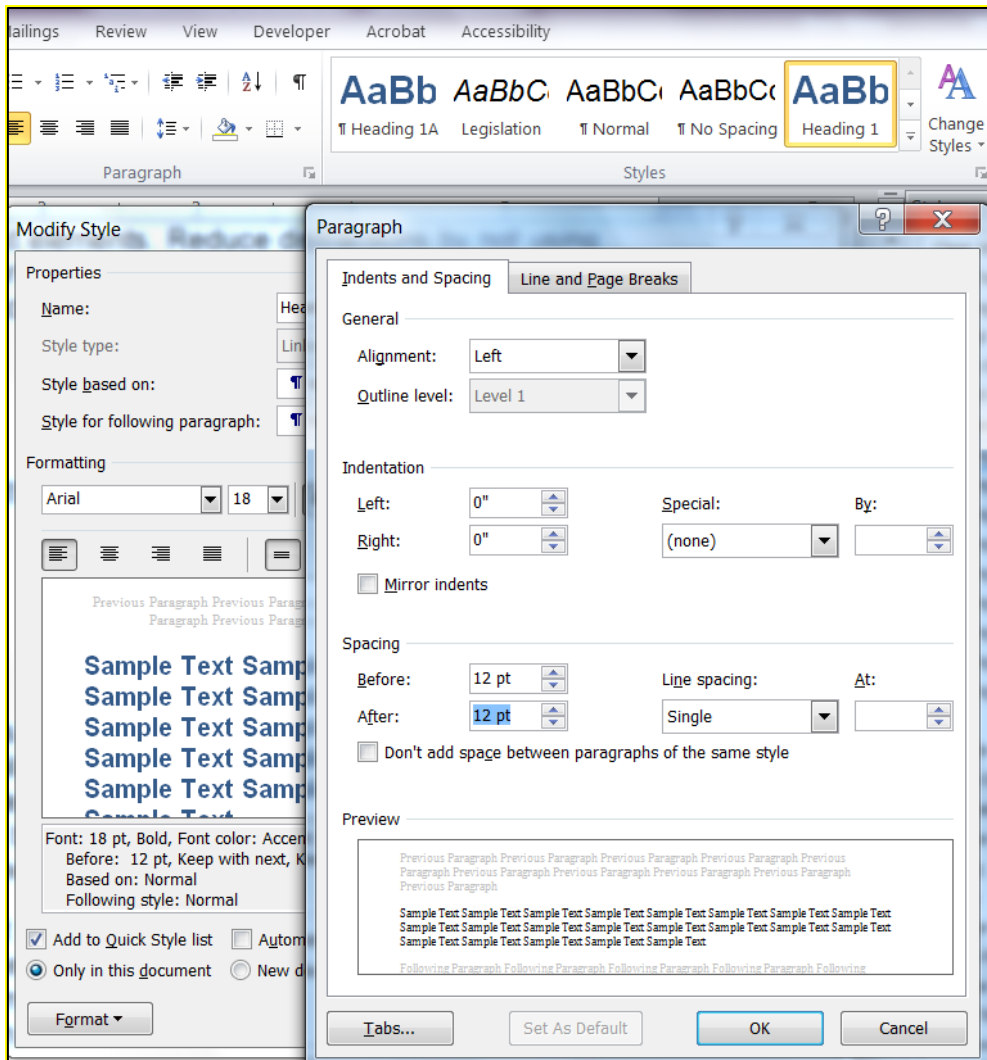
Figure 1 - Line Spacing Adjustment Options within Style Formatting

Similarly, if you need to 'bump' text or an object to the next page, before you reach the end of the page use a page break instead of multiple touches of the enter key.

Tab Stops

If you would like to add space between words in the same row and do not want it to read as columns use tab stops. This is a good way to display qualitative data, as it should not be displayed in a table.

This method allows for a smoother read by assistive technology, as it reads extra spaces, returns and tabs. Between each section there will now be only one tab action.

1. Ensure your top page ruler is visible.
2. If not, select the View Ribbon and check ruler.
3. To add a Tab Stop click on the ruler at desired intervals. 'L' shaped brackets will appear at each location. You can add multiple Tab Stops.
4. To apply the Tab Stops to a section of text, highlight the section before placing the Tab Stops.
5. If text does not yet exist type as normal, using the Tab Key between areas.
6. If text exists, place the cursor at the beginning of the word you wish to move and press the Tab Key.
7. Tab Stops can be adjusted by dragging the 'L' within the ruler.

Use High Contrast

Use a minimum 7:1 colour contrast ratio between the background and foreground.

The better the contrast between the background and the foreground, the more legible the document will be. Black or blue text on a white background provides the best contrast, but is not the only option.

	contrast ratio			contrast ratio
Test 1	21:1		Test 7	7:1
Test 2	21:1		Test 8	4:1 (fail)
Test 3	19.56:1		Test 9	4:1 (fail)
Test 4	15.27:1		Test 10	3.04:1 (fail)
Test 5	14.73:1		Test 11	2.18:1 (fail)
Test 6	10.37:1		Test 12	1.43:1 (fail)

Figure 2 – Colour Contrast Ratios

Ensure colour is not the only means of conveying information. Add shapes or symbols when colour is used to compare information and do use colour alone to make a comparison of information, especially in charts and graphs.

Pay attention to the use of colour in a document to ensure the information makes sense for people who are colour blind and people with low vision. Good use of colour means a document printed in black and white is as meaningful as the colour version.

Online contrast testing tools are also available, which allow you to test colour combinations to determine the exact contrast ratio.

[Snook](#)[7] is an example of a colour contrast testing tool.

Plain Language

Plain language is text that the reader can understand the first time they read it, free of acronyms, jargon and complex sentence structure. Written material is in plain language if the audience can:

- Find what they need quickly.
- Understand what they find.
- Content meets their needs.

Text that is clear and easy to read benefits customers with learning disabilities and low literacy skills. It improves comprehension for all users and allows for easy adaption to other formats. When writing in plain language, authors are reminded to:

- Keep your intended audience in mind.
- Use an active voice.
- Keep sentences brief.
- Use common language.
- Eliminate jargon and unnecessary words.
- Use simple sentence structure and grammar.
- Plain language, consistent with Grade 5 reading level.

Use Standard Navigational Aids

Use navigational aids to organize information and make documents easier to understand. When using Microsoft Office, use the "Styles" tool to quickly apply a set of formatting choices to document headings and body. By using these tools the document can be read and navigated by those relying on assistive technology. The Heading Styles are used as markers when creating the table of contents and makes the document easier to navigate; they also show in the Navigation Pane. These heading styles or markers allow readers to jump between sections of a document allowing them more efficient access to the information, without them the reader would have to read the entire document to find the information they are seeking. As Headings are used as navigational points for all readers it is recommended that Headings be formatted to be bold font to provide visual cues to their importance.

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[7] The colour contrast testing tool, Snook, is available at
www.snook.ca/technical/colour_contrast/colour.html

To open the Navigation Pane to view the structure of the document:

1. Open the View Ribbon.
2. Click Navigation Pane from the Show group.
3. The Navigation Pane will appear on the left hand side of the document showing all of the Headings within the document.

Styles

Styles are formatting instructions, such as 'Title' for the title of your document, 'Heading 1' to indicate the top-level heading. 'Heading 2' to indicate a sub-heading and the 'Normal' style for the body text in your document. If your document contains other levels of sub-headings continue to use different levels of headings. It is recommended authors use no more than four Heading styles, in addition to the Normal style, and other formatting options. While Word has built-in styles, they can be easily modified using the modify option within the Styles menu.
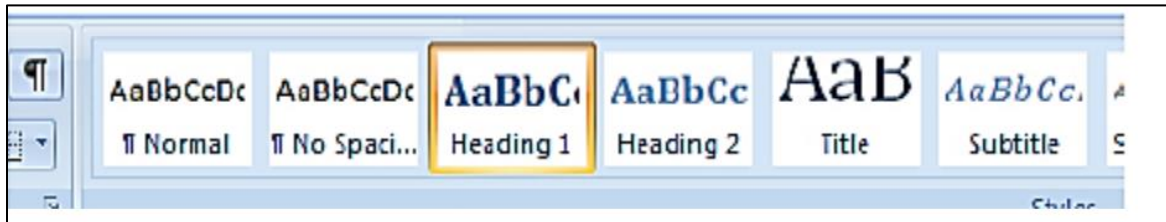

Figure 3 - Style Section of the Microsoft Word Ribbon Menu

When modifying the appearance of your document including font, lists, bold, underline, italics or line spacing do not use the quick access buttons on the left of the home ribbon. An appropriate style should be used as the icons within the ribbon do not result in accessible formatting.

