

The accessibility of peelregion.ca

Presentation to Accessibility Advisory Committee

Marketing & Communications
November 2020

AODA compliance

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) states that external websites and web content modified after 2012 must comply with WCAG 2.0 Level AA by **January 1, 2021**.

The following presentation spotlights how we are preparing to meet this deadline.



Our journey

We have improved peelregion.ca in the following ways:

1) Skip navigation

Those using assistive technologies had navigation read to them each time a page loaded, forcing users to listen or tab through the same items repeatedly. We implemented code to intercept this process. When selected, the code skips navigation and places users at page content.

2) Link anchor labels

We ensure that link anchor labels are contextual in the content of the link's destination. Example:
Our website contains information about healthcare.

Corrected: Our website contains information about healthcare.

3) Focus and tabbing

Users can tab through all links on a page and are presented with visual cues on linked elements.

Our journey – page 2

4) Colour contrast

We ensure sufficient colour between background on which text is placed so that sighted users can read content properly.

5) Alt text

Images are tagged with blank alt text. This is to ensure that screen readers ignore decorative images that are not relevant to page content. Generally we avoid images with text, or that are crucial to communicating the message on the site.

6) Unique link text labels

We make sure that we don't have identical linked text that go to different targets (have different URL's). For example, we would not link “contact us” twice on the page, one instance going to waste@peelregion.ca and the other to housing@peelregion.ca. Alternatively, we note contact Waste and the other contact Housing.

Our journey – page 3

7) Aria labels

Sometimes it's not possible to have different linked text. Aria labels allow unique labels to be placed on identical links. The content is grouped under relevant headings, for the sighted, and an additional attribute is placed in the link tag.



8) Live chat

Introduced in spring 2019, Live Chat sits on our Contact Us page and features an added usability menu.

New website

- Rollout in phases beginning mid 2021.
- High contrast, design and common look represents updated Brand.
- Usability and accessibility enhanced by breadcrumbs and ability to reach pages from different places.
- Improved ability to browse with keyboard.
- Ease of navigation on mobile.
- AAC to test beta version.



Asset management

- Our biggest challenge is the scope of inaccessible PDFs.
- Staff have historically used PDFs as a way to expedite publishing and secure content.
- Our website has a history of being used as an archive.
- The current CMS does not have a content lifecycle management system.



Preparing for AODA

- Audit site and reduce scope of PDFs.
- Continue to develop guidelines to rethink ineffective practices.
- Develop corporate policy to ensure content placed on site is accessible.
- Use Accessibility Checkers and conduct training sessions.
- Work with stakeholders on records management accountability.
- Leverage Digital Champions Network (160 employees in all Departments) as way to educate and inform.
- Work with vendor to produce accessible PDFs that meet requirements.



Expert consult

We're working with AbleDocs to help produce accessible PDFs.

AbleDocs is the vendor of record for Ontario.ca as well as other municipalities including Toronto, Ottawa, Burlington and Oakville.

New practices could include:

- Automated tools that crawl site and report on accessibility of documents
- Providing alternative formats of content
- On-demand remediation
- Tools that generate fully-compliant PDF files in one click



New intranet

- While AODA does not require Intranets to be accessible, we are employing strategies to ensure Pathways+ is.
- Microsoft SharePoint is accessible out of the box.
- We have minimal customization and the content that is customized is accessible.
- SharePoint has a built-in screen reader.
- Microsoft has a disability answer desk providing help to users on Office, Windows and SharePoint. We now link to this resource on Pathways+.



Partnership with AAC

We would like to establish an effective partnership with the AAC to ensure that Peel's digital tools continue to allow for meaningful participation by persons of all abilities as well as seek alliances for new ideas, insights and innovation.

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Thank you!

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