City of New Haven
Web Site Policy

Purpose: To establish standards and procedures for development and administration of the City of New Haven Internet and Intranet web site.

Issuing Authority: The Chief Administrative Officer is the issuing authority for this policy.

Enforcement Authority: Daily administration is the responsibility of the head of the Information Technology Department or designee.

Policy

The City of New Haven recognizes that the Internet is an efficient way to conduct business, and allows the public to feel more connected to The City of New Haven Government. In order to keep that efficiency and connection with the public developing, the City of New Haven needs to keep up with current Internet and E-commerce trends. Therefore, the importance and size of the City of New Haven web site will be growing as the Internet and E-commerce grow. Because of this, it is imperative that certain administrative procedures be enforced to ensure that the new technology is used in the most efficient and effective way.

Section I. Administrative Procedures

A. Purpose of web site
1) The purpose of the City's web site is to provide convenient electronic access to information and services about the City of New Haven.

B. Web site Management & Maintenance
1) The City of New Haven local government website shall be maintained and managed by the webmaster in the Information Technology Department; unless it is a content managed area. Areas using content management tools within the City of New Havens' site will be maintained by the individuals responsible for that content. Any dispute of content will be resolved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

2) All requests for changes on the web site by departments in the City must be submitted in writing to the webmaster in the Information Technology Department. If the department in question develops their own portion of the City web site, they only need to submit the .html file to the webmaster, and that person shall update the web site. The department web site in question, as well as the developer of the web site, must adhere to the criteria set forth by this policy. The webmaster is not responsible for the accuracy of the information provided by another department, and that is posted to their portion of the City's web site. It is the responsibility of each department head or designee, to check for errors and ensure the information posted is accurate, complete, and up to date.

C. External Consultants
1) Any future external consultant who provides services for the City's web site must adhere to this entire policy.
2) All software and/or web applications provided by the consultant, or developed internally for use on a City of New Haven site, must meet the guidelines set forth in this policy.

D. Privacy

1) On certain occasions, the public has the need to provide personal information to the City in order to complete online transactions. This information includes but is not limited to e-mail addresses, resumes and applications for employment, responses to surveys, registering for services, and new services to be created. The City will not disclose this information to any third party, unless required to do so under federal or state law.

E. External Links

1) The City of New Haven permits the establishment of links to external web sites on the City official web site solely in the conformance of this policy. Consistent with the foregoing policy, it is the City's policy to limit external links to the following kinds of entities and organizations.

   - Chamber of Commerce and/or Visitors Bureau
   - Other governmental agencies
   - Accredited Educational Institutions
   - Hospitals
   - Museums, libraries, historical organizations and similar kinds of established, bona fide organizations that provide cultural resources to residents and visitors of the City.
   - Public Utilities
   - Entities and organizations whose primary purpose is to provide the location, telephone number and/or description of tourism events in the City of New Haven
   - Entities that the City has an existing formal, contractual relationship with through direct funding, or co-partnership on programs
   - Entities and organizations who provide electronic access to the operations of the City of New Haven through a contractual agreement
   - Entities and organizations who provide educational information associated with City services

2) Entities or organizations wishing to establish external links on the City's official web site must submit a request, in writing, to the Information Technology Department. The request should have backround information about the organization, and why a link is being requested.

3) The City has a right to:
   - Deny any external link application because it does not meet the criteria set forth by this policy.
   - Deny any external link because the applicant failed to provide the necessary information or provided fraudulent information.
   - Remove any link if it is found that the organization or agency no longer complies with the criteria outlined in this policy.
   - Revise this policy without prior notice when it is deemed to be in the best interests of the City.

Section II. Accessibility

Purpose: It is the policy of the City of New Haven that information and services on City of New Haven Web Sites, including departmental web sites, are designed where possible to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Issuing Authority: The Chief Administrative Officer is the issuing authority for this policy.

Enforcement Authority: Daily administration is the responsibility of the Information Technology Manager and the Director of the Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities.

Policy

It is the responsibility of the departments and their web page developers to become familiar with the guidelines for achieving universal accessibility and to apply these principles in designing and creating any official City of New Haven web site.

According to the latest statistics available from the Bureau of the Census, there are 9.7 million people in the United States who have difficulty seeing the words and letters in ordinary newsprint, equal to 5.0% of the total population. Another 10.9 million people, or nearly 6% of the total population, have difficulty hearing what is said in an ordinary conversation with another person. In 1995, Connecticut had an estimated 35,000 people who were legally blind, and twice that number who were visually impaired. Additionally, there are estimated to be 25,000 people who are profoundly deaf and 175,000 people who are hard of hearing in Connecticut.

The use of the guidelines below will ensure that web sites created by the City of New Haven are developed to serve the largest possible audience. Compliance with these guidelines provides an added benefit to those users with text-based browsers, low-end processors, slow modem connections and/or no multi-media capabilities on their computer. It also allows for access to City of New Haven web sites by new technologies, such as WebTV, internet phones, and personal organizers with internet connectivity.