Applying a Style

1. Open the Styles pane by clicking the bottom arrow in the Styles group on the Home Ribbon
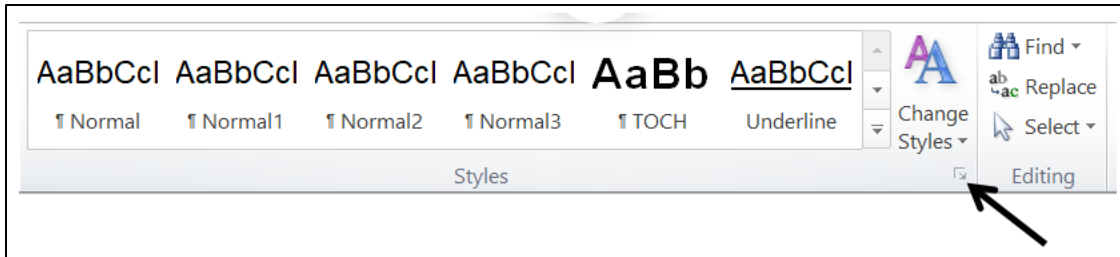

Figure 4 - Styles Group in the Home Ribbon

2. Highlight text you want the style applied to.
3. Click on the name of the style you want applied in the Styles Pane, which is now on the right hand side of the document.
4. If the complete list of desired Styles still does not appear, click Options in the bottom right of the Styles pane and select All Styles under Styles to Show and click OK.
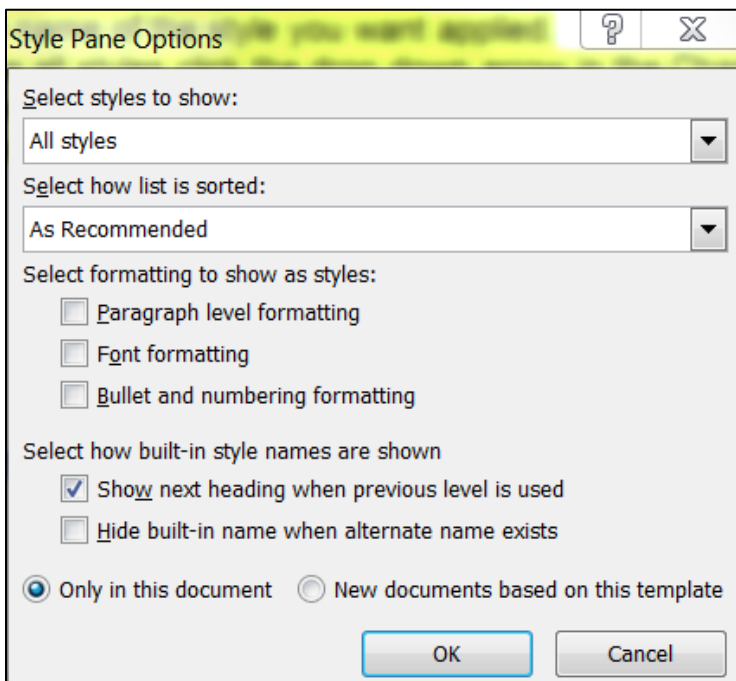

Figure 5 - Style Options Pane

Headings should always follow in sequential order, (ie. Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3).

The same Heading may be repeated before adding the next, depending on the structure of your document. Think of them as chapters and subheadings.

The following are equivalents you may find useful:

Bold = Strong

Italics = Emphasis

Underline = Intense Emphasis

Modifying a Style

If there is no style formatted the way you wish your text to appear you may wish to modify the style closest to what you are looking for.

1. Right click on the name of the style.
2. Select Modify.
3. Click on format to choose the element(s) you would like to change.
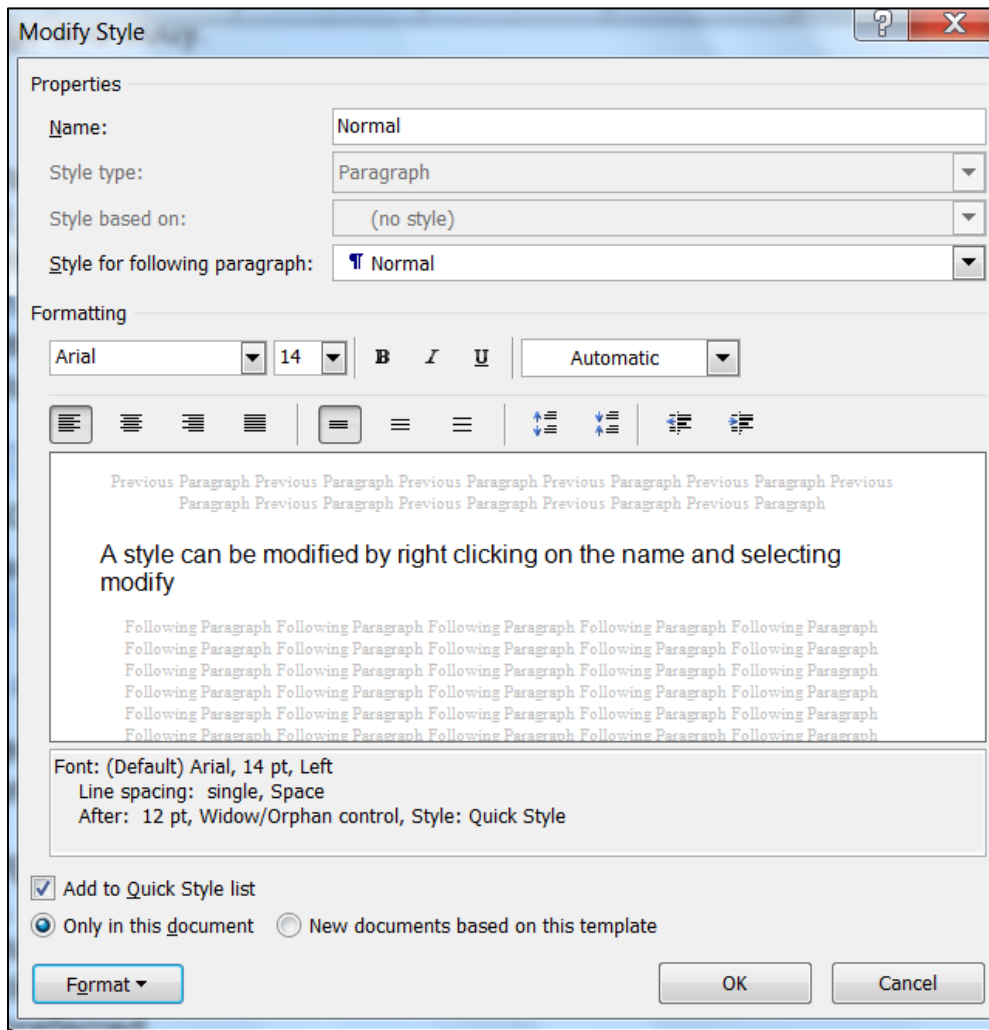4. Make changes, ensuring you click OK when finished.

Figure 6 Modify Style Dialog Box

Creating a Style

You may choose to create a new style to achieve the appearance you desire.

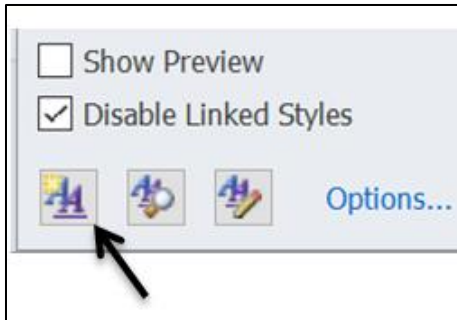1. Click New Style from the bottom of the Styles Pane

Figure 7 - Location of the New Style Option at the Bottom of the Styles Pane

2. Select the style you would like the new style to be based on

3. Make any changes to the new style just like you would if you were modifying an existing style.

Benefits if using styles include:

- Increased readability.
- Screen readers can identify and navigate sections.
- A table of contents with links to document sections can be automatically generated, as formatted in this document.
- Formatting is consistent throughout the document.

Font, Design and Accessible Formats

Use appropriate **Font** Family

Avoid complicated, decorative or handwriting fonts.

Consistent with the City's standard to use Arial for public documents, the City templates will be developed using Arial font. As illustrated below fonts that have easily recognizable upper, lower-case and numerical characters are more accessible than narrow version fonts that should be avoided.

Arial   This font is accessible

Garamond   This font is not accessible

Lucinda Calligraphy   This font is not accessible

The City of Brantford's standard font family is Arial. If you wish to use another font beyond Arial in marketing materials, please check with the Corporate Communications Manager and the Accessibility Coordinator.

Use appropriate Font Size, beginning with Arial 12 for your base or Normal style text. Font size should increase with the Heading Level. For Example:

Title (Arial 22 or 24 pt. Bold)

Heading 1 (Arial 20 pt. Bold)

Heading 2 (Arial 18 pt. Bold)

Heading 3 (Arial 16 pt. Bold)

Heading 4 (Arial 14 pt. Bold)

Normal (Arial 12 pt.)

When converted to PDF the different headings will continue to scale proportionately to allow for differentiation of sections.

Text should be left justified to make reading easier. Centre justified can lead to excess white spacing that can distract the reader.

Use the strong option from Styles menu for bold emphasis. This feature should be used sparingly (headings and key words) as overuse defeats the purpose of emphasis. Avoid italics (emphasis style) and underlining (intense emphasis style) to improve readability.

Italic (emphasis style) fonts are more difficult to read than regular fonts, mainly due to the output of angled characters on a digital screen that has poor resolution. There may be exceptions to using italics, such as when required to meet standard formatting (for example, citation in legal documents). Keep in mind, if the font is very large, italics may be more legible, but as a general rule, avoid italics where possible. Avoid using italics and underlining and do not use large amounts of text in capitals.

Underlining interferes with lower case letters. Do not use underlining to emphasize words and phrases. Underlining is an outdated method to emphasize text. People used underlining when manual typewriters did not have bold or italic styling. Only use underlining as the standard option to emphasize links for email addresses and websites.

Avoid full sentences in all UPPER CASE letters. A sentence written with a combination of upper and lower case (sentence case) letters is easier to read. The ascenders and descenders found in lower-case letters provide word shape, resulting in reading clues that allow recognition and speed up the process of reading. Sentences written in all upper case are more difficult to read. All UPPER CASE should be restricted to one or

two words important words such a WARNING or for acronyms. For headings use a larger font size using the Styles menu "emphasis option" rather than the bold option from the standard ribbon menu.

Text Boxes should never be used. These are inaccessible to those who rely on assistive technology.

Use of Decorative Lines and Borders

Visual cues such as line breaks and borders can still be used in an accessible document. This must be done using the borders tool. Depending on the use you will either incorporate this into a style (i.e. to separate a quote).

1. Select the appropriate style.
2. Right click and choose modify style.
3. Select format.
4. Choose borders and select desired format.
5. Click OK.

Or use the option in the Home Ribbon (i.e. to add visual section breaks or to add a signature line)

1. Highlight the text you want the line or border applied.
2. Select the Border Tool from the Home Ribbon.
3. Select Borders and Shading.
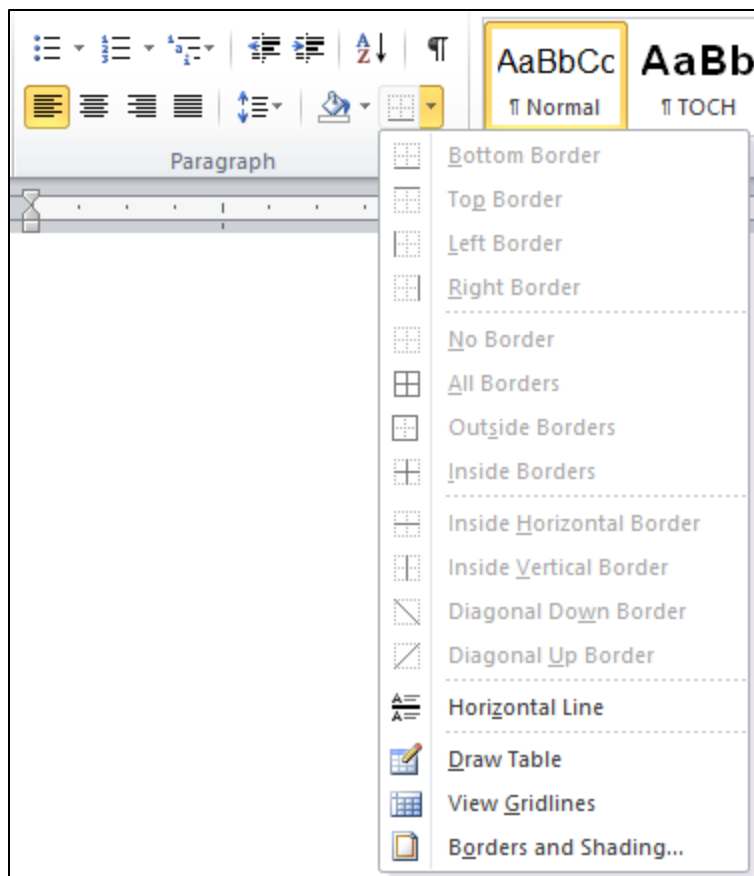4. Choose the desired formatting and placement.
5. Click OK.

Figure 8 - Borders and Shading Button in the Home Ribbon

Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are important navigational tools within an electronic document. However, to ensure the same access to information is available to users relying on the physical document a footnote must be added to each contextual hyperlink. This may be excluded if the entire link is embedded in the body.

Remember hyperlink descriptors such as 'click here' are unacceptable. Key contextual words must be used as the hyperlink. An example would be 'The City must comply with the AODA'. The footnote would then read: More information on the AODA can be viewed by visiting https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11

The exception would be if the body of your text read: information on xyz can be found at www.brantford.ca.

Your method would depend on your preference, type of document as well as the length of the address. Inserting a lengthy URL address can be distracting or confusing to the reader.

Use Real Lists

Use auto generated bullets or numbering systems.

A list created in MS Word with the Bullets, Numbering or Multilevel List tools will tag the list in the document structure and package it as a list of related items. A screen reader will know how many items are in the list and understand the start and end of the list. If you manually create a list, a screen reader will not understand how the items are related. A screen reader will interpret a manual list as a series of short separate paragraphs.

The Real List options are located within the Paragraph Tools group on the Home Ribbon. Here you can select from bulleted lists, numbered lists or multi-level lists.

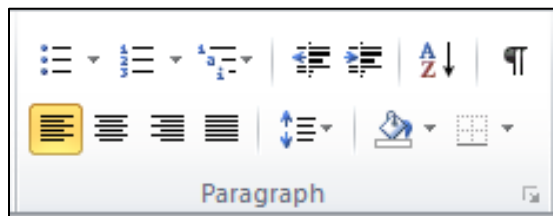Multi-level lists require more nesting which can be discussed as needed.

Figure 9 - Paragraph Tools Group

Please keep in mind that extra return spaces in a list will break up the real list format.

When applying bullets only use the options that are available within the Bullet Gallery. The use of other symbols or images can be confusing and can create a lot of extra work. For example if a chevron (>) is used for a bullet, assistive technology will read it is as 'greater than' or 'angled bracket'. If an image is used you may be required to add alt text, defeating the purpose of the use as a bullet.

Use of Accessible Tables and Charts

Avoid tables and charts where possible. When using tables and charts, ensure they only contain quantitative data only and are formatted to be as accessible as possible to all readers. All of the basic accessibility considerations that are applied to documents must also be applied to tables and charts. For example:

- Use appropriate font size, not less than Arial 10.
- Add alternative text.
- Use appropriate text alignment.

Additionally, ensure tables include column and row headings. Keep tables simple by avoiding merged cells. If tables split across pages, set the header to show at the top of each page. When creating charts, use-formatting options to create different types of

lines or apply textures rather than colours to differentiate information for users who are colour blind.

Of course, there are times, such as preparing budget documents, when charts and tables are the most efficient and best way to express a large amount of numerical information. In these cases, staff should be prepared to provide an accessible format of this information if requested.

Inserting a Table

1. Only use to display quantitative data.
2. Open the Insert Ribbon.
3. Click table and select the number of rows and columns desired
4. Never draw a table!
5. Add content, including column and row headings
6. Highlight cells containing column headings, and right click on the table selecting Table Properties
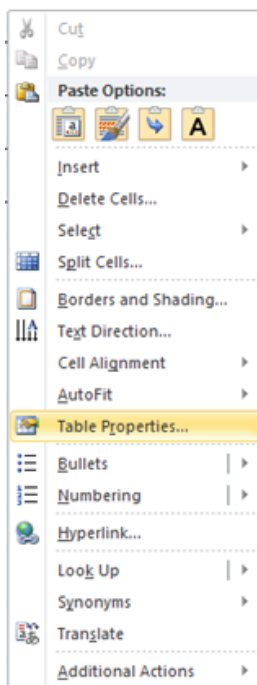

Figure 10 – Location of Table Properties

7. Select the Rows Tab
8. Uncheck the box that says Allow row to break across pages
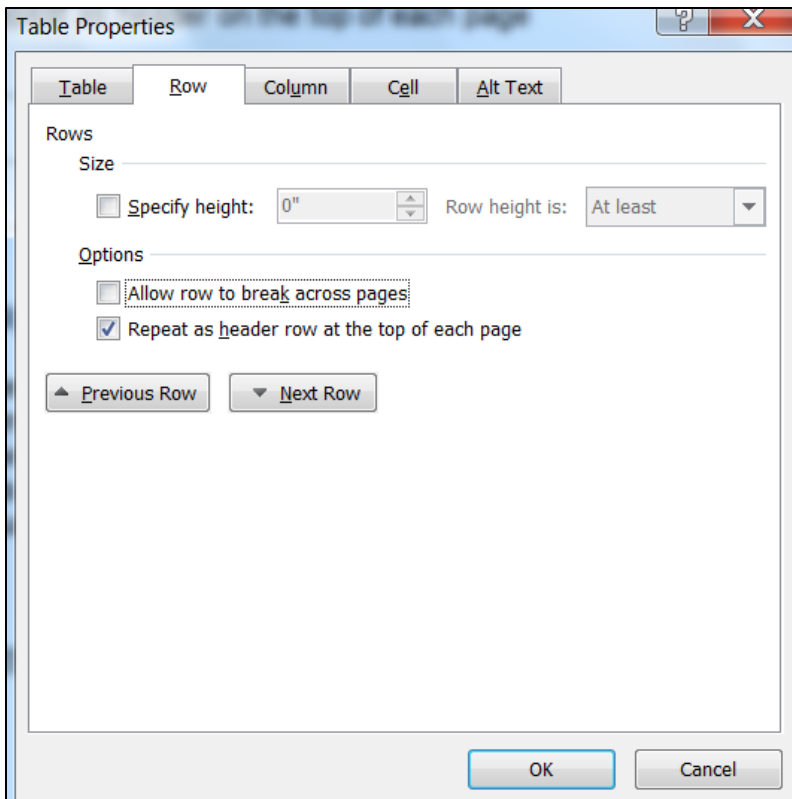9. Select Repeat as header on the top of each page

Figure 11 - Table Properties Dialogue Box

10. Click OK
11. Add caption and Alt Tag (described below)

Once you have inserted a table a Table Tools Ribbon appears. Select the Design Tab and in the Table Styles Option group ensure Header Row and First Column are checked. This will help with the tagging off your table when the document is saved as a PDF document.

