



MEMORANDUM

TO: York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC)

FROM: Marc Gallant, Senior Multimedia Specialist
Corporate Communications Services

DATE: October 18, 2004

RE: **Addendum to York Region *Graphic Standards*
and *Corporate Writing Style Guide***

Corporate Communications Services' 2004 Accessibility Plan committed to including graphics standards guide that will take into consideration people with disabilities as part of new visual identity standards for the Region.

Although the development of new visual identity standards for printed publications did not get approval for 2004, attached is an addendum to the Region's existing *Graphic Standards* publication. This addendum is intended to ensure the Region is able to respond to requests from people with disabilities for alternate printed formats of Regional information.

Following feedback from the York Region AAC, the addendum will be brought forward to the Region's Graphic Standards Working Group for inclusion in the Region's *Graphic Standards* and development into a corporate-wide policy, as well as inclusion in the *Corporate Writing Style Guide*.

Also attached are Guidelines for Developing Accessible Web sites, a best practice for developing an accessible internet sites as set out by the WC3 Consortium (standard for the World Wide Web). These guidelines are included in staff training for web co-ordinators and are posted on the Region's intranet for easy reference.

Attachments

(DRAFT)

Addendum to York Region *Graphic Standards* and *Corporate Writing Guide*

The following is an addendum to the Region's *Graphic Standards* and *Corporate Writing Guide*.

This addendum is intended to ensure the Region is able to respond to requests from people with disabilities for alternate printed formats of Regional information.

In order to accommodate people with disabilities, particularly visual impairments, who may require alternate print formats of Regional information, the points below are to be followed and adhered to by all Regional departments:

- All public documents, reports, publications, etc. must be available in a word processing format, and available in a Veranda or Arial font and a 14 and/or larger font size if requested. These include marketing and promotional materials such as brochures and flyers that have been professionally designed by a graphic designer.
- These documents will reside in the Region's Records Management System for easy retrieval corporately.
- These documents must also be available to be translated into braille copy, if requested. The Region is in the process of retaining the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) as its supplier for braille translation. The contact name and number will be included in this addendum, once the CNIB has been officially retained by the Region.
- All major publications and documents will also be available on the Region's Web site and accessible by screen reading software.
- The option of sending any text document to a person with visual impairments via CD ROM must also be available. This will enable someone with a screen reader access to Regional documents if they are not connected to the World Wide Web.

Guidelines for Developing Accessible Web Sites

The following guidelines, as set out by the WC3 Consortium, will ensure accessibility to those persons with visual impairments. These guidelines must be followed by anyone developing web pages housed on the York Region's Web site (www.york.ca).

The following are the key areas that must be covered in order to achieve partial accessibility:

- All text must read from left to right (no alternative text manipulation for design purposes).
- Descriptor tags (META and ALT tags) will be places on every page. These tags give information about the content and graphics of each page, allowing visually impaired visitors using the Web reading programs to scan content and identify graphics.
- Where there are file attachments, tables, or links, executive summaries also will be provided for easy reference for Web reading programs.
- Titles and text cannot be displayed as a graphics
- Provide a link to a longer description for graphics that present important information (especially charts, tables, and diagrams).
Alternative text descriptions are usually short and define the basic purpose of graphic elements. To describe the graphic itself in more detail, supply a link to an alternative description.
- Provide a description for each link in an image map. Depending on the image map, there are several possibilities. If the MAP element has been used with AREA, set the "alt" attribute of the AREA element.
- Provide descriptions of applets that present important information.
- If an applet gathers information, provide an alternative mechanism for gathering the information. Alternative information gathering mechanisms such as a user-input form, e-mail address, phone or fax number should be provided within the alternative text of either the APPLET or OBJECT elements.
- Provide a mechanism for the user to freeze any moving or blinking objects, particularly those that contain text. In the following example created by Mark Novak, if the user presses the escape key while the Java marquee has focus, the text will be displayed statically.