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To: All North Little Rock City Council Members
From: Nathan Hamilton
Date: September 8, 2025
Re: Introduction of WCAG 2.1 for discussion

Rec'd 9-22-2025
Council member
Hami Har @
7:02 P.m.

Dear Colleagues,

I'm writing to request your attention to an approaching deadline for ADA compliance. By April 24, 2026, cities over 50,000 residents must comply with Justice Department rules on website accessibility.

I'm handing out a draft resolution affirming our City's commitment to WCAG 2.1 AA compliance by that date and invite your input. Please review and, if you wish, I can answer any questions during a short discussion at our next Council meeting.

Why this matters now

- Federal law requires compliance by April 2026.
- Acting now keeps us ahead of the curve.
- Accessibility and transparency are core values.
- Early action helps with budget planning.

Why a Resolution?

- Puts the City's commitment on record as a governing priority.
- Ensures continuity regardless of future leadership.
- Educates Council and the public about a requirement few know about.

What This Is Not

- Not a criticism of staff — *much* progress has been made since the 2013 redesign.
- Not a major spending item — compliance is achievable.

Bottom Line

This resolution is a forward-looking statement of commitment. It doesn't dictate how compliance is achieved — that remains with the Mayor and Administration. It simply affirms that North Little Rock will follow the law and reflect our values of accessibility, transparency, and fairness.

Sincerely,



Nathan

Fact Sheet -- Web Accessibility & ADA Compliance

Dept. of Justice Rule Guidance: <https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/>

The standard for website accessibility is called WCAG 2.1 AA. It's not about adding extra work — it's about ensuring the information we already provide is available to everyone. Most of the fixes are common sense and improve usability for all residents, not just those with disabilities. These are reasonable steps that make city government easier to use and more transparent. The solutions are already known; we just need to implement them.

Achieving compliance may require an audit to identify specific issues, followed by some software adjustments and staff training. Fortunately, numerous guidelines and resources are freely available to government institutions to support this work.

Homepage Accessibility Errors

LR Errors: 141 Alerts: 10 Contrast Errors: 26 Features: 22	Maumelle Errors: 4 Alerts: 28 Contrast Errors: 9 Features: 30	Bentonville Errors: 5 Alerts: 30 Contrast Errors: 6 Features: 22	New York City Errors: 0 Alerts: 10 Contrast Errors: 13 Features: 39	NLR Errors: 9 Alerts: 125 Contrast Errors: 24 Features: 51
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Common Accessibility Mistakes on City Websites

- PDFs are scanned images instead of searchable text — unreadable to screen readers.
- No headings or bookmarks — long budgets and minutes are hard to navigate.
- Charts and photos posted with no descriptions — information is lost.
- Broken links to ordinances, agendas, or reports — frustrating for everyone.
- Forms without labels — people can't tell what to type where.
- Menus or pages that don't work with a keyboard.
- Videos posted with only auto-captions — often inaccurate and confusing.

What WCAG 2.1 AA is Really About

- Making text readable by ensuring enough color contrast.
- Providing alt text so images and charts are understandable.
- Organizing documents with headings and bookmarks, just like chapters in a book.
- Fixing broken links and using clear link names so everyone knows where they're going.
- Allowing websites to be navigated by keyboard, not just a mouse.

Draft Resolution: Commitment to ADA and WCAG 2.1 AA Compliance

**Note: This resolution is presented for consideration without a designated sponsor; sponsorship may be assumed by the Mayor or any member of the City Council prior to formal adoption. **

Resolution No. ____

A Resolution Affirming the City of North Little Rock's Commitment to Web Accessibility and Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Department of Justice's Final Rule on WCAG 2.1 AA Standards

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title II, requires state and local governments to provide equal access to programs, services, and activities; and

WHEREAS, in April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a final rule requiring state and local government websites and mobile applications to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA by April 24, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the City of North Little Rock values transparency, accessibility, inclusion, and equity, and recognizes that ensuring digital accessibility is vital to participation in local government by all residents; and

WHEREAS, the City acknowledges that some existing content, including but not limited to PDF documents, videos, and web navigation, do not currently meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards and must be addressed; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it appropriate and necessary to place the City's commitment on record and to direct city staff and administration to take all necessary steps to achieve compliance;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS:

1. The City of North Little Rock affirms its commitment to full compliance with the ADA Title II web accessibility requirements and the WCAG 2.1 AA standards by April 24, 2026, or sooner where feasible.
2. The Mayor, Administration, and City Departments are directed to take necessary actions to identify barriers, remediate inaccessible content, and establish policies to ensure ongoing compliance.
3. Archived materials may remain available online for historical and recordkeeping purposes but shall be clearly designated as “archived,” with accessible versions provided upon request.
4. The City Clerk, Information Technology Department, and Communications Division are directed to implement procedures ensuring all future agendas, minutes, ordinances, and other public-facing documents are accessible at the time of posting.
5. The City shall provide periodic progress updates to the City Council on compliance efforts, including training, policies, and budgetary needs.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Mayor

City Clerk

APPROVED:

City Attorney