An alternative choice to a table may be putting information in an outline format or using columns or spacing information out using tab stops. Like the return or enter key, the tab key should never be used more than one time for each use.

Adding White Space within Cells (Cell Padding)

White spaces within cells, like the document as a whole allows ease in reading the data. To accomplish this, follow the following steps and never add extra space by pressing the return or enter key.

1. Right click on the Table and select Table Properties from the middle of the dropdown menu.
2. Select the Table Tab.
3. Select Option and this will open a secondary dialog box.
4. Adjust the top and bottom margins between 0.04 and 0.1 ensuring your selections are consistent.
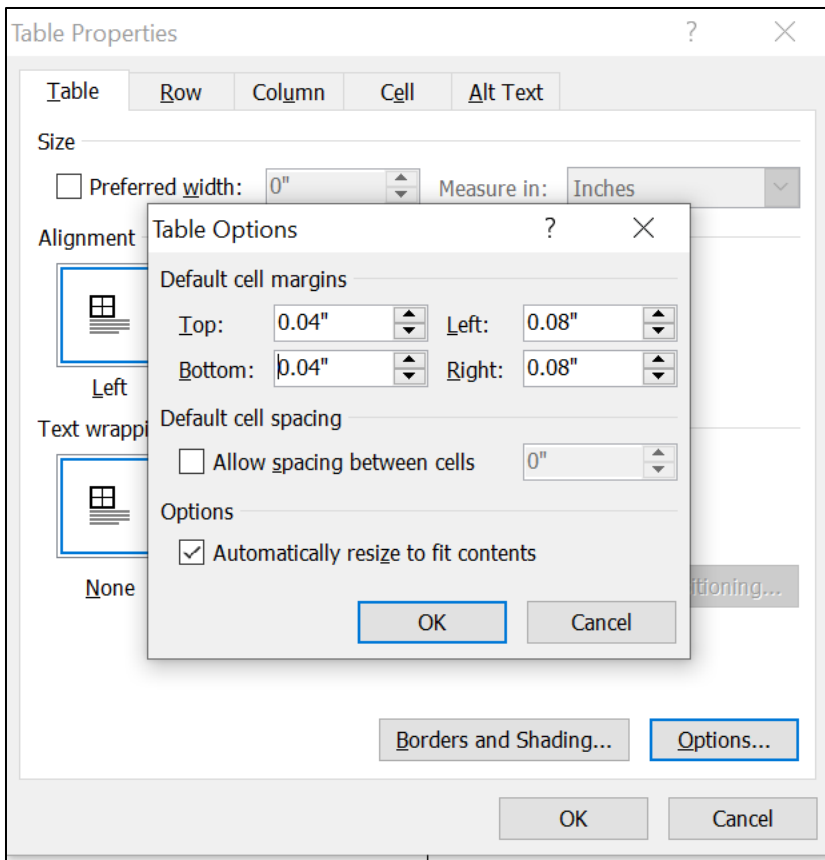5. Click OK to close both dialog boxes.

Figure 12 - Cell Padding Adjustment Option within Table Properties

Adding Image

Images/ graphics can come in many formats and can serve many purposes.

Often we use graphics that are layered. For example there may be a map with a block of text which provides more information or we may create a flow chart with many pieces. These layered graphics cannot be interpreted by assistive technology. It is important to capture all elements as one item. The easiest way to do this is by using the snipping tool. Once this single graphic is created insert it in to document in the desired location.

Once you have you completed image use the Insert Ribbon to place your image in the desired location. Ensure the image is sized so that the information can be easily read from a reasonable viewing distance.

If the graphic does not have clear boundaries or blends with the background it is recommended a boarder be added to the graphic.

1. Right click on the image.
2. Select Format Picture
3. Select Line Colour
4. Click Solid Line
5. Set the colour to black
6. Click Close

Graphic Alignment

Avoid floating images. Place images and non-text content above or below text with the MS Word In Line option from Format Picture.

1. Right click on the image or double click on the image
2. A Picture Tools Ribbon will open
3. From the Position group select In Line with Text

A picture style can be created to assist with aligning the image horizontally on the page.

Explain Images, Tables, Charts and Maps Using Text

All graphic elements that contain information relevant to the document require a text explanation within the body of the document; the graphic should only be used as supporting material. The explanation needs to be written by the same person responsible for writing the document. Having someone else describe the graphic elements may provide an incorrect interpretation. When explaining complicated visuals, be sure to identify the type of visual (photo, chart, graph, map, etc.) along with the title, purpose and the meaning of the data. Where possible it is good practice to include this description or summary within the body of the text, but can also be included as an appendix.

It is unnecessary to provide text explanations for graphics used for visual appeal, such as designer lines, borders etc. Photographs also used for visual appeal and not having a great deal of relevance can be given very short descriptions.

In addition to the explanations within the document Alt Tags must also be included.

Use Captions and Alt Tags for Tables, Charts and Images

An "Alt tag" or alternative text is a brief description of any image inserted into a document. Inserting an Alt Tag allows a screen reader to assist someone with a vision disability to understand what the image is. It is also displayed in place of the image when software does not support the display of images or when the user has chosen not to view images. Search engines can also read it. If the image is an essential part of the communication (i.e. a chart or a graph illustrating an important pattern or trend, a description of the findings should be outlined in the body of the text accompanying the graphic.) Without the Alt Tag when an image in encountered the user simply hears the word image vs the information in the Alt Tag. If the explanation is complex, it could be added to the document as an Appendix.

After the brief description the alt tag should also include the type of image, (ie. Photo, portrait, bar chart, line graph) in brackets. It is also good practice to include contact information in the alt tag of complex images should the reader want more information. If the alt tag reads 'Map of parks within the City of Brantford' a reader may wish to know the location of a certain park for example.

Captions should also be added to each figure, table or chart. This will allow the user, relying on the physical document access to a description of the object, think of this as a title.

How to Add an Alt Tag to an Image

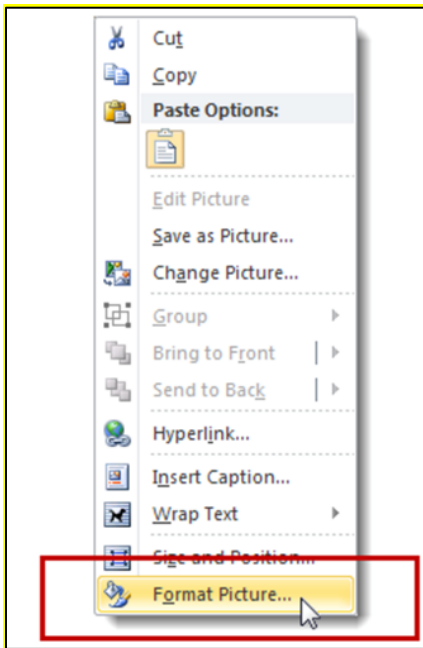1. Right click on the object and select Format Picture.

Figure 13 - How to Access Picture Formatting

2. Alt Tag will be the last choice on the left of the new dialog box, select this item.
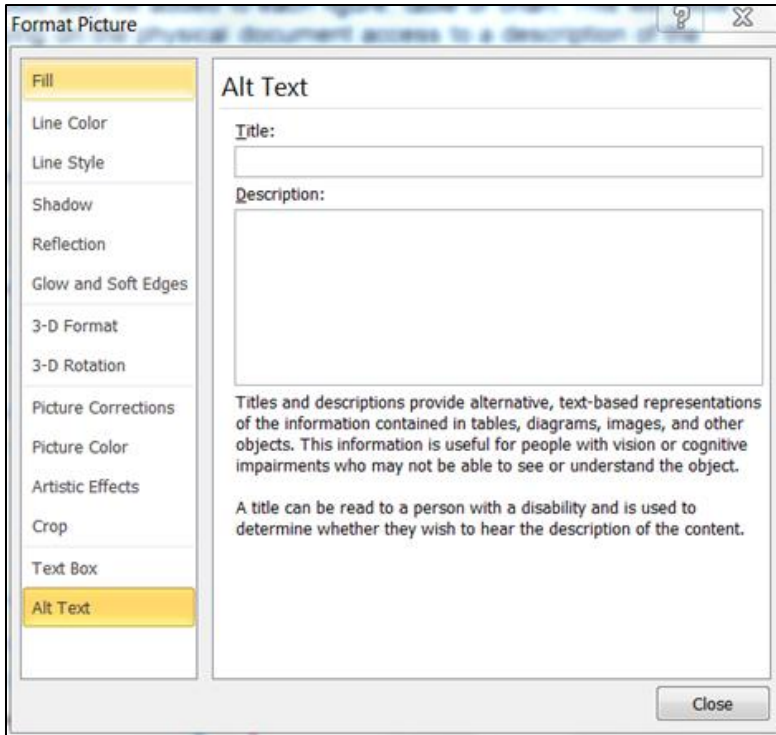
Figure 14 – Alt Text Dialogue Box for Images

