

KCMO.gov Web Accessibility for persons with visual impairment
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Methodology:

I was asked to evaluate the accessibility of several sub pages of the KCMO.gov website for people with visual impairments. The evaluation was conducted using the W3C standards for accessibility, consultation with people who regularly use adaptive technology, my lifetime experience using adaptive technology, and because the pages were created using WordPress, WordPress accessibility documents were also used. In order to put this report and its recommendations in their full context, it is important to understand that visual impairment represents a very broad spectrum. Some people with normal or near normal acuity scores use screen readers because of strabismus or nystagmus make reading for long periods of time uncomfortable. Others use magnification, special high contrast setting or even inverted (white on black) colors on their devices. Screen readers are used by people with low acuity or the complete loss of vision. Screen readers are sometimes used by people with normal vision who have another print disability such as dyslexia or ADHD. In order to complete this report, I examined the websites using two different forms of magnification, inverted color and high contrast settings. I also looked at the reader view and played audio from the the reader view in firefox and also used the built in screen reader on my MacBook Pro. I inspected the HTML to find easily seen coding mis-steps. I consulted people who use screen readers on a regular basis.

Requirements:

In order to access essential information, citizens of Kansas City, MO need to be able to access the city website. For the purposes of this report, they needed to be able to find voter information, city council pages and ADA information. In order to find this information, the main page must be responsive to magnification, navigable by screen reader and the information architecture must allow people who use screen readers to find the necessary sub pages.

Findings:

While the Kansas City website was not inaccessible to people with visual impairments, it was also not welcoming. In this case, information architecture compounds problems of accessibility.

Paths to access pages: