



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

## Accessibility Checklist: StoryMaps

Use this checklist to ensure your StoryMap meets all requirements for accessibility. Please refer to the [GIS StoryMap Accessibility Guidance](#) page on Mass.gov for details on how to meet these requirements.

**Date Reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Owner Username:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Web Map Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Web Map URL:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Design

- Navigation is enabled under “Design” settings to facilitate quick navigation by readers.
- The StoryMap has a short, engaging title.
- The cover does not include video or any auto-play content (e.g. a GIF).
- If the “Full” cover style has been selected, a semi-transparent background has been added to increase contrast between title block text and cover image.
- For StoryMap Collections only:
  - “Compact” navigation is used.
  - A short, descriptive name has been provided for each item.
  - Cover information (title, summary, and description) is completed and meet all text guidelines.
- For StoryMap Briefings only: unique slide display titles have been added for each slide.

### Text

- The first heading used is H1.
- Logical heading structure is implemented to create a hierarchical outline of content.
- The heading style is not solely used for esthetic purposes.
- Headings are short, descriptive, and written in sentence case.
- A sans serif font is used (if you are using one of the accessible themes, the font is already selected).
- Bold is used sparingly, and only to convey important information.
- Text is not center aligned.
- The use of "click here" or "here" for links is not present.
- The purpose of each link is clearly communicated directly in the link text.



## Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

- Avoid the use of all capital letters (abbreviations are an exception).
- Text meets contrast ratio guidelines against background (4.5:1 for small text, and 3:1 for large text). If you are using one of the accessible themes, the colors work for proper contrast ratios.
- Text is plain and easy to understand. Common, everyday words are used (avoid the use of jargon and idioms).
- All acronyms are defined at least once before they are used.
- Sentences are used, where possible, to convey information.
- Narrative is written at an appropriate reading level, using short sentences and simple words where possible. When technical or scientific language is required, definitions are provided.
- Large blocks of text are avoided. Instead, text is broken up into short paragraphs of only a few lines.
- All email addresses, phone numbers and place addresses are clickable links.
- Instructions do not rely solely on sensory characteristics (e.g. "Tap the button below to update the map" [non-compliant] vs. "Tap the update map button to update the map" [compliant]).
- In-text superscript citations are not used (e.g. "This fun fact is cool.<sup>1</sup>").

### Maps

- Any included web map(s) or Express Maps meets [web map accessibility requirements](#).
- Any included static map(s) meets [static map accessibility requirements](#).
- All maps have alternative text that preserves original intent, meaning or nuance of the map.
- All maps receive a unique caption, which does not match the alternative text.
- The map legend is enabled for all maps.
- The search option is enabled for all maps.
- Swipe maps have alternative text in the following locations:
  - Left-hand map.
  - Right-hand map.
  - Entire swipe content block.

### Images

- The cover image is high resolution, crisp and clear.
- Do not use images of text (e.g. tables or infographics).
- If placing text over an image, ensure the text block has a semi-opaque background to ensure high color contrast between text and background is always met.



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs**

- All non-decorative images have a text alternative that serves an equal purpose.
- Decorative images do not have alt text.

### Audio/Video

- All videos include closed captioning and a transcript.
- All videos, moving, and auto-updating content provide user controls to pause or stop content.
- Audio or video content does not auto-play. GIFs are not used.
- All audio content have an accompanying transcript.

### Other Content Blocks

- Code
  - The correct language has been selected.
  - Line numbers are enabled.
  - A short description of the code and its purpose is provided in the narrative ahead of the code block.
- Charts
  - All data columns receive a clear heading, and abbreviations or acronyms are not used.
  - Series color(s) are selected from StoryMap theme options.
  - All series colors are easily distinguishable from one another and have been tested with [Colorblindly](#).
  - A meaningful chart title, category axis title, and value axis title are present.
  - The chart legend is enabled.
  - The data source has been added.
  - A descriptive caption is present that can be used to understand the contents of the chart.
- Infographics
  - No abbreviations or acronyms are used.
  - Theme colors have been used for all components.
  - The data source has been added.
- Tables
  - No screen captures of tables are included.
  - Each cell contains information (e.g. '0' or "N/A" to indicate no data).
  - All data columns/rows receive a clear heading, and abbreviations or acronyms are not used.
  - The data source has been added.



## Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

- A descriptive caption is present that can be used to understand the contents of the table.
- Embed
  - Card display:
    - A custom title and helpful description have been provided. Do not use the defaults.
    - A custom thumbnail has been added.
  - Interactive display:
    - Do not enable “Allow readers to directly interact with this content”.
    - Configure small screen display to “card” and add custom title, description and thumbnail.
- Timeline
  - Each “step” includes a meaningful title (date or time) and description.
  - If photos are included, and they are non-decorative, alternative text has been added.
- Sidecar
  - Best practices for each content type have been followed.
  - Do not embed content into the “main stage” of a Sidecar.
- Map Tour
  - All locations have a title and description.
  - All photos include alternative text.

### Alternate Formats

- Map data is available in an alternative format (such as through the attribute table or a downloadable CSV).
- Provide an alternative to video-only and audio-only content.
- Provide captions and/or transcript for videos with audio.
- Any Map Tour provides data in an alternative format, such as a CSV.

### StoryMap Item Details (Alternative Text)

- The StoryMap has completed item details. All text descriptions should serve the equivalent purpose as the visual. This should include:
  - Item summary—a brief statement (1-2 sentences) describing the item.
  - Item description—several sentences focusing on key patterns, takeaways, and purpose.
  - Terms of Use—for public items, please use prescribed terms of use referenced in EEA's ArcGIS Online Best Practices.
  - Credits