3. The Title field may be left empty.
4. Enter the desired content into the description box.
5. Close the dialog box.

How to Add an Alt Tag to a Table or Chart

1. Right click on the table and select Table Properties from midway down the drop down menu.
2. Select the Alt Text Tab.
3. The Title field may be left empty.
4. Enter the desired content into the description box. Alt text for a table or chart must indicate the number of rows and columns in the chart and if there are any merged cells. It does not have to summarize the content of the table or chart.
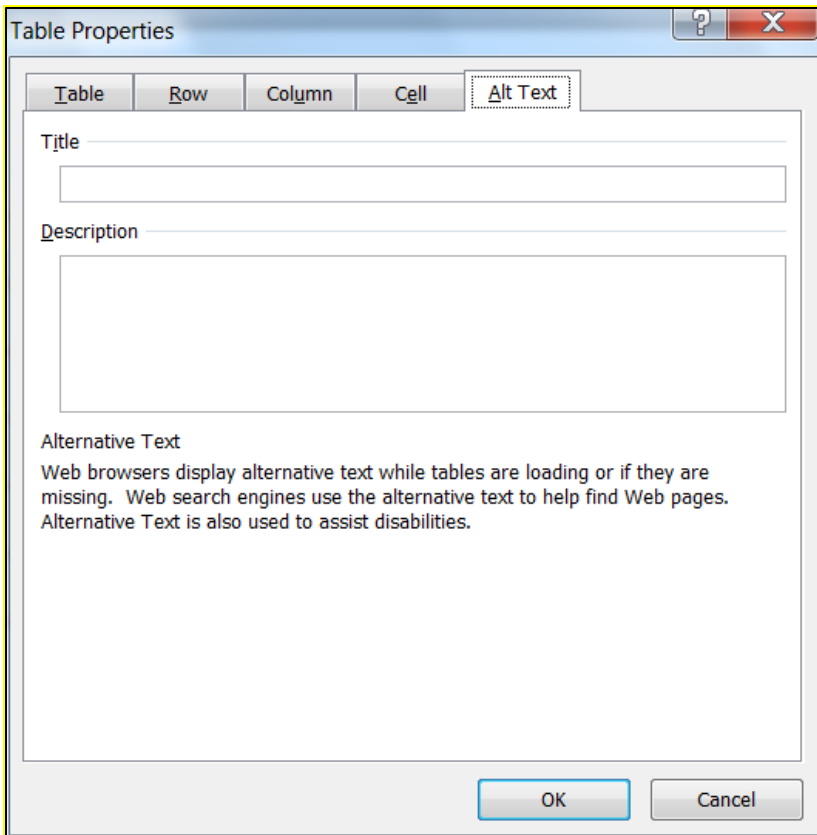
Figure 15 - Alt Tag Dialogue Box for a Table

Tips for Adding Alt Text

- Be brief.
- Describe the important content or purpose of the object.
- Do not start with "image of", "table of", or "link to". Add this information to the end of the description in brackets. If all alt text starts the same way it negates the searchability.
- Tell the screen reader to skip the object if it has no meaning. Use alt text of two double quotes with no spaces between ("").

How to Add a Caption for an Image, Table or Chart

1. Select the object to be captioned.
2. Open the References Ribbon.
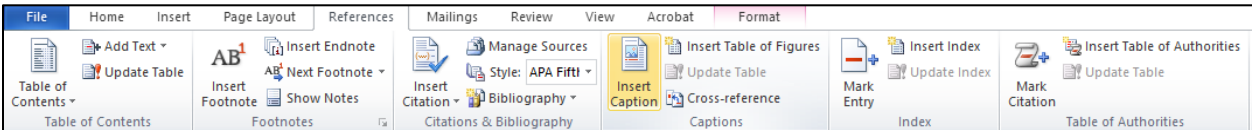3. Select Insert Caption.

Figure 16 - Where to locate the Insert Caption button in the References Ribbon

4. Select the correct label for the image. Numbering will be automatically generated.
5. Ensure the position selected is 'above selected item' when captioning tables. For images select 'below selected item'.
6. Add your caption after the assigned label with a space – space after the label. This should be a high level description of the object.
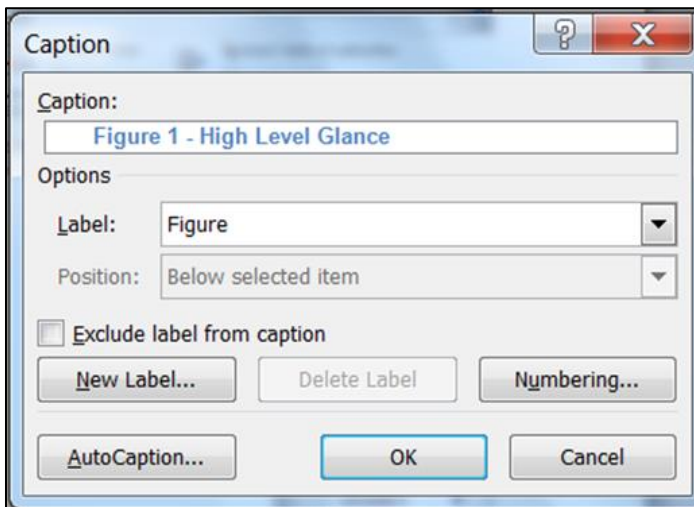7. Click OK.

Figure 17 - Caption Dialogue Box

Use of Page and Section Breaks

Page and Section Breaks can be useful tools in creating an accessible document as they provide one command in place of several hard returns, allowing for easier reading and comprehension while using assistive technology while achieving a desired appearance. A section break will also allow you to change formatting of the same headings or page orientation part way through a document, while a page break will simply move information to the next page.

If you would like to bump a set of information to the next page:

1. Place your cursor at the beginning of the first line of content to be moved.
2. Open the Page Layout Ribbon.
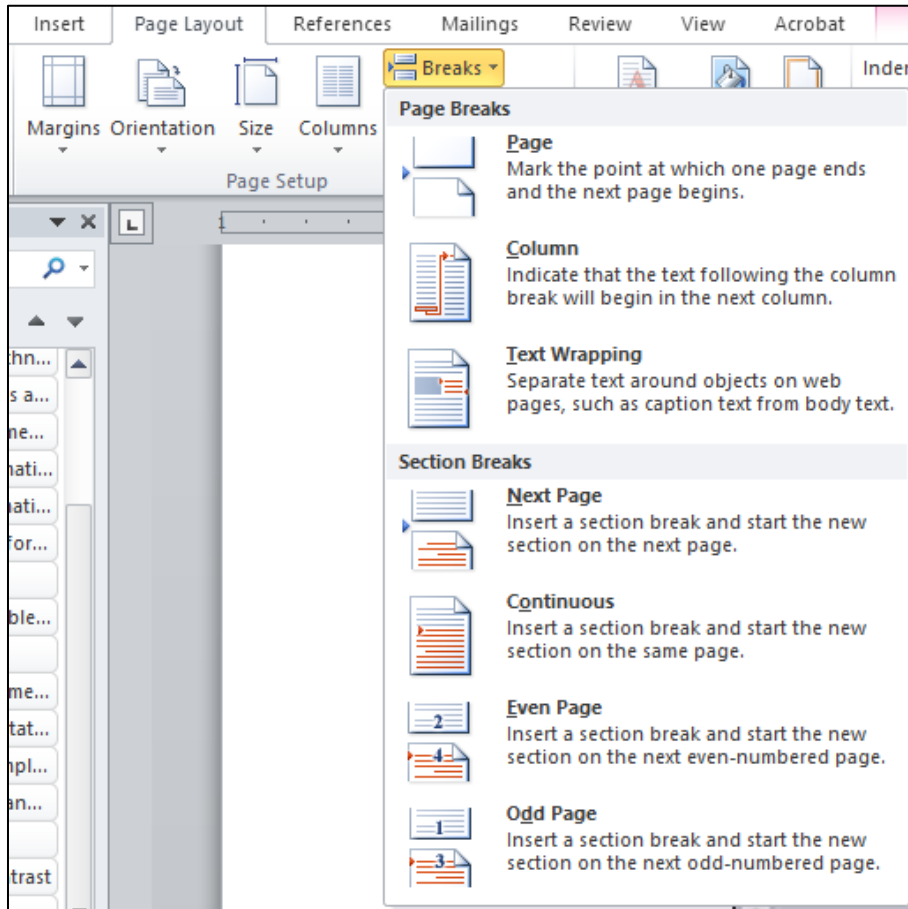3. Click on Breaks, and make your selection.