A. Design Guidelines

1)   This policy provides a set of established guidelines adopted by The State of Connecticut Web Site Policy Committee and a checklist of design requirements, which provides a quick reference for numerous design issues. Additional references can be found at:

   http://www.cmac.state.ct.us/access/resources.html

   The City of New Haven's Web Site Policy Committee has adopted the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 1.0 W3C Recommendation 5-May-1999 as the primary guideline to meet the objectives of the Universal Accessibility for City Of New Haven Web Site policy. These guidelines explain how and why to make web content accessible to people with disabilities. The guidelines are intended for all web content

developers (page authors and site designers) and for developers using authoring tools. The primary goal of these guidelines is to promote accessibility. However, following them will also make web content more available to *all* users, whatever user agent they are using (e.g., desktop browser, voice browser, mobile phone, automobile-based personal computer, etc.) or constraints they may be operating under (e.g., noisy surroundings, under- or over-illuminated rooms, in a hands-busy environment, etc.). Following these guidelines will also help people find information on the web more quickly. These guidelines do not discourage content developers from using images, video, etc., but rather explain how to make multimedia content more accessible to a wide audience.

2) To comply with this policy, departments must be able to demonstrate two things:
   - That they have achieved WCAG Conformance Level "A" which means that all Priority 1 checkpoints are satisfied
   - That they have successfully addressed all the items in the Checklist of Design Requirements

3) Department webmasters are encouraged, but not required at this time, to achieve WCAG Conformance Level "AA". The full checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 can be found at:

   - http://www.w3.org/TR/1999/WAI-WEBCONTENT-19990505/full-checklist.html

B. Checklist of Design Requirements

1) The following checklist list has been compiled from various sources. Some of the items in this checklist are categorized as Priority 2 checkpoints in the WCAG. The purpose of this list is to provide a summary of the types of issues to consider when creating and designing accessible HTML pages. Please note that not all of the requirements are yet supported by all browsers, but the rendering of your page in current browsers will not be adversely affected by their use.

Universal Design

- Include a document type declaration (DOCTYPE) (see http://www.w3.org/TR/html401/struct/global.html" \l "version-info) in your web pages. This declares what version of HTML you are using in your documents, and assists the browser in rendering your pages correctly.
- Maintain a standard page layout and navigation method throughout the web site.
- Use headings, lists, and consistent structure.
- Avoid the unnecessary use of icons, graphics and photographs.
- Use plain backgrounds and simple layouts to improve the readability of text.
- Ensure that foreground and background color combinations provide sufficient contrast when viewed by someone having color deficits or when viewed on a black and white screen.
- Provide a text-only index or site map of your site.
- Include textual as well as graphical navigation aids.

- Do not abbreviate dates; for example, use December 1, 2000 rather than 12/1/00.
- Ensure that dynamic content is accessible or provide an alternative presentation or page.
- Until user agents allow users to freeze moving content, avoid movement in pages.
- Test your web pages with a variety of web technologies; including, but not limited to, graphical browsers with the images turned off, browsers with JavaScript disabled, a text based browser, using only your keyboard, and using assistive technology.
- Avoid the use of HTML tags or extensions which are supported by only one browser.
- Check web pages and images at different monitor resolutions, monitor sizes and color depth settings.
- Hyperlinks to downloadable files should include a text description that includes the file size and file type.
- You may consider the development of a text-only version of the document or site to facilitate accesses not only by people with visual impairments, but users of non-graphical browsers or slow Internet connections. Keep in mind, however, this option requires considerable resources and discipline to keep the two versions of the content in sync.

Text-Based Design

- End all sentences, headers, list items, etc. with a period or other suitable punctuation.
- Avoid using side by side presentation of text, for example, columns and tables.
- Provide alternate versions of forms; Alternatives might include a simple list or paragraph of what is needed to submit a form entry and then provide a link to a mailto: feature or simply an appropriate e-mail address to send the text.
- Minimize the number of hyperlinks that appear in a single line of text - one hyperlink is best; consider using vertical lists for links wherever possible.
- Avoid/Limit the use of bitmap images of text, unless a textual alternative is also provided.
- Consider beginning lists with a descriptive identifier and the number of items so the users will have an idea of what the list represents and the total length of the list. Using numbers instead of bullets will also help the user to remember items that interest them.
- Provide meaningful and descriptive text for hyperlinks, don't use short hand, e.g. "click here"; instead "Follow this link to our News Page". (Screen readers can search specifically for linked text; "click here" provides no indication of where the link will take them.) If documents are provided in a specialized format (e.g. PDF (Portable Document Format), etc.) provide the equivalent text in plain text or HTML format.

Graphics and Images

- Keep the number of colors in your images to a minimum.
- Minimize the file size and number of images you display on any one page.
- Design your background image at the lowest color depth and resolution you can.
- Ensure that text can always be clearly read at any location against the background.

- Avoid/Limit using image maps; provide an alternate text-based method of selecting options when image maps are used, e.g., separate HTML page or menu bar.
- Use the ALT attribute with image tags to provide associated, meaningful, text for all images, pictures and graphical bullets.
- Consider using the "longdesc" attribute of the IMG tag to specify a link to a long description of the image. This description should supplement the short description provided using the ALT attribute. When the image has an associated image map, this attribute should provide information about the image map's contents. This is particularly important for server-side image maps.
- If image files are used for graphical bullets in place of standard HTML, it is best to use a bullet character like an asterisk " * " or "o" in the ALT = text field of the <IMG> tag (rather than describing the bullet as: "This is a small purple square").

Audio/Visual Features

- Provide text transcriptions of all video clips.
- If possible, include captions or text tracts with a description or sounds of the movie.
- Provide descriptive passages about speakers and events being shown through video clips.
- Give a written description of any critical information that is contained in audio files contained on your web site.
- If you link to an audio file, inform the user of the audio file format and file size in kilobytes.

Scripts, applets and plug-ins

- Provide alternative content in case active features are inaccessible or unsupported.

Additional References

- http://validator.w3.org/check/referer
- http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/check/referer
- http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-alidator/check/referer

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