Figure 18 – Section Break options from the Page Layout Ribbon

A break can also be inserted before text:

1. Ensure the cursor is on the line of text before opening the options of the Paragraph tool group
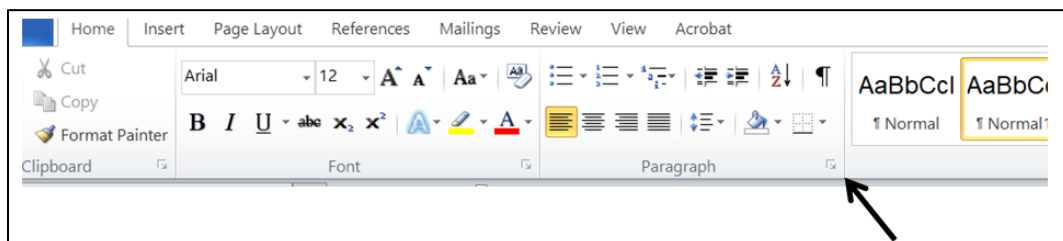

Figure 19 - Location of the Paragraph group options

2. Once the Paragraph Dialogue box is open select the Line and Page Breaks tab, select Page break before and click ok. Your text will move to the next page. Regardless of changes made to the document this break will be associated with the text.
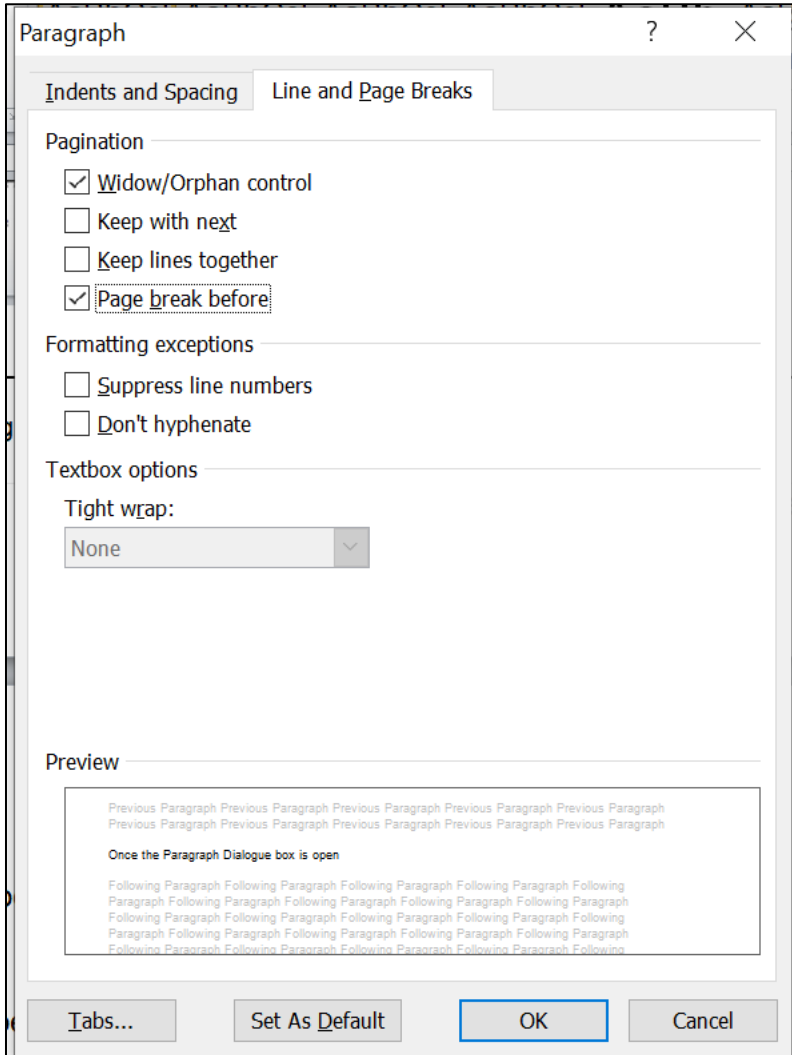

Figure 20 - Paragraph dialogue box

Use Page Numbering

Add automatic page numbering using the Header and Footer tool.

Numbering the pages of a document helps readers to effectively navigate and reference the contents. Microsoft Office products have a variety of page numbering templates that can be automatically inserted into documents. In a longer document, the preferred option is a format that indicates page number of total count.

1. Open the Insert Ribbon.
2. Select Page Number.
3. From drop down list select the desired location and format.
4. To edit the page numbering double click on the number and the Design Ribbon will open.
5. Select your preferences and close.

Table of Contents

Use a Table of Contents to indicate the different sections of the document. A Table of Contents can be easily created in Word under References/Table of Contents. The "Table of Contents" will be automatically generated based on the "Headings" that have been identified throughout the document by using the following steps:

1. Place your cursor where you would like the Table of Contents placed.
2. Open the References Ribbon.
3. Select Table of Contents.
4. Choose Insert Table of Contents – none of the pre-set formats will result in an accessible **Table of Contents.**
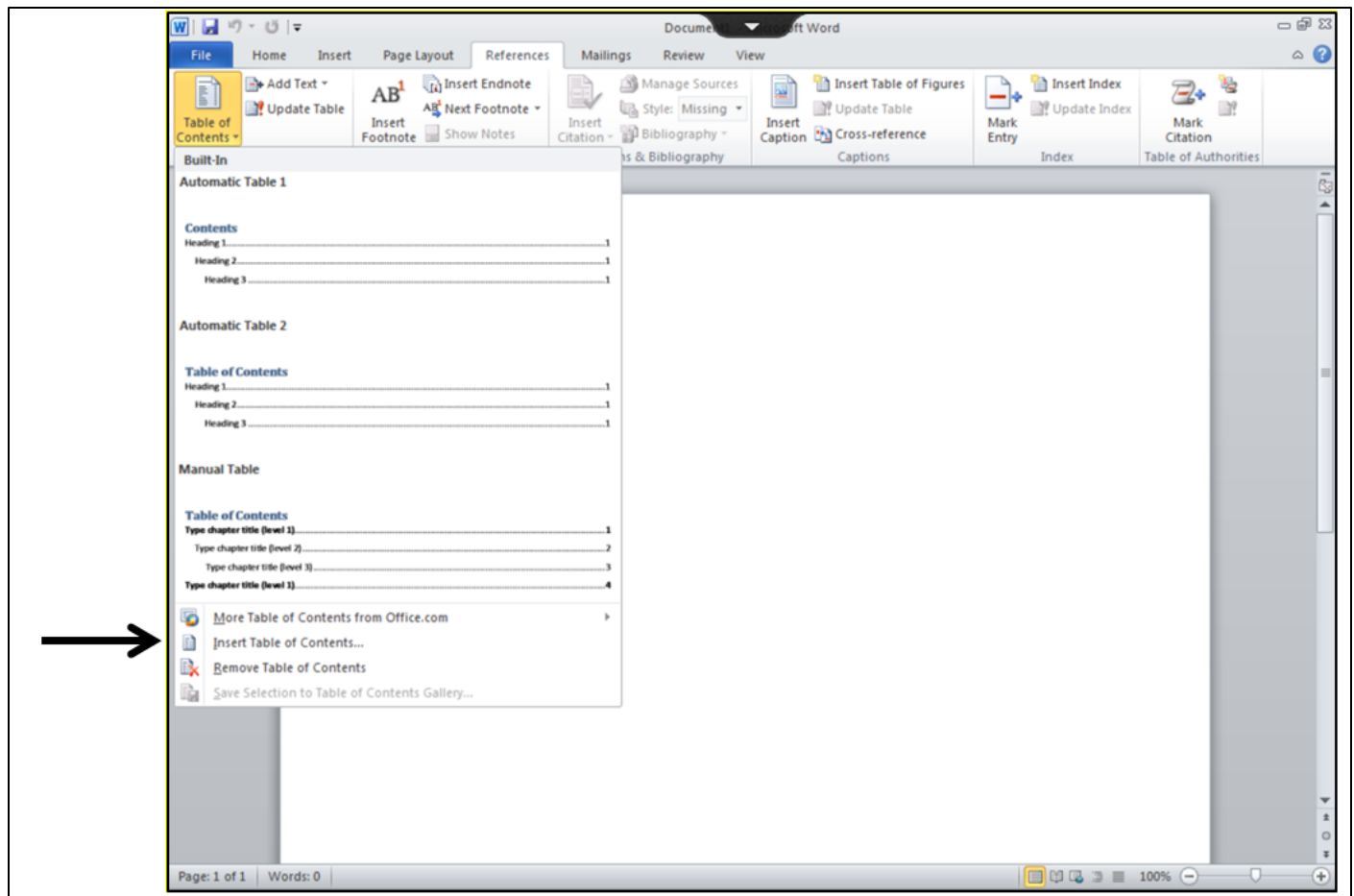
Figure 21 – Inserting an Accessible Table of Contents

5. A dialog box will appear.
6. Select Options
7. Select the number of levels (Headings) you would like to appear in the Table of Contents by placing level numbers beside each heading. The numbers represent the level of indent. I.e. you may wish the Heading 2s to be indented more than the Heading 1s. Unless you have several different headings, you will not have to modify this.
8. Click OK.

Modifying a Table of Contents

If you change content in the document after the Table of Contents has been added you must update it to ensure accuracy as the items in the Table of Contents serve as links to the associated section (hold Control and click on the heading).

1. Right click anywhere within the Table of Contents.
2. Select Update Field
3. If information has been shifted to different pages due to the addition of Normal or body content select Page Numbers Only.
4. If there was a change to any of the Headings select Update Entire Table.
5. Click OK.

If you change your mind about the content levels you want to appear in the Table of Contents:

1. Right click anywhere in the Table of Contents
2. Select Edit Field
3. Choose TOC from the field names
4. Click Table of Contents on the right hand side
5. Click Modify
6. Select the Headings you would like to appear by entering the level at which they should appear
7. Click OK
8. A dialogue box will appear asking if you would like to replace the existing Table of Contents. Select yes and your Table of contents will be automatically updated.

Finalizing Your Word Document

1. Tab through your document ensuring there are no extra spaces or returns. This may be easier for you to see if you reveal formatting. In the Home Ribbon select the following button to reveal formatting.
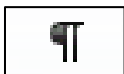

Figure 22 - Reveal Format Button

2. From the File tab, select Info.
3. Ensure you enter a title, author and date for your document in the properties on the right hand side. Keywords may be added to assist with searchability if desired
4. Click the Check for Issues button.
5. Select Check Accessibility.

6. On the right hand side, using the Inspection Results Pane, select any and all issues and fix them.
   - Errors - The most serious issues are errors. An error means content is unavailable for a person who uses assistive technology, especially if they rely on screen reading programs.
   - Warnings - These are less serious but still make it difficult for a person with a disability to read a document.
   - Tips - Tips list issues that might cause problems. Fixing these will help optimize your documents readability for everyone.
7. Save your document one more time to preserve your Word document.

Converting a Word Document to a PDF

Once you are satisfied with your Word Document you may want to convert it to a PDF to protect the content. Note that any errors found must be corrected in the Word version, so be diligent in your final review before PDF conversion. Scanning is not accessible. Please always work from the original document to create the PDF.

1. Select Save As to save your document selecting the PDF file type.
2. Before you save, select options and click Create bookmarks using Headings.
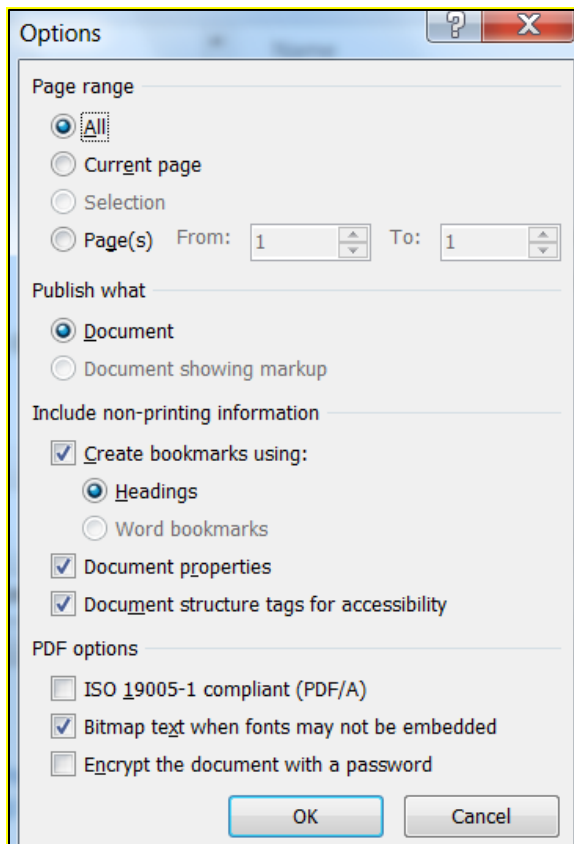3. Click OK.

Figure 23 - Selections that should be made in the Options Dialog Box before saving a document as a PDF

Tagging A PDF

Tagging is an important part of making an accessible PDF document for people who use screen readers. All content in a PDF requires a tag. Even elements of a page that are decorative or in the background require a tag called an "artifact".

PDF tags require careful human inspection, testing and repair by a person who is trained and experienced in accessible PDFs. Tags set the order of how a screen reader navigates through information, so even small errors in the tag structure can make a document inaccessible.

Sample PDF Tags and their role in the document

<H1>   tag used for a heading 1

<H2>   tag used for a heading 2

<P>   tag used for a paragraph

<L>   tag used for a list

<LI>   tag used for a list item

<LI Body>   tag used for the content of each list item

<Figure>   tag used for an image

<TR>   tag used for table rows

<TH>   tag used for table cells that serve as column or row headings

<TD>   tag used for table cells that hold data

<Link>   tag used for a link

Note: Adobe Acrobat Pro is needed to make accessible documents

Using Tags

Tags of a document are housed in the Tags Tree. Tabbing down the Tags Tree reveals how assistive technology will read the document.

1. Open the PDF document.
2. Open and expand your Tags Tree by selecting the Tags tab and expanding the closed tags
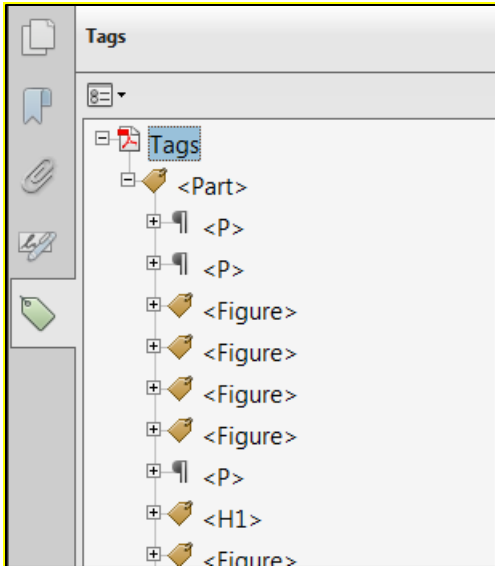
Figure 24 - Expanded Tags Tree in a PDF Document

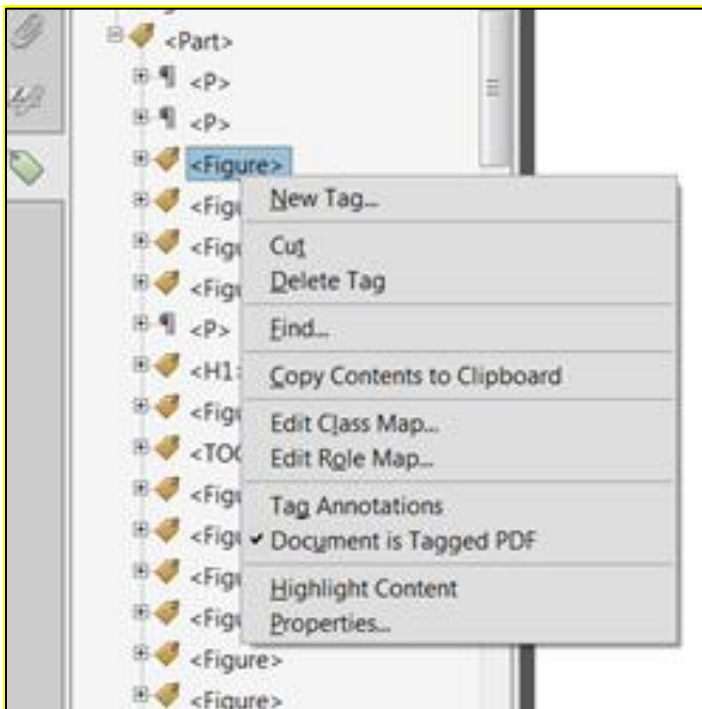3. Right click on any Tag and select Highlight Content.

Figure 25 - How to highlight text associated with specific tags

4. Now when you click on a Tag you will see the associated text.
5. Click through the Tags to check reading order, if content does not appear in the correct order drag the Tag to the appropriate position.
6. Save after every couple moves, if you drop a tag it cannot be found again.

7. If Tags have incorrectly been assigned (ie. Headings have been assigned the Paragraph Tag for normal text instead of the correct heading, right click on the tag and select the correct tag type.
8. Once complete save the final document.

Nested Tags

Some tags require 'nesting' or putting a tag within another in order for assistive technology to interpret it correctly. This can be done by dragging the tags to their correct placement and level. Most common examples would be a list, link or a table.

Assistive technology must be able to tell the reader how many items are in a list so therefore each <LI> must be nested under the <L>. Likewise each <Lbl> and <L Body> will be nested under each <LI> to identify the content.

Figure 26 – Tags for a two item list

Multi-level lists and link require more nesting which can be discussed as needed.

Likewise, assistive technology has to be able to identify the number of rows and types of cells in a table. Below is an illustration of a table where each cell in the first row is a column heading as well as the first cell in each of the following rows is a row heading or identifier.
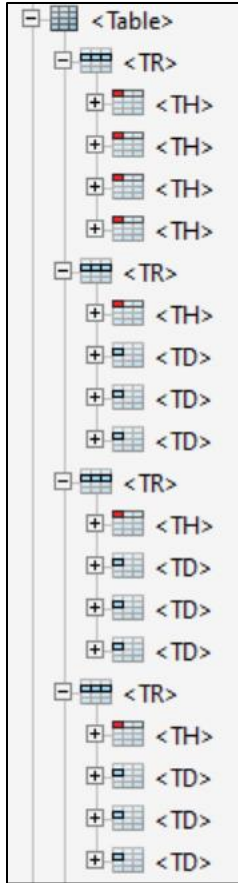
Figure 27 - Tags for a table that has four rows and four columns that has both column and row headings

Adding Tags to the Tags Tree

If content cannot be located in the Tags Tree or is miss tagged, it may be easiest to create a new Tag and assign content here.

1. Click on the Tag above where you want to insert the new Tag, right click the mouse and select New Tag and assign the proper title property.
2. Click on the new empty tag to highlight it.
3. Highlight the text to be assigned to the new tag.
4. Right click on the tag and select Create Tag from Selection.
5. Repeat for any missing content.

Accessible Fillable Forms

All forms placed on the City website should be fillable – meaning a user can fill out the information without having to print the form and fill it out by hand. Except in situations where an applicant must attend City Hall in person, forms should be able to be submitted via email. Staff can also complete forms on behalf of the public.

Fillable Forms Guidelines:

- Organize the fields chronologically
- Ensure forms are keyboard accessible
- Make sure label and field locations are easy to use
- Make sure the information asked is short and basic
- Avoid using asterisks (*) to indicate required fields
- Offer standard entry fields for phone numbers
- Where signature is required, ensure there is sufficient space

How to Create an Accessible Form

1. Design general layout of the form in Word using Headings and other features discussed previously. Do not add any boxes or lines, just spacing using tab stops, for space to add them in the future. Any required fields or specified formatting must be identified in the written Word document.
2. Make sure you are happy with the design, spelling and grammar. Once you complete the next step, none of this can be amended without starting over.
3. Save it the Word Document as a PDF.
4. Using the PDF document you may now add your form fields.
5. From the Tool Panel on the right hand side select Forms and then select Create.
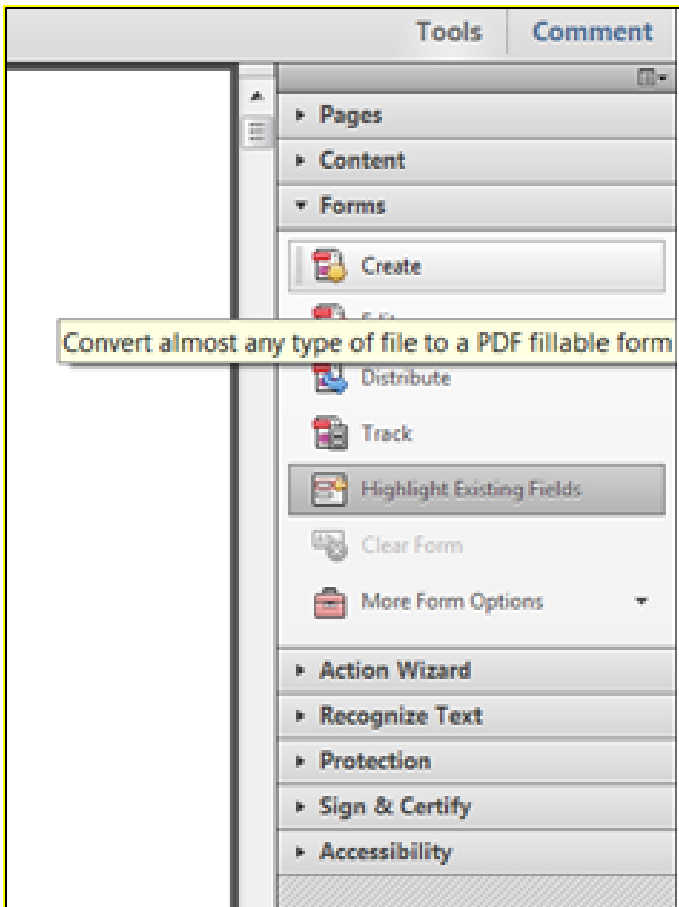
Figure 28 - Location of the form tools in Adobe Acrobat

6. From the pop up dialog do not change the pre-set selections.
7. Click Next twice.
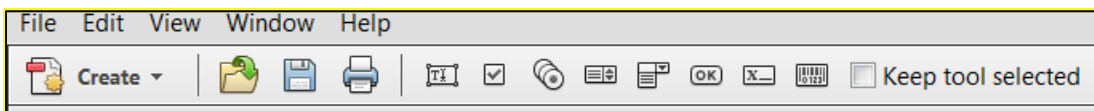8. Select the type of field from the toolbar for each question:

Figure 29 - Icons for each type of form field in the toolbar

- Text field – for entering text
- Check box – for selecting one or more options at the same time
- Radio Buttons – for selecting mutually exclusive choices
- Lists or Drop Down Menu – for providing a list of options
9. For each field added, align to appropriate text
10. For each field added, right click and add the following properties:
    a. Name: a descriptor for your formatting use to ensure reading order

b. Tooltip: a statement or question that will tell a user of assistive technology what they are to answer. Any format stipulations must be include (ie Date mm/dd/yyyy or Phone Number xxx-xxx-xxxx or Address street, province, postal code). If answer format does apply please select Format from the dialog box and choose the right selection. It is in the Tooltip where you would also note if the space is for staff use only.

c. Required: if the answer is a requirement please check the Required box

d. For Radio Buttons you will also choose Add Radio Button from this dialog box. Repeat this until the desired number of buttons appear. The Tool Tip will act the same, asking a question about the group of buttons (be sure to enter this in the properties of the original button. From the Properties dialog box you will then select Options and enter wording for each choice the buttons represent. You will have to do this for each button

e. For Lists, enter the Name and Tool Tip and then select Options to add each choice to the list.

11. From the Tools panel choose Accessibility and then Add Tags.

12. Open the Tags Tree as described previously and arrange the order. Each field will have the Paragraph Tag (preceding test) and a Form Tag (field). The form field should be nested in the Paragraph Tag under the text.

13. Once all fields have been properly labelled and final checks have been made, save the document.

14. In this format, the form is still unable to be filled electronically. To enable this feature select Save as – Reader Extended PDF – Enable Additional Features. You will want to save this version under a different name. Once you enable these features you can no longer edit so it is important to keep both versions named differently for future field edits.
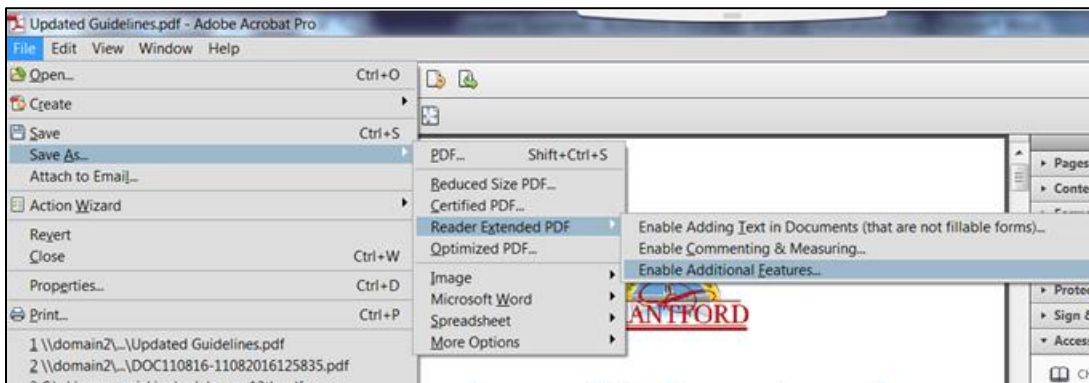

Figure 30 - How to initiate the components to make a form fillable

PowerPoint Presentation Guidelines

- Structure presentations like you would a Word document.
- Include Document Properties (File, Info tab, Properties, Advanced Properties). The most important property is the document title.
- Always use the default slide layouts from the Home Ribbon, Insert Layout. They use accessible placeholders.
- The accessible slide placeholders are:
  - Slide title placeholder
  - Subtitle placeholder.
  - Text placeholder (can be added through Slide Master).
  - Picture placeholder.
  - Note: some content that can be added to a Content placeholder may not be accessible—for example, multimedia, SmartArt or embedded objects.
- Use Section Break slides to identify a change in topic.
- Do not put text in text boxes on slides. Resize the default slide placeholders to meet your needs.
- Every slide must have a unique slide title.
- The slide title must be in the slide title placeholder.
- If a topic spans more than one slide, use the following techniques:
  - For content spanning two slides, use (Continued) after the second slide title.
  - For content spanning more than two slides, use either "Slide Title – " "Slide Title – 2"; or "Slide Title (1 of 4)", "Slide Title (2 of 4".
- Text in slide placeholders must be readable by the audience.
- The text must be large enough to be read by people at both the front and the back of the room. The ideal size is 48 point and should never be less than 18 point (Government of Canada Style Guide).
- Use mixed upper and lower case letters rather than all capitals, and avoid using italics.
- Plain paragraph text should be left-aligned.
- Use sans serif font types such as Helvetica, Arial and Verdana.
- Use one font in the presentation. Do not mix fonts.
- Presentations must have good colour contrast as set out by the WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Standard).
- Backgrounds must be plain with no texture or graphics. This principle also applies to email communications.

- Banners on slides must not block the placeholders. The larger the banner, the less content/text you can add to a slide. Ensure that the banner does not overwhelm the slide/presentation.
- Include slide numbers on all slides except the first one/title slide (Insert, Slide Numbers).
- Avoid transitions between slides.
- Any video content on slides must be captioned and video described.
- When converted to tagged PDF, the title of the presentation and the title of Section Break slides are converted to Heading 1s, and the slide titles on all other slides are converted to Heading 2s. This is why it is essential that the default placeholders on slides are used. They create the logical reading order and structure of the presentation.

Summary

We have a legal obligation to make any information that is normally available to other people also available to any person who has a visual impairment or other disability and who wants to access it. Every report produced by the City should state that this material can be made available in alternative formats i.e. large print, audio cassette, Braille or digitally and how to obtain it. If you need any help or support with implementing these guidelines please contact [Accessibility Coordinator](#)[8].

Microsoft Quick References

Create Accessible Word Documents

[Microsoft Quick Reference for Creating an Accessible Document Format](#)[9]

Format your document using Styles

[Microsoft Quick Reference for Formatting Documents Using Styles](#)[10]

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[8] The email address for the Accessibility Coordinator is accessibility@brantford.ca

[9] Microsoft Quick Reference for Creating an Accessible Document Format can be found at [https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Create-accessible-Word-documents-4fbb34d6-264f-4315-98d1-e431019e6137?section=8&mode=print&CorrelationId=586374ad-e0dc-41b7-908f-116e6f90fd01&ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US](#)

[10] Microsoft Quick Reference for Formatting Documents Using Styles can be found at [https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Format-your-document-with-styles-db59b0b7-f730-45d5-a4f1-d34ac25d4361](#)